
National Referee Program Manual

2008 Edition

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Introduction

This manual is meant to be an easy-to-use source of information regarding the AYSO National Referee Program. It contains information of use to all AYSO Referee Administrators, Instructors and Assessors. An elaborate support system is available to assist you in providing the best possible officiating program for the enjoyment of AYSO players, volunteers and spectators in your region. Please do not hesitate to contact members of the AYSO referee support staff available to you at the Area, Section and National Level.

The Referee Administrator Reference Guide is a must have for all Referee Administrators and is available from the AYSO Supply Center at (888) 243 2976. Additional materials also available to help you build a successful officiating program include: The AYSO edition of the Laws of the Game (available in English and Spanish); The

AYSO Guidance for Referees and Coaches (available in English and Spanish); The Annual Referee Update; The Referee Advisor Handbook; The Referee Instructor Resource Book; The AYSO Recruiting and Retaining Referees Manual, The AYSO Short-Sided Games Guide for Referees; Developing and Maintaining a Youth Referee Program; The Youth Referee Manual; and a multitude of supporting materials and lesson plans on aysohelp.org.

Thank you for volunteering your time and talent to contribute towards a positive AYSO experience for the players, coaches and spectators who participate in AYSO. The overall success of AYSO and of the AYSO National Referee Program depends upon your efforts as a member of the volunteer referee support staff. Those efforts are greatly appreciated.



Joe Eldridge,
AYSO National Referee Administrator
Phone: 888 686 AYSO
email: joeeldridge@ayso.org

Part I – Administration

National Referee Program Organizational Overview

AYSO National Referee Administrator

The AYSO National Referee Administrator (NRA) is hired by the AYSO National Executive Director and is responsible for the development, revision and implementation of the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the overall needs of AYSO referees. The NRA receives recommendations regarding program development and implementation from the AYSO National Referee Commission (NRC).

National Referee Council

The National Referee Council members are nominated by the National Referee Administrator in conjunction with the Referee Commission Chairman and appointed by the AYSO National President. The National Referee Council consists of the Chairman of the Referee Commission and Directors of Referee Instruction, Assessment, Curriculum, Information Transfer and Youth & Women Referee Development. The members of the National Referee Council provide technical expertise to produce, maintain and revise as needed the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of AYSO referees.

Also supporting the National Referee Council and the National Referee Commission are: the AYSO FIFA Law Interpreter/AYSO Representative to the United States Soccer Federation Referee Committee; the Director of Programs; the Referee Program Coordinator; and the Liaison from the AYSO National Board of Directors.

The National Referee Council

Joe Eldridge,
National Referee Administrator (Staff)
10031 Timbercreek Rd
Union, KY 41091
AYSO Phone: 888 686 2976
Home Phone: 859 384 7532
Cell Phone: 513 460 9880
Email: joeeldridge@ayso.org

Tony Veronico,
Chairman Referee Commission
38 Fourth Ave Apt. LC
Nyack, NY 10960
Home Phone: 866 860 2976
Cell Phone: 845 653 1353
Email: tonver@optonline.net

Jane Vanderhook,
Dir. Youth & Women Ref. Dev.
416 Shepherd Lane
Shepherdstown, WV 25443
Home Phone: 304 876 6993
Email: janehook@frontiernet.net

David Keller,
Director of Referee Assessment
1368 N. Mohawk 2S
Chicago, IL 60610
Home Phone: 312 751 1693
Cell Phone: 312 859 1940
Email: dlkeller@comcast.net

Pat Mullane,
Director of Referee Instruction
1951 N. Cleveland Ave # N
Chicago, IL 60614
Home Phone: 312 943 7850
Cell: 312 217 1869
Email: pnm1951@mac.com

Alex Horwitz,
Director of Referee Curriculum
434 La Marina
Santa Barbara, CA 93109
Home Phone: 805 962 9466
Cell Phone: 805 570 3375
Email: ahorwitz@vetronix.com

Roy Levin,
Director of Referee Information Technology
810 Garland Dr.
Palo Alto, CA 94303
Home Phone: 650 323 1290
Email: roy@levin.net

Also Supporting the Referee Council and National Referee Commission

Bill Mason,
AYSO FIFA Law Interpreter
4945 Golden Arrow Dr.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
Home Phone: 310 377 3896
Email: jackyandbill@yahoo.com

Randy McNutt,
NBOD Liaison to Referee Commission
Cell Phone: 619 948 1942
Email: aysosoccer@cox.net

Tom Tobin,
Director of Programs (Staff)
American Youth Soccer Organization
12501 S. Isis Ave
Hawthorne, CA 90250
AYSO Phone: 800 872 2976 Extension 5460
Email: tomtobin@ayso.org

Steve Close,
Senior Program Coordinator (Staff)
American Youth Soccer Organization
12501 S. Isis Ave
Hawthorne, CA 90250
AYSO Phone: 800 872 2976 Extension 5473
Email: steveclose@ayso.org

National Referee Commission

The National Referee Commission (NRC) consists of the Section Referee Administrators from each AYSO section appointed by their respective Section Directors. The NRC meets annually to provide input and advice to the National Referee Administrator and National Referee Council regarding the status of National Referee Program implementation efforts in their

sections. The NRC members provide suggestions for National Referee Program modifications or additions.

National Referee Commission Chairman

The National Referee Commission Chairman is nominated by the National Referee Administrator and appointed by the AYSO National President. The NRC Chairman is an executive member of AYSO and represents the AYSO National Referee Program at all National Board of Directors meetings and at the AYSO Annual General Meeting. The NRC Chairman chairs the annual meeting of the National Referee Commission and works closely with the National Referee Administrator to assist with the development, revision and implementation of the National Referee Program.

Section Referee Administrators

The Section Referee Administrator (SRA) is appointed by the Section Director and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of AYSO referees within the section. The SRA appoints Section Directors of Referee Instruction and Assessment. These directors are charged with implementing the respective areas of the AYSO National Referee Program under the direction of the SRA.

Area Referee Administrators

The Area Referee Administrator (ARA) is appointed by the Area Director and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of AYSO referees within the area. The ARA appoints Area Directors of Referee Instruction and Assessment. These directors are charged with implementing the respective areas of the AYSO National Referee Program under the direction of the ARA.

Regional Referee Administrators

The Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) is appointed by the Regional Commissioner and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of

AYSO referees within the region. The RRA appoints Regional Directors of Referee Instruction and Assessment. These directors are charged with implementing the respective areas of the AYSO National Referee Program under the direction of the RRA.

The AYSO National Referee Program - Three Main Elements

Administration

Administrative training is available for referee administrators: Referee Administrator Training plus generalized management training courses.

The National Referee Program Manual is available and provides details regarding responsibilities, operating procedures, and guidelines for administering an AYSO referee program.

Cross-certification opportunities with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) are available for referees.

Instruction

Six levels of Referee certification and training are available: U-8 Official, Assistant Referee, Basic Referee, Intermediate Referee, Advanced Referee and National Referee.

Special programs are offered for youth referees.

Three levels of Referee Instructor certification are available: Referee Instructor, Advanced Referee Instructor and National Referee Instructor.

Two levels of Referee Instructor Evaluator certification are available: Referee Instructor Evaluator and National Referee Instructor Evaluator

Assessment

Two levels of referee assessor certification are available: Assessor and National Assessor.

Referee Advisors are trained to be a helping hand for new and developing officials.

AYSO Philosophy

AYSO's philosophy, as determined by the AYSO founders in 1964 and still guiding the

organization today, grew out of a deep concern for the positive development, growth, and enjoyment of all children who wanted to participate in the wonderful game of soccer.

AYSO Vision Statement:

To provide world-class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives

AYSO Mission Statement:

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO Philosophies of...

Everyone Plays

Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

Balanced Teams

Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

Open Registration

Our program is open to all children between 4 and 19 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

Positive Coaching

Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

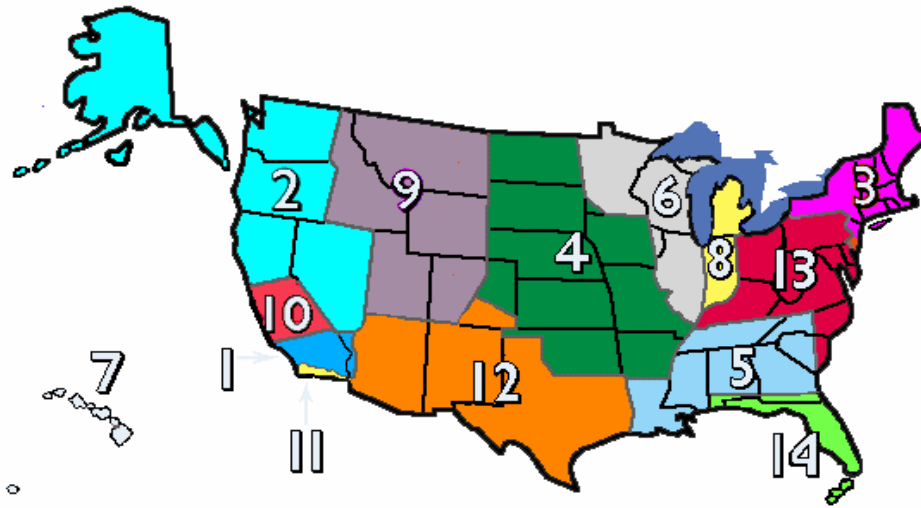
Good Sportsmanship

We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

These fundamental principles are the foundation of the AYSO National Referee Program and must be emphasized in all aspects of program implementation in local AYSO regions throughout the country. Referees play a crucial role in ensuring there is truth in the motto:

"In AYSO, it's about more than the game!"

AYSO Section Map



The Organization of Soccer

Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)

Soccer is played throughout the world. The international governing body of soccer is the Federation Internationale de Football Association, most commonly referred to as FIFA.

FIFA was founded in Paris in 1904 by the football associations of France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

FIFA consists of over 200 member national associations. National associations are recognized as the governing body of soccer for the countries or territory they represent.

The FIFA Headquarters has been based in Zurich, Switzerland, since 1927.

Laws of the Game

The Laws of the Game are promulgated and altered by the International Football Association Board (IFAB), which consists of twenty members, sixteen of whom are appointed by the four British associations, each of which nominates four members, and four members appointed by the Executive Committee of FIFA. This regulation cannot be changed except by the unanimous consent of the members of the board.

FIFA annually publishes The Laws of the Game. The International Football Association Board (IFAB) is made up of The Football Association (England), The Scottish Football Association, The Football Association of Wales, The Irish Football Association and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).

The Organization of Soccer

CONCACAF (Confederation Norte-Centroamericana y del Caribe de Futbol)

The IFAB meets annually in February or March to consider proposed alterations to the Laws of the Game.

The International Board meets annually to consider any requests for changes to the Laws or any decisions necessary to clarify any aspect of the Laws. FIFA publishes a copy of the Laws of the Game each year.

AYSO, with the permission of FIFA, publishes an AYSO Edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game each year. Copies are available from the AYSO Supply Center.

All AYSO games are conducted in accordance with the current FIFA Laws of the Game and decisions of the International Board, subject to those modifications adopted by AYSO in the current AYSO National Rules and Regulations. Copies are available from the AYSO Supply Center, telephone number (888) 243-2976.

CONCACAF (Confederation Norte-Centroamericana y del Caribe de Futbol)

FIFA member national associations are divided into six continental confederations: Africa, Asia, South America, CONCACAF, Europe, and Oceania.

The United States is a member of CONCACAF, which is comprised of 35 countries from North and Central America and the Caribbean.

United States Soccer Federation (USSF)

The United States Soccer Federation (USSF) is the national governing body for soccer in the United States, and is a member of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the worldwide governing body.

The United States Soccer Federation, also known as US Soccer, is made up of three councils:

- Youth Council
- Amateur Council
- Professional Council

The Youth Council members are the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA).

AYSO is the second largest member of USSF. As members of USSF, AYSO has voting representatives on the Referee Committee and Coaching Committee, as well as a number of other committees.

AYSO and USYSA boards of directors, based upon the recommendations of the joint committee of AYSO and USYSA representatives, have adopted the following guidelines, which are consistent with the APRIL 1989 AYSO/USYSA agreement, for the good of youth soccer.

Guidelines for Cooperation: AYSO/USYSA

Friendly Games

AYSO and USYSA member teams are encouraged to participate in friendly games under the following suggested format:

Establish the rules and regulations governing friendly games before play begins, preferably before teams meet on game day.

Follow the host team's rules with the understanding, however, that consideration will be given to the other, non-hosting organizations rules and regulations, including AYSO's everyone plays rule (even if substitutions are made only at halftime).

The host team will provide proof of liability insurance.

Both teams must have and provide proof of medical insurance.

The USYSA state association and the AYSO Regional Commissioner, through their designated representatives, should be notified by their teams that a friendly game has been scheduled.

League Play

If an AYSO team applies to play in a USYSA league, or vice-versa, that team must comply with all the rules, regulations, and financial commitments of the league in which it wishes to participate. Also:

Dual registration is permitted; however, once players have played with a team, they must fulfill their obligations to that team.

Once an AYSO or USYSA team is formed, no recruitment of players from that team by another team competing during all or a portion of that season is permitted.

Creating leagues that combine a number of AYSO and USYSA teams is not recommended.

Tournaments

Each organization is encouraged to host "Open Tournaments". Any team invited to a tournament must comply with the tournament rules of the hosting organization. All teams must comply with the procedures governing travel in the tournament and/or travel manual of their own organization.

National Cups

AYSO and USYSA will continue to hold separate national competitions (AYSO National Games and USYSA National Youth Challenge Cup).

Coaching and Refereeing Programs

Cross certification agreements have been established between AYSO and the USSF National Coaching and Refereeing Programs.

Cooperation

AYSO and USYSA will continue to encourage an ongoing dialogue and work together to resolve any state and/or local issues. They will also continue participating in each other's board

and membership meetings, e.g., workshops, NAGMs and section meetings.

The AYSO/USYSA committee has been granted a continuing role as a facilitator of local AYSO/USYSA issues, and will be a strong ongoing communications link between AYSO and USYSA.

AYSO and USYSA will respect each other's disciplinary actions against players and/or adult volunteers. Neither group will accept players or

adults from the other organization if the primary purpose of seeking a change is to escape disciplinary action. Nor should a program be accepted if the purpose for switching is to circumvent the reasonable rules of the other's constitution and bylaws.

The AYSO/USYSA committee will meet periodically to evaluate the progress of implementing these recommendations and, if needed, address any new issues that arise as a result of their implementation.

The Diagonal System of Control

The diagonal system of control is the only system for officiating outdoor soccer games that is currently recognized by FIFA. The diagonal system employs three officials for every match: one referee and two assistant referees. The diagonal system of control (one referee on the field) is the approved method of control for all AYSO matches.

The application of the diagonal system of control, including cooperation between the referee and the assistant referees, the mechanics of the use of the diagonal system, and the signals used by the referee and assistant referees, shall be as recommended in the current AYSO edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game.

In addition to being the universally recommended method of officiating outdoor matches, the diagonal system can be a most effective method of increasing and retaining the number of officials. Recruiting new volunteers as assistant referees has proven to be an effective method of introducing new officials into AYSO. After proper training and exposure to the game while serving as assistant referees, many

otherwise uninterested volunteers become enthusiastic for more training so that they can try their hand as the official in the middle.

The AYSO National Referee Program is designed to support and encourage the use of the diagonal system of control. The Referee Administrator Training Program includes components that address the recruitment and scheduling of officials. The Referee Training and Certification Program provides instruction tailored to all levels of AYSO. The Referee Assessment Program incorporates the diagonal system as an essential component of referee testing, observation, and assessment for advancement to higher-grade levels.

Note:

Use of the dual refereeing system must be avoided. The dual refereeing system uses two referees on the field, each with whistles. This system encourages the development of poor officiating habits and is the source of frustrations as the officials attempt the impossible task of remaining close to play and, at the same time, being correctly positioned to watch for offside infractions. This system also fosters hesitancy

on the part of the officials and/or unnecessary interruptions in play as the two officials attempt to consult with one another for a consensus.

If only two qualified officials are available for a match, one should assume the duties of the referee and the other should become a neutral

assistant referee. A “club linesman”, if available, may be used after receiving instructions from the referee. If a “club linesman is not available, the referee must assume the duties of the missing assistant referee as is done in the single referee system.

Referee Administrator Responsibilities

National Referee Administrator

The AYSO National Referee Administrator (NRA) in coordination with the National Referee Commission Chairman (NRCC) is responsible for the administration, development and implementation of the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the overall needs of AYSO referees. The NRA receives recommendations and guidance regarding program administration, development and implementation from the NRCC and the Section Referee Administrators (SRA)

The National Referee Administrator, in conjunction with the NRCC, provides the AYSO National Board of Directors and the Executive Director with nominees for appointment to a National Referee Council of up to six members to serve in staggered three-year terms.

Section Referee Administrators

The Section Referee Administrator (SRA) is a member of the National Referee Commission and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of the referees within the section, areas, and regions. The SRA appoints Section Directors of Assessment and Instruction. These directors are responsible for implementation of their respective disciplines and are to work in

cooperation with the National Director of Assessment or National Director of Instruction, as the case may be.

