

AYSO National Assessor Course

Course Guide

Goal:

To train referees assessors in the psychology of interacting with and assessing the ability of experienced referees, who are being evaluated for National Referee grade level, to control U-16 and U-19 matches. Those who successfully complete the course may perform properly authorized assessments for National Referee Badge level upgrade as well as those they are currently authorized to perform.

Learning Objectives:

- Review AYSO Philosophies
- Know AYSO Referee and Referee Assessor Program requirements
- Recognize the importance of the referee/assessor partnership
- Review the “Observing the National Referee Candidate” narrative
- Learn what level of match control to expect from referees officiating in U-16 and U-19 matches
- Re-affirm acceptance of the “AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed”
- Provide candidates with the skills and techniques necessary to constructively critique candidates for National Referee grade level.
- Prepare candidates to conduct positive and effective a post game interviews for upper level referees

Requirements to Become a National Assessor:

- At least one year as a certified Assessor
- Performed a minimum of 5 observations and 5 assessments on Intermediate Referees seeking upgrade to Advanced Referee.
- Successful completion of the National Assessor Course
- 90% on the National Referee Assessor Examination
- Successful completion of one (1) practice assessment on a referee officiating an under 16 AYSO match (or equivalent) and one (1) practice assessment on a referee officiating an under 19 AYSO match (or equivalent) and approved as a National Referee Assessor by the Section Referee Administrator, or the Section Director of Referee Assessment and a National Referee Assessor.

Course Instructors:

- The lead instructor for this course must be an Advanced Referee Instructor or higher, and must be at least a National Referee Assessor.
- Assistant instructors must be an Intermediate Referee Instructor or higher

Equipment and Materials

- Course roster
- Course Lesson Plans
- Visual aids (PowerPoint presentation or overhead viewgraphs)
- Overhead projector and/or laptop and projector for PowerPoint presentation
- Flipcharts and marking pens
- Referee Upgrade and Assessment Forms Package (one per student)
- Referee Assessor Upgrade Form (one per student)
- Referee Assessor/Mentor Manual (one per student)
- Course Evaluation Forms (one per student)
- Course Examination (one per student)

Order of Presentation: (5 - 6 hours with breaks)

1. Introduction and the AYSO Referee and Referee Assessor Programs (15 Minutes)
2. The Psychology and Philosophy of Referee Assessment (25 Minutes)
3. Observing National Referee Candidates - Workshop (60 Minutes)
4. Game Control Expectations for U-16 and U-19 Matches (60 Minutes)
5. Giving Constructive Criticism – Lecture/Practice (45 Minutes)
6. Case Scenarios and Post Game Interview – Lecture/Workshop (60 Minutes)
7. National Referee Assessor Examination and Course Conclusion (45 Minutes)

Class 1. Introduction and the AYSO Referee and Referee Assessor Programs (15 Minutes)

Goal:

1. To state the purpose of this course and to define its place in the AYSO National Referee Program

Objectives:

1. Get to know the instructors and other students
2. Understand the purpose of the National Referee Assessor Course
3. Know the AYSO Referee and Referee Assessor Program Requirements

KEYS:

- Introduce the Instructor Staff. Review any administrative details such as breaks, meals, smoking privileges and rest rooms. Use an appropriate icebreaker for the students
- State that the purpose of the course is to prepare qualified candidates to:
 - become National Referee Assessors
 - perform an assessment service to referees who are attempting to improve their officiating skills and to be upgraded to the National Referee Levels
- Briefly review the AYSO philosophy and its importance to the National Referee Program
- Quickly review the Referee and Referee Assessor Program requirements.
- Explain that each National Assessor candidate must be a certified assessor with a minimum 5 Observations and 5 assessments and one year in grade.
- Explain that assessment examples and discussions are geared to U-16 and U-19 play

Close by linking to *“The Psychology and Philosophy of Referee Assessment”*.

Class 2. The Psychology and Philosophy of Referee Assessment at the National Level. (25 Minutes)

Goal:

To provide candidates for certification at the National Referee Assessor level with an understanding of the AYSO National Referee Program and the referee assessment psychology and philosophy at the U-16 and U-19 levels.

Objectives:

1. To reiterate the purpose of assessments at the national level
2. To understand the psychology of assessment interaction with experienced referees and the importance of creating an atmosphere of open discussion.
3. To develop a mentoring attitude in the National assessor candidates
4. To appreciate the philosophy of the referee/assessor partnership

Most referees are apprehensive about being assessed, although many referees who are anxious to advance welcome the chance to improve. The referee advancing to the U-16 and U-19 level is looking for the “professional” approach to help sharpen his/her skills and develop new techniques for game control, foul recognition and better game management. National Assessor candidates must be able to establish an effective communication atmosphere to give a clear vision to the national referee candidate their strengths and needed areas of improvement.

