

Expectations for Referee Performance Based on Grade Level

Grade 8 Referee/AR

- Entry level or novice referee competent to referee youth games up to U16 as a referee and U19 as an AR.
- Since no fitness test is required, he/she may not exhibit good field positioning during dynamic play or good recovery from extreme field positions; often lacks sprint speed and high work rate for entire game.
- Focused on basic fouls recognition; probably will not recognize subtle fouls, gamesmanship, persistent infringement, time wasting, simulation, etc.
- Has some difficulty in recognizing misconduct, serious foul play and violent conduct when they occur.
- Usually runs a rigid diagonal or runs up and down the center of the field (i.e. doesn't recognize the need for a flexible diagonal when the game demands it).
- Often has his/her back to the AR, thus missing offside flags and other signals, and doesn't use dead ball situations to get eye contact with the AR's.
- If a pre-game discussion occurs, it is often basic and deals with mechanics and signals.
- He/she lacks confidence to manage players with a word, gestures, and personality.
- May lack courage or understanding to award Penalty Kicks, Send Offs, and Cautions when the game demands them.
- Ignores coaches and doesn't have the courage or understanding to insure they behave and are not abusive.

Grade 7 Referee

- Capable of refereeing youth games up to U19 level and AR for Division 2 Adult matches.
- Demonstrates basic knowledge of the laws of the game and their application.
- Demonstrates basic positioning during static play (i.e. restarts) but due to lack of fitness and tactical knowledge is often in the wrong place to see fouls and misconduct during dynamic play.
- Has basic fitness for a youth game, and a fair work rate; however, in a higher level fast game, he/she will not be able to keep up with the demands of the match.
- Doesn't recognize tactical fouls and their intent to disrupt attacking play, this misses the opportunity for strong game control.
- Often ignores dissent rather than dealing with it.
- Employs basic mechanics and signals on static restarts and issuance of cards.
- Has basic foul recognition and uses Advantage when obvious.
- Often is inconsistent in issuance of Cautions and limited use of personality to manage players as a preventive mechanic.
- Still doesn't recognize the need to address gamesmanship, simulations, time wasting, and other tactics meant to delay restarts and gain advantage by cheating.

Grade 6 State Referee

- Capable of refereeing any youth level match and adult division 2 matches as a referee and AR on division 1 adult matches.
- May still have some positioning problems during dynamic play due to inability to read developing play and tactical nature of game.
- Fitness meets the standard for grade, but during a fast, high pace game, still has problems with work rate to recover from extreme positions.
- Foul recognition not a problem for game control, but foul discrimination is not consistent.
- Beginning to realize that he/she needs to manage the game by paying attention to detail and managing players with regard to restarts, encroachment, delaying tactics, simulation, injuries, and should begin to recognize persistent infringement when it occurs.
- Uses approved mechanics and signals.
- Has developed a flexible diagonal and sufficient read of the game to know when to come off his/her diagonal to see developing play.
- Conducts a thorough pregame with AR's and communicates with them on dead ball situations with eye contact, thumbs up, etc.
- Still developing the read of the game and may miss misconduct, serious foul play, or violent conduct due to poor dynamic positioning.

Grade 5 State Referee

- Capable of refereeing the highest level amateur games within the state and in regional and national tournaments; AR on higher level matches.
- Good foul recognition and foul discrimination for control of the match.
- Good fitness for grade level and field coverage during dynamic play based on a flexible diagonal and read of the game.
- Uses recommended positioning on static and dynamic play and good work rate for 90 minutes.
- Not influenced by gamesmanship, simulations when they occur, and deals with them appropriately.
- A basic knowledge of tactical play and player tactics, and deals with them as part of controlling the game.
- Manages walls and restarts to ensure fair play and minimal time wasting.
- Courage to override AR offside and foul decisions that are not in the spirit of the game or which are not correct.
- Good understanding of Advantage and uses it effectively for game flow.
- Good physical presence, strength of whistle, and body language when selling decisions.
- Pays attention to details on restarts, set plays, encroachment, allowing quick restarts, PK encroachments, goal keeper movement on PK's, wall mechanics, getting 10 yards on Free Kicks, card mechanics, and dealing with persistent infringement.
- Courage and positioning to make the game critical calls (i.e. PK's, send offs, goal/no goal, offside, misconduct, DOGSO, etc.)

National Candidates and National Referees

- Excellent foul recognition and discrimination
- Demonstrates player management skills and use of personality with players.
- Recognizes and had the courage to deal with violent conduct, serious foul play, and misconduct when they occur.
- Very fit and has good work rate for recovery from extreme positions for 90 minutes.
- Demonstrates game management by paying attention to details at the professional level (i.e. time wasting, simulation, walls, persistent infringement, administration of extra time, etc.)
- Recognizes and deals with benches and their behavior and after warning, willing to dismiss those who exhibit unacceptable behavior.
- Great read of the game and positioning during dynamic and static play which assists in decision making for PK's, send offs, DOGSO, etc.)
- Excellent eye contact with AR's/4th during dead ball situations and teamwork and communication to get the call right!
- Can differentiate between trifling offenses and fouls at the professional level, and the courage to take some risk for game flow.
- Adjusts to changing game environment and proactively reads the game and anticipates problems rather than just react to them. Uses preventive mechanics to anticipate and avoid problems before they grow into larger problems.
- Pre-game preparation is thorough on teams, tactics, tactical style of play, match ups expected, prior history, what is at stake in the game, etc.
- Prepares referee team to expect the unexpected and to be ready from the first whistle until the last to manage players and game.
- Excellent fitness and recovery and work rate; reads the game well and is always in the correct position during dynamic play to see events and make the correct decisions.
- Is up to date on all memoranda and position papers and applies them as required during the game.
- Applies the laws of the game, understands the spirit of the game, and the courage to make the tough decisions (i.e. PK's, send offs, goal/no goal, offside, misconduct, DOGSO, etc.)
- Understands the requirements and expectations of professional players.