

Referee Training and Mentoring Process

The Mansfield Referee Committee has formalize our Referee Training and Mentoring Process. We elicit the assistance and cooperation of coaches at all levels to make this process work

- U05 & U06 games
 - These games are used as to train referees working their initial center position games. These referees have been moved up from the Assistant Referee role at the U09/U10 and higher levels.
 - These individuals have been evaluated and have shown that they have the knowledge of the game and maturity to start working the Center Referee position.
 - ALL of these people are going to be apprehensive and tentative during their first few games, but should become better as they gather experience.
 - This is also the level that we lose a significant number of referees due to constant criticism from coaches and spectators. As coaches, you are part of the training process with these referees.
 - Your support during these formative games is essential. Please talk to them during the game and give them encouragement and constructive criticism (blow your whistle louder or tell me what direction verbally as well as with your signals). Please keep in mind that these are beginning referees and what they need mostly is encouragement
- U07 and U08 games
 - At this level, we are trying to hone the referee's confidence and awareness of the game as well as the nuances of player, coach and spectator management
- U09 Games
 - These games will be used to train referees to work in referee crews (one center referee and two assistant referees) and in the Diagonal System of Control (the method in which referees "run" the field).
 - They are also used to provide new Assistant Referees their first experience refereeing.
 - It may be common to have the senior center referee swap with one of the ARs, who is being mentored in the Diagonal System of Control, for part of the game.
 - This training method allows the trainee to
 - Observe a senior referee
 - Apply what was observed
 - Be critiqued at half time
 - Correct or improve upon what was talked about at half time.
 - The senior referee will swap back at the 15 mark to finish the game.
 - The referee crew will participate in a debrief session at the completion of the match.
 - The senior referee will supply the Referee Committee with a written evaluation of the trainee

- U10 Games
 - These games are used to train and mentor Assistant Referees.
 - Most of the ARs on these games will have worked at least one season. However new referees may also be assigned as ARs to these games.
 - Center Referees and Assistant Referees will be actively mentored during game by either shadowing or written evaluation.
 - There will be frequent coaching on applying the rules of the game and on the nuances of offside and observing Center Referee position where the Assistant Referee is in a better position to observe an infraction

- Referee Mentoring
 - Shadowing of the ARs by a Senior Referee on U09 and above games is one of our best mentoring tactics.
 - The mentor gives the referee pointers on referee position relative to the play and on how they should execute proper flag mechanics or position
 - Mentors will observe and evaluate a referee and recommend advancement
 - Board Members and Field Marshals will observe a specific game to evaluate and assist a mentor in a negative environment
 - Peer-to-peer group sessions develop after almost every match, and senior referees have been directed to listen and correct inconsistencies, misapplication of the rules of the game, and improper interpretations of game situations
 - In some cases referees have been identified and paired with specific senior referees. The senior referees give them special help to overcome problems or to assist in the upgrade process

- The culmination of this training process is the upgrading of a referee to work on U11+ games. When we move a referee to center these upper level games, the training process essentially starts over. We reinforce the good habits and try to eliminate the bad ones. According to the USSF the training process never ends.