DO NOT READ SCRIPT. For full effect learn lines to act out

DRAMA: Open Class 2 with a skit between a national referee candidate and a “national assessor”. The Skit demonstrates some of the poor communication skills that transpire between an assessor, who should know better, and an experienced national referee candidate who has spent many years in the program and has developed a certain amount of self confidence and a strong ego about his ability to officiate a U-19 match. One of the instructors should read the summary of the match below and then two instructors playing, the roles of the national referee candidate and the “bogus” national assessor, should start the dialogue.

The Match: A national referee candidate has just completed a rough U-19 match. During the game the referee had to issue several cautions to each team and in the second half he sent off two players from one team and one player from the other team. The spectators on the sideline were no help to the referee. Parents from both sides were shouting at the referee almost every time he called for a foul. All through the game the players seem to be concentrating on fouling their opposite number rather than playing the game. Several times the referee had to step in between players in order to restore order. The two teams have had a long rivalry and are battling for the league championship. Neither coach seems to be able to control their players. The last match ended in a 1 – 0 score and this match will decide the winner or if they have to play again. Neither team wants to see the other again and the referee had a difficult time reading the game. The referee missed several offside flags and appeared to be sucked

into giving a penalty kick on a questionable trip (possibly a dive) that ended up being the only score in the game. Both coaches had to be cautioned in the second half. The match was interrupted several times by defensive fouls on the attacking teams near the penalty area.

The assessor watched the entire match from an area near one goal. The match is over and the assessor has given the referee time to get some water, fill out the referee's report and cool down. He begins the interview with:

Assessor: "Well, that was some match. I'm glad I wasn't the referee. At what point did you feel the match getting out of control?"

Referee: "Who said the match was out of control?"

Assessor: "Come on, Sport, with all those cards and three send-offs. I had the impression that play was out of control and the game was lost!"

Referee: What game were you watching? (pause). ... Look, I'll admit that this match was harder to read than other U-19 matches I have refereed, but I thought that the send-offs were timely and necessary for match control. Besides, I thought the match settled down somewhat after the perpetrators left the field.

Assessor: Tell me, did you know anything about these teams before today?

Referee: A little. I know they were battling for the league lead, but I have not officiated any of their matches since the beginning of the season.

Assessor: What do you think your major problem was today?

Referee: Problem? Well.... I guess trying to get the teams to play soccer and not focus on retaliation when they were tackled hard. I reminded both teams several times and when it got rougher I backed it up with several cautions in the first half. You saw that!

Assessor: It didn't work too well, did it? You had to send three players from the field and that further irritated the crowd. Don't you think a national referee candidate should demonstrate better control?

Referee: Yes, and I thought I did that. Granted, this was not a pretty game, but I got it finished and considering the attitudes of the players it could have been a lot worse. Do you think you could have done better?

Assessor: Hey man, I was not the one in the center. We're supposed to be talking about what we can do to help you.

Referee: Yeah, well I haven't heard anything constructive yet!

Skit Critique: Instructor: What did you think of this post game interview? Was there anything about this assessment that bothered you?

Major points:

- a. Assessor failed to develop a positive atmosphere at the start.
- b. Assessor's viewing position during the match was questionable.
- c. The assessor's biases were making it difficult to critique performance.
- d. The assessor did not read the match the same way the referee did.
- e. The assessor put the referee on the defensive and did not let up.
- f. Did not ask for an explanation of specific incidents.

Allow 3 – 5 minutes and ask students:

1. What they think is the purpose of assessment at this level?
2. What they suggest the critique methods should be?
3. What should be the attitude of the assessor toward the persons being assessed?

List responses on a flip chart under the headings noted in the following **KEYS** and review and expand upon their responses and the checklists, and respond to comments and questions as needed.

KEYS: (Visuals provided in the appendix to the course should be used)

Purpose of the Assessment:

- To improve the level of officiating within AYSO at the U-16 & U-19 level
- To encourage national referee candidates to expand their referee skills and understand the skill level of U-16 and U-19 players and to be able to adapt their officiating styles to match.
- To recognize that the attitudes, maturity and confidence levels of national referee candidates are also at a higher level.
- To improve the national referee candidate's ability to read the game for the pleasure of the players as well as the spectators.
- To recognize and reward referees for service to AYSO

Critique Methods:

- The National Assessor must be able to read the national referee candidate. Is the referee anxious, terrified, confident or over confident, suspicious, relaxed and in command.
- The assessor must try to establish a positive atmosphere where give and take discussions can be achieved.
- Assessor must be able to adjust his observation techniques in relationship to the game difficulty so the after game discussions will be meaningful.
- Discuss the strengths of the referee's game control, i.e. flow and control, foul recognition, effective use of advantage, misconduct, challenges to authority.

