

Proactive Refereeing



Change History	
July 26, 2006	Lesson Plan First Developed
August 1, 2007	Lesson Plan Revised
November 25, 2008	Lesson Plan Revised
December 12, 2011	Update
September 5, 2012	Update
September 10, 2013	Lesson Plan Revised
October 17, 2013	Customer Service Pod Added
October 17, 2014	Customer Service Pod removed; integrated new EXPO Template

1. 1. DESCRIPTION

This workshop focuses on the skills referees need to balance flow and control to better read the game and anticipate play in more challenging matches in the older age groups.

2. GOALS

To help referees understand the importance of reading the game to effectively manage the match. Referees should be “students of the Game”.

To help referees understand the importance of proactive positioning to prevent fouls and infringements and satisfy the expectations of the attendees.

To learn ways on how to read the game to provide effective game control.

To improve referees’ anticipation, positioning and game control by understanding the job of various position players and what actions in those positions will take to achieve their objectives.

3. PREREQUISITES

This workshop is intended for more experienced referees.

4. STUDENT MATERIALS

Proactive Refereeing handout (Optional)

5. INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Computer, LCD projector, Flip chart and markers, Power Point presentation

6. INSTRUCTOR NOTES

None

7. ATTACHMENTS

Handout - Objectives of the Game.

.LESSON PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Introduce self and co-instructors
- B. Introduce topic

II. BODY

- A. Why (Spirit)
 - 1. Referees who adopt a proactive approach to refereeing are more successful at effectively controlling the match. Good referees are “Students of the Game”.

- a. Being a good Student of the Game requires preparation before the game.
 - b. Get a good night's sleep. Eat and hydrate well.
 - c. Be approachable before the game. Shake the coaches' hands.
 - d. At coin toss, shake the captain's hands. Watch them warm-up.
 - e. Evaluate the field and weather conditions.
2. Do your homework.
 - a. Find out what you can about the teams you will be officiating.
 - b. You will want to know who their star players are or if they have players who will need to be watched.
- B. How to Read the Game.
1. Think about the maturity level of the players you will be officiating.
 - a. Apply advantage if necessary.
 - b. Read the body language of the players.
 - c. Look at hard tackles 1-2 seconds longer as players oftentimes get carried away and need a bit of supervision during this time.
 - d. If you are a ball watcher you will miss the foul.
 - e. Use your whistle, voice, and cards effectively for game control.
 2. Ken Aston said "Refereeing is thinking." Therefore anything that affects your ability to think will affect your ability to control the match. Ask, "What are some of the factors that will affect your ability to think clearly?"

Note: The following information is also on the attendee handout.

 - a. Impact of fatigue
 - i. Fatigue is a fundamental physiological response by the body to physical exertion
 - ii. Loss or slowness of cognitive mental function due to fatigue affects both you and the players
 - b. Impact of stress
 - i. Impact is the same as fatigue
 - ii. May be triggered internally (up for the game) or in reaction to physical or vocal attack (or your perception of attack)
 - iii. Loss of cognitive function due to stress affects both you and the coach
 - iv. Solution: Deal with problems early when everyone is at his rational peak and you have highest probability of success.
3. During the Game
 - a. State the following: "You must be where you need to be, to see what you need to see to call what needs to be called."

- b. Ask, "What are the times you need to be close to play?" Record the answers on a flip chart or dry erase board. Make sure that the following are discussed.
 - i. First 5 – 10 minutes of each half
 - (a) The learning time. What you allow and don't allow
 - ii. Last 5 – 10 minutes of each half
 - (a) Desperation, fatigue, frustration, time wasting. Much misconduct occurs in last 10 – 15 minutes of a match
 - iii. After a goal has been scored
 - (a) Goals tend to quickly follow other goals and frustration, "getting even," fouls tend to occur
 - c. During other times in the match
 - i. Pulse in (7 – 10 yards) and out (10 – 25 yards) of the area of active play
 - (a) Move in to reinforce presence in high intensity match, out for larger picture of what is happening
 - d. Make sure you're looking through play at an assistant referee
 - e. Move as required to get the right angle to view potential trouble areas
 - f. Stay out of players' way and out of passing lanes
 - g. Think – Where do I need to be next?
 - h. Move quickly to the spot of hard fouls to prevent retaliation and show strong control
 - i. Game Management
 - j. Make good eye contact with players and assistant referees.
 - k. Talk to the players throughout the match.
 - l. Establish the tone by calling a few fouls early.
 - m. Whistle loudly for hard fouls so players know you didn't like what you saw.
 - n. Players respond to a referee who is managing the game.
 - o. Deal with dissent and unsporting behavior.
 - p. Watch for various forms of persistent infringement in which different players keep fouling the star player on the opposing team.
4. Proactive Positioning for High-Risk Situations
- a. Player who is looking at you every time you see him
 - i. Player should be focusing on game not on you.
 - ii. Position yourself to keep him in view as much as possible
 - b. Player around whom bad things happen

