

North Shore Youth Referee Development Program

Introduction

This document lays out the training and support available for youth referees working on the North Shore in the youth and Pee Wee leagues. Also included is the expected development path for youth referees.

Getting Started

The first step is to take a class 5 Youth Referee course (8 hours of class work). These are organized by the NSYSA Regional Referee Coordinator in conjunction with the NVRC with the approval of the NSYSA Referee In Chief. To find out where and when the course will be held. –Contact the NVRC or look at the NVRC Summer/Fall Activity guide ,these Clinics may also be listed on the BCSA website (www.bcsoccer.net). A Class 5 referee must be 12 years old at the date of the Course.

On passing the Class 5 test the Course Instructor will pass the list of referees to the NS Referee in Chief, who will pass on the names and phone numbers to the *NSYSA* Pee Wee Referee Coordinator. The NSYSA Pee Wee Referee Coordinator will allocate new referees to each of the Clubs on the North Shore for their Pee Wee (under 10 year olds) games. If a referee has not heard from an assigner within two game weekends of passing the Class 5 test they should call the *NSYSA* Pee Wee Referee Coordinator or the *NSYSA* Referee in Chief. Any **adult** passing the Class five test will be passed on to the NS Youth Soccer Referee Coordinator for use in divisional games (U11 – U18).

The Class five training is per FIFA guidelines – it covers the Laws of the game and in addition the Laws as they apply to the small sided games– The referee should contact their Club in order to obtain a copy of the rules as they apply to North Shore Pee Wee games (eg – how many players, game lengths, and other special rules for the local Pee Wee games). It is the responsibility of the Clubs to provide a copy of the local rules to each and all of their Pee Wee Referees.

First Assignments

Club Assigners will call and allocate Class five referees to Pee Wee games. A referee is expected to make every effort to accept assignments – take the phone call, know when they are free the next two Saturdays, write down the assignment date, time, game location and the assigner’s name and phone number – Assigners work very hard each week to find referees and not returning messages or asking them to call back could result in the referee not being phoned for a while. Once the referee accepts the assignment they must make every attempt to get to it. If they can’t due to illness or a family conflict they must call the assigner immediately. Once booked a referee cannot cancel to take a “more lucrative” booking from another assigner.

The Class five youth referees will be used for U7 and U8 games only for the first two months. The referees are to use these games to practice and improve their skills – perfection is not expected. After two months the older and more confident referees will be assigned to U9 matches and exceptional new referees may be assigned to a U10 match (before Christmas).

If a referee receives any pressure, correction of calls, complaints or abuse from coaches or parents on the sidelines they **MUST** report it to their assigner – this is not allowed and will be dealt with by the relevant club.

Mentoring and Advice

The only people qualified to give a referee advice about refereeing are NSYSA authorized mentors or assessors in addition to BCSA authorized referee instructors and assessors. The Club assigners have had a lot of contact with young referees and understand the problems they face. The Club assigners also know what to do if a referee needs help. A referee should build a relationship with and communicate with their Club assigner – if the assigner believes that it would help they can contact the NSYSA Pee Wee Referee Coordinator and arrange for a mentor to watch the referee at work and help them. North Shore Clubs try to get every referee mentored at least once a year. The mentor will be an adult Referee as authorized (by the NSYSA Referee In Chief).

The North Shore also runs “Referee Development Club” on the **First Friday** of every month (the second Friday in Sept if the first is a holiday) from September to March for youth referees. The club is held at the Delbrook Recreation Centre from 6:00 – 7:00pm. Attendance is free, a Senior Referee will always be available to answer questions and coach the referees in attendance as to specific game management skills. Attending the referee development club will help prepare a referee for U10 and higher games. – eg in reviewing and interpreting the laws of the game based upon actual on field experiences.