- Discuss the ability of the referee to read the game, i.e. what were the teams' tactics, strengths and weaknesses?
- Discuss the key moments in the match where game control was critical, i.e. player reaction
- Feedback to the referee must always be positive and constructive.
- Suggestions for improvement must be presented as a means to increase the effectiveness and enjoyment of the referee and of the players.
- Suggestions for improvement must always be practical and within the capability of the referee to accomplish.

Attitude:

- Assessors must always observe the National Program requirements and not set their own standards. Reference “*The AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed*”
- Assessor must be able to demonstrate a clear reading of the match to the referee in order to gain the referee’s respect that the assessor’s suggestions are indeed helpful.
- Assessors must recognize the referees’ experience, maturity and style and gear suggested improvements to the strengths of the referee’s style.
- Assessors must at all times project a positive and helpful attitude to create a win-win situation.
- Assessors need to approach the difficult and trouble areas of the match tactfully, positively and truthfully if improvement is to be accomplished.
- The process of assessing should create a platform for continuous performance improvement developing an ongoing mentoring relationship between the assessor and the referee candidate.
- In an ideal situation the candidate should feel that the assessor is a mentor, friend, teacher, advisor and supporter and would not hesitate to ask for and listen to advice.

Note:

In Greek legend, Mentor was the friend of Odysseus in the epic poem by Homer. During the ten years Odysseus was away from his homeland (Ithica), on numerous adventures, he entrusted Mentor with the education of his son, Telemachus. During Odysseus’ absence, many unwanted suitors sought the hand of Odysseus’ wife Penelope and plotted to murder Telemachus. But Mentor remained true to his friend Odysseus and so the name became proverbial for a wise and trustworthy friend.

Emphasize the importance of the Referee Upgrade Program to the AYSO National Referee Program and to AYSO Programs in general.

Close by linking to the next class “***Observing National Referee Candidates***”.

Class 3. Observing National Referee Candidates
(25 Minutes)

Goal:

1. Learn the AYSO requirements for assessing National Referee Candidates both as a referee and as an assistant referee

Objectives:

1. Discuss the “Observing the National Referee Candidate” narratives
2. Ensure the requirements are understood and accepted
3. Reintroduce and reinforce the “*AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed*”

Introduction: (5 minutes max.)

- Introduce yourself and your co-instructors.
- Introduce the topic and state that the purpose of the class is to review, discuss and understand the requirements of the “Observing the National Referee” narratives in the categories listed in the “Keys” below.
- Review and discuss the skills that must be demonstrated clearly by any national referee candidate while officiating a U-16 or U-19 match.
- Emphasis should be made that minor deviations or below standard performance in these areas should be used as *possible* reasons for non-acceptance in borderline performances. However, the assessor’s judgment in the performance is still the assessor’s guide for approval.
- Note that some of the topics have been covered in previous classes and that this is a way of reinforcing the participants’ understanding.

KEYS: (Review of Keys should take approximately 15 minutes)

The following are sub headings taken from the “*Observing the National Referee*” and the “*Observing the National Referee as an Assistant Referee*” narratives. These can be found in the “AYSO Referee Mentor and Assessor Manual”

Review each category and discuss how they apply to the National Referee candidate. During the discussion ensure that wild, impractical or too demanding ideas are not appropriate.

Narrative Categories

Number	Referee	Assistant Referee
1	Appearance	Appearance
2	Pregame	Pregame
3	Fitness	Fitness
4	Attitude	Attitude
5	Positioning, Mechanics and Signals	Positioning, Mechanics and Signals
6	Accuracy of Decision	Assisting, Offside, Goal line and Touch line

Conclusion (5 Minutes max.)

- Stress the need for consistency among referee assessors and reintroduce and read aloud the “AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed”

“When performing my duties as a Referee Assessor I will evaluate referees based upon the standards established, approved and set forth by the AYSO National Referee Program. My assessment will take into account the referee performance I am witnessing only and I will endeavor, to the best of my ability to not be influenced by my own biases and expectations or the views of others.”
- Close by linking to the next class **“Game Control Expectations for U-16 and U-19 Matches”**.

Class 4. Game Control Expectations for U-16 and U-19 Matches (60 Minutes)

Goal:

1. Learn what level of game control to expect from referees officiating in U-16 and U-19 matches

Objectives:

1. Discuss techniques which can be used to maintain game control
2. Identify actions, which demonstrate the referee's ability to deal with players, coaches, or spectators who challenge the Referee's game control.
3. Discuss how the *three C's of Courage, Character and Consistency* are necessary for flow and control.