Area Referee Administrators

The Area Referee Administrator (ARA) is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of the referees within the areas and regions. The ARA appoints Area Directors of Assessment and Instruction. These directors are responsible for implementation of their respective disciplines and are to work in cooperation with the Section Director of Assessment or Section Director of Instruction, as the case may be, as well as with the national referee staff.

Regional Referee Administrators

The Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Referee Program in response to the needs of the referees within the region. The RRA appoints Regional Directors of Assessment and Instruction, if needed. These directors are responsible for implementation of their respective disciplines and are to work in cooperation with the Area Director of Assessment or Area Director of Instruction, as the case may be, as well as with the section and national referee staff.

Referee Administrator Training

Administrative training is offered in the Regional Referee Administrator Training Course as well as the generic Introductory, Intermediate and Advanced Management courses available to all AYSO administrators. The Introductory Management course offers the new regional management team (the Regional Commissioner, Regional Referee Administrator and Regional Coach Administrator) a unified, practical approach to management training at the regional level and is designed to equip the regional management team with the basic management skills and tools, which they will require during their first year together, to establish and manage a viable regional program.

The Intermediate and Advanced courses offer an enhanced curriculum to the more experience regional management team that will also provide a unified, practical approach to management training. They are designed to upgrade the regional management team with the advanced management skills and tools that they will require to negotiate the more complex issues of maintaining and improving a regional program.

All courses are presented by trained instructors. It is strongly recommended that every Regional Referee Administrator attend these courses with their management team at the earliest possible opportunity.

Program Delivery

Each referee administrator, whether section, area, or regional, has the same overall responsibility: to be a conduit through which the energy of the AYSO National Referee Program can flow. This is an in/out process; the program must be both received and sent. Any referee administrator who receives training or programming and fails to pass it on makes the training or program valueless, just as though it had never been received in the first place.

To assist in the delivery of the National Referee Program, each referee administrator is expected to be familiar with the program's purpose, intended audience, and usefulness to particular situations, and limitations. Part of the Section Referee Administrator's duty is to be thoroughly familiar with the National Referee Program and

to pass that familiarity on to the Area Referee Administrator as part of their training process. The Area Referee Administrator has the same duty in training the Regional Referee Administrators. The Regional Referee Administrator should then apply the program at the local level.

The Section Referee Administrator should take either direct responsibility for a program's implementation or indirect responsibility by passing it to the Area Referee Administrator; the Area Referee Administrator takes direct responsibility or passes the program to the Regional Referee Administrator for direct implementation. For example, since the development of instructors or the education of advanced or national level referees requires special resources, planning, and training not usually found at the regional or area level, these programs are usually executed by the Section Referee Administrator with the assistance of the Area Referee Administrator. On the other hand, the Section Referee Administrator is not usually involved in the training of beginning or intermediate level referees in every region because that is more properly the responsibility of the Regional or Area Referee Administrator.

To deliver a program, one becomes familiar with it and passes it on; to implement a program, one places it at the appropriate level, and then gives it the capability to succeed through motivation, planning, resources, and tools. The referee administrator who does these things helps to ensure the successful completion of the delivery/implementation cycle.

Administering the Regional Referee Program

Primarily, the Regional Referee Administrator must be a good organizer, able and willing to delegate responsibilities and motivate adult and youth volunteers positively. The Regional Referee Administrator must be prepared to spend more time administering the program than actually refereeing.

General Management

The Regional Referee Administrator has the primary responsibility of ensuring that the matches within the region are conducted in conformance with FIFA Law and AYSO National Rules and Regulations (as interpreted by the AYSO National Referee Commission and the AYSO FIFA Law Interpreter). Sources of information include current editions of:

- AYSO edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game
- AYSO National Rules and Regulations
- AYSO Guidance for Referees and Coaches
- USSF Advice to Referees on the Laws of the Game
- USSF Guide to Procedures for Referees, Assistant Referees and 4th Officials
- Communication with Area, Section, or National referee staff

Making Local Rules

The very first line of the AYSO National Rules and Regulations states, "All AYSO games shall be conducted in accordance with the current FIFA Laws of the Game and decisions of the

International Board..." The bulk of the remaining content of the Rules and Regulations clarifies the kind of specific exceptions which are permitted. In the beginning of the FIFA Laws of the Game under "Modifications" it states, "Subject to the agreement of the national association concerned and provided the principles of these Laws are maintained, the Laws may be modified in their application..." and then specifies the kinds of modifications that are permissible. These statements endeavor to make it clear how AYSO games should be played and who, how and to what extent the Laws may be modified.

Making a local rule in the presumed interest of safety may appear well intentioned on the surface but careful consideration must be given to the overall effect of the rule and whether or not it is permissible or, in fact, beneficial. Accidents happen in soccer and if we tried to make a rule to prevent all of them we would be overrun with rules that don't make sense. Running, jumping, kicking, heading, dribbling, tackling, shooting, and goalkeeper efforts to prevent goals all have potential to cause injury. As stated in the Laws of the Game, "Football is a competitive sport and physical contact between players is a normal and acceptable part of the game, however players must play within the Laws and respect the principles of fair play." Soccer is a contact sport and injuries are possible. It is impossible to avoid. Players and parents must recognize there is risk involved in playing sports. Reading the waiver carefully on the player registration form, which all parents are required to read and sign, makes this point very clearly.

It is the job of coaches to teach players correct technique to help them avoid injury to themselves and to others. It is the job of referees to learn to recognize when skills are executed correctly or not. Players should develop, coaches should teach and referees should learn to recognize skills that are a part of

soccer. When we make a local rule that takes away one or more of the skills used in playing the game this lessens the opportunities for players to learn to execute the skill correctly, coaches to teach the skill and referees to recognize the skill performed legally. An argument could be made that such local rules actually may cause more injuries because coaches will be discouraged from teaching correct techniques to the players since there is a local rule prohibiting the skill.

Working with the Regional Commissioner and Regional Board

The regional referee program does not exist in a vacuum. It is just one component of an AYSO region. It is the responsibility of the Regional Referee Administrator to ensure that the needs of the regional referee program are incorporated into the region's overall program. It is recommended that the Regional Referee Administrator work closely with the Regional Commissioner and regional board (especially the Regional Coach Administrator) to establish, at a minimum, the following:

- a referee program budget
- regional guidelines (including guidelines for referees and coaches)
- weather policy
- protest policy
- apparel requirements
- codes of conduct

Establishing a Regional Officiating Staff

The activities required to run a successful regional referee program are simply too numerous and time consuming to be effectively carried out by any single individual. A team effort is required. The first goal of any Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) should be to establish a regional officiating staff. Every RRA should appoint a Regional Director of Referee Instruction and a Regional Director of Referee

Assessment. It is strongly recommended that every RRA should also appoint a Regional Coordinator of Recruitment, and a Regional Coordinator of Scheduling. The RRA, while providing direction and maintaining control, should delegate the responsibility for these elements of the regional referee program to the appointed individuals. The RRA must also ensure that the appointed officials receive adequate training and instruction in their particular area so that they can perform their duties.

Registering Volunteer Officials

It is critical that all volunteer officials are annually registered with AYSO. This is accomplished through the use of the AYSO Volunteer Registration Form or through an on-line process at eAYSO.org. Registration ensures that referees are covered by the Soccer Accident Insurance. Registration also ensures that AYSO referees will receive the InPlay newsletter and Playsoccer magazine.

Certifying Volunteer Officials

Every volunteer referee (and coach) in AYSO must be Safe Haven Certified. This ensures the maximum possible protection for our children and for the volunteers who work with them. Ensure all regional referees/officials have successfully completed the AYSO Referee Safe Haven Certification course before they are given any assignments. This is a one hour course for which the lesson plan can be found on aysohelp.org. The certification can also be taken online at aysotraining.org.

Equipping the Referees

It is absolutely essential that regional referees be properly equipped with a complete proper uniform and the necessary accessories for the job. A referee should look the part to really feel the part. A sharp-looking referee, in proper uniform, will receive more respect than an equally trained, but non-uniformed, referee.

Uniform Dress Code for Referees

Throughout the soccer community, referees and assistant referees are identified by their uniforms. The AYSO National Referee Program's goal is to have three trained officials at every game. This goal applies to uniformity and consistency in the application of the Laws, and it includes the appearance of the officiating team.

The AYSO National Referee Program encourages referees, when officiating a match, to wear a shirt that distinguishes them from the members of either team. It is also recommended that, whenever possible, referees and assistant referees follow the uniform guidelines noted below:

Referee Shirt

It is suggested that when purchasing new shirts the United States Soccer Federation recommended shirt colors be chosen. They are as follows:

Primary shirt color:

gold with black stripes and trim.

Alternate colors:

black with white stripes and trim

red with black stripes and trim

blue with black stripes and trim

green with black stripes and trim

Referee Shorts

Solid black.

Length not less than 3 or more than 7 inches above the knee.

Referee Socks

Black with three white stripes at top.

Pulled up over the calf

Referee Badge

The only badge appropriate for referees to wear during AYSO games is the current AYSO referee certification level badge earned by the referee. Exceptions: An International Referee may wear his or her FIFA badge; and, if provided, special referee tournament badges

may be worn by referees during that tournament's games.

Only one badge on uniform.

Referee Footwear

Black, or black with white trim.

Smooth, turf or cleated soles.

Cleaned and polished regularly

Referee Hats

Hats are not traditional for soccer referees and are discouraged. If hats are worn for sun-protection health reasons, the following guidelines should be observed:

Solid black, or predominately black with white trim, or

Solid white, or predominately white with black trim.

Hats should bear no logo or slogans, except AYSO logos (traditional, promotional, regional, or tournament) are permitted, and National corporate apparel sponsor logos are allowed.

Local conditions and common sense may dictate some variations from these recommendations. For example, a region may have purchased shirts of different colors or styles than those noted above for their referees and assistant referees. If variations are appropriate, they should be applied consistently. The referee and assistant referees should wear shirts of similar color and style, thus appearing as a team on the field. If the referee chooses to wear an alternate jersey that the assistants do not have, then the assistant referees should at least match each other. Uniformity on the part of the officials establishes initial credibility for them as a team, and it demonstrates their kinship with an important group: the trained, dedicated referees and assistant referees of AYSO.

It is usually not necessary to provide all of the regional officials with a complete set of new equipment every year. For example, returning referees can normally use the same uniform shirt and shorts for two or more years, depending on the quality of uniform purchased. On the other hand, socks may need to be replaced every year. Whistles, data wallets, red and yellow cards, and assistant referee flags

also tend to last for several seasons. Keeping a record of the returning referee's equipment needs over several seasons is a practical way of providing the Regional Referee Administrator with guidelines as to the equipment needs of returning referees. However, it is critical that every registered referee be provided each year with the current edition of both the FIFA Laws of the Game, the AYSO National Rules and Regulations, and the Guidance for Referees and Coaches.

Developing a Regional Referee Program Budget

One of the attractions of the game of soccer is that it is a relatively inexpensive sport to play. The regional board's primary financial focus is, legitimately, on the players (uniforms, soccer balls, etc.) and the fields (goal nets, line markings, corner flags, etc.). Because of this, it is sometimes easy to overlook some of the less apparent financial implications of the game, particularly those costs associated with the implementation of an effective regional referee program. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the Regional Referee Administrator to make sure that sufficient funds are available to support the regional referee program.

The most effective way to accomplish this responsibility is for the Regional Referee Administrator to prepare a regional referee program budget element for inclusion in the region's annual operating budget. In preparing this budget, the Regional Referee Administrator should work closely with the members of the regional referee staff. The Regional Directors of Referee Instruction and Assessment should identify their anticipated needs, particularly regarding proposed clinics and workshops. The coordinators of recruitment and scheduling may also have specific program plans that require funding. Each of these individual referee program components should be broken down into specific detailed costs and prioritized.

When considering what items to include in your regional referee budget, you may wish to keep the following comments in mind. While AYSO is a volunteer organization, one cannot realistically expect the volunteer officials, who are already giving substantial amounts of their time, to also absorb the total costs associated with the implementation of a successful regional referee

program. Imposing a significant financial burden on the volunteer official can severely limit your ability to recruit and retain all but the most dedicated, and affluent, volunteers. Therefore, it is critical that a region provide adequate financial assistance to its referee program. This assistance may come from a variety of sources, including player registration fees, referee sponsors, etc. Regardless of the source, money invested to train and equip the region's officials, following a well-conceived plan and budget, will result in a high rate of return. The bottom line is that the region's players will have a more positive experience and the games will be more enjoyable for all if the region's referees are properly trained and equipped to perform their duties. A properly prepared regional referee program budget is critical to achieving this end.

A standard regional referee program annual budget form is available on aysohelp.org. You may use this form as a guide in the formulation of your own regional referee program budget.

Once the regional referee program budget is prepared, the Regional Referee Administrator must work with the Regional Commissioner and regional board to see that the referee program budget is included as a component of the region's annual operating budget.

Developing a Regional Referee Calendar

Just as the thinking referee establishes game control by being proactive on the field, the thinking Regional Referee Administrator needs to be proactive in planning the region's referee program. The preparation of a regional referee calendar is essential for the successful administration of the regional referee program.

Preparation of the regional referee calendar needs to begin far in advance of the actual playing season. Indeed, initial planning should normally begin during the conclusion of the preceding season with an assessment and evaluation of that season's successes, problems, etc. The Regional Referee Administrator must work with the regional officiating staff to identify those aspects of referee administration, recruitment, instruction, assessment, certification, and scheduling requiring modification or increased emphasis for the next season. It should be determined which

of these activities must be addressed prior to the registration of players and volunteers, after registration but prior to the commencement of

the player season, and those that will occur during the season itself.

One technique many Regional Referee Administrators have found successful in preparing a regional referee calendar is to begin with a full twelve-month blank calendar, which coincides with the region's playing year (e.g. January—December, July—June, etc.). They then identify those key dates which have already been established, such as regional board meetings, player and volunteer registration, the beginning and ending of the playing season(s), regional play-offs or tournaments, etc. Special events outside the region, such as area meetings, section and national annual general meetings, area and section tournaments, referee clinics and camps, etc., should also be included.

The Regional Referee Administrator, together with the regional officiating staff, then works backward from each of these events to establish both what action is required at the regional level to prepare for that activity, when that action must take place and the specific person responsible and accountable.

Representing the Region's Officials

It is often said that there are three teams on the field during every soccer match: two teams of players and the team of officials. It is important that the AYSO volunteer officials at the regional level recognize that they are also a part of a larger team that extends to all other volunteer officials at the area, section, and national levels.

The Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) is the conduit between volunteer officials at the regional level and:

the Regional Commissioner and regional board,

the Area Referee Administrator (ARA),

the Section Referee Administrator (SRA), and

Date	Activity	Notes
Jan thru Dec	Attend board meetings	Help establish standards and support referee program
Jan	Prepare budget and policies Appoint referee staff	Order training materials and uniforms early. Plan and document policies for protests and player and coach discipline. Set objectives for recruiting, training, retention, and assessment and appoint staff for each discipline
Feb	Schedule training classes	Coordinate with area and section for information on instructor, assessor, and referee upgrade courses
Mar thru May	Schedule referees for spring games	Preseason referee meeting is advisable. Games can serve as opportunities for training, assessment, and recruiting
Mar	Train instructors	Make use of spring games as opportunities for training. Reserve facilities for referee camps and courses.
Apr	Recruit referees and assistant Referees	REGISTRATION DAY. Register all referees on volunteer registration forms. Recruiting is a year-round activity.
May thru Aug	Train and certify referees, ARs, and assessors/advisors	If there are summer games, use them for training, observation/assessment, and recruiting.
Aug	Coach Presentations	The <i>Laws of the Game</i> should be part of all coach training

the National Referee Administrator (NRA) and National Referee Council/Commission.

The RRA is the vital link in a two-way communication chain. The RRA must communicate national, section, and referee policy and news to the regional officials. Equally important, since AYSO is a "grass-roots up" organization, the concerns, needs, and problems of the regional referees and assistant

referees must be passed along so that area, section, and national can respond by providing direction and programs that are tailored to the experiences of the volunteers "in the trenches".

To accomplish this goal, the Regional Referee Administrator must be prepared to meet and communicate frequently with the regional officials during the season. The RRA must also be committed to active participation in area and section referee meetings, instructional clinics and camps, and other activities so that the information provided in these forums can then be passed along to the regional officials.

The Regional Referee Administrator also serves the important role of recognizing and reinforcing the efforts of the volunteer officials within the region. The RRA can demonstrate the fact that AYSO appreciates the efforts of our volunteer officials in a number of ways:

A simple verbal "Thank you! Without your dedication, our children wouldn't get to play" can go a long way in reinforcing both the importance of the volunteer and the AYSO philosophy. The introduction and acknowledgment of officials at the end-of-the-season picnics or banquets is another way of providing public recognition in front of players and parents. Volunteer officials who have put in extra effort in terms of the number of games covered, advancement to a higher certification level, or who have become referee instructors and/or referee advisors/assessors can and should be given extra acknowledgment.