- i. Keep an eye on him and let him know that you are doing it
- c. An unbalanced or lopsided match
 - i. Differences in style, intensity or skill can cause problem for the referee
 - ii. Watch for frustration, use voice, move closer to play
- d. Star Attacker problem
 - i. Protect skilled players, keep in view during attacks
 - ii. Deal assertively with 'rolling fouls'
- e. "Hard Man" on defense
 - i. Move in close when attackers try to get by him
 - ii. Use presence to prevent fouls from occurring
- f. Midfield Problem
 - i. Most intimidation and strategic fouling occurs here
 - ii. Position yourself during attacks on goal so that you can recover quickly to midfield for counterattacks
- g. Player far from normal position
 - i. Why? Designated "Enforcer" looking to even a score
 - ii. Position yourself to keep in view as much as possible
- h. You (the referee) are fatigued
 - i. Ask ARs before match to assist you
 - ii. Try to keep up with flow of play
 - iii. Use ball out of play opportunities to move through players to imprint your presence
- i. You have club linesmen
 - i. Be honest with coaches and players – your responsibility is safety so you must be where action is
 - ii. Stay centered in field. If you call offside it happened, if you don't, it didn't
 - iii. Be prepared to penalize more often than you normally do (more control; less flow)
- j. Hard foul on attacker early in the match
 - i. Likely to be strategic to weaken or intimidate
 - ii. Long, loud whistle and voice to inform everyone this is unacceptable
 - iii. Deal assertively with fouling player. Caution now may pay dividends later.
 - iv. Keep fouling player in view

- v. Watch for retaliation
- k. Hard foul on attacker late in match
 - i. Desperation and frustration drive fouls late in match
 - ii. Long, loud whistle and voice to inform everyone this is unacceptable
 - iii. Deal assertively with fouling player
 - iv. Tell all retaliation will not be tolerated
 - v. Move close to play and increase control level

III. CONCLUSION

A. Review

1. The importance of being prepared before a game by doing your homework.
2. The importance of reading the game.
3. The importance of proactive positioning.
4. Better anticipation and foul recognition results in better overall match control.

B. Thank attendees for attending the workshop.

TIME SENSITIVE VERSION (2 minutes minimum):

C. Slide #CSPR-1

Now that we've covered the main material of today's workshop, I'd like to talk with you briefly about the role of the referee in the context of the total AYSO experience as seen through the eyes of our customers.

You've participated in this workshop today because you care about becoming the best Referee you can be, and we can't thank you enough for that. So I'd like to spend a few moments discussing just how important our role is in the context of your AYSO program.

D. Slide # CSPR-2

You heard me use the word "customers" just a moment ago and it's not a term we use often as youth soccer people.

But, make no mistake about it, as referees and as AYSO volunteers, we do have customers.

Who are our customers?

- *Region customers are parents, volunteers, players and community members.*
- *Referee's customers are the spectators, the coaches, the players, and sometimes other referees.*

Now I'd like us to think about what that means to us. I offer you this quote:

E. Slide # CSPR-3

"Customer service is not a department, it's an attitude"

For us, this is really just an interesting way of saying that when it comes to customer service (hit clicker):

Everyone Plays!

It's not just the RCs job to be handling the relationship with our families. And it's not just the coaches' job to handle the relationship with our players and their parents. It's not just the Registrar's job to be the Welcome Wagon at sign up time. The way all volunteers interact with our families and players and each other really matters. Good personal impressions lead to good word-of-mouth.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE TODAY.

STANDARD VERSION (5 – 10 min):

A. Slide # CSPR-1

Now that we've covered the main material of today's workshop, I'd like to take a step back and talk with you for a few minutes about the role of the referee in context of the total AYSO experience as seen through the eyes of our customers.

You've participated in this workshop today because you care about becoming the best Referee you can be, and we can't thank you enough for that. So I'd like to spend a few final minutes discussing just how important our role is in the context of your AYSO program.

B. Slide # CSPR-2

You heard me use the word "customers" just a moment ago. Let's spend a minute with that, as it's not a term we use often as youth soccer people. But make no mistake about it, as referees and as AYSO volunteers, we do have customers.

ASK: Who are our customers as a Region?

ASK: Who are our customers as Referees?

(Note: ask for audience participation – list responses on flip chart. Then hit clicker:)

Answers should include:

Region customers are parents, volunteers, players and community members.

Referee's customers are the spectators, the coaches, the players, and sometimes other referees.

Now I'd like us to think about what that means to us. And before we get too far, I offer you this quote:

C. Slide # CSPR-3

"Customer service is not a department, it's an attitude"

For us, this is really just an interesting way of saying that when it comes to customer service (hit clicker):

Everyone Plays!

--It's not just the RCs job to be handling the relationship with our families.

--It's not just the coaches' job to handle the relationship with our players and their parents.

--It's not just the Registrar's job to be the Welcome Wagon at sign up time.

The way all volunteers interact with our families and players and each other really matters. Good personal impressions lead to good word-of-mouth.

There's one group of volunteers I didn't mention just now that may have the most important role of all when it comes to customer service...who might that be?

