

Tournament Referee Opportunities

Note: For the purposes of this document, Tournament and All-Stars mean the same thing.

Tournaments

The Tournament season offers referees with at least 2-3 regular seasons' experience the chance to volunteer and work AYSO matches all over Southern California. Stay fit, keep your skills sharp, gain valuable match experience, increase your game count towards your upgrade plans and have more fun than you imagined you could running all over Southern California!

Tournament play offers the qualified referee a distinctive tournament environment and challenging level of play to officiate from December through June. As a member of a three-person referee crew attached to a Tournament team, you will have the chance to travel and officiate in a higher level of play for teams all over Southern California. Even if you don't have a player on a Tournament team, you are in a unique position to help teams by volunteering as a tournament referee, or even better, as part of a tournament referee crew made up of referees you already know and enjoy working with. For more details, contact John Ciolino, Director of Tournament Referees or Mark Spear, Region 9 RRA.

Extra League

Extra League tournaments offer the more experienced referee a level of play much closer to that of Bronze level club soccer. Extra League qualified referees can stay in post-season shape by forming a crew and volunteering to work tournaments throughout the tournament season or by volunteering to assist an Extra League team with their tournament referee requirements. Extra League team referees from the Fall season automatically become Extra League tournament referees traveling with their teams and even get the chance to work as a regular referee crew repeatedly. For more details, contact Mark Spear (he's also our Director of Extra League Referees).

What Qualified Referees With At Least 2-3 Seasons of Experience Need To Do

- 1) Get the following information together in one place:
 - Your AYSO ID number (if you've been using our referee scheduling program then you probably already know it well)
 - Your current certification level (Regional, Intermediate, Advanced or National)
 - The certification date of your level
 - Your contact information: Cell phone and email address at a minimum
 - The highest level you feel confident officiating as a Center Referee and as an AR (e.g., an Intermediate referee might feel confident enough to center a U12 match, but only confident as an AR on a U14 match)
- 2) If you have a player on a Tournament or Extra League team, be sure your coach and/or team manager have your all of your information from #1 above. They need **all** of this information to complete their referee application/nomination forms for tournaments.
- 3) If you do **not** have a player on a Tournament or Extra League team, let Mark Spear know and, for tournaments only, also let John Ciolino know that you'd like to volunteer - either individually or as part of a crew you've already pulled together from amongst your colleagues. Be sure to specify any date or distance limitations. Trust us, you are likely already HIRED!

Some Additional Suggestions For Tournament Officiating

Gear up!

- Invest in yourself: acquire alternate color jerseys and long sleeve versions as well. Winter all over SoCal is normally quite a bit cooler than the Fall season, especially in the deserts and coastal communities, often windy and sometimes rainy (unlike Region 9, there are tournaments that can, and will, play in the rain). The official sequence for the use of alternate, wide stripe jersey colors (per USSF and AYSO National Rules & Regulations) is: Gold, Black, Red, Blue and that glorious Green. TIP: Keep them neatly folded and packaged in gallon sized zip-lock type bags (or those fancy packing cubes you can find at places like ebags.com).
- If you haven't done so already, invest in under armor or other sweat/cold management gear (e.g., compression shirts and shorts) and some player's gloves. A great trick is to wear those groovy black wrist-sweat bands under your watch. You can wet them if it gets hot and when it's cold and/or rainy, they actually help you stay warmer.
- Invest in a decent warm up pants and jacket combo. Look for these in the Referee gear sections of supplier's websites (typically black with gold or white accents - it's a referee thing). Nothing beats coming off a windy "damp" first half and pulling on a decent jacket or pants while you stretch. It also makes the long walk back to the ref tent or car more comfortable.
- Bring a portable chair! Some tourneys give them as part of the referee "schwag", those memorabilia goodies we sometimes even work for, but most do not. Nothing beats hydrating while actually sitting in a chair for a few minutes between matches or while on standby duty.
- Upgrade your ref bag to the wheeled variety. No sense staggering under the weight of a tournament referee bag. If possible, get one that fits on an airline in the overhead compartments. Then it can be used for double duty – a regular vacation or business trip, or flying cross-country to a tournament!
- Invest in a set of your own flags. Once you get that \$25 pair of thick, cushy handled swivel flags, you'll wonder why you didn't think of it sooner! In most tournaments, if you work 3 games the odds are 2 of them will probably be as an AR. You might as well be holding a comfortable flag!
- Obtain backup gear: a second whistle, an extra pencil or two, a couple of coins, a second watch (if you're upgrading past Intermediate, that's a HUGE hint for your assessment). TIP: A roll of your favorite TP in a zip-lock bag is worth GOLD at some parks. Not all tournaments are created equal.

Be Ready, Reliable & Improve your Skills!

- **This goes without saying:** show up at the check-in station or referee tent no later than 30 minutes before your assigned match. Tournament RAs and their staffs will regard you as a HERO if you show up 45-50 minutes before and are in uniform ready to rock and roll at that 30-minute prior mark. Every minute you are prepared, hydrated, mentally focused, fully stretched out and warmed up before they need you is a golden minute others will remember. They will remember you and that you came from Region 9. When you look great, our Region looks good. Tap that pride!

- Hydrate, stretch and be properly fueled for the physical demands you will have to meet. Do not skimp or shortcut your body. The players deserve your best. Remember, tournament play is much more intense than the regular Fall Season play. TIP: FIFA has a great nutrition booklet for players and makes a brief mention for referees. USSF/Cal South also has an in-service training module on referee nutrition recently created by Reed Christy, a USSF National Referee and Physio.
- Participate in fitness training! Train with your crew between tournaments and warm up together before matches. Nothing tells coaches, players and spectators that they're about to have the best match ever like three officials warming up, stretching and looking like a team BEFORE they get to meet you in person. Contact Chris Page, RRA if you want USSF referee-specific fitness training opportunities during the tournament season, he's already out there anyway.
- Watch other games. Don't just watch your own team's matches. Identify the upper level/experienced officials and go watch their matches between, before or after yours. You are bound to learn something new you can put into your skills toolkit.