Introduction: (5 minutes max.)

- Introduce yourself and your co-instructors.
- Introduce the topic and state that the purpose of the workshop is to develop acceptable criteria for match control under the topics 'Courage, Character and Consistency' and 'Game Control' in the requirements of the 'Observing the National Referee' narratives.

Referees working U-16 and U-19 matches must be able to *read the game* from the intensity of the players and the level of play. Based upon this *reading of the game* the referee must determine how to use the whistle and disciplinary tools to maintain control while allowing play to flow in a reasonable way.

Candidates for National Referee Assessor should recognize actions by referees that demonstrate to players, coaches and spectators their confidence in the application of the Laws of the Game and their ability to handle situations firmly and fairly.

Activity:

- Divide the class into three groups.
Ask each group to select a discussion leader (or if there are enough instructors assign one to each group), a scribe and someone to present their ideas to the whole group.
- Assign each group the responsibility of coming up with a recommended list of **KEY** criteria under the headings of Game Control and Courage, Character and Consistency.
- Ask each group to come up with a list of things they would look for under their topics when assessing the referee or the assistant referee candidates for National Referee level.

After approximately 15 minutes have each group present their ideas to the whole class with each group taking a particular topic in turn. After a group has presented their ideas have the other groups briefly comment and add ideas. The instructor should guide the discussion to ensure that wild, impractical or too demanding suggestions are not accepted.

Key Criteria that should be covered under Game Control Issues for U-16/U-19 Play: (15 minutes)

- Referee's 'Command Presence' before, during and after the match
- Overall teamwork with the assistant referees.
- Referee's ability to read the match (tactics & style of play) for 90 minutes.
- Referee's ability to distinguish between aggressive fair play and hard fouls
- Dealing with 'hard' fouls quickly and effectively.
- Proper and effective use of advantage.
- Handling dissent
- Handling misconduct and injuries.
- Dealing with time wasting
- Handling aggressive play by the goalkeeper
- Effective use of whistle during tense situations.
- Recognizing gamesmanship and 'Moment of Truth' situations

Key Criteria that should be covered under Courage, Character and Consistency: (15 minutes)

For the Referee:

- Willingness to call fouls equally for both teams.
- To distinguish between real fouls and dives on the field and particularly in the penalty area.
- Ability to recognize and deal firmly, including the use of cards, with any challenges to their authority.
- Maintenance of coolness and calmness during pressure situations.
- Making decisions in a timely manner.
- Demonstration of the proper use of advantage.
- While in command the referee demonstrates he/she is having fun, smiles.

For the Assistant Referee:

- Assisting not insisting.
- Not being influenced by sideline distractions.
- Carefully following the referee's instructions.
- Reading play well and following the ball to the goal line.
- Protecting the referee from fouls committed behind his/her back.

- Anticipating offside situations and flagging the offside infractions.

Conclusion (5 Minutes)

- Lead instructor should quickly review the requirements under the Game Control and Courage, Character and Consistency headings.
- Stress the need for consistency among referee assessors and refer them once again to the “AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed”

Close by linking to “*Giving Constructive Criticism*”

Class 5. Giving Constructive Criticism Lecture/Practice (45 Minutes)

Goal:

1. To provide National Referee Assessors with the skills and techniques necessary to allow them to constructively criticize candidates for National Referee Certification.

Objectives:

1. Define the meaning of positive criticism
2. Develop a model for the assessment process
3. Learn to criticize in a way which convey a positive message for improvement
4. Recognize how to reduce resistance to change
5. Prepare the Assessor candidates to listen more pro-actively
6. Define common sources of errors in assessment feedback

Lecture: (20 Minutes)

Review and expand upon the following checklists as needed and respond to comments and questions.

KEYS: (Visuals provided in the appendix to the course may be used)

Criticism, a New Definition:

- A results oriented interaction whose goals are improvement and motivation.
- Communicating an evaluation to others in a way that enables them to use it to their advantage.

We should understand certain things about criticism under this definition:

1. Criticism is our opinion, not fact.
2. Criticism is to encourage improvement, not to remind us of failure.
3. Criticism is interactive.
4. Criticism facilitates growth.
5. Criticism deals with behavior that can be changed.
6. Criticism is helpful.

“In sum, productive criticism allows you to improve skills, increase interpersonal effectiveness, enhance job satisfaction, moves you up the organization and helps achieve long term goals.”

The Critical Edge

"Criticism should not be querulous, and wasting, all knife and root puller, but guiding, instructive, inspiring, a South wind, not an East wind " **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Methods:

- a. Assessor must be able to read the referee candidate
- b. Establish a positive atmosphere at the start.
- c. Be able to adjust observation techniques to game conditions.
- d. Assessor must be able to read the game so comments have validity.
- e. Recognize the referee's style and strengths.
- f. Determine if 'weaknesses' are style or an area for improvement.
- g. Approach problem areas with tact, positively, and truthfully.

