

1. How many games have you seen this fall?

- 5
- 6
- 12
- ~8
- 6
- 50 – 70
- 60+
- 10
- 20
- 2

2. Did you think the class training prepared the referee for their games

- yes
- Yes as far as rules knowledge
- Yes
- Rule-wise, yes. Most new referees I've handled seem to lack confidence (Which really can't be taught, It comes with experience) and have had a little trouble with positioning.
- I believe the classes did as well as they possibly could. Back when I took the class, (from XXXX) he had two games for us to see and call on paper. He stopped the game and asked us what we saw and why. I believe this better prepared us, but you just can't beat mentoring by other teaching referees. We did games as Linesmen (ARs) and would get feed back during the half and after the game. I know this is a lot of work on someone's part, but it helped us.
- No
- As well as can be expected for a 16 hr. class: after the class, referees have to want to learn more. Unfortunately, too many just are there to put in there time to earn a few bucks.
- Yes
- No

If no What else do we need from the class?

- Some additional preparation could be provided for player, coach, and parent management.
- In regard to positioning, I would add a trip out to a field. Show them exactly where they need to be and where they need to be looking in certain situations, both as an AR and as a referee. The only think I can think of experience-wise would be to see if coaches would allow newer referees to officiate scrimmage games, but that would be more of a league task.

- I think the courses do a good job teaching the referees the technical rules of the game, but do not prepare them for actually managing a game. Too many of the younger referees are far too timid, when calling a game - they stand in one spot, barely blow the whistle or signal a call, and generally look intimidated by the situation. They know the proper length of an official FIFA field, but they don't understand how to manage a game. I think we need to do a better job explaining positioning, professionalism, and managing games. I would highly recommend adding a training session to the new referee course where the students have to role play and actually make a call. Have them blow a whistle, signal, and explain the call to some role-playing "players". They need to see how an experienced referee makes a call and explains it to youth players, and even coaches. Clear and confident signals would reduce criticism from coaches and spectators dramatically, in my opinion. A lot of frustration comes from coaches failing to hear (or see) any indication of a call from a young referee who is barely moving, out of position, and looking as if he or she needs a nap. I'm sure you've seen situations where the ball has clearly gone out of bounds, and the official makes such a weak call that the players keep on playing, while the coaches become confused as to what has or has not been called. Referees need to be taught how to take control of the situation and run things (without becoming too much a part of the game; i.e. while letting the players play).

Secondly, I think the referees need to be better educated in the "spirit of the game". Again, they know the technical rules, but they do not necessarily understand the spirit of the game. I'll give an example - after making a save, a goalie has the ball in her grasp but is injured. The referee blows the whistle and the goalie is attended to. The referee restarts the game with a drop ball. In this situation, in my opinion, the referee should instruct the attacking team to allow the goalie to pick up the drop ball, so that the situation is restored to where it was prior to the whistle stopping play (or the attacking team should kick the ball out of bounds for a goal kick). This is exactly what would occur in any high level league in the world. What I witnessed in the game where I saw this was the referee asking an attacking player to come and contest the drop ball on the edge of the goal box. This led to confusion from the players (some of whom had never seen a dropball) and a mad scramble in front of the net. Referees need to understand that the rules should be followed, but that fairness is a critical aspect of soccer and is one of the things that makes the game great. Let the "spirit of the game" be a factor, when making decisions.

Finally, I would make the test harder and actually have some

students fail the test. I don't know what the pass rate is, but I would suspect it is close to 99% - sitting through the course seems to guarantee a passing grade. Set the bar at 90% or 95% correct, if the current test is used (although some of the questions are rather subjective and ambiguous, and could use revising). Ideally, referees should be required to actually pass a practicum, but I can understand the difficulties in doing this.

I'd also eliminate the charge for the course for new referees, as an encouragement to get people to sign up.