Small tokens of appreciation, such as AYSO Certificates of Appreciation, referee pins, special coins for the pre-game coin toss, etc., are appropriate. Useful referee equipment like data wallets and cards, assistant referee's flags, warm-up jackets, etc., may also be considered. It must be emphasized that, consistent with the volunteer nature of AYSO, our volunteer officials may not be paid or otherwise financially compensated in any manner for their efforts.

Recruiting Referees

Recruiting volunteer officials is the most challenging responsibility of the Regional Referee Administrator. Frequent surveys of Regional Referee Administrators identify the

recruitment of officials as their number one problem.

To maintain a qualified and competent regional referee staff, it is necessary to pursue and recruit new officials continually. A general rule of thumb suggests that the recruitment effort should attempt to bring new officials into the fold at a level of 50% of the previous season's staff. Because of attrition, this will keep the referee roster at approximately a constant level. If you anticipate an expansion of your region, the effort has to be intensified to increase the referee corps. In general, there are never an adequate number of referees, especially well versed and well trained ones.

Due to the importance and ongoing nature of referee recruitment, it is strongly recommended that the Regional Referee Administrator designate a Regional Coordinator of Referee Recruitment. When looking for a candidate for this position, the RRA should be cognizant that this individual will be the "salesperson" for the regional referee program. The coordinator should, therefore, have some refereeing experience, and be able to answer basic questions about the game, the Laws, and most importantly, the AYSO philosophy of officiating. The coordinator must be personable, outgoing, and able to make prospective volunteers feel at ease. The coordinator should develop a staff of referee recruiters to assist with recruitment. The regional recruiting staff should represent a cross section of the region's referees. It should include men, women, and youth referees. The main objective is to convince potential volunteers that refereeing in AYSO is open to everyone, and that AYSO will provide the volunteer official with the training necessary to perform their job.

The greatest opportunity for referee and assistant referee recruitment usually occurs at regional player registration. This is true for a number of reasons. First, registration occurs well in advance of the season. Registration also provides an opportunity where a large number of individuals can be contacted easily in one place, and in person. This is also the perfect opportunity to meet the parents of new players, especially those in the younger age divisions. Careful planning can make the most of this opportunity.

One suggestion is to have a team of referees and assistant referees in uniform present at

registration. Women and youth referees should be part of this referee team at registration so that these two important sources of volunteers have a very visible presence. The referee team can help the registration process in an indirect way by answering questions regarding registration or the AYSO program and at the same time recruiting referee candidates. Care must be taken in choosing the referee team, selecting those who present a friendly image and who can explain the enjoyment of supporting the AYSO soccer program by actual involvement in the game itself.

Members of the referee recruiting team must remember that many of our volunteers have little or no familiarity with the game of soccer. Therefore, potential officials must understand that they should not hesitate to volunteer simply because they do not know the game. The recruiting team should briefly outline the training program to assure potential referees and assistant referees that they will be prepared to take the "pitch".

Referee Advisors can encourage U-8 Officials and club linesmen to become trained as certified referees. The advisor program is outlined in Part III of this manual.

Sources of referees often overlooked are the players themselves. Information on starting a Player Referee Organization (PRO) Program can be obtained from the NSTC. Valuable information on developing a youth referee program can be found in the manual, "Developing and Maintaining a Youth Referee Program".

Women represent a largely untapped source of referees. Women who are also trained referee instructors, assessors and administrators will serve as respected role models for other women who are recruited. The NSTC can provide additional information on developing and supporting a women referee program.

For a more in-depth discussion of some specific techniques, which have proven successful in recruiting and retaining referees, please see the AYSO National Referee Program Booklet "Recruiting and Retaining Referees" available from the AYSO Supply Center at (888) 243 2976.

Training and Certifying Referees

Proper training is the cornerstone of any effective regional referee program. Without adequate referee training everyone associated with the game is affected. Because of this the National Referee Program strongly recommends that each Regional Referee Administrator appoint a Regional Director of Referee Instruction.

The Regional Director of Referee Instruction will then be delegated the responsibility for the implementation of the AYSO Referee Training Program. This program is administered by the AYSO National Director of Referee Instruction.

The Referee Training Program is delivered by AYSO referee instructors utilizing NRP approved course curricula. The program offers six levels of referee training opportunities: U-8 Official, Assistant Referee, Basic Referee, Intermediate Referee, Advanced Referee, and National Referee. Special programs are available for youth referees. Three levels of instructor training are also available: Referee Instructor, Advanced Referee Instructor, and National Referee Instructor. Two levels of assessor training are available: Assessor and National Assessor.

As RRA you should ensure your Regional Director of Referee Instruction and all your referee instructors obtain a copy of the AYSO National Referee Program Manual, available from the AYSO Supply Center at (888) 243-2976.

One of the most important parts of the AYSO National Referee Program is the AYSO Referee Certification and Training Program. All referees (and coaches) in AYSO are required to be trained and certified. AYSO Referee Administrators and their staff, the Directors of Referee Instruction and Directors of Referee Assessment, administer the program for our volunteer referees according to the spirit and intent with which the program was designed. The philosophy of the AYSO Referee Certification and Training Program involves:

- protecting referees through AYSO Safe Haven Referee Certification

- helping referees to improve their officiating skills
- assisting referees to advance in level
- providing support and encouragement
- establishing realistic achievement standards
- providing challenges commensurate with ability and experience
- providing consistent and uniform program implementation

Each level of referee certification is intended to be representative of the officiating skills needed at a specific level of play within AYSO and are not necessarily linked to a specific age group. These officiating skills vary according to both the age and skill level of the players involved and range in complexity from our beginning under 6 year old players to the more advanced play common among our under 19 year old teams.

AYSO Safe Haven Referee Certification and training for the Assistant Referee, U-8 Official and Regional Referee levels is the responsibility of the Regional Referee Administrator and requires the completion of the required courses. It also requires the annual completion of a volunteer registration form and submittal of the form to the National Support and Training Center.

The Application for Referee Certification form must be completed by the candidate for upgrade to Intermediate Referee level and above. Final approval for Intermediate and Advanced upgrades rests with the Area Referee Administrator or the Area Director of Assessment, while final approval for National upgrades resides with the Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Assessment.

After all requirements have been met by the candidate and the form is completed and approved by the appropriate referee administrator it must be forwarded to the AYSO National Support and Training Center, 12501 S. Isis Avenue, Hawthorne, CA 90250.

Cross-certification opportunities with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) are available upon application.

Rationale for AYSO Referee Certification Levels

U-8 OFFICIAL: Trained in the fundamental skills needed to officiate short-sided games for players under 8 years of age.

ASSISTANT REFEREE: Trained in basic skills needed to be an AYSO Assistant Referee.

REGIONAL REFEREE: Trained in the basic skills needed to referee AYSO matches under AYSO (FIFA) Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

INTERMEDIATE REFEREE: Trained in the skills needed beyond the basic level to referee soccer matches that are more physically demanding and challenging under the AYSO (FIFA) Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

ADVANCED REFEREE: Trained in the advanced skills needed to referee most upper level AYSO soccer matches under the AYSO (FIFA) Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

NATIONAL REFEREE: Trained in the professional aspects of refereeing needed to referee more challenging upper level matches under the AYSO (FIFA) Laws and AYSO National Rules & Regulations.

Approving Upgrades

Advancement in level from Regional to Intermediate Referee is recommended by the Regional Referee Administrator or the Regional Director of Assessment following the observation of the official concerned by an AYSO Referee Assessor or Advisor.

The recommendation is made by signing the candidate's Application for Referee Certification form. The form must then be reviewed and approved by the Area Referee Administrator or Area Director of Assessment and forwarded to the National Support and Training Center.

Advancement from Intermediate Referee to Advanced Referee requires assessment by a certified AYSO Referee Assessor or National Assessor, and must be approved by the Area

Referee Administrator or Area Director of Assessment.

Advancement from Advanced Referee to National Referee requires assessment by a certified AYSO National Assessor and must be approved by the Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Assessment.

Obtaining Certificates and Badges

Assistant Referee, U-8 Official, and Regional Referee certificates and badges may be ordered directly from the AYSO Supply Center by calling (888) 243-2976. The course instructor will award them upon successful completion of the specific course. Intermediate and Advanced badges for upgrade are supplied to the Area Referee Administrator or Section Referee Administrator, and are awarded upon successful completion of training and certification requirements. National badges are mailed to the upgraded referee together with a Certificate from the National Referee Administrator upon receipt at the AYSO National Support and Training Center of a completed, signed, and approved Application for Referee Certification Form.

AYSO Referee Certification and Training Requirements

U-8 Official (minimum age 10)

- GAMES:** No minimum number of games required
- TRAINING:** Complete modules 1 through 7 (U-8 Official Course) (Includes Safe Haven Referee Certification – module 1)
- TESTING:** Take U-8 Official exam
- ASSESSMENT:** Not required
- FITNESS TEST:** Not required
- SERVICE:** None required

Assistant Referee (minimum age 12)

- GAMES:** No minimum number of games required
- TRAINING:** Complete modules 1 through 10 (Assistant Referee Course)
- TESTING:** Take Assistant Referee exam

- ASSESSMENT:** Not required
- FITNESS TEST:** Not required
- SERVICE:** None required

Regional Referee (minimum age 12)

- GAMES:** No minimum number of games required
- TRAINING:** Complete modules 1 through 13 (Basic Referee Course)
- TESTING:** 75% or better on the Regional Referee exam
- ASSESSMENT:** Not required
- FITNESS TEST:** Not required - an introduction to the AYSO Physical Fitness Test is recommended.
- SERVICE:** None required

Intermediate Referee (minimum age 14)

- GAMES:** 25 as referee with at least 5 in U-12 matches
- TRAINING:** Complete Modules 14 through 19 (Intermediate Referee Course)
- TESTING:** 90% or better on the Intermediate Referee exam
- ASSESSMENT:** See note 3 below.
- OBSERVATION:** One observation as a referee is required, and one as an assistant referee is recommended
- FITNESS TEST:** Not required - practice for AYSO Physical Fitness Test is recommended
- SERVICE:** None required

Advanced Referee (minimum age 16)

- GAMES:** 50 as referee (10 in U-14) and 5 as an assistant referee (in U-14)
- TRAINING:** Complete Modules 20 through 24 (Advanced Referee Course)
- TESTING:** 90% or better on the Advanced Referee exam
- ASSESSMENT:** One as referee and one as assistant referee in a U-14 match
- FITNESS TEST:** Complete the AYSO Physical Fitness Test for this level.
- SERVICE:** Do a minimum of five service units. See note 3 and 4 below.

National Referee (minimum age 18)

GAMES: 100 as referee with at least 30 in U-16 and U-19 matches of which at least 15 must be in U-19, if available, and 25 as Assistant Referee with at least 10 in U-19, if available. The SRA may authorize substitution of U-16 for U-19 if U-19 matches are not available. National Referee candidates must have one year (min.) experience as an AYSO Advanced Referee.

TRAINING: Complete the National Referee Course. A pre-requisite game count of at least 80 matches as referee prior to attending the National Referee Course is strongly recommended.

TESTING: 90% or better on the National Referee exam

ASSESSMENT: Two assessments as referee in U-16 or U-19 matches with at least one in U-19, if available, and one as assistant referee in a U-19 match, if available. The SRA may authorize substitution of U-16 for U-19 if U-19 matches are not available.

FITNESS TEST: Complete the AYSO Physical Fitness Test for this level.

SERVICE: Do an additional five service units. See notes 3 and 4 below.

Notes:

1. Field assessments for certification level upgrade must be done based on the officiating skills needed in a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO match, in the age group specified, in any soccer game using the Diagonal System of Control. Matches used for upgrade assessments are recommended to be of the duration specified for that particular age group in the AYSO National Rules and Regulations (NRR). Where NRR length matches are not readily available, the duration of matches used for upgrade assessments may be reduced to no less than 30 minute halves with the concurrence of the approving authority (ARA/ADA for Advanced, SRA/SDA for National).
2. If requested by the referee being assessed, a higher division match or a non-AYSO

match of the equivalent age division (or higher) may be used for the assessment.

3. Service units consist of:

Advisor observations for development or upgrade

Serving as a Referee Administrator, Director of Assessment, or Director of Instruction

Instructing Assistant Referee and U-8 Official training courses

Instructing Referee Assessor training courses

Assessing candidates for upgrade in referee level, if qualified

Any addition service to AYSO deemed appropriate by the Regional Referee Administrator

Note:

No more than two (2) service units may be credited by an applicant for advising an individual referee, or one (1) service unit per instruction course or one (1) service unit per year for an administrative function

4. The requirement for performing service units is waived in the case of candidates who are under 18 years old.
5. Entry may be at Assistant Referee, U-8 Official or Regional Referee level.
6. AYSO Application for Referee Certification forms are available on the aysohelp.org web site or may be ordered directly from the AYSO Supply Center by calling 888-243-2976.

Training Using Modules

AYSO training is modularized for the U-8 Official Course, Assistant Referee Course, Basic Referee Course, Intermediate Referee Course, and Advanced Referee Course. The AYSO National Referee Course is separate from the other courses and is not modularized. Modularized training provides flexibility to offer

training in shortened time periods or combined into half day, full day or complete courses.

The AYSO National Referee Program is designed to provide training to referees and prospective referees that will allow them to referee an AYSO soccer match under FIFA Laws of the Game and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations. It is the intent of this program to standardize the course requirements for consistency throughout AYSO. With the exception of training for the U-8 Official, referee designations and training is not directly associated with any specific age group. The U-8 Official Course prepares volunteers to officiate AYSO matches for players under 8 years of age but does not adequately prepare them for any other level of AYSO play.

It is the belief of AYSO that Regional Referees and above should have sufficient training to provide skills to referee many AYSO soccer matches. It is obvious that to effectively referee higher level games a referee must have experience, physical conditioning and mental preparation, as well as training. Training in AYSO is a continuing process. Referees are encouraged to continue their education by annually attending additional training and update sessions.

Every referee must have a sound foundation in the Laws of the Game as a prerequisite to being certified as a referee. The training program provides the foundation at the Regional Referee level. To confirm this knowledge at the Regional Referee level and higher, candidates are expected to successfully pass appropriate level referee examinations. These examinations are considered to be a separate requirement and are not a required part of the referee training courses.

At each referee certification level, there are requirements in addition to training and testing. It is the responsibility of the individual referee to ensure that they meet all other requirements. The training program has been organized into modules that must be completed to meet upgrade requirements. In addition, any and all of the modules may be used for continuing education that may not necessarily result in upgrade.

Except for those in the U-8 Course, modules may be presented in any sequence for certification. These modules may be taught as

part of a Basic, Intermediate or Advanced Course or they may be presented individually as part of continuing education. The Teaching Plans for each course identifies the modules required for various levels of certification. Referees who attend training for up-grade must maintain their individual training record and obtain appropriate signatures for modules attended and completion of other requirements.

Lesson plans for each of the courses have been prepared as guidelines for instructors. Each lesson plan indicates the referee instructor level necessary to be the lead instructor. AYSO encourages lead instructors to use their own initiative in developing how material may be presented. Each instructor however, is responsible to ensure the lesson goals and learning objectives of the lesson plans are met.

AYSO Referee Training Modules

Mod #	Module	U-8 Official	Asst Ref	Basic	Int	Adv
1	Safe Haven for Referees	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
2	The Game of Soccer	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
3	Understanding U-8 Players	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
4	Pre-game and Post-game Duties	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
5	Starting the Game	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
6	Stopping the Game	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
7	Restarting The Game	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
8	Fouls and Misconduct - Basic		XX	XX	XX	XX
9	Offside - Basic		XX	XX	XX	XX
10	Referee and Assistant Referee Mechanics		XX	XX	XX	XX
11	Understanding U-10 Players			XX	XX	XX
12	Stopping Play and Restarts - Basic			XX	XX	XX
13	Fundamental Coaching Concepts			XX	XX	XX
14	Understanding More Physically and Demanding Matches				XX	XX
15	Fouls and Misconduct - Intermediate				XX	XX
16	Offside – Intermediate				XX	XX
17	Interaction With Coaches and Spectators				XX	XX
18	The Referee Team and Diagonal System of Control				XX	XX
19	AYSO National Referee Program				XX	XX
20	Understanding the Advanced Game					XX
21	Offside - Advanced					XX
22	Fouls in the Advanced Game					XX
23	Misconduct: Players, Substitutes and Others					XX
24	Reading the Advanced Game					XX

Exclusive of breaks and written tests, the approximate teaching times for the complete stand alone courses are:

- Safe Haven Referee Course – 1 hour
- U-8 Official Course – 3 hours
- Assistant Referee Course – 5 hours (3 hours of U-8 Official plus 2 hours of Assistant Referee)
- Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Courses – 8 hours each
- National Referee Course – 15 hours

XX Indicates the modules included in the referee course indicated at the top of the column.