Promotion through Pee Wee

After a year at most officiating U8 and U9 games, the referee will be promoted to U10 games. Pee Wee games are considered “training games” for referees. The parents and coaches could quite easily look after a small sided scrimmage for 7 to 9 year olds if necessary, the only reason to have a referee there is to build experience, ready to take on divisional competitive games. If a referee is assigned to a U10 game after their first year they are expected to take it – if they are concerned, they should request a mentor at the game. If the mentor advises that the referee has potential but is not ready for U10 yet then the NSYSA Pee Wee referee coordinator may consider an additional few matches at U9. But they must move to U10 before Christmas or resign from refereeing.

Once a referee has officiated at least one pre Christmas U10 game (no off-sides) they are eligible for U10 after Christmas (off-sides apply) and are expected to work in the U10 age group for the rest of the year. Occasionally a referee who is very keen and shows potential can receive coaching on the offside rule and U10 officiating after Referees Club and then be eligible for U10 without working pre Christmas U10 matches.

After a minimum year at U10 (except in special cases) the referee's name and phone number will be given to the NSYSA Referee in Chief for forwarding to the NSYSA Referee coordinator. The referee is now promoted to divisional games. The referee will not be contacted by any divisional assigners until the Pee Wee Referee Coordinator and NSYSA Referee in Chief have approved their promotion. It is expected that between 60 – 100 referees will be promoted each year. Once promoted the referee will not be used again for Pee Wee games.

Divisional Refereeing

Once promoted to divisional games the referee will not be offered Pee Wee games. A referee is expected to take the Class four Clinic as soon as possible (minimum eligible age 14 at date of Clinic). Contact BCSA to find out when and where a Class 4 Clinic is being held (20 hours). Without class four or higher a referee cannot expect to be assigned many youth divisional games. After one year as a class four the referee can take the Class 3 course (20 hours) as long as they have one suitable BCSA assessment and have reached the age of 16 at the time of the Course. If nervous about refereeing divisional games a referee can request an assessment or can act as an assistant referee to gain experience.

All referees Class 4 and up MUST attend an Annual Refresher Course and register with the BCSA as a Referee on an annual basis. To register the Referee will go to the BCSA Web Site and follow the links under the caption “ Technical”. As to date, time and location of Annual Refresher Clinics again the Referee will go to the BCSA Web Site.

Also the referee should consider joining the Vancouver branch of the BC Soccer Referees Association (www.bcsra.com) and attend their monthly meetings, which includes at least 45 minutes of technical training from the BCSA Education Committee.

The BCSRA provides a great safety net and support team for all young referees wanting to follow this route.

Assistant Refereeing

Divisional youth soccer requires qualified assistant referees (linesmen) for all games in the U16-U18 age groups and all select (metro) soccer games – these are class five or above referees. The NSYSA Referee Coordinator who will assign games as an Assistant Referee. As an “Assistant” a referee gains valuable experience from working with and watching senior referees. It is also important for experienced/senior referees to occasionally “run lines” for younger referees in order to provide on field guidance and assistance.

Assessments

The North Shore Youth Soccer Association funds and runs a referee assessment program for referees officiating divisional matches. A trained assessor will be sent to a referee's game without warning the referee and will carry out an assessment. They will discuss their observations with the referee and will submit a written report from U14 and up game assessments. **This is not an official BCSA assessment.** The assessments are intended to help coach and improve the referees and to determine the suitable age group for the referee to officiate. A referee can request an assessment from the NSYSA Referee In Chief or if an official assessment is required for promotion then contact BCSA. Referees should continue to attend Referee Development Club on the First Friday of every month at Delbrook Recreation Centre (6pm – 7pm).

Beyond Divisional Youth

A referee is expected to move up through the age groups (2 years below their own age) building experience and developing their skills until they are ready for more challenging and exciting work. This would include Provincial Youth Cup games, Adult recreational and boys/girls select team league games.

To move on to higher challenges a referee should improve their Class qualification (minimum Class 3) and request frequent BCSA assessments (at least one per year). After one year refereeing with a class three certification and two assessments the BCSA might invite the Referee to attend a Class 2 Clinic. By invitation the Class one follows after that, then, National Referee and finally FIFA referee.

NSYSA Referee Committee
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Eric R. Keller, Referee-in-Chief