The Assessment Discussion:

- Content is a matter of judgment
- Subjective, your perception
- Give referee room for explanation, interpretation
- Stay away from "always" and "never"

Use words like:

- In my opinion..
- I believe...
- From my perspective...
- The way I see it..
- You might think about, you could...
- Others have...
- Another way to accomplish.....

Get the referee involved:

Ask the following questions as necessary:

- How do you see this?
- What do you think?
- How would you do this differently in the future?
- What happened during a specific incident?
- Were there any moments in the match that challenged you more than others?
- Which players needed the most watching and why?
- How did the tactics of the teams challenge your game control?
- What were the key moments in the match that you felt were the "moments of truth"?

No matter how poorly the Referee performed, always find something positive to say. We need to build self-confidence and retain every Referee.

Reduce Resistance to Change

Convincing a person to change is almost always difficult. Unless the person sees some benefit to the change, he will be reluctant. Here are some ideas that may help lead to positive change.

1. Recognize that others may not share your beliefs or approve of your attitudes.
2. Realize that the beliefs and attitudes of others are habit patterns.
3. Visualize the change from the viewpoint of those who will have to use or adapt to your recommendations.
4. Anticipate difficulties in getting acceptance of your recommendations and devise ways to make the transition more acceptable.
5. Carefully consider all consequences of a change and avoid recommendations for abrupt, sweeping change. It is almost always best to bring about gradual change a step at a time.
6. Recognize that any significant change triggers emotional tension, either because old behavior is found to be inadequate or because new behavior must be acquired. The dissipation of tension may take some period of time. A clear incentive to change, where possible, helps those affected do so.
7. When possible, maintain contact with people while change is being made.

How well do you listen?

- Do you prepare yourself by facing the speaker and making sure you can hear?
- Do you watch the speaker as well as listen?
- Do you decide by the speaker's appearance and delivery whether what he has to say is worthwhile?
- Do you listen primarily for ideas and underlying feelings?
- Do you determine your own bias, if any, and try to allow for it?
- Do you keep your mind on what the speaker is saying?
- Do you interrupt immediately if you hear a statement you feel is wrong?
- Do you make sure before answering that you have taken in the other person's point of view?
- Do you try to have the last words?
- Do you make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic and credibility of what **you** hear?
- Do you think about your response before you have finished listening?

Common Sources of Errors in Assessments

- Unwillingness to take the time and make the effort to do a thorough assessment.

- Overweighing recent occurrences - things that take place late in the game.
- Personal prejudices on the part of the assessor. Use of assessment criteria can help here.
- Lack of uniform criteria or standards
- Reluctance to point out weaknesses.
- Communicating in a negative way, rather than in a positive and constructive manner.
- Failure to use specific incidents as a basis for constructive criticism.

Criticism Practice (20 Minutes)

Using the following Scenarios have the class practice methods of critiquing referees and assistant referees.

Select the scenarios that fit the class best.

Scenario 1:

The National Referee candidate has just completed a difficult U-16 boys match in which he missed several offside flags. One of these missed offside calls resulted in a goal.

The referee rarely looked at his assistants and focused on dealing with dissent from the players. In the second half he had to resort to several cautions including cautioning a coach who could not control the spectators.

Your worksheet shows the referee traveled mostly between the penalty areas, but kept up with play.

The referee is experienced at the U-14 and below and is a senior referee in his region.

Role play by establishing an open dialog with the referee.

Scenario 2:

You are dealing with a 10-year referee who is a candidate for the National 2 Referee level.

He is considered a top referee in his area and a no nonsense person with players and coaches.

He is well respected but fairly new to U-16 play.

Role play by establishing using the following situations. Try to establish a means of give and take.

1. A player from the blue team falls down whenever he approaches the red penalty area and comes into contact with a red defender. Each time he appeals for a penalty kick.
2. In the first half the referee whistles for a hard tackle by a red player at the halfway line but fails to whistle for the same foul in the red team's penalty area.
3. The blue team's captain praises the referee when calls go against the other team but argues all calls against his team.
4. Referee ran a tight U-16 game but was verbally harsh with players.
5. Referee called simultaneous fouls and restarted the game with a dropped ball.

Scenario 3:

You are assessing a National Referee candidate who is doing his first U-19 match for assessment. He is a veteran referee in AYSO having refereed many years. He is experienced at the U-19 level since he also referees for the State High School Association.