Referee Training Matrix					
Course	Description	Length	Prerequisites	Minimum Lead Instructor Reqmts.	Minimum Auth Req'd
Safe Haven Referee	This certification includes module 1 and certifies volunteers in child and volunteer protection issues for referees. This is the certification course for all AYSO Referees (not coaches).	1 hour	None	Referee Instructor	Regional Referee Administrator
U-8 Official	This training includes modules 1 through 7 and trains volunteers to officiate in U-8 matches.	4 hours	None	Referee Instructor	Regional Referee Administrator
Assistant Referee	This training includes modules 1 through 10 and trains volunteers in the basics of being an Assistant Referee for AYSO matches under FIFA Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.	5 hours	None	Referee Instructor	Regional Referee Administrator
Basic Referee	This training includes modules 1 through 13 and trains referees in the basic aspects of refereeing needed to do AYSO matches under FIFA Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.	8 hours	None	Referee Instructor	Regional Referee Administrator
Intermediate Referee	This training includes modules 14 through 19 and trains referees to do more physically demanding and challenging matches under FIFA Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.	8 hours	Completion of the Basic Referee Course is recommended	Referee Instructor	Area Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
Advanced Referee	This training includes modules 20 through 24 and trains referees to do most matches under FIFA Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.	8 hours	Completion of the Intermediate Referee Course is recommended	Advanced Referee Instructor	Area Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
National Referee	This training is not modularized. The course trains referees to referee all AYSO matches under FIFA Laws and AYSO National Rules and Regulations.	15 hours	Completion of the Advanced Referee Course is recommended	National Referee Instructor	National Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
Referee Assessor	This training is designed to train assessors to assess officiating skills at the Advanced level.	4.5 hours	Must be at least an Intermediate Referee plus completion of the Advanced Referee course and test is recommended	Advanced Referee Instructor and either an Assessor or National Assessor	Section Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Assessment
National Referee Assessor	This training is designed to train Assessors to assess refereeing skills at the National level.	5 hours	Referee Assessor	Advanced Referee Instructor and National Referee Assessor	National Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Assessment
Annual Referee Update	This training provides continuing education for referees. Program overview, Law changes, and points of emphasis will be reviewed.	1.25 hours	None	Referee Instructor	Regional Referee Administrator
Annual Update For Referee Administrators, Instructors, and Assessors	This training provides continuing education for referee Administrators, Instructors and Assessors. Program updates and program requirements are reviewed.	1.25 hours	None	Advanced Referee Instructor	Section Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
Referee Administrator Training	This training is designed to teach potential Referee Administrators the essential activities needed to manage a referee program.	2.5 hours	None	Referee Instructor	Area Referee Administrator or Director of Instruction
Introduction to Instruction	This training is designed to teach potential instructors their role as instructors and general aspects of presenting AYSO courses using AYSO directed teaching plans.	3 hours	None	Advanced Instructor in any discipline	Area staff in any discipline
Referee Instructor	This training is designed to teach Instructor candidates how to conduct introductory and intermediate referee training courses using AYSO directed teaching plans.	7.5 hours	Intermediate Referee & Completion of Introduction to Instruction	Advanced Referee Instructor	Area Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
Advanced Referee Instructor	This training is designed to teach Referee Instructors how to conduct advanced referee training courses using AYSO directed teaching plans.	6.5 hours	Referee Instructor and Advanced Referee	Advanced Referee Instructor	Section Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
National Referee Instructor	This training (not a course) is accomplished through mentoring while assisting with national referee training courses.	Variable	- Advanced Referee Instructor - Referee Instructor Evaluator - National Referee Instructor Exam - Assist as instructor at the National Referee Course - Be evaluated and recommended for approval by a National Referee Instructor - Approved by the National Director of Referee Instruction or National Referee Administrator	National Referee Administrator or National Director of Referee Instruction assigns mentor	National Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction
Referee Instructor Evaluator	This training is designed to teach Referee Instructors to evaluate other instructors and to provide positive constructive feedback.	5.5 hours	Referee Instructor	Advanced Referee Instructor and Referee Instructor Evaluator	Section Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction

Assessing Referees for Development and Upgrade

The assessment of referees helps to strengthen the individual referee, improve consistency in officiating within the region, and increase the level of referee professionalism.

Professionalism for the AYSO volunteer referee means having the knowledge and ability to perform one's job well. Because of this, the National Referee Program strongly recommends that each Regional Referee Administrator appoint a Regional Director of Referee Assessment.

The Regional Director of Referee Assessment will then be delegated responsibility for the implementation of the AYSO Referee Assessment Program. This program is administered by the National Director of Referee Assessment.

The Referee Assessment Program consists of two components. First, referee advisors who are trained and appointed to assist new and developing officials in all aspects of officiating. Second, assessment and observation of referees for up grade by qualified assessors. The program is initially delivered by AYSO referee instructors who have been designated to train new assessors using approved course curricula

Observations are less formal situations wherein the referee is provided feedback from a trained AYSO advisor or assessor for the purpose of strengthening one's skills. Assessments are a more formal situation wherein the referee is assessed for the purpose of advancement to a higher level within the AYSO National Referee Program.

As RRA you should ensure your Regional Director of Referee Assessment and all your referee assessors obtain a copy of the AYSO National Referee Program Manual, and The Referee Advisor Handbook available from the AYSO Supply Center (888 243 2976).

Scheduling Referees

A thorough review of the various ways referees can be scheduled can be found in the Referee

Administrator Reference Guide which is available from the AYSO Supply Center at (888) 243 2976. Scheduling is one of the most important aspects of the regional referee program. If done haphazardly, scheduling can be the Achilles heel that may undermine the morale of the referees and hinder the regional referee program. The task of scheduling referees for each of the region's games throughout the soccer season involves a vast effort of coordinating individuals' personal schedules, their children's schedules and game/field schedules. Confronted with this chore, the initial reaction is to believe that all the variables cannot be brought into control. Obviously, the Regional Referee Administrator should attempt to seek assistance in conducting the scheduling effort. It is strongly recommended that the RRA appoint a coordinator of scheduling to devote full attention to this important task.

In filling this position, the RRA should recognize that this is one of the regional referee staff positions that do not require a trained referee. The coordinator of scheduling simply needs to be someone who is organized, computer literate, a good communicator and skilled at coordinating the activities of others. The RRA should provide the coordinator of scheduling with a list of what referees are available, and guidelines as to what level games they are qualified to officiate.

The scheduling of youth referees should be given some special thought and planning. Some regions schedule teams of youth referees, while other regions want an experienced adult referee on each team. Certainly, the youth referees should be consulted on this. There is a lot to be said for putting three young friends together to work as a team, they enjoy it! Youth referees call a very good game, but they should not be put in a situation where they must deal with adult dissent. A responsible adult should be assigned to be at the field where youth referees are working games. The responsible adult can explain to anyone who needs reminding that negative comments about the referees are inappropriate and are not tolerated in AYSO. This is especially critical when youth referees are involved.

There is much to be gained by using all-women teams occasionally as well. A well-officiated game done by three experienced women referees can help dispel some commonly-held

stereotypes about the competence of women referees.

Schedulers should support the advisor/assessor program by scheduling games to provide appropriate time for the conduct of assessments and observations and debriefing of candidates.

Be sure to obtain a copy of the Referee Administrator Reference Guide for more details regarding scheduling referees and the various options available.

Ensuring General and Personal Safety

For additional safety information, please refer to the AYSO Guidance for Referees and Coaches.

The referee administrator has many concerns, but one of the foremost is safety. The entire referee staff needs to be involved both before and during the season to deal with all the factors that affect safety for both the players and the referees.

Factors that affect the safety of referees and players equally are:

- field conditions
- weather
- fitness
- pre-game warm-up

Factors that affect the safety of the players are

- players equipment
- goalposts and corner flags
- dangerous play
- treatment after an apparent injury

Referee administrators cannot demand referee fitness, but they can encourage it. Talk about

fitness at clinics, in casual conversations with referees, and wherever the opportunity presents itself. Point out that you have a selfish reason for wanting referees fit: fit referees are less likely to miss games due to injury.

At clinics, have a sport's trainer teach your referees the best way to stretch and warm up before a game to avoid injury. Get referees to help each other to remember to stretch before and after games. Stretching should be a ritual at all pre-game and post-game gatherings of referees. Make fitness and stretching a part of referee social interactions.

In the off-season the referee administrator and the referee staff can promote referee fitness. Remind the referees to work on fitness so they will be prepared for the season. "Get fit to referee – don't referee to get fit". Use clinic mailings, registration, and newsletters to promote fitness also.

Sponsor a fitness group. Invite referees to jog together 3 or 4 times a week. Get a fitness expert to attend one of these workouts to teach fitness techniques.

Teach safety and first-aid with a clinic on sports medicine. Coordinate this through the region's risk manager/safety director.

Work with the field director to ensure that the fields and sidelines are as smooth as possible. Also check the goalposts for structural damage. Holes and uneven ground on the fields and sidelines can cause the region to lose the services of its best referees. Work with the field director, sparing no effort to get the fields in the best condition possible. Referees should be encouraged to contact the field director when dangerous field conditions exist. The referee organization should also remember to thank and recognize a hard working field director (many consider the job of field director as one of the most difficult and thankless).

Work with the regional board to ensure that everyone knows that games will end, and not simply be postponed for a few minutes, when thunder is heard or lightning is seen. It does no good to stop a game for lightning if people are going to stand around by the field wondering if the game will continue later. If there is no doubt that the game is finished for the day, people will clear the fields and get into the safety of their cars more quickly.

AYSO Severe Weather Policy

The National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) currently recommends that all individuals should leave the game site and reach a safe structure or location when lightning is within 6 miles.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Lightning Safety Guidelines indicate that since lightning can strike out of a clear blue sky as far away as ten miles from a rain storm, when the "Flash-to-Bang" count is thirty seconds or less, everyone should leave the game site to a safe location.

The United States Soccer Federation (USSF) position is that if you can hear thunder you are within reach of lightning and that referees must protect the safety of all participants by stopping game activities quickly, so that participants and spectators may retire to a safer place before the lightning threat becomes significant. Applying the 30-30 rule is recommended and to wait thirty minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter.

In view of the above, the following is the position of the AYSO National Referee Commission regarding severe weather:

"It is said that lightning can strike from a clear blue sky that is within a ten mile radius of a storm. It is therefore strongly recommended that practices and games be terminated immediately upon hearing thunder or seeing lightning".

"If you can see it - flee it; if you can hear it - clear it."

Instruct referees not to wait until a thunderstorm is near to stop the game. The game needs to be stopped while the storm is miles away so that the field can be cleared of people before the lightning is overhead.

Inspecting Players' Equipment

The referee's opinion as to dangerous equipment is the final authority in the FIFA Laws of the Game. As Regional Referee Administrator, you must set minimum standards to help your referees who may not recognize possible dangerous situations. The specifics regarding what equipment is and is not permitted can be found in the AYSO publication "Guidance for Referee and Coaches" make sure all your referees are supplied with a current edition.

Dealing with Player Injuries

In AYSO, the coaches have a form signed by the parent giving authority to deal with the injured player. The referee does not have that authority. Parents and coaches also get very concerned when they think their young child is injured on the field. For these two reasons it is important for referees to stop the game and bring the coach on the field when a player appears injured. Both coaches and parents want the game stopped immediately. The referee should not hesitate to stop play to allow injured players to be attended to by the coach. To parents and other spectators, seconds seem like minutes when a child is on the ground.

The referee's calm voice can be reassuring to an injured young player. First he/she can encourage the child to avoid further injury by lying still. EMT's, paramedics, or doctors can always be found to address your referees at clinics or meetings to teach the signs of possible injury. This training has an extra advantage beyond the safety of the players the referees

can feel better prepared to deal with a possible emergency in the event it is necessary to do so.

Dealing with Bleeding

Law 5 of the Laws of the Game states that the referee “ensures that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the referee, who must be satisfied that the bleeding has stopped”. It is the decision of the AYSO NRP that a player, referee or assistant referee who is bleeding from a wound must leave the field and may only return when the bleeding has been stopped, the wound is covered and the blood on the skin and clothing is neutralized.

Allowing Additional Clothing:

Regions in colder climates must decide what additional clothing, worn for warmth, will be allowed. Ideally, the rule would allow only sweats, worn under the uniform, and a stocking hat. But in reality, not all families can be expected to have these items, and so other types of long pants, jackets, and hooded sweatshirts are often allowed. The region should have a policy on this that is printed for coaches, parents, and referees. If jackets have zippers or snaps, they must be closed and not flapping loose. Hoods that are not being worn over the head should be tucked in. Long pants should only be allowed when the weather is cold enough to warrant it.

Checking players’ equipment should be a ritual taught in detail at referee clinics. The more prescribed the ritual, the less likely it will be skipped. Some regions have both teams to line up for the coin flip and/or equipment check. One benefit is that the referee’s instructions are heard by everyone. But most important, the equipment check is thorough and not forgotten. In the upper divisions, with older players, the preference is for minimum pre-game instructions, usually involving only the team captains. Player equipment inspections are done individually rather than with both teams assembled together.

Managing Monitored (Free) Substitution:

The Board of Directors at its March 22-23, 1985, meeting authorized the creation of a one-year

national pilot program for U-16/U-19 play. The following year, the Board announced the indefinite continuation of the program. The board reaffirmed the appropriateness of this policy in July, 2003. It also reaffirmed that this policy only applies to U-16/U-19 play.

The purpose of the experimental program is to explore different ways to enable sections, areas and regions to attract and keep U-16/U-19 players in the AYSO program.

A. WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

All regions (chartered or pilot) or areas that have or wish to establish a U-16/U-19 or combination program and wish to deviate from the National Rules & Regulations with respect to substitution and other matters are subject to this policy.

B. GUIDELINES

The experimental program will continue to permit U-16/U-19 play to be conducted with greater flexibility by permitting the following:

- More informal play;
- More games and less practices;
- Co-ed play;
- Providing different programs in U-16 and/or U-19 based on the ability of the participants to commit their time (e.g., a 10-hour program for those with more time and a four-hour program for those with less time).
- Fixing game times on a regular basis to suit the working schedule and other commitments of the participants;
- More flexible player substitutions;
- Limitation of the play of any participant who is excessively violent and receives a red card during a game;
- Creation of a “traveling” team to participate in non-AYSO leagues but only where there are insufficient AYSO players to form a viable U-16 or U-19 league or a combined U-16/U-19 league within the region or area;
- Creation of a “select” team to play in USYSA, SAY or other tournaments;

- Creation of neighborhood or regional or area based teams to minimize the travel of the participants.

C. MONITORED SUBSTITUTION

Much of the concern about the need to continue the U-16/U-19 Experimental Program seems to have centered around the desire to have free substitution. Free substitution will be permitted in the U-16/U-19 Experimental Program, but only if it is handled in a manner which will ensure that every participant plays at least one half of every game by requiring a separate time monitor, independent of either team or coach, who checks each player in or out of the game.

D. OTHER AREAS OF FLEXIBILITY

Rural, suburban, ex-urban and city areas seem to require different types of programs because of the varying demands on the time of the participants.

Co-ed practices and/or teams or parallel social programs should be considered since they have been found to lead to greater participation.

Coordinate team structuring, playing schedule and practice time and season with the local high schools in the event the local school rule prohibits high school and AYSO play at the same time.

E. MONITORING

It is the responsibility of the regional commissioner or the area director, as the case may be, to monitor the experimental program during the season.

Conclusion

Experienced Regional Referee Administrators know the basic tasks:

- recruiting,
- training,
- certifying
- equipping,
- scheduling,
- assessing/advising,
- enforcing, etc.

Yet the proactive Regional Referee Administrator knows the job involves much more. In fact, the more subtle aspects of being an RRA are not part of the normal job description.

Although you are in charge of all regional referees, your responsibilities are not limited to them. As the RRA, you are the link between the referees and the other members of the AYSO regional team. Therefore, you must deal with all groups using support, mediation, and professionalism.

Some of the rules you already know: never criticize another referee; avoid needless debate with coaches and spectators about a referee's decisions, especially during a game; etc. But there are other rules that will create a supportive relationship between you and your referees, as well as between you and the rest of your region:

- Deal quickly and positively with poor officiating through discreet one-to-one contact and counseling.
- Provide support to referees and officials by actively implementing a Referee Advisor program.
- Address coach and spectator concerns sensitively for the welfare of your referees and the region.
- Help your referees keep a positive attitude toward all coaches and spectators, even the difficult ones.
- Maintain your referee's good humor through camaraderie, praise and rewards.

Even when you provide solid support for your referees, you can still experience conflicts between referees and the rest of the program. This is where your proactive mediation role becomes critical.

As the Regional Referee Administrator, you are uniquely positioned to be the official speaker for your referees. This also makes you the official receiver of complaints. If your reactions are brusque and defensive, you may be supporting your referees but alienating yourself from the rest of the program. If your response is an attempt to mediate the conflict, listening with genuine interest and responding with careful consideration, you can protect your referees and turn probable opponents into possible allies. You will also need to be diligent to mediate

referee antagonism toward coaches, spectators and players.

