

Match Walkthrough for New Referees (U7/U8)

1. Jot down from Matchtrak the coaches' names and which is the home team to help you later at the field. Home team is north or west.
2. Bring your watch, whistle, badge, coin, pen and ref wallet. Coin can be kept securely in your shirt badge Velcro. Feel free to wear a plain black hat but refrain from wearing sunglasses.
3. Check that goal is safely anchored to ground. Check field for anything dangerous. Take note of the radius of the center circle...this is the distance that opponents need to stand away from free kicks.
4. Introduce yourself to coaches, discuss match duration (5x the age group...8Ux5=40 mins), substitutions, and ask home team to provide 3 size-3 game balls (check firmness, place one behind each goal)
5. Check the players equipment: shinguards fully covered by socks, no jewelry/earrings even if taped (except med bracelets), no toe stud on cleats (sneakers also fine). Goalkeeper needs unique jersey or penny.
6. Give any player instructions such as "Play the whistle". Have fun with them and show them you are a human.
7. Call for captains at center circle. Perform coin toss and let the winner choose the ball or direction. Mark one of the game cards to indicate who kicked off in the first half and which direction so don't forget.
8. Get 1st "quarter" subs from each coach and mark on game cards.
9. At any kickoff, ensure proper number of players are on the correct side and the defending team is outside the center circle. Blow your whistle and start your stopwatch.
10. Young players may get excited and forget they cannot "double touch" the ball on any restart including a kickoff/goal kick/corner kick/free kick, but at this age simply blow whistle and retake.
11. Remember the ball is not out of play until it wholly crossed the lines. Our region prefers throw-ins vs. pass-ins. Opponents must be 2 yards (6 feet) away from throw-in.
12. Call substitution breaks midway through each half at a dead ball situation (e.g., out of bounds). Do not stop your stopwatch. Instruct that the break is for subs and water only, no lengthy strategy sessions.

This document covers very little of the Laws of the Game so please refer to other resources.

13. Monitor substitutions. Ensure goalkeeper changes each "quarter" and that players get equal playing time (goal to play everyone 3 quarters)
14. Scores are not officially reported at U8 but you should keep track.
15. There is no need to whistle when the ball crosses the touch line or goal line unless players continue to play the ball.
16. Be nice and loud with "red throw" or "blue corner kick" while simultaneously making the appropriate hand signals for the coaches to see and for the players to learn.
17. Rarely stop action. Use lots of "play on," and "get up, keep playing." Repeat a bad throw-in after giving instruction but play on regardless on 2nd throw. Help the kids learn.
18. Region 114 does have goalkeepers at U8 (7 vs. 7). Allow them to handle the ball within the penalty area. Goalkeeper violations should not be strictly enforced. For example, putting ball down and picking back up, or deliberate pass backs to keeper that are handled by keeper should be corrected with a warning and not penalized.
19. No goalkeeper punts. No heading. No slide tackling. No offside but correct any "cherry picking" and involve coach if necessary.
20. Instruct attackers to retreat beyond the Buildout line when the goalkeeper has the ball or for a goal kick.
21. Any foul is a direct free kick. Opponents need to stand back the radius of the center circle. For a foul in the goal area, place the ball at the nearest point on the goal area line parallel to the goal line.
22. Any adults (including parents) coaching players near goals should be asked to move for safety as it distracts the kids.
23. Coaches may not enter field for any reason (even player injury) unless invited on by the ref. Parents are never allowed on the field. If play is stopped for an injury, restart with a dropped ball for the team that last had possession. Opponents need to be 4.5 yards away.
24. Indicate halftime with 2x whistle blasts (end of game is 3x whistle blasts). Choose 5-10 minute halftime depending on weather. When a few minutes left, use quick whistle blasts to alert both team that it's time to get back on the field.

Match Walkthrough for New ARs (U10)

This document covers very little of the Laws of the Game so please refer to other resources.

1. Have pregame chat with referee. Ask about backup timekeeping, making eye contact on dead balls and coordinating signals (who waits for who and when), what are you expected to watch for on throw-ins, circumstances when you should call fouls, how to get attention of referee, and any other questions/clarifications.
2. Introduce yourself to the coach on your touch line. Mark 1st "quarter" player substitutions on the game card.
3. Your role is to assist the referee, not insist. Do not whip the flag to be adamant. Try to match the center referee's signals and only be first to signal when the ball goes out nearer to you than the referee.
4. Your primary responsibilities are to call offside infractions and assist with signaling ball out of play. Try to make eye contact with the referee at every dead ball for possible feedback.
5. If you know which team gets the throw-in but forget which direction, you can quickly look at one of the goalkeeper's socks for a reminder.
6. Your position should be at whichever is closest to the goal line: (1) build out line (see graphic below), (2) second-to-last defender (2LD), or (3) the ball. While it may be difficult to keep up with a kicked ball, you should be near goal line to judge a goalkeeper save.
7. Spend only a few seconds at a time watching play before checking to see if you are still in line with the 2LD. Staying aligned with the 2LD also applies during kickoffs, free kicks, and goal kicks. Be on the goal line at the start of corner kicks and adjust once play starts.
8. Flag signals for corner kick or goal kick should be made while standing close to the corner flag after having followed the ball.

9. Carry the flag straight down and unfurled (even when running) in the hand closest to the referee (typically the left hand), and then switching hands if necessary before signaling. The majority of signals are done with your right hand (e.g., offside, goal kick, corner kick, throw-in for attacking team, free kick for attacking team).
10. Do not perform flag signals while running/walking. You should come to a complete stop and squarely face the field.
11. When calling offside, first raise your flag straight up and hold until the referee stops play...then indicate restart location.
12. Similarly, when the ball goes out of bounds (including a goal) but it is not obviously over the line, first raise your flag straight up and hold until the referee stops play...then indicate the proper restart.
13. Do not lower your flag after signaling offside or ball out of bounds. Remain stationary with arm raised until either (a) acknowledged by the referee and they either wave you down or stop play, or (b) the defending team gains clear possession of the ball essentially making the offside call no longer useful.
14. To indicate a good goal to the referee, turn and jog roughly 10 yards up the touch line towards midfield. There are no hand/flag signals.
15. If you wish to speak to the referee, a common signal is to hold the flag horizontal across your chest.
16. Ensure game cards match and have referee names printed. Discuss which referee will hand in at referee tent at Heartwell Park.
17. If the last match of the day, instruct coaches to have parents put away goals/flags in accordance with the Fields page on ays114.org

