



For Immediate Release
Contacts: Lamell J. McMorris
NBRA Spokesman
202.638.5090
lmcmorris@perennialsg.com

NBA and NFL Officials Join The V Foundation to Blow the Whistle on Cancer

Cary, N.C., December 13, 2004 – Officials from the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA) have joined The V Foundation for Cancer Research, in partnership with the National Association of Sports Officials, to Blow the Whistle on Cancer December 17-20.

For the third consecutive year, the NFL Referees Association will participate in The V Foundation's "Blow the Whistle on Cancer" campaign. All 119 NFL game officials will donate a portion of their salary to The V Foundation to fund essential cancer research. Front office personnel, scouts and replay officials in the NFL will also join in the fight against cancer and the NFL will match the donations of the officials and all full-time employees. Since the NFL Referees Association helped kick off the campaign in 2002, the officials and the NFL have combined to contribute more than \$75,000 to The V Foundation.

"I could not be more proud to be associated with a great group of officials who are now supporting The V Foundation for the third consecutive year," said Mike Pereira, the NFL Director of Officiating. "So many of us, including me, have been touched by this horrible disease. To participate with The V Foundation and their noble cause is the least we can do to help find a cure for cancer."

As part of the NBA's "Season of Giving," the members of the National Basketball Referees Association (NBRA) will join the fight against cancer and donate \$5,500 to The V Foundation as their annual charitable contribution in support of "Blow the Whistle on Cancer." The NBA will match the contribution made by the NBRA for a total donation of \$11,000 to The V Foundation for Cancer Research.

"The NBA referees are honored and excited to be able to assist this important campaign sponsored by The V Foundation for Cancer Research and the National Association of Sports Officials," said Lamell McMorris, the official spokesman for the NBRA. "The work of The V Foundation over the past 10 years has benefited many around the world, and we are proud to play some part in the Foundation's programs. We are also pleased that the NBA, in support of the referees and the Foundation's laudable goals, has agreed to match the funds being donated by the officials."

"You need integrity and passion to be an NBA official, and this charitable endeavor illustrates those qualities to the fullest," said Stu Jackson, NBA Senior Vice President, Basketball Operations. "We are proud, not only of our officials, but of all members of the NBA family including players, coaches and executives for all of their goodwill, especially during the holidays."

“Officials play an integral role in every organized sporting event,” said V Foundation CEO Nick Valvano. “We are so grateful to the members of the NFL Referees Association, who have been Blow the Whistle on Cancer advocates from Day One of this program. Now, to have their NBA colleagues join the program is not only a tremendous boost for our Blow the Whistle campaign, but a visible example of the great people who have embraced this program.”

The V Foundation for Cancer Research and the National Association of Sports Officials partnered in 2002 to encourage sports officials at all levels to help “Blow the Whistle on Cancer.” Officials nationwide, in all sports and at every level – professional, college, high school and recreation leagues – are encouraged to join their colleagues in the NFL and the NBA by donating a stipend from one game to The V Foundation. For additional information on The V Foundation’s Blow the Whistle on Cancer campaign, visit www.jimmyv.org.

About the NBRA

The National Basketball Referees Association represents 62 active and 14 retired referees who officiate all of the games for the National Basketball Association. It was formed to unite all referees of the NBA, promote the game of professional basketball, and improve the quality of officiating in the NBA.