Through your support and mediation activities, you are demonstrating your professionalism. Professionalism is acting and being the best Regional Referee Administrator you can be. This means, in addition to a positive attitude and philosophy, having a good command of the Laws of the Game, exercising competent management (including the delegation of responsibility) and attention to detail. When you present yourself with professionalism and a cooperative attitude, you increase the odds of being respected and accepted, and this helps all your referees as well as the local program.

Support, mediation and professionalism!! As Regional Referee Administrator, your example in these areas will help your referees, other regional volunteers and most importantly, the players in your region. Remember...

“In AYSO, it's about more than the game”!

Part II – Instruction

The AYSO Referee Instructor Program

Referee Instructors play a crucial role in the development of referees and the overall success of AYSO. This is particularly true for instructors who teach basic entry level referee courses. This is where new volunteers first develop an understanding of the most important and fundamental aspects of refereeing AYSO soccer. Instructors must ensure that AYSO philosophy, policies, programs, plus child and volunteer protection issues are explained. AYSO instructors must instill in the minds of the referees they instruct the importance of understanding and applying the spirit of the Laws and the significant role they each play to ensure that, "In AYSO, it's about more than the game"!

Having qualified local instructors is important because they give the region the flexibility to train new volunteers at a time and place most convenient for the local referees. The AYSO Referee Instructor Program offers opportunities for volunteers to become trained and certified as instructors at three levels: Referee Instructor, Advanced Referee Instructor and National Referee Instructor. The AYSO Referee Instructor Program also provides standardized curriculum and teaching plans for all training courses which enables consistency across AYSO for referee training.

The AYSO Referee Instructor Program consists of three components:

INTRODUCTION TO INSTRUCTION COURSE which emphasizes common instructional skills and strategies applicable to all disciplines.

REFEREE DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC TRAINING COURSES – The Referee Instructor Course and Advanced Referee Instructor course cover the referee specific knowledge needed to instruct at each of these levels. National Referee Instructors are developed through a mentoring process.

STUDENT TEACHING COMPONENT – Students practice teaching in real course situations with evaluation and mentoring by certified Referee Instructor Evaluators.

AYSO Referee Instructor Certification Criteria

Referee Instructor

1. Complete the AYSO Introduction to Instruction course
2. Be an Intermediate Referee and should be an Advanced Referee
3. Complete Referee Instructor Course
4. Pass Referee Instructor Examination
5. Pass Referee Instructor evaluations
 - As an instructor in a 30 minute presentation from the Basic Referee Course with a qualified Referee Instructor Evaluator, and
 - As an instructor in a 30 minute presentation from the Intermediate Referee Course preferably with a different qualified Referee Instructor Evaluator.

Minimum Authorizing Signature Required: Area Referee Administrator or Area Director of Referee Instruction.

Advanced Referee Instructor

1. Be a Referee Instructor
2. Be an Advanced Referee and should be a National Referee
3. Complete Advanced Referee Instructor Course

4. Pass Advanced Referee Instructor Examination
5. Pass Advanced Referee Instructor evaluation in a one hour presentation from the Advanced Referee Course with a qualified Referee Instructor Evaluator.

Minimum Authorizing Signature Required:
Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Referee Instruction.

National Referee Instructor

1. Be an Advanced Referee Instructor
2. Be a Referee Instructor Evaluator
3. Should be National Referee
4. Should have taught substantially all of the lessons in the National Referee Course
5. Be evaluated and recommended for approval by National Referee Instructor(s)
6. Approved by the National Director of Referee Instruction or National Referee Administrator

Minimum Authorizing Signature Required:
National Referee Administrator or National Director of Referee Instruction.

Referee Instructor Evaluator Certification Criteria

Referee Instructor Evaluator

1. Be a Referee Instructor
2. Should be an Advanced Referee Instructor
3. Complete Referee Instructor Evaluator Course
4. Pass two required practice evaluations

Minimum Authorizing Signature Required:
Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Referee Instruction.

Planning a Referee Training Course

Introduction

Ready to give a clinic? Whether this is your first or your thirty-first referee clinic, the steps you must go through are the same. You must plan: plan for every little detail, every contingency. The major difference between the experienced instructor and the new instructor is that this year the new instructor will make the mistakes the experienced instructor made last year. Hopefully, information in this document will help you to prevent making the mistakes made in the past. Perhaps the best advice you can get is, "If you fail to plan, then plan to fail."

Okay, you are an instructor. You want to put on a class, but where do you start? Start with a need. Do you need more referees? What region doesn't? When will the referees be needed? With just this information, several decisions can be made: whether or not outdoor classes may be held; the number of days which will be required. Some recruiting methods are time-dependent, and training aids could be affected by the time available. The amount of time available to work with co-instructors could be hampered.

As you can easily see, the need for planning becomes very evident. If you wait until the last minute to plan a clinic, you reduce the number of options and invite the possibility, and perhaps even the likelihood, of failure.

One effective method of planning is to determine when you want the class to finish, and work backwards from there. The steps used might be similar to the following list.

1. Contact the appropriate Director of Referee Instruction
2. Determine total time available from the present to the training date
3. Determine the amount of planning time required prior to the first class. Include

time for notification of students, instructors, obtaining suitable class space, preparing lesson plans and developing training aids

4. Determine the number of hours per class and the number of classes per week, and select which days the classes will be taught
5. Determine the location and get commitments for use of the facility
6. Contact potential instructors; determine availability; assign classes
7. Initiate the recruiting program. Let potential students know when and where the clinic will be. If possible, get commitments for attendance
8. Review lesson plans, develop training aids, practice lessons, review classes with co-instructors

Choosing a Location

Facilities for referee instruction should include the following:

- Blackboard or marker board
- Overhead projector and screen (recommended).
- Electrical outlet (always bring your own extension cord)
- Tables or desks for students
- Enough space in the room for demonstrations
- Soccer field (gym if necessary if no field is available).

Possible locations:

School classroom -junior high, high school, college (elementary schools should be avoided due to small size of desks)

- Church hall
- Youth or senior citizen center
- Library conference room
- Town hall meeting room

Class Scheduling

Classes may be scheduled in a variety of ways to accommodate the varying conditions and needs of local programs. Stand alone lesson plans are available for teaching the complete courses (U-8 Official, Assistant Referee, Basic Referee, Intermediate Referee, Advanced Referee or National Referee Course). Additionally, all of the courses, except the National Referee Course, may be offered in smaller increments of time over an extended period.

The type of class schedule used depends upon a variety of factors such as availability of facilities, instructors, and students. The most important consideration to remember is to teach the information that is needed for the experience level of the students. For example, when teaching entry level officials who will only be assigned to lower division or short sided matches (U-6 to U-8), it is neither advisable nor productive to teach aspects of the game which are rarely present at this level of play. Likewise, when teaching advanced officials, it would not be worthwhile to schedule lengthy sessions on such aspects as ball in and out of play, basic referee and assistant referee signals, or correct restart procedures. For course length and content requirements of the various AYSO referee training courses, please refer to the Referee Training Courses section in this manual.

Use of Co-Instructors

It is a good idea to make use of additional AYSO certified instructors in your region or area. Classes are always made more interesting when taught by a variety of instructors. Whenever possible, try to assign at least one woman

referee instructor. Their presence may make the training process more comfortable for female candidates. At the same time, having women instructors demonstrates the knowledge and competence of women referees, a positive message for both women and men referee candidates. If you have not worked with a particular instructor before, it is a good idea to go over the particular class he or she will be assigned to teach. You may want to practice together, especially if you are using a newly qualified instructor. If you will be using an instructor whose teaching is unfamiliar to you, ensure approved teaching or lesson plans are being used. Be sure to ask your guest instructor what teaching aids he/she will be using so you will know if a slide, overhead, movie, or multimedia projector will be needed.

Teaching Aids

Teaching aids are not mandatory, but they can be very helpful. Remember that 70-80 percent of all learning is accomplished through the eyes. As Ken Aston said, "I see and I understand." As you begin to prepare classes, think about what teaching aids, particularly visual aids, you might be able to use to assist in the transfer of knowledge to the students.

The National Referee Program has produced a number of very good teaching aids which are available on www.aysohelp.org. Your Regional, Area or Section Referee Administrator or Director of Referee Instruction may have some available for your use, or examples you can look at to determine if they are appropriate for your class. These aids are constantly being produced and improved. Contact your referee staffs or other instructors for assistance in finding the most recent list of available teaching aids.

If no teaching aids are available, or if the available aids do not suit your purpose, do not despair. Use your imagination; develop your own. As you develop teaching aids, consider the following:

- **OBJECTIVE:** the teaching aid should be designed to assist you. It should focus the students' attention on the information you want them to retain. A beautiful, well-designed aid that illustrates something other than what you are teaching will distract the students.

- **AUDIENCE:** the teaching aid should be tailored to the audience and should not be too complex.
- **TYPE OF PRESENTATION:** how durable should the teaching aid be? Is this a one-time class, or is this a class for which you will use this aid over and over? How important is this presentation? Can you afford to spend hours preparing an aid that will be used for 30 seconds in one presentation?
- **TIME FOR PREPARATION:** how much time do you have to develop the aid?
- **SIMPLICITY:** keep the teaching aid simple. A picture is worth a thousand words. A picture of a thousand words isn't worth much.

When using teaching aids, remember the following tips.

- Practice with the teaching aid. An instructor who fumbles with an aid or who is perceived as not familiar with its content loses credibility with his students.
- Don't have the aid in front of the class before you need it. When you are finished with it put it away, otherwise it becomes a distraction for the students.

Roster Return Policy

The AYSO National Board of Directors approved the following policy regarding course rosters:

In order to ensure attendees receive credit for completed training, it is vital that training rosters are returned to the National Support and Training Center (NSTC) for entry into the AYSO database in a timely manner. Therefore, the disposition of any training course authorized by the NSTC must be resolved within 60 days following the scheduled date of the course and notification of the course status provided to the roster administrator at the NSTC. Any lead Instructor who has failed to account for a roster within the 60 day period following the scheduled training date will not be authorized to conduct additional training until the past due roster is returned or its status satisfactorily resolved.

As AYSO Instructors you are a window through which our volunteer referees can envision the AYSO experience as it is intended to be for all who participate or watch AYSO games. Keep that vision clear and unobstructed and remember to instill the belief that...

"In AYSO, it's about more than the game!"

Administering Written Examinations

Many AYSO referee training courses have associated written exams. The purpose of these exams is to confirm that knowledge has been acquired, not to “pass” or “fail” anyone. Nevertheless, many people get unduly anxious about written exams. Instructors can reduce the anxiety and increase the value of the exams as follows:

- Set aside sufficient time for administration of the exam, which in some cases could be on a separate day from the rest of the course.
- Allow time for review and a question-and-answer session before the exam.
- Establish an appropriate atmosphere in the classroom for administering the exam. Ensure that the room is free of distractions and/or interruptions.
- Be available during testing so you can answer questions.
- As students complete the exam, ask them to leave the room so as not to disturb those who have not yet finished.
- Grade the exams as soon as possible. When grading, understand the intent of the student’s answer and give credit if you are convinced that the student knew the answer, even if it isn’t perfectly expressed. Don’t be petty – remember that the purpose of the exam is confirmation of learning.
- Review the exam question by question with the students and ensure that everyone understands the correct answer to each question. (Answer keys provided for most exams include explanations with the answers.) In some cases, it may be appropriate or necessary to go over individual exams one-on-one.

Those who did not get a passing grade should be given some extra tutoring and should be encouraged to take the exam again. Have a plan for administering the exam a second time. Most exams have two different versions available – use a different version the second time. (The AYSO National Referee Program’s retesting policy is at the end of this section.)

Well before the course, the instructor should obtain the current version(s) of the appropriate exam. The following are available on the aysohelp.org website:

Referee Assessor Exam	Referee Instructor Exam (2 versions)
National Assessor Exam	Advanced Referee Instructor Exam
U-8 Official Exam (2 versions)	
Basic Referee Exam (2 versions)	Sample Intermediate Ref Exam
Intermediate Referee Exam (2 versions)	Sample Advanced Ref Exam
Advanced Referee Exam (2 versions)	National Pretest (sample exam)
National Referee Exam (2 versions)	

Note that the above exams are password-protected, except for the sample exams. (Answer keys for sample exams are password-protected.) Instructors may obtain the passwords from their Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Referee Instruction.

Periodically, new versions of the exams with grading keys are produced. Instructors should ensure they have the latest versions and destroy old versions.

With the exception of the National Referee and National Assessor exams, all exams can be administered by any Referee Administrator, Director of Assessment, Director of Instruction, or referee instructor. The National Referee and National Assessor exams must be administered by the Section Referee Administrator, Section Director of Assessment, Section Director of Instruction, or a person designated by any one of them.

Instructors who wish to provide suggestions for improving AYSO's written exams should complete the feedback form, available on the aysohelp.org website on the same page as the exams.

Retesting Policy

If a candidate does not achieve the required score on a written referee exam (including Law, Assessor, and Instructor exams), the candidate may retake the exam at any time provided that the version of the exam used for the retake (a)

differs from all versions administered to the candidate in the preceding four weeks, and (b) is current (that is, no newer version of the exam has been issued by the National Referee Program).

Since at any time there are two current versions of most exams (see list, above), a retake can occur (using a different version) as soon as the candidate wishes. If a candidate does not pass the second time, (s)he will generally have to wait four weeks before trying again.

Part III - Assessment/Advisor

Introduction

Effective referees are indispensable if the American Youth Soccer Organization is to grow and prosper. Effective referee assessors and advisors are also indispensable if our core of effective referees is to continue to grow. The effectiveness of our referee assessors has a tremendous effect on our referees and ultimately the overall success of AYSO.

Assessment and Advisory Activities

The first level of support for AYSO officials and referees is the Referee Advisor program. Under this program, Regional Referee Administrators and Regional Referee Directors of Assessment identify and assign qualified referees to act as a helping hand to new and developing officials and referees. This helping hand consists of frequent contact to support and encourage the development of the referees or officials. The Advisor Program is important to referee development, retention and recruiting.

At the second level is the assessment program. This program trains two levels of assessor (Assessor and National Assessor) to provide required observations and assessments for upgrade of referees. These assessors should be encouraged to also act as referee advisors to other officials.

Observation and Assessment

Part of referee upgrade involves observation or assessment of the “on-field” performance of the official. This observation/assessment serves at least three purposes. First, it ensures officiating competency at the level required to officiate a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO match in a specified age group. Second, it provides a mechanism for officials to obtain positive and constructive feedback and to measure the progress of their officiating skills and third, it provides a means of recognition for that progress.

Observation of an official for upgrade should be performed by a trained assessor who has completed the AYSO assessor training. Observations are an opportunity to observe the referee under game conditions with positive feedback provided to the up-grade candidate. These observations are intended to be part of an informal and relaxed activity designed to assist in the development and improvement of a fellow official’s skills. Unless the game is abandoned, upon completion of the game and after receiving a debriefing, the candidate for upgrade has fulfilled the observation requirements for Intermediate Referee. Under circumstances where qualified assessors are not available, observations for upgrade may be done by individuals who are trained and designated as Referee Advisors. Observations are also used as a development tool and may be conducted at any time and may not necessarily involve advancement in referee level.

The AYSO Referee Assessor/Advisor Training Program

The AYSO Referee Assessor/Advisor Training program is a voluntary program in which referees and other qualified individuals are encouraged to participate. The program is administered by AYSO Directors of Assessment and is designed to allow current and inactive referees and others who have appropriate soccer experience to assist in improving the standard of refereeing within the AYSO program by observing, advising, and assessing our volunteer referees.

Referee Advisors receive their training as part of the Intermediate Referee training course (Module 19) and are approved by the Regional Referee Administrator or the Regional Director of Assessment to participate in the advisor program and, if necessary, observe Regional Referees who are candidates for upgrade to the Intermediate level. They may also perform other observations or service unit functions within their region or area.

Referee Assessors receive their training at the Referee Assessor course and are approved by the Area Referee Administrator or the Area Director of Assessment to assess candidates for upgrade to the Advanced Referee level. They may also, and are encouraged to, perform as Advisors for new and developing officials, other observations and service unit functions within their own region.

National Assessors receive their training at the National Referee Assessor course and are approved by the Section Referee Administrator or the Section Director of Assessment to assess candidates for upgrade to the National Referee level. They may also, and are encouraged to, perform observations and assessments at all other levels as well as act as Referee Advisors.

AYSO Referee Assessor/ Advisor Requirements

Referee Advisor

TRAINING: Successfully complete the Intermediate Referee Course Module 19. Recommended, but not required, that the advisor be an Intermediate Referee

TESTING: Pass Regional Referee Exam

APPOINTMENT: Appointed as a Referee Advisor by the Regional Referee Administrator or the Regional Director of Assessment.

AUTHORIZED TO: Advise U-8 Officials, Assistant Referees and Regional Referees. When assessors are not available, observe Regional Referees for upgrade to Intermediate Referee.

Referee Assessor

EXPERIENCE: At least three (3) years of soccer experience as a referee, and must have observed or advised referees either for improvement or upgrade and have the approval of their Regional Referee Administrator.

