

Players, Moms, Dads, Brothers, Sisters, Coaches, Former Players, Soccer Fanatics, All:

Youth soccer needs you to participate in a manner you may never have thought about before. The youth game has continued to grow exponentially, but the number of referees remains stagnant at best. Each year, nationwide, 30-40% of soccer referees don't return. Here in Rhode Island the same is true. The game needs you to step forward and help. It doesn't need to be full-time, whatever little time that you can contribute on your schedule will be helpful.

You have the opportunity to join a new team, one that wears yellow uniforms with black stripes. Becoming a referee is easy; complete online training, attend a field session, and pass an exam, and you'll be qualified to start working youth games in recreational and competitive leagues. There are many reasons to become a referee; here are some of them:

### **Love for the game .**

To me it begins here. You have to really love the game and appreciate what it takes for an athlete to be good at it. Every sport requires a unique set of skills and talents to excel. For one sport it may be size and strength; for another speed and quickness; still another may reward unique coordination and technique. Anyone that remembers Michael Jordan trying to make it as a major league baseball player will know exactly what I mean. Whatever the case, to enjoy watching the athletes compete is the first criteria.

### **Make new friends**

Refereeing is a great way of meeting new people. You will meet great mates that will last for years. There is a kinship between referees that is hard to find elsewhere. During any athletic contest, the players are supported by coaches and fans. Referees have only each other. This reliance, the working together as a team, creates a unique bond that goes well beyond the game itself. When you become a referee, you'll know exactly what I mean.

### **Keeping fit and active**

Refereeing is a great way to keep fit and active. Some sports require the referee run at essentially the same pace as the players, constantly moving to create the best angle to see a play develop. And sometimes the pace can be rigorous. To be a top notch referee means getting into condition and staying that way throughout the season. It's the price you pay, but in the long run it is the only way to do the job right. What better way to stay in shape and get a great view of the game?

### **Build your confidence**

Referees take pride in our training and education, and will give you the tools to make the right decisions. Refereeing will provide the confidence you will use in life. Refereeing keeps the mind sharp. The ability to block out distractions and concentrate on the athletes, exercises the mind. Oftentimes the mental demands of officiating can be much tougher than the physical demands.

### **Learn more about the game**

Have you sat watching soccer and wonder why decisions are made? As a referee, you will learn the rules and get a better understanding of our game.

### **Be a part of the game**

You don't need to have kids or play to be a part of the game. Refereeing puts you in the middle of the field and makes you the most important person on the field.

### **Make it to the pros**

You don't need to play to make it to the big time. With hard work and dedication, you can make it to the big time.

### **Anyone can be a referee**

It doesn't matter how fit you are, how old you are or whether you're male or female, refereeing is open to anyone who has a good attitude and patient demeanor.

### **Opportunity to give back to your Community**

In every sport, there are many opportunities for a referee to donate his or her services. Whether for a local fundraiser, youth sports group or Special Olympics, you don't have to look too far for places to support a worthy cause through officiating. It's one of the most honorable things a referee can do and it is always greatly appreciated. Not to mention the sense of personal satisfaction we get.

### **Chance to stay involved**

Most referees played their sport at some time. Some probably still do, but perhaps not as competitively. Being a referee keeps you involved. It puts you right back into the action and gives you a part in the game that you'll never get as a spectator. It's not the same thrill as playing, but I'd say it is the next best thing.

### **Challenge**

Refereeing is a challenge. From passing the exam, advancing to higher levels, getting the best assignments, doing a good job under pressure in a big game. These are all challenges for every referee. And when these goals are met, it creates a great deal of satisfaction.

### **Money**

For 99% of us, being a referee is not our primary means of employment. However, for a part-time job, the rate of pay is more than acceptable. And when you consider all of the benefits listed above, for the ex-athlete, becoming a referee is as rewarding an avocation as you will find.

We will be holding introductory classes over the winter. There are 4 Grade 9 (ages 15 and under) and one Grade 8 class (ages 16 and above) scheduled. The first of the Grade 9 field sessions will be held on January 27. The cost of the class is \$160, and includes a referee uniform consisting of 2 colored jerseys (yellow and black), shorts, and socks which you will walk away with that day. Referees that complete winter classes will be certified through December 31, 2019.

If you think being behind the whistle is for you, please visit the link below to get started!

<http://www.risrc.net/instruction/new-referee/>

For more information, please contact:

Steven Mauricio

Rhode Island State Referee Administrator

401-692-7285

[SRA@RISRC.NET](mailto:SRA@RISRC.NET)