Referee Training
The Referee

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Safety is Job #1

- The referee’s primary job on the field is to ensure safety of the players (both physically and mentally).
- Pick 6 Sports’ mission is to put a Smile on a Kid’s Face by helping them build self-confidence through a positive, fun and safe environment.
Setting the Tone

• The referee sets the tone for the game:
  • Have fun and keep the game fun for the kids.
  • Be excited. This is youth sports. It’s ok to give kids high fives and tell them they are doing a good job.
  • Support and encourage players. This helps build their self-esteem and sends message to coaches, parents, and players that this is for fun and development, not championships or scholarships.
  • Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.
The referee also officiates the game:

- What you permit, you promote. What you penalize, you discourage.

- Imagine yourself as an 8 year old kid. How would this impact your self confidence: getting tackle to the ground every time you get the ball, kids taunting other kids, or a coach or parent yelling at you? The ref is there to prevent this.

- If in doubt, throw a flag. You can always pick it up later.
General Tips

• Plan on being criticized during the game.
  • It is part of the job, but know how to deal with it.
  • Think about this: Every call will make half the teams unhappy.
  • The key is to be clear so the other half can be happy. (You’ll make everyone mad if no one knows the call.)
• Be consistent with your calls.
• Present the proper image of confidence in your calls, but not arrogance
You are NOT Alone

• You are part of a team:
  • Your co-referee
  • The field manager
  • Pick 6 Sports
  • Volunteer coach
  • Parents
Arrival/Check-In

• Arrive at your scheduled start time for the week
• Ensure you wear your uniform (ref jersey and black pants or shorts)
• Ensure you have your equipment (whistle, yellow flag, stop watch and pen)
• Check in with the field manager
  • Receive your scorecards and field/role assignments
  • Updates on points of emphasis, feedback from prior week
• Sign in/log your start time
• Assist with setting up the fields
Before Game

• Get your teams from the practice field 5-7 minutes before scheduled start of game
• Talk to coaches and teams
  • Introduce yourself and share your name
  • What questions or concerns they have about the upcoming game (great time to answer questions about rules)
  • Any trick plays the ref should be aware of?
  • Share any points of emphasis for this week
• Equipment check
  • Mouth guards
  • Jerseys tucked in
  • Flags on the hips with extra belt length tucked in or taped
• Double check cones on field are placed in the right spots after previous games
• Ensure adult volunteer is in charge of running the scoreboard
The Field

![Image of a football field showing the end zone and no running zones.](Image)
Game Management

- You are responsible for keeping **time**
  - Game Time: Two 20-minute halves
    - Pre-K/K games are two 15-minute halves with 1 minute half
    - Note: Do NOT call out “Last Play” when there are a few seconds left in half or game. Half or game is over when the clock runs out.
  - Half Time: 3 minutes
  - Play Clock: 30 seconds from spot to snap
  - QB Pass Clock: 7 seconds
- You are responsible for keeping **score**
  - Keep track on scorecard
  - Call out the score to each sideline after each score
  - Confirm accuracy of parent-run scoreboard
- You are responsible for tracking **game**
  - Announce downs and “No run zones”
  - Announce penalties

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Position at Snap

Head Ref
positions self on
7 Yard Rush Line near
center of field

Side Ref
positions self on sideline
at Line of Scrimmage
Side Ref should move towards middle of field to get a view from behind the play and then trail the play from behind. This also allows side ref to rotate back to their original sideline if the player cuts back across the field.

Play AWAY From Side Ref

Head Ref moves quickly to sideline (opposite Side Ref) and gets in front of the play to have good view if ball carrier steps on line.
Side Ref should quickly get up the sideline to watch the play from in front of the play.

Head Ref trails behind the play as the play goes up field. This also allows them to rotate back to the far sideline if the player cuts back across the field.
Head Ref

- Positioning:
  - Line up on 7-Yard Rush line

- Responsibilities:
  - Keeping score, keeping play moving, and ensuring that the game is going well
  - Spokesperson for the crew: communicate all penalties
  - Watch and count down 30 Second Play Clock
  - Mark the ball at the end of play and call out down
  - Maintain scorecard
  - Watch for and call all penalties, but head ref is in better position to see:
    - Illegal Motion
    - Illegal Rush - If the Rusher left early and did not reset
    - Sideline - Covering the other sideline that is away from the side ref to ensure player doesn't step out.
Side Ref

Positioning:
• On the sideline at the Line of Scrimmage

Responsibilities:
• Game Clock - Should let both teams know every 5 minutes how much time is left. When time is under 5 minutes in the half should let teams know every minute. (15 minutes left in the half, 10 Minutes Left, 5 Minutes left, 4 Minutes left, 3, 2, 1.) Reminder, do not call out “Last Play” to help offense.
• Line of Scrimmage - In plays where the ball is returned to line of scrimmage, the side ref should be in position to mark where the ball should be placed.
• Down - Assist head ref in keeping track of down. (Also can communicate down to near sideline)
• Scoreboard - Assist head ref in ensuring the scoreboard matches the official scorecard
• Watch for and call all penalties, but side ref is in better position to see:
  • Offside
  • Illegal Rush - Watch for ineligible defenders crossing line of scrimmage to rush QB
  • Watch to ensure ball cross the line of scrimmage in a Pass Only Zone
  • Watch for QB contact - Does the rush run into the QB?
  • Sidelines - Watch the near sideline to ensure player doesn't step out
Working Together

- Designated positioning maximizes view of field of play
  - This doesn't mean they can't call other fouls, but:
    - Side judge has a better view on the line of scrimmage
    - Head ref has better view of rush line and field side-to-side
- Both refs should whistle the play dead when they see a flag be pulled.
- When the play goes past the line of scrimmage, the ref away from the ball should trail behind the play to get a view and the ref closest to the play should be in front of the play, looking at the ball / down the field.
After the Game

• Shake hands with all players and coaches (players go thru the line to shake hands)
• Recap the score with the head coaches
  • Score on website is recorded as 1 - 0 (or 1-1 in event of tie), regardless of actual score
• Circle winning team on the scorecard and turn into field manager
• Ensure cones on field are in put back into position
• Take a break, get water before next game
After Last Game of Day

• Pick up all of the cones and scoreboard on your field
• Assist with cleaning up game field (leave it nicer than how we found it)
• Ensure all scorecards have been turned into the field manager
• Talk with field manager:
  • Confirm schedule for next week
  • Provide feedback on games
• Log your end time
Getting Paid

• To ensure prompt payment:
  • Turn in scorecards for games you ref
  • Log start time and end time each week
• Refs are paid every other Friday
• Pay is via direct deposit (set up during on-boarding process)
Referee Training

Thank You

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