Role play each of the following situations:

1. A player curses the referee after a particularly hard foul is called against him. The player is cautioned.
2. The referee calls a dangerous play against a blue attacker in red's penalty area. The red goalkeeper takes the free kick and passes the ball to a teammate, who is inside the penalty area, who then plays it back to the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper kicks the ball up field but does not touch it with his hands. Play continued.
3. An assistant referee raises her flag for an attacking player who is in an offside position but is moving back up field away from the ball that was passed by his teammate. The referee blows her whistle.
4. In a hard fought U-19 match play is rough and contact is hard. Players go down with each tackle. Several times when the referee blew his whistle the players complained to the referee about play being stopped.
5. Red number 10 is a very skillful player and the red team's leading scorer. Blue number 34 appears to be assigned to marking number 10. The referee calls several fouls against number 34 in the first half and tension is being raised over number 34's aggressiveness. In the second half, after several more fouls by number 34, red number 10 is injured and forced to leave the field.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Repeat the opening scenario from Class 2 except it is to be done in a more positive fashion.

Re-read the scenario to the class to remind them of the match and the challenge to the referee.

The match is over and the assessor has given the referee time to get some water, fill out the referee's report and cool down. He begins the interview with:

Assessor: "Well, that was quite an exciting match. It certainly provided many opportunities to challenge the referee. Tell me, what was your biggest concern?"

Referee: Yes, it was a challenging match. I guess my biggest concern was trying to get the players to focus on playing the game and not one another. I also tried not to let the spectators affect my decisions.

Assessor: They kept you on your toes. I thought you got to the troublemakers early on and kept up a good dialogue with the players. What did the cautions and send-offs do for the game.

Referee: Well I thought that they woke the players up to the fact that I was not going to put up with any garbage and things seemed to settle down after that.

Assessor: One of the key points in the game was the penalty kick. What did you observe?

Referee: I was only about 10 yards from the play and I clearly saw the defender get the attacking player's leg. The defender missed the ball and caused the attacker to trip. It definitely wasn't a dive.

Assessor: You were right on the ball there. Do you know what told me it was a good call?

Referee: I think it was the reaction of the defending players. None of them objected to the call very vigorously. They knew it was a trip.

Assessor: Exactly! That was the key moment in the game and I think it helped your control. Is there anything in the game you would like to have done differently?

Referee: Well I missed several offside flags and I know that will be trouble if I don't correct it.

Assessor: Yes, but fortunately it did not lead to any goals being scored. I have a couple of recommendations, if you're interested. You can work on training yourself to look at your assistant referee when an attacker in his opponent's half passes the ball forward. You can also work on moving closer to the opposite touchline on attacks so that your position allows more play to be between you and your assistant. This would allow you to see the flag more easily. Why don't you try both ideas and decide which one, or if both, work for you?

Referee: Thanks, I'll work on both ideas.

Assessor: This was a tough match and not too pretty to watch. But you got the job done. You stayed with the flow, read the game well and didn't allow it to get out of control. Good job, well done!

Referee: Thanks, I'm looking forward to the next match and to working on your recommendations.

Skit Critique: Instructor: What did you think of this post game interview? Did you think this interview was more positive than the one in the Scenario that opened Class 2?

Close by linking to the next class.

*All of the KEYS discussed in this class, if properly implemented by the assessor, can have a profound impact on the way candidates accept the critique given them on their refereeing performance and in the way they implement the improvement suggestions. Candidates for Referee Assessor will be given an opportunity to put these principles into practice in the next class: **Case Scenarios and Practice Post Game Interviews.***

Class 6. Case Scenarios and Practice Post Game Interview Lecture/Workshop (60 Minutes)

Goal:

1. Prepare National Assessor candidates to conduct positive and effective post game interviews of the upper level referee team being assessed

Objectives:

1. Review the basic procedure and requirements for conducting the post game interview
2. Conducting post game interviews in small groups while obtaining immediate feedback

Introduction: (5 minutes max.)

- Introduce yourself and your co-instructors.
- Introduce the topic and state that the purpose of the workshop is to review and understand the methods for conducting the post game interview in a way which will create a win - win situation for both the assessor and the officials being assessed
- Note that some of the topics have been covered in previous classes and that this is a way of reinforcing the participants' understanding.

Activity (50 minutes)

The activity is broken down into two parts. Part 1: covers the recommended procedure. Part 2: is where interviewing techniques are practiced in small groups using the scenarios attached to this lesson plan. A short break between the two parts is recommended.

Part 1: Recommended Procedure: (20 minutes) (Visuals in the appendix to this course should be used)

Review and expand upon the following keys. Respond to comments and questions as needed.