TRAINING: Successfully complete the Referee Assessor Course, and pass the Assessor exam.

ASSESSMENT: Successful completion of two (2) practice assessments on referees officiating U-14 AYSO matches (or equivalent). These "over-the-shoulder" assessments must be mentored by a Referee Assessor or National Assessor.

APPROVAL: Approved as a Referee Assessor by the Area Referee Administrator or the Area Director of Referee Assessment.

AUTHORIZED TO: Advise U-8 Officials, Assistant Referees and Regional Referees. Observe Regional Referees for upgrade to Intermediate Referee and assess Intermediate Referees for upgrade to Advanced Referee.

National Assessor

EXPERIENCE: Certified as a Referee Assessor with a minimum of one (1) year in grade and performed at least ten (10) assessments/observations, with a minimum of five (5) assessments on Intermediate Referees seeking upgrade to the Advanced Referee level. The candidate must have the approval of the Section Referee Administrator or the Section Director of Assessment.

TRAINING: Successfully complete the National Assessor Course, and pass the National Assessor exam

ASSESSMENT: Successful completion on one practice assessment on a referee officiating a U-16 AYSO match (or equivalent) and one practice assessment on a referee officiating a U-19 AYSO match (or equivalent). These "over-the-shoulder" assessments must be mentored by a National Assessor.

APPROVAL: Approved as a National Assessor by the Section Referee Administrator or the Section Director of Referee Assessment.

AUTHORIZED TO: Advise U-8 Officials, Assistant Referees and Regional Referees. Observe Regional Referees for upgrade to Intermediate Referee, and assess Intermediate Referees for upgrade to Advanced Referee and Advanced Referees for upgrade to National Referee.

Mentoring of Assessor Candidates

The objective of the AYSO national assessment program is for the Advanced and National Referee candidates to look for help from the assessor to become a better referee. The assessor should provide positive, constructive guidance in areas the assessor believes will help make the referee more confident in his/her performance and enhance the enjoyment of the game for everyone. This principle also applies to the Referee Assessor and National Assessor candidates being mentored to their new grades.

After the classroom activities, the assessor candidate cannot be certified as a Referee Assessor or National Assessor until he/she has been mentored by an experienced, certified Referee Assessor or National Assessor and can demonstrate the attributes of a knowledgeable, positive, caring assessor. Assessor mentors need to be careful when mentoring new assessor candidates to ensure that the referee candidates they are actually observing are not forgotten in the effort to help the assessor candidate in the post-game interviews. To help the referee candidates and the assessor candidates through the sensitivity of the post-games debrief with an assessor candidate, here are some Dos & Don'ts that should be followed by the assessor mentor.

Dos:

- DO remember that you are responsible for setting a positive tone for both the referee and assessor candidate.
- DO spend time with the assessor candidate before meeting with the referee candidate to establish the observation procedure and method you intend to use to conduct the evaluation.
- DO get to know the assessor candidate's methods and the techniques he/she intends to use or is comfortable practicing.
- DO determine whether you need to stand with the assessor candidate during the match or let him/her observe the game alone. (this generally applies to Referee Assessor candidates).
- DO tell the referee candidate that you are mentoring a new assessor

candidate so they will understand why there appears to be two assessors.

- DO record your findings as you would at any assessment.
- DO compare your notes and observations with the assessor candidate at half-time and clarify questionable observations.
- DO be sure the assessor candidate identifies several positive actions, decisions, or techniques the referee candidate has taken.
- DO be sure the assessor candidate identifies no more than three items to recommend for improvement.
- DO ask the assessor candidate how he/she would approach the selected topics with the referee candidate and make appropriate corrections, if necessary.
- DO make sure the assessor candidate greets the referee candidate after the match with a “thank you”.
- DO give the referee candidate and the assessor candidate time to cool down, collect their thoughts and complete the paperwork.
- DO select an area for discussion away from players, and spectators.
- Before the interview, DO spend a little extra time privately with the assessor candidate to review the points to be covered and the technique to be used. See if the assessor candidate has been able to identify the personality of the referee candidate and the techniques that will lead to an atmosphere of meaningful exchange between the assessor candidate and the referee candidate.
- DO let the assessor candidate conduct the interview.
- DO help maintain a positive atmosphere and an open, honest discussion of the game observations.

- DO listen carefully to the assessor candidate for any negative approach that might destroy the rapport established.
- After the interview when the referee candidate has left, DO sit with the assessor candidate alone and go over your observations of the assessment. Discuss the various techniques that can be used to understand the referee candidate better and to conduct the interview.
- DO determine if the assessor candidate should have another mentoring observation.
- DO make your recommendations to the appropriate Referee Administrator or Director of Assessment.

Don'ts:

- DON'T gang up on the referee with a two-pronged approach.
- DON'T allow negative comments from the assessor candidate to continue where the referee candidate is obviously becoming discouraged and has stopped listening.
- DON'T dominate the post-game interview with your own observations and assessment knowledge.
- DON'T fail to follow-up with the assessor candidate to answer any questions about the process or any other aspect of the program.

Procedures for Scheduling an Observation or Assessment

In circumstances where the “Preferred Processes” outlined below are not followed, assessments done by certified AYSO assessor are to be accepted.

Intermediate Referee Observation:
Requirement: One observation as referee in a U-12. The game should be of regular AYSO length.

Preferred Process:

1. Candidate should contact the RDA or RRA of their home Region requesting an observation. It is recommended that the RDA and RRA be pro-active in scheduling observations as soon as possible for all Intermediate Referee candidates.
2. The RDA or RRA will schedule an Assessor or Advisor to conduct the observation.
3. The RRA or Regional Assignor will schedule a game for the observation. Where possible the following conditions should be observed:
4. The game will be conducted in the home Region of the referee to be observed.
5. Referee to be observed will not be assigned a game immediately before or after the game to be assessed.
6. Qualified Assistant Referees will be assigned to the game.
7. Game time, location, and names and contact information of Assistant Referees should be provided to the referee to be observed in advance of the game.
8. The referee to be observed is responsible for bringing to the observation the appropriate certification forms necessary to record the results of the observation.
9. The observation and the observation debriefing will be conducted in accordance with current guidelines. Observations are a learning experience where the referee observed is given guidance to improve their skills as a referee. Once the referee has been observed and debriefed, the referee has met this observation requirement for upgrade to Intermediate Referee.

Advanced Referee Assessment:

Requirements: One assessment as referee and one as an assistant referee in a U-14 or above game. The game should be of regular AYSO length or a game with each half not less than 30 minutes in duration. Non-AYSO matches are acceptable as long as the game is refereed

using the diagonal system of control and meets minimum duration.

Preferred Process:

1. Candidate should contact the RDA or RRA of their home Region requesting an assessment.
2. The RDA or RRA will schedule an Assessor through the ADA or ARA. Assessments are a right of any referee. Regional and Area staffs will not refuse scheduling an assessment regardless of their opinion of the likelihood of a referee to be successful in the assessment.
3. The RRA or Regional Assignor will schedule a game for the assessment. When the assessment is in an inter-Regional, inter-Area, tournament or other game the appropriate approval authority referee staff will coordinate the game assignment. Where possible the following conditions should be observed:
 - Referee to be assessed will not be assigned a game immediately before or after the game to be assessed.
 - Qualified Assistant Referees will be assigned to the game.
 - Assistant Referees will not be assigned a game immediately before or after the game to be assessed. The referee assessed should have the option of having the Assistant Referees available for part or all of the assessment debriefing.
 - Game time, location, and names and contact information of Assistant Referees should be provided to the referee to be assessed well in advance of the game.
4. The referee to be assessed is responsible for bringing to the assessment the appropriate certification forms necessary to record the results of the assessment.
5. The assessment and the assessment debriefing will be conducted in

accordance with current assessment guidelines.

National Referee Assessments:

Requirements: Two assessments as referee and one as an assistant referee in U-19 games. When U-19 games are not available, U-16 games may be used for assessment with the approval of the SDA or SRA. The game should be of regular AYSO length or a game with each half not less than 30 minutes in duration. Non-AYSO games are acceptable as long as the game is refereed using the diagonal system of control and meets minimum duration.

Preferred Process:

1. Candidate should contact the RDA or RRA of their home Region requesting an assessment.
2. The RDA or RRA will schedule an Assessor through the SDA or SRA. The ADA or ARA should be informed of the assessment request. Assessments are a right of any referee. Regional, Area and Section staffs will not refuse scheduling an assessment regardless of their opinion of the likelihood of a referee to be successful in the assessment.
3. It is recommended that, where possible, games outside the home Region of the referee to be assessed be used for assessment for up-grade to National Referee.
4. The RRA or Regional Assignor will schedule a game for the assessment. When the assessment is in an inter-Regional, inter-Area, tournament or other game the appropriate approval authority referee staff will coordinate the game assignment. Where possible the following conditions should be observed:

- Referee to be assessed will not be assigned a game immediately before or after the game to be assessed.
 - Qualified Assistant Referees will be assigned to the game.
 - Assistant Referees will not be assigned a game immediately before or after the game to be assessed. The referee assessed should have the option of having the Assistant Referees available for part or all of the assessment debriefing.
 - Game time, location, and names and contact information of Assistant Referees should be provided to the referee to be assessed well in advance of the game.
5. The referee to be assessed is responsible for bringing to the assessment the appropriate certification forms necessary to record the results of the assessment.
 6. The assessment and the assessment debriefing will be conducted in accordance with current assessment guidelines.

AYSO Referee Physical Fitness Test

The referee physical fitness test is designed to test the referee's ability to stay up with play and

to react to match situations encountered at these levels. All referees should warm up

before taking the test by performing stretching exercises to prevent muscle pulls.

Remind the candidates that it is not a race to see who is the fastest but rather simply a test of their ability to meet minimum physical standards. (avoid unnecessary exertion)

Administering Referee Physical Tests

Physical tests for certification as Advanced Referee are authorized by the Area Referee Administrator or Area Director of Referee Assessment. Physical tests for certification as National Referee are authorized by the Section Referee Administrator or Section Director of Referee Assessment. Others may be designated to administer the test. Fitness tests administered by USSF may be used to comply with AYSO fitness test requirements.

Physical Testing Conditions:
Part of the upgrade requirements to Advanced and National referee include testing the candidate's physical condition. The following considerations are important for those who may be involved in administering physical tests:

- Suitable running surface (well marked, smooth, level, track or mowed grass)
- Weather conditions (temperature extremes, rain, natural or artificial lighting)
- Ample time (warm-up, rest between events and cool-down)
- Sufficient timers to avoid long waits to be tested (staff at start and finish lines)
- First aid precautions (availability to medical professionals)
- Proper Equipment (forms, stopwatches, cones, clipboards, first aid supplies)

Certification	Test	Requirements	
Advanced Referee	Endurance Run	Must run for 12 minutes and cover at least one mile	
	Speed Run (50 meters)	Maximum 10.5 seconds	
	Speed Run (200 meters)	Maximum 42 seconds	
National Referee	Endurance Run	Must run for 12 minutes and cover:	
		Age	Minimum Distance
		Under 38	(2200 meters) 5.5 laps
		38-45	(2000 meters) 5.0 laps
		46 & over	(1800 meters) 4.5 laps
	Speed Run (50 meters)	Age	Maximum Time
		Under 46	9.0 seconds
		46 & over	9.5 seconds
	Speed Run (200 meters)	Maximum 40 seconds	

Special Instructions for the Physical Fitness Examination

NOTE: All parts of the physical fitness examination should be conducted on the same day, with 15 minutes between events.

ENDURANCE RUN: This event consists of a run/jog for the entire 12 minutes, regardless of the distance covered on a standard 400-meter track (440 yards) at any high school or college. In running 12 minutes, Advanced Referee candidates must cover at least one mile (1600 meters). National Referee candidates must cover the minimum distance listed for their age group.

SPEED RUN (50 METERS OR 55 YARD DASH): This run is a straight 50 meters (or 55 yard) dash and must be completed in no more than the time allowed.

SPEED RUN (200 METER OR 220 YARD DASH): This run is a straight 200 meters (or 220-yard) dash and must be completed in no more than the time allowed.

Referee Advisor Program

The Advisor:

As a Referee Advisor you act as A HELPING HAND FOR NEW AND DEVELOPING OFFICIALS. You play many important roles in the development of referees. These roles include:

- As **FRIEND**, the advisor must be persuasive in his or her comments to the officials. The official must trust the motives as well as the judgment of the advisor and believe that the advisor gives freely of time and effort.
- As **OBSERVER**, the advisor must provide sound, simple advice and assistance that leads the trainee on the shortest path to success. The official must believe in the sincerity and credibility of the assistance given.
- As **SUPPORTER**, the advisor offers encouragement in unlimited supply. In this view, the official can do no wrong, but can always be encouraged to do better. This is unconditional support for the person, not for everything the person does.
- As **ADVOCATE**, the advisor is obligated to take the part of the official in all encounters. No criticism or dissent can go unchecked; no party can challenge without the proactive, positive involvement of the advisor.
- As **CHOREOGRAPHER**, the advisor helps the new and developing official to stage the officiating process. From the opening (arrival and inspection of the field) to closing (post-game ceremony and bookkeeping), the advisor helps the official to move with purpose and direction from one part of the process to the next. The advisor also encourages

and assists the official in moving through upgrades in certification to the highest level desired by the official.

- As **MENTOR**, the advisor provides accurate, factual information that gives the official additional insight and understanding.
- As **COACH**, the advisor offers tactical instructions that help the official to operate at the top of their game, and provides the official with practical suggestions to improve performance.
- As **ROLE MODEL**, the advisor gives the developing official a real person to emulate. The advisor's attitudes, values, and behaviors set the example that the official is likely to follow on the field.

The Advisor Program can be a great tool for any AYSO Region's retention and up-grade efforts. If successful, the program also aids the recruiting effort and potential volunteers realize the safety net that surrounds each new official.

The program is simple, effective and free. And, best of all, it works.

Advisor Qualifications:

As an advisor you must have the following minimum technical qualifications:

- Regional Referee certification-Intermediate Referee Certification is recommended.
- Completed Referee Training Module 19
- You should:

- Be committed to AYSO and the AYSO philosophies
- Willing to devote time and energy to the advisor program
- Have clear and concise verbal communication skills
- Learn to properly observe official's performance
- Be positive attitude toward presenting information
- Develop an aptitude for listening and responding to official's questions and concerns
- Encourage officials and understanding an official's shortcomings
- Serve as a role model to other volunteers
- Know the laws on the game and referee mechanics

Advisors are appointed by the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) or Regional Director of Assessment (RDA)

Administration:

Regional, Area and Section Referee Administrators:

The Regional Commissioner should ensure that qualified personnel fill the positions of Regional Referee Administrator (RRA) and Regional Director of Assessment (RDA) and that the Advisor Program has a high priority in the Region.

REGIONAL REFEREE ADMINISTRATOR (RRA) supports and encourages the Regional Director of Assessment (RDA) to develop and administer the program. Support must include ensuring that scheduling is done in such a manner to support the advisors and officials being assisted.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF ASSESSMENT (RDA) develops and administers the program including:

- Recruiting and training Advisors. It is recommended that sufficient Advisors be assigned to provide an advisor to each U-8 Official, Assistant Referee and Regional Referee. Advisors should be assigned no more that three (3) officials at any one time.
- Develop a specific program that will ensure assignment of an Assessor to each new U-8 Official, Assistant Referee and Regional Referee during at least the first season of the official's assignment of games in the Region.
- Encourage Advisors to continue their education to become Assessors and National Assessors.

The Area Referee Administrator (ARA) and Area Director of Assessment (ADA) should provide support and encouragement to the RRA's and RDA's in their Area and should provide inter-Region support for the program.

Section Directors and Section Referee Staff should place the Advisor Program at a high priority in the Section and provide support to the Area and Regional programs.

Components of a Successful Advisor Program:

Identify and appoint sufficient Advisors to meet Region requirements

Provide Advisors with adequate training and material including:

- Briefing on duties and responsibilities of advisors
- Consider conducting training consisting of role playing for new Advisors before working with officials
- Provide a copy of this handbook
- Provide a copy of the Referee Advisor Program manual

Assign Advisors to officials immediately upon the official receiving training and certification

Avoid scheduling Advisors as referees in games prior to or immediately after games the official they are advising is officiating.

Awards or other recognition programs for Advisors are encouraged

Alternative Administration of Advisor Program

While a one-on-one, ongoing advisor program is most effective, there are times when resources are not available or where conditions exist that prohibit this structure. In these rare cases, the following are offered as interim steps that can be taken to support an Advisor Program until circumstances permit a one-on-one organization.

ASSIGN FIELDS AND TIMES TO ADVISORS:

Under this alternative an Advisor will observe and support all officials on the fields during the times assigned. Officials should be informed, in advance, of the Advisor's role. If necessary, an Advisor may be expected to cover two fields at a time.

FORM TEAMS OF OFFICIALS: An Advisor should be assigned to a team of officials who will rotate duties during a series of games. The Advisor should give feedback at the conclusion of the series of games.

