



PROFILE OF THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE



CONTEXT OF THE PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:

- Officiates grassroots games (youth and adult competitions) in small-sided 7v7, 9v9, and/or 11v11 outdoor fields
- Works primarily with Grassroots Referees (new or experienced)
- Facilitates games for grassroots players (youth and adult)
- Collaborates with coaches with diverse backgrounds (new and experienced coaches, volunteers, etc.) to ensure player safety and responsible spectator behavior

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:

- Facilitates a fair, fun, and safe game for the players by enforcing and applying the Laws of the Game
- Makes and clearly communicates decisions based on perception and interpretation of player's actions
- Facilitates understanding and application the Laws of the Game for players and coaches
- Keeps a record of the game (goals scored, misconduct, injuries, etc.)

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE:

- Prepares prior to the game, manages post-game activities, and reflects on the performance after the game
- Demonstrates leadership characteristics before, during, and after the game
- Takes ownership of self-development through online and field session opportunities offered by U.S. Soccer
- Accepts or declines games in a timely manner
- Ensures that the field conditions are safe
- Officiates and maintains control of the game
- Works together with other match officials in a referee team
- Has final decision-making authority on matters that apply to the Laws of the Game
- Is accountable to the competition authority (youth or adult league, U.S. Soccer)

TASKS AND PROCESSES OF THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE

PREPARING FOR A GAME

- Navigating the game assignment process
- Understanding the game
- Maintaining physical aptitude
- Performing pre-game activities

OFFICIATING A GAME

- Understanding the game
- Making decisions that impact the game
- Demonstrating physical aptitude
- Communicating decisions clearly and confidently
- Leading the referee team

MANAGING POST-GAME ACTIVITIES

- Concluding the game
- Completing the game report(s)

REFLECTING ON THE PERFORMANCE

- Reflecting and evaluating

PRIOR TO THE GAME



The Grassroots Referee is able to prepare for a game and is competent in the below.

NAVIGATING THE GAME ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Invest in technical equipment
- Use assigning platforms/applications
- Communicate availability to work games
- Gain knowledge about the game assignment process
- Connect with assignor(s)
- Connect with referee team
- Connect with referee coach(es)/mentor(s)
- Invest in appropriate technical equipment (uniform, whistle, cards, flags, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

- Professional appearance with appropriate attire and equipment
- Game opportunities to apply knowledge about preparation for games in various competitions, season after season
- Line of communication with assignor(s) and referee colleagues
- Availability of the referee to accept appropriate level games
- Resource for advice about game assignments
- Positive good impression that typically earns respect from players and coaches

UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Gain knowledge about team tactics that teams may use during the game
- Understand the Laws of the Game and rules of competition
- Understand the level of match management involved in various grassroots competitions
- Understands performance environment applicable to a team(s), club(s), or league (fun, development, win at all cost, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

- Game plan that addresses:
 - the expectations from players and coaches
 - positioning and movement adjusted to team tactics
 - signals, mechanics, and decision making
- Prepare for decision making to promote a fair, fun, and safe environment
- Prepare for decision making to maintain control of the game
- Understand the meaning of reading the game

MAINTAINING PHYSICAL APTITUDE

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Gain knowledge about basic physical fitness
- Understand the physical demands of the game
- Identify information about nutrition, rest, and recovery, and their relation to fitness
- Identify information about warm up and cool down drills for before and after the game
- Attend referee field sessions in their local area and/or competitions (youth and adult, U.S. Soccer, etc.)
- Understand the environmental considerations (weather) surrounding outdoor training sessions (hydration, equipment, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

- A training plan to reach personal goals related to fitness
- Awareness of fitness for the performance environments in grassroots competitions
- Develop a warmup and cool down routine for before and after the game, respectively
- Self-comfort and self-confidence to lead the accepted game at current level of fitness
- Use preventative approaches to prepare for the performance environment



PERFORMING PRE-GAME ACTIVITIES

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Actively participate with the referee team in a pre-game conference and in conducting pre-game inspections (the field of play, the game ball, and the player's equipment)
- Actively participate with the referee team in checking the rosters and checking-in players and coaches
- Connect with coaches and players via check-in, pre-game conference, and/or coin toss
- Actively participate with the referee team in a group and individual warmup prior to the game

OUTCOMES:

- Ensured safety prior to the game in collaboration with players and coaches
- Environment of cooperation prior to the game to promote positive sporting behavior
- Ensured low risk of injury during a game for the referee team
- Positive relationship with referee team during pregame activities and to prepare to work as a team during the game

DURING THE GAME



The Grassroots Referee is able to officiate games and is competent in the below.

