

BIBIANA STEINHAUS-WEBB



First Female Referee in German Professional Football FIFA's Head of Women's Refereeing

Bibiana Steinhaus is a pioneer - in 2017, she became the first woman to officiate a match in the first men's Bundesliga and established herself in the following years as the respected first female referee in German professional football.

Bibiana Steinhaus (*1979) was a referee from 1995 to 2020. She became a professional referee in 1999 by officiating matches in the Women's Bundesliga, after that she was selected to officiate in the Regionalliga. Before becoming a referee like her father, she played football for SV Bad Lauterberg.

In 2003, she was the main referee for the 2002/03 Women's DFB Cup final. She officiated the 2008 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup as well as the UEFA Women's Euro 2009 and 2010 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup. She was one of 16 referees for the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup where she officiated two group stage matches before she was selected to officiate the final between Japan and United States. She was also selected to officiate the women's football gold medal match in the 2012 London Olympics, also between Japan and United States. During the 2017/18 season Bibiana was the first female referee to officiate a men's match of the 2nd Bundesliga. During the same season she became first female fourth official in the men's football league. A fact that was accompanied by an enormous media response.

In 2020, she ended her impressive career as the first female referee in the men's first football league. Her way of refereeing matches earned her a lot of respect and recognition - even without ever having to pull a red card. After a year as a video assistant, she has become director of the English Women's Super League in 2021, where her task was to professionalise refereeing. In October 2024, Bibiana Steinhaus-Webb took on an important role at football's world governing body, Fifa: she has since become Head of the Women's Department of the Fifa Refereeing Subdivision.

Bibiana Steinhaus has received numerous awards during her refereeing career, including being named DFB Referee of the Year every year from 2007 to 2011. In 2013, 2014 and 2017, she is World Referee of the Year.

Topics (Selection):

- Why diversity is key / How gender equality empowers us all
- Getting good and staying good - A game lasts longer than 90 minutes
- Stories on digitalisation in refereeing
- Motivation after injuries