ASSIGN IN GROUPS: Advisors should be assigned refereeing duties in close proximity to an official who is to be advised. Before or after a game the Advisor should be available to assist the official and respond to questions.

Recruit retired or injured referees to act as advisors. Some of these referees may not initially meet all of the prerequisites of an Advisor. They should be carefully selected and thoroughly briefed on their duties. They should be encouraged to complete the necessary requirements as soon as possible.

Guide to Advisors:

Initial Contact:

Contact the official you are assigned to advise as soon as possible. Initial contact may be by telephone or e-mail. Personal contact should be made as soon as possible. **Do not expect the official to make initial contact with you.**

The initial meeting should

- Introduce yourself and explain your referee experience
- Describe the Advisor Program
- Make sure that the official understands that the advisory program is intended to be a positive experience
- Learn as much about the official as possible
- Understand the official's goals, objectives, experience and concerns.
- Answer any questions or doubts
- Arrange for a next meeting, including attending the official's next game.
- Develop your objectives that meet the needs of the official and AYSO

As an Advisor you:

Act as an Advisor in all of the roles outlined above

Always present a positive attitude toward officiating and AYSO

Create a safe, positive environment for improvement

Should be available as often as needed to provide support and answer questions

Observe the official as often as needed

Encourage the official to continue certification to higher levels of officiating

Ask the official to Assistant Referee for one of your games

Participate with the official in continuing training and social activities offered by the Region

Seek help from others to insure that the needs of the official are met

Report to the Regional referee staff any special needs or problems that should be addressed for the official

Actively recruit other volunteers to become officials and Advisors

Support the official at any game you observe. This includes positive support to coaches, spectators and players.

Provide positive feedback to the official after all observations including:

- At least two or three positive comments
- Not more than two areas for improvement by the official
- Be specific in all comments made to the official using game experience or specific examples of performance.
- Give small, attainable, immediately improvable goals for the official
- Use positive language such as:
 - “Your might consider trying...”
 - “Other referees often find that...”
 - “From my experience...”
 - “It may be easier for you if you...”
- Avoid phrases such as:
 - “Your should...”
 - “I always...”
 - “Never...”
 - “Always...”
- End discussions of observations with a positive comment

Encourage the official at all times.

Check List for Observing an Official:

Observations are unlike assessments for upgrade in that it is not a pass/fail situation and usually there is no written report prepared for the official. All observations should be positive win-win experiences. Unlike an assessor, the Advisor need not be inconspicuous. If necessary, the Advisor should insure that the coaches and spectators are aware of his or her presence. Advisors may participate with the official, when necessary, in pre and post-game activities. While not encouraged, limited discussion with the official may take place during the halftime. There must always be a post-game discussion with the official

PRE-GAME: Did the official-

- Arrive early for the game?
- Dress properly and have all necessary equipment?
- Check the field?
- Check the players?
- Perform administrative duties such as game cards?
- Check the ball?
- Give pre-game talk to players?
- Conduct a coin toss and kick off?

DURING THE GAME

- Count the number of players?
- Begin the game on time?
- Communications with Linespersons or Assistant Referees: Did the official-
 - Give clear instructions?
 - Use the person well?
 - Treat the person with respect?
- Positioning: Did the official-

- Keep play between the referee and assistant referee?
- Remain close to play (15-20 yards)?
- Maintain proper position on restarts?
- Signals: Did the official-
 - Whistle with authority?
 - Use proper hand signals?
 - Communicate with players and coaches, effectively using voice?
- Law Knowledge and Mechanics: Did the official demonstrate-
 - Correct applications of Laws?
 - Consistent application of the Laws?
 - Recognition of proper restarts?
 - Proper administration of restarts?
- Good foul recognition?
- Interaction with players and coaches: Did the official display-
 - An attitude of helpfulness and tolerance?
 - Respect?
 - Friendliness without familiarity?
 - Credibility in responses and decisiveness?
 - Positive action even in discipline

POST-GAME: Did the official-

- End the game on time?
- Participate in the post-game handshake?
- Thank the Linesperson/Assistant Referee?
- Complete administrative duties such as game cards?

Assessment/Observation Forms

Necessary forms for assessment and observation may be found on AYSOhelp.org. This website contains the official forms recommended for use by the assessor or observer. Forms include the following:

- Field work sheet

- Checklist-Assistant Referee
- Assessment Verification Form
- Assessment Feedback Form

Field Observation Narratives

Observing the Intermediate Referee Candidate

Recognize that candidates are being advised on the elements to successfully referee a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-12 game. The observation should focus mainly on the abilities necessary to officiate matches beyond the basic level that are more physically demanding and challenging. The candidate should be given feedback on his performance as an entry level Intermediate Referee.

Appearance

The Intermediate Referee candidates should arrive at the game properly attired and have the required equipment.

Pre-game

Intermediate Referee candidates should:

- arrive at the game at least 20 minutes before it starts, be properly equipped and be ready to walk onto the field
- administer the field, players and field equipment inspection
- provide simple but acceptable pre-game instructions to their assistant referees
- demonstrate acceptable techniques during the coin toss, and leadership in acquiring game cards and game ball
- properly position themselves for the kick-off, and direct the referee team and the players as to their position for the kick-off

Fitness

In general, candidates:

- keep up with play while traveling the diagonal

- sprint as required
- demonstrate the rudiments of anticipating play

Attitude

Candidates:

- must practice the “AYSO Team” philosophy at all times
- should be friendly and accommodating to fellow referees, players and coaches
- may indicate some nervousness but must demonstrate an aura of authority

Courage, Character, and Consistency

Candidates should:

- demonstrate willingness to call fouls equally for both teams when they occur
- be capable of recognizing and dealing firmly with any challenges to their authority on or off the field, and interference from the sidelines

Positioning, Mechanics, and Signals

Candidates should:

- demonstrate knowledge of the operation of the diagonal system of control
- position themselves correctly in advance of restarts
- direct assistant referees to preferred positions during a restart by the attacking team near the opponent’s goal
- orient themselves in a manner that maximizes their eye contact with their assistant referees

- indicate their awareness of proper restart signals and show a measure of professionalism while executing them
- use the whistle in a manner that reflects the seriousness of the offense

Accuracy of Decisions

Candidates should:

- consistently recognize and whistle fouls which occur in a TYPICAL REGULAR
- SEASON AYSO U-12 game including penal and non-penal fouls
- Recognize the difference between offside position and offside participation
- apply the proper penalties and restarts

Control

Candidates should demonstrate that they have full control of the game at all times by:

- starting and stopping the game on time
- stopping and starting quarters and halves on time
- controlling substitutions
- handling injuries
- being aware of the readiness of players and the assistant referees
- providing sufficient whistle signal level so that players are aware that the referee has made a call

Conclusion

To satisfy the field certification requirements at the Intermediate level while refereeing a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-12 game, candidates must complete the game and be debriefed by the Assessor/Advisor.

Assessing the Advanced Referee Candidate

Recognize that candidates are being critiqued on their ability to successfully perform as referees and assistant referees in a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-14 game. The

assessment should focus on the candidates' ability to officiate beyond the intermediate level sufficiently well to handle most AYSO matches with skill equal to an entry level Advance Referee. .

Appearance

Advanced Referee candidates should arrive at the game properly attired and have the required equipment.

Pre-game

Advanced Referee candidates should:

- arrive at the game at least 20 minutes before it starts, be properly equipped and be ready to walk onto the field
- administer the field, players and field equipment inspection, and require correction or marking of unsafe conditions before the game is allowed to begin
- provide general, but acceptable pre-game instructions to their assistant referees that include: positioning and signaling on restarts, offside, and goal
- provide acceptable techniques during the coin toss, and leadership in acquiring game cards, and game ball
- properly position themselves for kick-off, and verify proper position of players and assistant referees for kick-off

Fitness

In general, candidates are expected to:

- be within 15 - 20 yards of play
- generally travel the diagonal while demonstrating their ability to cover the extremes of the field when required
- sprint as required
- demonstrate their ability to anticipate play by positioning themselves in advance of play

Attitude

Candidates:

- must practice the "AYSO Team" philosophy at all times

Field Observation Narratives

Assessing the Advanced Referee Candidate as an Assistant Referee

- should be friendly and accommodating to fellow referees, players and coaches including introducing assistant referees to team captains during the coin toss
- must demonstrate confidence and be perceived by players and coaches to be confident
- must control the game at all times

Courage, Character, and Consistency Candidates must:

- demonstrate their willingness to call fouls equally for both teams when they occur
- be capable of recognizing and dealing firmly with any challenges to their authority on or off the field, and interference from the sidelines

Positioning, Mechanics, and Signals Candidates must:

- a. demonstrate their knowledge of the operation of the diagonal system of control, and when it is appropriate, to deviate from the diagonal to follow play
- b. position themselves correctly in advance of restarts
- c. consistently orient themselves in a manner that maximizes their eye contact with their assistant referees
- d. indicate their awareness of proper restart signals and show a measure of professionalism while executing them
- e. use the whistle in a manner that reflects the seriousness of the call

Accuracy of Decisions Candidates must:

- recognize and whistle less obvious as well as obvious fouls
- have no difficulty distinguishing between penal and non-penal fouls
- distinguish between offside position and offside participation

- apply the proper penalties and restarts
- demonstrate the use of advantage

Control

Candidates should demonstrate that they have full control of the game at all times by:

- starting and stopping the game on time
- stopping and starting quarters and halves on time
- controlling substitutions
- handling injuries
- being aware of the readiness of players and the assistant referees
- providing sufficient whistle signal level so that players are aware that the referee has made a call

Conclusion

To satisfy the field certification requirements at the Advanced level while refereeing a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-14 game, candidates must be mostly successful in demonstrating:

- knowledge of the Laws
- proper application of the Law
- the mechanics of the diagonal system of control
- proper positioning for restarts

Assessing the Advanced Referee Candidate as an Assistant Referee

Recognize that candidates are being critiqued on their ability to successfully perform as assistant referees in a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-14 game. The assessment should focus on the candidates' ability to officiate beyond the intermediate level sufficiently well to handle most AYSO matches as an assistant referee.

Appearance

Advanced Assistant Referee candidates should arrive at the game properly attired and have the required equipment.

Pre-game

Advanced Assistant Referee candidates should:

- arrive at the game at least 20 minutes before it starts, be properly equipped and be ready to walk onto the field.
- in response to direction from the referee, inspect players and field equipment
- be attentive to the referee's pre-game instructions, and when in doubt, ask questions
- assume proper position for the kick-off

Fitness

In general, candidates are expected to:

- maintain a position opposite the second to last defender
- sprint and side-step as required
- demonstrate their ability to anticipate play by positioning themselves in advance of play
- correctly position themselves for restarts

Attitude

Candidates:

- must practice the "AYSO Team" philosophy at all times
- should exhibit an appropriate professional attitude, and a spirit of cooperation and support for the referee team

Courage, Character, and Consistency

Candidates must:

- maintain their composure and attention to their responsibilities
- demonstrate a willingness to make consistently fair and unbiased decisions

Positioning, Mechanics, and Signals

Candidates must:

- demonstrate their knowledge of the operation of the diagonal system of control
- correctly position themselves in a manner that maximizes their eye contact with the referee
- correctly position themselves in advance of restarts
- indicate their awareness of proper restart signals and show a measure of professionalism while executing them
- maintain the flag unfurled and on the field side while moving up and down the field

Assistance: Offside, Goal line and Touch line

Candidates should:

- provide timely and accurate assistance to the referee for ball out of play across the touch line or goal line and indicate the proper restart required
- provide accurate assistance for offside calls (participating players)

Assistance: Fouls and Misconduct

Candidates must:

- indicate a willingness to flag infractions out of view of the referee
- ask for support when sideline interference is interrupting the game and their concentration

Conclusion

To satisfy the certification requirements at the Advanced level while refereeing a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-14 game, candidates must be very successful in demonstrating:

- knowledge of the Laws
- application of the Laws
- the mechanics of the Diagonal System of Control

- proper positioning for restarts

Assessing the National Referee Candidate

Recognize that candidates are being critiqued on their ability to successfully referee a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-19 game. The observation should focus mainly on the candidate's basic understanding of the "professional" aspects of refereeing, the application of the spirit and intent of Laws of the Game and the intelligent use of the diagonal system of control. The candidate should demonstrate skills equal to an entry level National Referee. The candidate is not expected to perform at a level that would allow him or her to referee the most challenging AYSO game.

Appearance

National Referee candidates shall arrive at the game properly attired and have the required equipment.

Pre-game

National Referee candidates should:

- arrive at the game at least 20 minutes before it starts, be properly equipped and be ready to walk onto the field
- administer the field, players and field equipment inspection, and require correction or marking of unsafe conditions before the game is allowed to begin
- provide acceptable pre-game instructions to their assistant referees that include:
 - positioning and signaling on restarts, offside, goals and fouls close to the goal line
 - assigning senior assistant referee, keeping backup time
 - substitution mechanics
 - entering and leaving the field as a team, and at the center during the half-time interval

- responsibility following the scoring of a goal
- calling fouls in assistant referee's area
- responsibility during penalty kicks
- show acceptable techniques during the coin toss
- exhibit leadership in acquiring game cards and game ball
- verify proper position of players and assistant referees for kick-off
- assume correct referee position for kick-off

Fitness

In general, candidates are expected to:

- be within 15 - 20 yards of play
- generally travel the diagonal while demonstrating their ability to cover the extremes of the field when required
- sprint and back pedal as required
- demonstrate their ability to anticipate play by positioning themselves in advance of play

Attitude

Candidates:

- must practice the "AYSO Team" philosophy at all times
- should be friendly and accommodating to fellow referees, players and coaches including introducing assistant referees, to team captains during the coin toss
- must demonstrate and be perceived by players and coaches to be confident

Courage, Character, and Consistency
Candidates must:

- demonstrate their willingness to call fouls equally for both teams when they occur
- be capable of recognizing and dealing firmly with any challenges to their

authority on or off the field, and interference from the sidelines

Positioning, Mechanics, and Signals
Candidates must:

- demonstrate their knowledge of the operation of the diagonal system of control, and when it is appropriate, to deviate from the diagonal to follow play
- position themselves correctly in advance of restarts
- be capable of back pedaling
- direct assistant referees to preferred positions during a restart by the attacking team near the opponent's goal
- consistently orient themselves in a manner that maximizes their eye contact with their assistant referees
- indicate their awareness of proper restart signals and show a measure of professionalism while executing them
- use the whistle in a manner that reflects the seriousness of the offense

Accuracy of Decisions
Candidates should:

- recognize and whistle less obvious as well as obvious fouls
- have no difficulty distinguishing between penal and non-penal fouls
- be alert to, and deal with, subtle fouls and with players who simulate fouls to attract favorable calls
- demonstrate the ability to distinguish between fouls and aggressive play
- distinguish between offside position and offside participation
- apply the proper penalties and restarts
- demonstrate the proper use of advantage

Control

Candidates should demonstrate that they have full control of the game at all times by:

- starting and stopping halves and the game on time
- controlling substitutions
- handling injuries
- being aware of the readiness of players and the assistant referees
- providing sufficient whistle signal level so that players are aware that the referee has made a call
- using dialogue to warn players of pending infractions in lieu of constant whistling
- being aware of, and dealing with infractions away from play
- properly managing the 10-yard rule
- positioning players for restarts within the penalty area
- providing protection for goalkeeper as well as ensuring proper goalkeeper conduct
- not tolerating time wasting or dissent

Conclusion

To satisfy the field certification requirements at the National level while refereeing a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-19 game, candidates must be extremely successful in demonstrating:

- knowledge of the Laws
- proper application of the Law
- the mechanics of the diagonal system of control
- proper positioning for restarts
- variation of positions as required from reading the game
- maintaining the flow and control of the match

- recognizing and dealing with players who are not in control of themselves
- adjusting referee style to experience and attitude of players for maximum enjoyment for all

- Demonstrate their ability to anticipate play by positioning themselves in advance of play
- Correctly position themselves for restarts

Assessing the National Referee Candidate as an Assistant Referee

Recognize that candidates are being critiqued on their ability to successfully perform as assistant referees in a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-19 game. The observation should focus mainly on the candidate's ability to officiate any AYSO soccer match at the most challenging level as an assistant referees.