MAKING DECISIONS THAT IMPACT THE GAME

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Perceive, interpret, and make decisions on the field of play (including fouls)
- Make split-second decisions based on the collected information
- Scan and use position and movement of players as cues for taking optimal position
- Use [FIFA Considerations](#) to interpret players' actions (challenges, handball, offenses, etc.)
- Collaborate with the referee team to make decisions during the game
- Make decisions based on the current and relevant Laws of the Game and rules of competition

OUTCOMES:

- Application of decision-making process for the match official
- Consistency of decisions during a match
- Optimal position to witness the action (first step of decision-making process)
- Increased consistency and accuracy of decision on the field
- Clear and confident communication with players, coaches, others in the field
- Teamwork
- Application of the Laws of the Game
- Informed decisions and not guessing
- Safety and control of the game
- Safe, fair, and fun environment

UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Have a basic understanding of team tactics
- Read the game by recognizing each team's general style of play (and team tactics)
- Recognizes key players (by technical skill, position, speed, behavior, etc.)
- Recognize potential conflicts
- Apply the Laws of the Game based on observed players' actions and considerations for interpretation
- Apply knowledge about advantage, offside, fouls, misconduct, restarts, etc.
- Understands the role of the coach and team officials and recognizes responsible and irresponsible behavior

OUTCOMES:

- Adapted decision-making to fit the game and players' needs for fair, fun, and safe environment
- Improved positioning and movement to witness the action (first step of making decision)
- Positively managed game for players, coaches, spectators, and referee team
- Basic management of coaches and technical area where appropriate
- Relationships that help manage players' behavior, emotions, etc.
- Recognize actions to prevent escalation
- Clear and confident communication with players and coaches
- Recognize clues for anticipation about where to move for the next phase of play

DEMONSTRATING PHYSICAL APTITUDE

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Keep up with the pace of the game
- Apply various speeds (jog/run/sprint) and directional changes based on level of play and teams' tactics

OUTCOMES:

- Improved positioning and movement to see between players
- Proximity and angle of view to active play
- Proximity to manage players' emotions when needed



COMMUNICATING CLEARLY AND CONFIDENTLY

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Demonstrate calm, confident body language when communicating public decisions
- Manage player and coach behavior with verbal and non-verbal communication
- Communicates decisions using signals, body language, and tools (flags, whistle, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

- Display of confidence in decision and clarity of the decision
- Clear, public communication of decisions
- Player or coach behavior refocused to their role in the game

LEADING THE REFEREE TEAM

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Establish the standard for foul selection on the field
- Establish the standard for misconduct
- Collaborate with colleagues to make decisions that are of the view of the referee
- Take initiative to make decisions that contribute to overall game management (whether Referee, AR, or 4th Official)
- Keep a record of the game (goals, cards, injuries, etc.) in conjunction with the referee team

OUTCOMES:

- Consistent referee team foul and misconduct selection
- Increased awareness and correct decisions by the referee team
- Collaboration between referee team

AFTER THE GAME



The Grassroots Referee is able to manage post-game activities, reflect on the performance, and is competent in the below.

CONCLUDING THE GAME

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Carry out post-game activities (gather game balls, join rest of the referee team in the field of play, monitor opposing players)
- Lead the referee team to collect and verify relevant information for the game report
- Return player passes and signed roster when applicable

OUTCOMES:

- Smooth transition from end of the game to post-game activities
- Increased accuracy and clarity of report(s) for competition authority
- Report that meets the standards of the competition and/or recommendations by U.S. Soccer

COMPLETING THE GAME REPORT(S)

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Confirm the accuracy of the report information with other members of the referee team for the game
- Document all required information (score, substitutions, misconduct, etc.) in the referee game report
- Recognize and submit when a supplemental referee game report is needed by the competition authority
- Review and confirm that the information in the report(s) is clear and that the language in the Laws of the Game is used
- Submit completed report(s) on time to the competition authority and other administrative roles (assignor, SRC, etc.)

OUTCOMES:

- Understanding the aspects of submitting reports and areas for improvement
- Knowledge about basic components of submitting reports as recommended by U.S. Soccer

REFLECTING AND EVALUATING

THE GRASSROOTS REFEREE IS ABLE TO:

- Review their individual performance
- Review their performance as a team
- Engage with referee coach/mentor/peers (referee team) when feedback is offered
- Understand the importance of lifelong learning
- Recognize and understand areas for improvement related to habits or incidents during the game

OUTCOMES:

- Identification of positive aspects in the performance and areas for improvement
- Continued growth (emotional and technical) as a referee
- Cultivation of relationships within the soccer referee community
- Participation in development opportunities
- Consultation of resources to assist with development of competencies of the grassroots referee (referee coach, mentor, assignor, LOTG, online, etc.)
- Identification of next steps and development plan to practice prior to the next game
- Application of new knowledge and behavior during the next game experience
- Increased comfort and confidence performing the tasks of the referee and demonstrating competencies for each of the tasks