- Some practical training would be helpful. Go to a field and demonstrate mechanics and positions. Do some off side position situations. Talk about where to be as an AR and how to move with the play.
- **Actual Games for the class. Ask teams to be "test games" for referees. Instruct Referees about judgment calls.**

3. Is your league having an experienced referee present at new referees first games?

- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- When I was scheduling, absolutely, and for as many games as the new referee wanted
- **Not to my knowledge**
- Whenever possible, but a lack of experienced referees makes this difficult. We also try to put new referees on U8 games first, and AR positions on older games, prior to letting the center an older game.
- as much as possible; the overriding goal is to cover the games
- Sometimes...we usually start them out on U10 games to gain some confidence
- No. We want to, but there aren't enough to go around because of HS games in the fall.
- **Yes. For at least their first games, but possible not for any additional games**
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4. Did you have a league or club officer present at all games?

- No
- No
- Don't know

- For the most part, yes, but I cannot say if the league coordinated that or if it was simply by chance.
- No
- No (with 55 teams, this is impossible)
- No
- Yes
- Yes
- Not Always

5. Were the coaches given any instructions on behavior toward referees?

- Yes
- Yes. Coaches were provided instruction during a pre-season coaches meeting. However, coaches who were not present at the coaches meeting did not receive the same instruction.
- Yes
- I don't know, but something like that could never hurt.
- I don't know
- Some
- Yes - at XXSA, we have a very strict zero tolerance policy that we enforce. This is communicated to all coaches and parents (they must sign a code of conduct, when they register their children). There is VERY little criticism of referees on our fields - we are very clear on our protection of referees.
- Yes. We met with coaches prior to the season to discuss various issues including new referees.
- We didn't this season, but have in previous seasons for the past five years or more.
- Not that I am aware of

For future new referees what would you suggest for the instructor, league or club officers to help ensure a positive experience for our referees.

- The most important thing is to have an experience older(adult) referee as a mentor first couple of games. This is a learning experience for a new referee and by having a mentor there they talk to at their first few games, they can learn what they are doing right and correct common error when it is pointed out before errors become problems. It is also makes new referees less nervous to have someone experience (adult ref) at the games to keep the coaches and parents off their backs while they are learning how to handle different situations.
- Overall, communication is the best weapon to prevent the loss of referees. If you keep in touch with the newer referees and are attentive of their issues and their worries, you have a much better chance of retaining them. A break in this communication allows for problems to go undetected, creating negative experiences for referees. Also make sure new referees know they can ask questions or provide input; some might not even consider it or know

who to speak to. Another big thing I've noticed as an assignor is knowing their comfort level, which, for a new referee, changes constantly. When I was scheduling, I always made sure I knew the referee's comfort level, as not to assign them a game they couldn't handle, mentally or physically, as well as assigning them more challenging games when they were ready. Lastly, as a referee, I did my best to speak with coaches privately when I was working with new referees. Most coaches will keep their comments down a little if they are aware they're working with an official who only has one or two games under their belt.

- Most referees I know who have quit did so because of the abuse from parent fans and coaches. I would like to see a group of recognized persons who observe games from the fan area and who would sort-of come to the defense of referees. Not like a policeman, but a polite and tactful person who politely approaches persons who are barking at the referees and ask them to please stop. These persons would need some sort of recognition/registration card and a polo shirt (not a T) and cap with an official insignia. I personally would pay for the cap and shirt. I will also volunteer to help with establishing such a group. I think it would be helpful if this person would participate in the registration of our youth players to hold a meeting with parents in which they would solicit the parents help in the matter.
- Create and enforce a strict zero tolerance policy for all leagues. Enforce the policy! Secondly, emphasize to the referees that they are professionals and should behave as such.
- I think the biggest issue for retaining referees is the treatment they receive from the coaches. There are some coaches that even our adult referees have complained about. We need to focus more attention on coach and parent expectations. I have heard several issues where our young referees feel intimidated by comments from these groups. It is
- we have issues of how do we keep referees around longer. I think if we raise the driving age, don't let date until they are in college and tell their parents not to give them money that they need to earn it we will have a better chance at keeping the young ones. As for adults eliminate "honey do" lists and they will come out more often. I had a doctor tell me yesterday he is waiting until his son is done this year then he wants to ref. We have 3 other doc's who ref as well. Go figure?