- Allow the referee team to complete their post game routine
- Greet the referee team with a smile and a friendly word of thanks
- Quickly establish a peer or consulting relationship
- When the referee team is ready, move to a comfortable, quiet and reasonably private area
- Allow the candidate(s) to complete the self evaluation portion of the Assessment Verification Form
- Using the Referee Assessment Checklist, a Field Worksheet or other notes conduct the post game interview
 - If only one member of the team is being assessed quickly identify strengths and areas for improvement of the other members of the team and excuse them from further involvement unless agreed otherwise
 - Address the key strengths of the candidate. This is critical if the candidate is to perceive the experience positively. Use specific incidents in the match to substantiate

- Identify no more than three areas for improvement. Again use specific incidents to substantiate your comments. Be frank, positive constructive and encouraging. **Do not dwell on what you perceive as mistakes**
- Try to use the interview as a teaching and learning experience. Involve the candidate in the discussion. **Do not preach.**
- Close by politely stating your recommendation and with a handshake. It is important that the candidate leave the interview feeling good about the experience and ready to continue to officiate whatever the recommendation
- Complete all assessment forms, sign and give to the candidate for further processing. If your recommendation is positive sign, or make arrangements to sign, the candidates Application for Certification Upgrade Form. Retain the lower half of the Assessment Verification Form for your records.

Part 2: (30 minutes)

- Divide the class into groups of four candidates.
- Give each group a copy of the four scenarios included in this class description and instruct the group to spend 7 minutes on each. They are to divide each session into 5 minutes interview time and 2 minutes group critique
- Have each candidate conduct the interview, in turn, with respect to the specific incident(s) noted in the scenarios provided. The remaining three candidates are to play the part of the referee team and should respond based upon the technique of the candidate. After 5 minutes the group is to critique the interview process.
- The groups should be reminded that this group critique is subject to the same general rules as the assessment interview and should be constructive and encouraging while pointing out areas of strength and for improvement.
- The sessions should be monitored with little or no interference by the instruction staff.
 - Note if there are insufficient instructors to perform this function assign it to a senior member of each group

Conclusion (5 Minutes)

- Instructors or senior group member quickly comment on the practice for each group
- Lead instructor quickly reviews important keys for conducting post game interviews as they apply to the senior referees who are being assessed in U-16 and U-19 matches
- Stress the need for consistency among referee assessors and introduce and, once again, read aloud the “*AYSO Referee Assessor’s Creed*”
- Distribute handouts, thank the participants and close the course by explaining the procedure for becoming registered as a National Referee Assessor.

Class 6. Scenarios

In the following scenarios you are performing an assessment of the referee. Conduct a post-game interview dealing in particular with the incident(s) described in the scenario. Where necessary include the assistant referees in the interview.

Each candidate should deal with one of the scenarios while the remaining candidates act the part of the referee and assistant referees. You have no more than 7 minutes to conduct the interview and to receive feedback from the other candidates.

SCENARIO 1

You are assessing a National candidate in a tough, physical U-19 contest between two teams who clearly have no love for one another. Since this is a crucial match the referee, in the pre-game, advised the assistant referees that he was going to let them play; that he wanted the players to decide the winner; but, that he would establish control early so no one would get hurt.

The referee, true to his word, quickly established the level of conduct he wanted in the first fifteen minutes. He whistled a number of obvious fouls, but as the game progressed he changed more to advantage-play style. It was evident that the physical contact and challenges were getting harder and more dangerous. By the middle of the second half a player from each team has been carried off and several players from each side are nursing bruises while they play. The referee is getting a normal amount of dissent from the players and coaches. The match ends in a tie.

Conduct a post-game interview

SCENARIO 2

You are charting the movements of a National candidate in a semi-final match between two U-16 teams that are very skilled and very aggressive. The referee has kept up with play very well and at times has had to duck quickly to avoid being hit by the ball. She has maintained good control by whistling several fouls at key moments. Your chart shows that the referee's distance from the foul is sometimes five yards, but never more than thirty yards. On fouls of thirty yards the play is near the penalty area close to the assistant referee. If there had been any complaints about the referee calls it was during these occasions. During one episode, late in the first half, when the players were playing very physically and the intensity was getting higher, the referee whistled a hard tackle from behind and cautioned the player. This seemed to settle the players down for a while, but late in the second half you observed another tackle from behind and the referee called out "play on" when the ball went to a team mate who scored the only goal in the game.

Conduct a post game interview

SCENARIO 3

The National Referee candidate is being assessed for his second U-19 game, having passed the first one. The game is a U-19 match between two inexperienced teams. The skills of the players are very low and the referee has little trouble in getting the players to refrain from using physical skills that they are obviously not ready to use in a safe manner. The referee has blown his whistle a few times in the first half and only two or three times in the second half, most of them offside calls. The referee has easily stayed within good playing distance and has continued to

talk to the players throughout the match. He comments to his assistant referees several times during the match with, “Good eye, Mike” and “Excellent offside call, Mary”.