Appearance

National Assistant Referee candidates should arrive at the game properly attired and have the required equipment

Pre-game

National Assistant Referee candidates should:

- Arrive at the game at least 20 minutes before it starts, be properly equipped and be ready to walk onto the field
- In response to directions from the referee, inspect players and field equipment
- Be attentive to the referee's pre-game instructions, and when in doubt, ask questions
- Assume proper position for the kick-off

Fitness

In general, candidates are expected to:

- Maintain a position opposite the second to the last defender unless otherwise directed by the referee
- Follow the ball to the goal line
- Sprint and side step as required

Attitude

Candidates should:

- Practice the "AYSO Team" philosophy at all times
- Exhibit an appropriate professional attitude and a spirit of cooperation and support for the referee team.
- Assist the referee, not insist
- Maintain an even temperament in the presence of sideline and player criticism or misconduct

Courage, Character, and Consistency

Candidates must:

- Maintain their composure and attention to their responsibilities
- Demonstrate a willingness to make consistently fair and unbiased decisions

Positioning, Mechanics, and Signals

Candidates must:

- Demonstrate their knowledge of the operation of the Diagonal System of Control
- Correctly position themselves in a manner that maximizes eye contact with the referee
- Correctly position themselves in advance of restarts
- Indicate their awareness of proper restart signals and show a measure of professionalism while executing them
- Consistently maintain the flag unfurled and on the field side while moving up and down the field

Assistance – Offside, Goal Line, and Touch line

Candidates should:

- Provide timely and accurate assistance to the referee for ball out of play across the touch line or goal line and indicate the proper restart
- In response to the referee's direction, provide "play on" signals for play along the touch line and goal line, and for onside
- Provide accurate assistance for offside calls (participating players)

Assistance: Fouls and Misconduct
Candidates must:

- Indicate a willingness to flag infractions which are out of view of the referee
- Ask for support when sideline interference is interrupting the game and their concentration

Conclusion

To satisfy the field performance requirements at the National level while refereeing a TYPICAL REGULAR SEASON AYSO U-19 game, the candidates must be very successful in demonstrating:

- Knowledge of the Laws
- Application of the Laws
- The mechanics of the Diagonal System of Control
- Proper positioning for restarts
- Full support for the referee

Referee Assessor Techniques and Procedures

The techniques and procedures used by the assessor are critical to the outcome of the evaluation. The way a candidate is approached and communicated with and the efficiency of the procedure can determine the success or failure of the process. It is important that the referee being assessed feels that the assessor's comments are worthwhile.

Assessor's Knowledge and Tools:

Candidate Performance Expectations
Assessors must understand that candidates for upgrade are at the upper end of the skills required at their current certification level and at the lower end of the skills required for the level

they are being assessed. As such, candidates should not be expected to perform at the highest possible level of the certification for which they are being assessed. An Advanced Referee candidate with a total of 50 games experience with 10 games at the U-14 level should not be expected to perform with the same level of competence as an Advanced Referee with 90 games experience and 30 games in U-16 games. Similarly, a National Referee candidate cannot be expected to perform at a level equal to a referee with many years of National Referee experience. As with any benchmark of proficiency, continued growth through experience is expected as referees mature professionally.

Knowledge

- Assessor must have a comprehensive foundation of knowledge and understanding of the sport within the framework of the AYSO program
- Knowledge of the Laws of the Game
- Proficient in the mechanics of the diagonal system of control and the signals used for communication between the referee and assistant referees
- Good interpersonal skills
- An open mind
- Ability to resolve conflicts and handle cynical or negative comments by the officials being assessed
- Always prepared to help the officials in a positive and factual manner
- The ability to deal with successful and unsuccessful candidates in a positive way

Tools

- Laws of the Game
- National Rules and Regulations
- Local Rules and Regulations
- Accessories including clipboard, pens, pencils, watch, paper and assessment forms
- Folding chair, refreshments, cap, sunscreen etc.

Assessor Techniques and Guidelines:

Pre-Game

- Contact the referee team before match and review ground rules, for instance should the entire referee team be assessed or only the specific candidate
- Remember what the goals and objectives of the assessment are

- Observe but do not contribute to the officials' pre-game conference
- Observe but do not interfere with player pre-game instructions by referee

During the Game

- Observe the entire game:
 - The first 5 or 10 minutes of each half will set the tone for that half
 - The last 5-10 minutes of each half may become challenging to both the referee and the players as fatigue sets in and if the players feel pressure to score
- Avoid personal prejudices and showing any negative reactions
- The referee's style may differ from yours
- Their judgment may be different from yours
- Don't judge the referee's performance strictly on your view of an incident
- Don't be influenced by any over-reaction of players, coaches or spectators
- Avoid conversing or socializing with or responding to questions asked by players, coaches, or spectators
- Feel free to move around the field but stay inconspicuous
- Evaluate overall performance of the referee and do not overemphasize minor points
- Refrain from interfering with the referee team while the match is in progress

After the Game

- Avoid showing any reaction to outcome of match
- Acknowledge the referee team with a "thank you" and give them time to "cool down"
- When the referee team is ready, perform the post-game interview - be constructive, positive and helpful

- Keep the assessment confidential. Area and Regional Referee Administrators are the only persons other than the referee team who need to know your findings

Communication and Attitude:

- Assessors must display integrity, professionalism and cordiality
- Assessors must convey a sense of friendly persuasion to the referee being evaluated
- Referees being assessed must never be made to feel inferior or put down in any way
- Feedback must be positive and constructive advice - not instructions or commands
- Referees must be given an opportunity to explain the circumstances of incidents from their point of view. Assessors must show respect for the referee's opinion.

Assessor and Referee Team Preparation

The saying "If you fail to prepare then prepare to fail" is just as valid when performing referee assessments as in any other setting. We must recognize the importance of proper preparation, discipline ourselves to do so and expect the same from the referee team.

Pre-game Duties:

Assessor

- Ensure all assessment forms are available and brought to the game (see Appendix --- of the Referee Administrator Manual)
- Identify all equipment and tools required and ensure they are brought to the game
- Verify name of referee to be assessed and time and place of match—plan to be at match at least 30 minutes before the start time
- Observe referee team preparations

Referee Team

- Before arrival, check equipment and clean and repair as necessary (the assessor can judge this only by the appearance and availability of the proper items)
- Arrive on time (20 minutes minimum before the scheduled start time)
- Carry out field safety and conformity inspection
- Hold referee team pre-game conference
- Introduce referee team to the team coaches
- Hold player pre-game safety inspection and give brief instructions
- Inspect and approve match ball
- Start match on time

Dress and Appearance

Assessor

- Professional looking
- Conservative and inconspicuous (do not wear a referee uniform or anything which identifies as an assessor)

Referee Team

- Professional looking
- Wearing proper badge
- Shoes shined
- Uniform different color from both teams
- Uniformity of dress between referee and assistant referees
- Change of shirt color available if necessary

As the referee team is initially judged by their preparation and appearance so is the referee assessor. A good first impression is important for both.

Post Game Interview

- Allow the referee team to complete their post game routine
- Greet the referee team with a smile and a friendly word of thanks
- Quickly establish a peer or consulting relationship
- When the referee team is ready, move to a comfortable, quiet and reasonably private area
- Allow the candidate(s) to complete the self evaluation portion of the Assessment Verification Form
- Using the Referee Assessment Checklist, a Field Worksheet or other notes conduct the post game interview
- If only one member of the team is being assessed quickly identify strengths and areas for improvement of the other members of the team and excuse them from further involvement unless agreed otherwise
- Address the key strengths of the candidate. This is critical if the candidate is to perceive the experience positively. Use specific incidents in the match to substantiate
- Identify no more than three areas for improvement. Again use specific incidents to substantiate. Be frank, positive constructive and encouraging. Do not dwell on what you perceive as mistakes
- Try to use the interview as a teaching and learning experience. Involve the candidate in the discussion. Do not preach.
- Close by politely stating your recommendation and with a handshake. It is important that the candidate leave the interview feeling good about the experience and ready to continue to officiate whatever the recommendation
- Complete all assessment the forms, sign and give to the candidate for further processing. If your recommendation is positive sign, or make arrangements to

sign, the candidate's AYSO Application for Referee Certification form. Retain the lower half of the Assessment Verification Form for your records.

The Top Ten Ways to Help Referees Improve

1. Begin with praise and honest appreciation.
2. The only facts are the Laws of the Game. Everything else is either an opinion, suggestion or thought. Avoid the phrase, "You should..." Make recommendations and suggestions using phrases like, "I suggest..." or "Perhaps you can try..." or "To avoid that happening again perhaps you can try this...".
3. Call attention to people's mistakes indirectly by citing examples.
4. Talk about your own mistakes before criticizing the other person.
5. Ask questions instead of giving directives.
6. Let the other person save face, don't argue with them.
7. Praise the slightest improvement and praise every improvement. Be hearty in your approval and lavish in your praise.
8. Use encouragement, make the fault seem easy to correct.
9. Assess the game you saw, not the game that might have been.
10. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.

Assessment Model

Before Assessment Prepare:

- What do you want the referee to do?
- How can you help?

- Be specific - take good game notes.
- Review the assessment criteria and understand the standard
- Arrive at least 30 minutes before the match and before the referee
- Before the match observe the teams, coaches, and referee pre-game activities
- Decide what to expect - good and bad

During match

Assess potential for change:

- Select discussion items based on expectations for positive change.
- Pick things that can be improved in the very next game.
- Match control issues
- Reading the game, anticipating play, team tactics
- Handling misconduct, dissent
- Foul recognition
- Being able to distinguish between dives and real fouls
- Understanding goalkeeper tactics

NOTE: At half-time do not interfere with the referee team's discussions

After the match

- Pick the right time and place for discussion:
- Allow cool off time.
- Review and summarize game notes.
- Let referee fill out self evaluation and collect thoughts.
- Step away from crowds.
- Relate your comments to a specific event.
- Leave time for discussion - do not rush

During Assessment Discussion

- Content is a matter of judgment.
- It is subjective, and your perception
- Give referee room for explanation, interpretation
- Stay away from "always" and "never"
Use words like:
- In my opinion..
- I believe...
- From my perspective...
- The way I see it..
- You might think about, you could ..
- Others have...
- Another way to accomplish

Get the referee involved

- How do you see this?
- What do you think?
- How might you do this differently in the future?
- What happened during a specific incident?
- Were there any moments in the match that challenged you more than others?
- Which players needed the most watching and why?
- How did the tactics of the teams challenge your game control?
- What were the key moments in the match that you felt were the "moments of truth"?

Offer solutions

- Do NOT abandon the referee
- Be helpful
- Offer specifics
- Be a partner

- Include incentives
 - Include positives
 - Be sincere!
 - No matter how poorly the referee performed, always find something positive to say. We need to build self confidence and retain every referee.
- might be caught fending off the negatives.
- The best method: state how referee can improve AND, state the positive things he is already doing.

The attention focuses on improvement, what can be done in the next game to be better and what can continue that is already good. Future focus versus past focus.

After the assessment:

- Follow up if possible
- Send written evaluation as confirmation of discussion
- Call for questions
- Offer yourself as a resource
- Help develop an action plan
- Make sure that the referee knows that you and AYSO have the resources to help him or her get better and to enjoy the experience. Good post-assessment activities can help ensure your comments and constructive criticism are applied to the advantage of all.

The purpose of assessment is improvement. Improvement implies the future. One cannot improve the past. One can only use the past as a guide to what might be accomplished in the future.

Reduce Resistance to Change

Convincing a person to change is almost always difficult. Unless the person sees some benefit to the change, he will be reluctant. Here are some ideas that may help lead to positive change.

How to Deliver the Message

Good assessment will allow referees the opportunity to review areas of strength and areas to strengthen. This means the referee will benefit from a candid assessment of both areas, presented in a positive manner.

The critical issue is how these subjects are addressed. The assessor can address poor performance in a positive way.

Here some options:

- State the positives, but state what is wrong.
- This format leaves the candidate with a sense of the negative because he forgets everything said before the BUT.
- State the negatives, then the positives.
- This is better, however one might lose the conversation at the negatives when the referee becomes defensive. You

- Recognize that others may not share your beliefs or approve of your attitudes.
- Realize that the beliefs and attitudes of others are habit patterns.
- Visualize the change from the viewpoint of those who will have to use or adapt to your recommendations.
- Anticipate difficulties in getting acceptance of your recommendations and devise ways to make the transition more acceptable. Solicit recommendations from the official as to how improvements can be made in specific areas of concern.
- Carefully consider all consequences of a change and avoid recommendations for abrupt, sweeping change. It is almost always best to bring about gradual change a step at a time.
- Recognize that any significant change triggers emotional tension, either because old behavior is found to be inadequate or because new behavior must be acquired. The dissipation of tension may take some period of time. A clear incentive to change, where possible, helps those affected do so.

- When possible, maintain contact with people while change is being made.
- How well do you LISTEN?
- Do you prepare yourself by facing the speaker and making sure you can hear?
- Do you watch the speaker as well as listen?
- Do you decide by the speaker's appearance and delivery whether what he has to say is worthwhile?
- Do you listen primarily for ideas and underlying feelings?
- Do you determine your own bias, if any, and try to allow for it?
- Do you keep your mind on what the speaker is saying?
- Do you interrupt immediately if you hear a statement you feel is wrong?
- Do you make sure before answering that you have taken in the other person's point of view?
- Do you try to have the last words?

- Do you make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic and credibility of what you hear?
- Do you think about your response before you have finished listening?

Common Sources of Errors in Assessments

- Unwillingness to take the time and make the effort to do a thorough assessment.
- Overweighing recent occurrences - things that take place late in the game.
- Personal prejudices on the part of the assessor. Use of assessment criteria can help here.
- Lack of uniform criteria or standards
- Reluctance to point out weaknesses.
- Communicating in a negative way, rather than in a positive and constructive manner.
- Failure to use specific incidents as a basis for constructive criticism.

Watching a Game

The following is reprinted from the June 1997 Referee Magazine

After you've become an official, attending games is different from when you were just a fan. Obviously you're much more aware of the officials and what they are doing. This becomes even more pronounced when you assume the title of Assessor. With that comes tremendous responsibility. You must watch a game the right way.

Be Invisible:

Maintain this philosophy; you don't want people to know you're an official. If you are identified as an official while attending games, you're opening yourself up for questions, contention and criticism. Every time there's a close call or controversial ruling, fans will look to you for an explanation. Don't look at that as an ego stroke, it's not, it is a tough situation to handle while maintaining your officiating integrity and professionalism. Avoid it all by staying in the background.

Don't Wear Your Uniform:

Whether you're a first-year official or a grizzled veteran, you're probably proud to be an official. You also might be proud of the officials' association you belong to or the league you work in. Attending a game is not the time to display your pride.

Do not wear your officiating uniform or association or league jacket or patches while attending a game. Wearing your uniform or any other items identifies you as an official.

If you're working multiple games and you've got a break between games, change into something else or don't sit in the stands. Remember, you're a potential target for the players, coaches and fans of the game you just worked and the game you're about to work. You don't want a confrontation and you don't want "schmoosing" either.

Sit Alone:

If there's an area away from fans, sit there. That way, even if people know you are an official, they have to go out of their way to talk to you.

Don't Criticize the Officials:

Sadly, for many officials, that's the most difficult part of attending a game. That's because some revel in other people's mistakes and enjoy pointing them out to others. It makes them feel good. It also ruins their professional reputations.

There's little more appalling than an official publicly bad-mouthing another official, especially while attending a game and watching that official work. Keep in mind how important the officiating brotherhood is and how violating that trust among officials hurts others. After all, if the officiating is really that lousy, you ought to be doing some positive things to help those officials (a post-game conference, a follow-up phone call, an association meeting topic, etc.) and not criticizing them.

Don't Comment to Fans:

If you're truly a member of the officiating community, you care about the officials working the game whether you know them or not. You feel good for them when they make a great call. You also hurt with them when things go awry.

One thing that happens in all games. Fans criticize officials. Those comments are even

more apparent when you're in the stands. Resist the urge to verbally fight back.. Realistically, you're not going to change their outlook on us and you're surely opening yourself up for problems. If it gets too bad, move to another section or leave.

Be Careful Answering Questions:

If you're a locally known official in attendance, your role is difficult. Many fans will look to you for answers about things occurring in the game. Many of those questions will be about judgment calls. Resist answering them. The fans are often looking for support in their arguments. If you say "That was a bad call" or "I wouldn't have called it that way" you're fueling the fire.

Some questions are rules-related. Answer them carefully. If the officials handled a rule correctly, explain what they did. If they didn't, either avoid the question or explain the rule carefully without criticizing the officials. That's a very difficult thing to do.

Sometimes, your safest move is to say, "I didn't see the entire play" or "We don't have the same view as they do on the field". That little white lie hurts less than trashing the officials.

Keep Emotions in Check:

That's especially true when you're a parent watching your son or daughter play. Someone once said "Officials watch games with their eyes; players, coaches and fans watch games with their hearts". Even though your offspring is involved, you must avoid emotional displays created by watching a game with your heart. Many officiating reputations have been damaged when officials lost control and acted like fans. If you can't watch your son or daughter play without showing emotion against the officials, you have only two real options: Don't attend the games or quit officiating.

There's more responsibility and accountability when watching a game after you've become an official. Look at it as a great opportunity to learn from others while avoiding controversy and your attendance will help, not hurt, your career.

The AYSO Referee Assessor's Creed

When performing my duties as a Referee Assessor I will evaluate referees based upon the standards established, approved and set forth by the AYSO National Referee Program. My assessment will take into account the refereeing performance I am witnessing only and I will endeavor, to the best of my ability, to not be

influenced by my own biases and expectations or the views of others.

Most importantly, as assessors and advisors, always remember that...

"In AYSO, it's about more than the game"!