I am a firm believer that there needs to be a mandatory small group of refs who get paid to go out and watch new refs. Being an employer I never let a person come to work the first day and work alone. In soccer we let them go to class and then put them out on the field hopefully with other experienced refs. I remember when my son started he might go to bantam games alone and the system just does not support them unless they are doing a game with 3 refs and at that they only get a few minutes of feedback maybe from a more experienced ref on the field. Not all refs make good mentors. So to me the answer is charge the players more, then have the teams pay more for the use of mentors. It is not the total answer but a thought. We

also should have mandatory assessments. Don't most employers evaluate their employees at least yearly? Time, qualified manpower and money are the needed ingredients to be successful.

- I hope you received my response to your survey. Still have a question about coaches using profanity and what to do if only the line judge hears and not the center ref. Also does a referee need to send you a report if he ejects a coach with out a red card. Does it need to be on the official report or can it just be a letter? Also I am dealing with a situation where a guy was acting as a coach but was not on the roster who reamed refs and the Association where he is at just wants to not let him coach next season. Any suggestions on what you think should happen? I have a lot of coaches verbally abusing coaches and I need to fix at the XXSL level. We do require coaches to sign a code of conduct but that seems to not be working. I know some refs are very timid and can not get experience because coaches are being to rude with them and then they don't want to ref or do centers especially. Any helpful suggestions you can give me to deal with this I would greatly appreciate it.

- Patience with youth referees

Active recruiting of adult referees so that the youths have a support system

Having experienced referees present as observers and mentors.

- Less class/book time, and more field work. Eight hours of class and Eight hours of field, or better 4 hours of class, and 12 hours of field work. Inspecting Goals, Inspecting fields, handling coaches/parents, knowing when to yellow/red card, seeing actual goal keeper fouls made and fouls made against a goal keeper (for example the keeper picking up a ball after it has been intentionally passed back, and example of against-when a player kicks the ball out of the keepers hands), how to write reports during/after game (not in a classroom), etc.

The book only scratches the surface of Soccer, and for me personally, I had never played soccer before I had to ref my first game. So, needless to say, my first game was a nightmare. Therefore, in Taylor County, I personally am on the field or have another experienced ref on the field when a new ref centers their first game. I tell the both coaches, that I have a new ref with their first center, and that I will be on the field, and will have the final say, if I think they have made a miscall.

- this is what I am hearing from coaches in XXSL.. They seem to think the refs know what they are doing but they won't blow their whistle loud enough and won't be decisive enough of what they are calling. I have had to deal with some coaches this season and suspend some because the ref did not do their job and give them a red card for using profanity. Coaches need to be reeled in a little bit and lay off these kids because the things they are saying turn refs away. KVSL will be addressing that problem. My refs at ERSC are watched every game. They do not know they are being watched because I don't tell them I am going to be there or one of the other board members. That way I can get a true picture of what they are doing. I always put the new ones with an adult usually the first couple of games. I think we need to do more mentoring and maybe this sounds ridiculous but give them a whistle in class and tell them to blow.

KVSL needs to be more consistent in our rules because some refs ask for a roster and most don't. Mine do because if they don't i won't put them back in center. The other complaint we have in KVSL is that we offer refs only on U9 and up. One Association pays refs for U7/8 and it causes lots of problems with coaches. And that is where I have had lots of problems this season. I have a problem right now I am dealing with about a coach and a ref. When I get that info I will let you know. Our young referees this weekend at our U10 Tournament did fantastic with good adult input as well. XXXXX did an excellent job of the refs. We do have good referees in our League and even though fans and coaches don't seem to agree, Sorry I have gone on and on. Thanks for all you do for soccer as well. One last question. If a side ref hears a coach using profanity and the center ref does not what does he do about it?

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