Conduct a post game interview

SCENARIO 4

This is the first assessment for a National referee candidate who is assigned a typical U-19 match during the regular season. The two teams are fairly matched, but they are not the best teams in the league. Both teams have a number of players who are not as skilled as some of the better teams and a both sides have received a fair number of cautions in previous games. In this match a player from each team is returning after sitting out a game for a send-off. The game starts off with a number of hard tackles and several vicious fouls. The referee is trying to talk to the players and get them to play soccer but the referee’s control is waning. You hear several complaints from the players, such as, “Come on ref, what about that trip?” and “Come on ref, that was a hand ball!” The game is stopped several times due to injuries and by the second half the referee has resorted to six cautions and a send-off from each side. The referee has missed several assistant referee flags and he appears to be frustrated.

Additional information for the referee only:

You consider yourself to be a good referee. You have a lot of self-confidence and feel that some of the criticism you have received in the past from players and coaches, as well as some referees, is unwarranted. In fact, you are likely to think that the assessors are looking for ways to fail you rather than help. The game was more difficult than you thought it would be. At times it was clearly frustrating but you got through it without having to terminate it. You believe the cautions and send-offs were essential to game control, but you are trying to decide if you started too late with the cards. The post-game stares and remarks from some of the spectators were less than appealing. Do you try to convince the assessor it was their fault the game went so poorly or shut up and hear what the assessor has to say?

Additional information for the assessor only:

You are the top assessor in the section. You have been assessing referees for ten years and have a good handle on the requirements of a National referee. You have assessed a difficult referee who has officiated some good games but, at times, can be challenged. You know his nature is to be defensive and he has a hard time admitting problems. You know he can be helped and you want to keep him because he is dedicated and loyal to the program.

Conduct a post game interview

Additional Scenarios (if needed)

Questions for Assessing - Role Playing

1. Referee ran a tight U-16 game and was verbally harsh with players.
2. After scoring a goal, the referee turned around to return to center, and one player struck an opponent. Confusion resulted.
3. Referee called "simultaneous fouls" and restarted the game with a drop ball.
4. A defender, seeing a shot on goal and the GK out of position, batted at the ball with her hand. Although deflected the ball continued into the goal. The Referee cautioned the defender, and restarted with a kickoff.
5. The referee was calling a "loose" game from the start, rough play escalated throughout the game until one player suffered a leg injury late in the second half after a slide tackle from behind.
6. Referee called a very tight game and player irritation was obvious. Players thought the calls were trifling. In the second half, coaches were more vocal and challenged the calls. On one occasion, the referee had to stop the game to verbally warn one of the coaches.
7. Some foul language is evident late in the first half. Referee deals with this situation verbally, but assertively. No other problems occurred during the rest of the game.
8. With the Blue team ahead by one goal late in the game, the Blue GK started to instruct and position his teammates before passing or punting the ball. Opposing players complained about time wasting, but Referee made no call.
9. Referee used some of the approved FIFA signals, but not all and not consistently.
10. Referee generally concentrated on play around the ball. There were a couple instances when fouls occurred away from the ball and went unnoticed.
11. In the first half, the Referee ran hard to stay up with play, and sometimes had to sprint on free kicks or quick turnabouts. In the second half, the Referee was obviously tired and did not keep up with play and found himself frequently out of position.
12. Referee was screened when a ball was kicked over the touch line in view of the Assistant Referee. Assistant Referee was not sure who touched the ball and no signal was given.

Class 7. The AYSO National Referee Assessor Examination and Course Conclusion (45 Minutes)

Goal:

1. To ensure that the National Assessor Candidates understand the content of the course and to conclude the course.

Objective:

1. Administer the AYSO National Referee Assessor Examination
2. Complete the administrative details of the course.

KEYS:

- Explain procedures and requirements for the taking of the examination
- Note minimum passing score of 90%
- Hand out examinations
- Allow 25 minutes for the taking of the examination
- Collect examinations for evaluations and grading

Conclusion

- Inform participants of how they will be notified of the course and examination results.
- Thank participants and make any other administrative announcements. Pass out course evaluations.
- Make sure course roster and evaluations are completed and collected.
- Complete course roster requirements.

AYSO REFEREE ASSESSOR TRAINING COURSE
EVALUATION FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

optional

Course Attended: _____

1. Which session or sessions do you feel provided the *most* useful information?

2. Which session or sessions contained the *least* useful information?

3. How could the sessions (# 2 above) be improved?

4. Were there any topics missing from the course that should have been included?

5. On the whole, did this course meet your expectations? If not, please explain.

6. Do you feel this course is an effective way to train referee assessors?
If not, please explain.

-over-