D. Slide # CSPR-4

(Collage of referees in action – on the pitch, talking to players, talking to coaches, interacting CR/ARs, smiling with parents/spectators)

Yes, it's you...us. Referees are a critical component to how our AYSO program is perceived, and therefore, significant in the representation of AYSO customer service.

(click to overlay copy :)
AYSO Ambassadors

Consider the service we provide...

(Offer for brief discussion of how this applies to referees, or for time considerations, continue to next slide :)

E. Slide # CSPR-5

Having a uniformed, well-trained referee(s) on hand means... (click to reveal each bullet, then explain teaching points as noted):

The Game Matters!

Yes, we take it seriously. It's fun for the kids and should be fun for all, but one of the reasons it's fun is because we are there to manage it in AYSO-appropriate style. Yes, AYSO is volunteer-driven, and yes, most of us are parents of players, but that doesn't mean our games are anything less than meaningful. Running a great game with a focus on making it a terrific experience for the kids...is our greatest contribution to Customer Service.

We Honor The Laws of the Game

There's no better way to honor the game than to demonstrate knowledge and respect for its laws, and no one knows how to apply them better than we do. Customer service means we also have an obligation to share our knowledge in a positive way when it's needed...let's face it, many parents, a lot of players especially young ones, and even some coaches, are not as familiar with the LOTG as we'd like...so look for positive, teachable moments to explain them.

Nurturing New Referees

Perhaps the greatest compliment we can get as AYSO referees is to be a recruiter by example not just by friendly persuasion. It's OK to show that we enjoy our job, that it can be fun and rewarding. Customer service means a positive, upbeat attitude even under duress, that in turn shows others what a great experience refereeing can be.

F. Slide # CSPR-6

Here are some other tools and tips we can all keep in mind that will help us in our dual role as Referees and AYSO ambassadors:

"The Triangle"

You are there to facilitate a great experience for the kids, is a great table-setter. You can also use this "just us" moment to remind them that you'll need their help in quelling any parental misbehavior, dealing with player situations as they may arise, your expectations for sportsmanship, blowout contingencies, etc. Let them know you're working with them, not against them...you are on their side!

"Teaching the Game"

Be willing to give instructive feedback, when and where appropriate. This may be at a break in the run of play to explain a foul to a confused young player, or to let a coach know you'll gladly explain a call or application of the Laws when the time is right. Customer service means being a pro-active teacher and communicator...don't be afraid to share what you know, as appropriate, in a positive, non-judgmental way. No one is born with intimate knowledge of the game, and few of your AYSO customers will have as much knowledge of it as you do.

Troubleshooting and Help Desk? That's Us!

As referees we become the flashpoint for problems or issues or unusual situations that arise in a game. Embrace your role as on-the-spot troubleshooter or help desk expert. You're the go-to source for resolution...handling this with confidence and a reassuring smile works wonders to let people know that AYSO, because of you, really knows how to manage a game.

The Thank You, Revisited

As referees we always appreciate being thanked by players, coaches, and parents...when it happens. But there's nothing that says WE can't be the ones to thank the coaches, the players, or the parents, when they've demonstrated the kind of behaviors we want throughout a game. Thanking a coach for running a great game, players for being great sportsmen/women, or parents for being the kind of spectators we want, actually reinforces that behavior especially when it comes from the man or woman with the badge and the black knee socks...so

let's offer our own thank-yous when earned!

G. Slide # CSPR-7

You're an AYSO Ambassador

So remember, when you are out on the field, or doing the other behind-the-scenes work you do as a referee...you're a very visible and uniquely important ambassador defining what your Region and AYSO are all about. Embrace the customer service role that comes with the territory, and you'll be sharing the fantastic experience of AYSO and being an AYSO volunteer, in a whole new way. What you do and how you do it really makes a difference!

Proactive Refereeing Handout

I.

The Impact of Fatigue

Anything that affects your ability to think affects your ability to referee.
Fatigue reduces your ability to think rationally and communicate quickly and effectively.
Fatigue impairs your ability to make decisions and to control your emotions.
Fatigue affects both you and the players.

II.

The Impact of Stress

Stress can be triggered internally ('up' for the game)
Stress can be triggered in reaction to physical or vocal attack.
The effect of stress is exactly the same as the effect of fatigue.

Deal With Problems Early - Be Where You Need to Be - See What You Need to See

Call What Needs to Be Called - The Best Way to Deal with Foul Play is to Prevent It

Times You Especially Need to be Close to Play:

- **The Learning Time** - The First 5 -10 minutes of each half
- **The Burning Time** - The Last 5 - 10 minutes of each half
- **After a Goal** – Goals follow goals and 3-5 minutes after a goal watch for “frustration / getting-even” fouls
- **Other times** – Don't be predictable in your positioning. You should pulse in (7 to 10 yards) and out (10 to 25 yards) of the area of active play. Moving in reinforces your presence (the higher the match intensity, the closer you should be). Moving out gives you an overview of the match environment.

III.

Position Proactively for

High-Risk Situations

- A player who is looking at you every time you see him
- Players around whom bad things happen
- An unbalanced or lopsided match
- The “star” attacker
- The “hard man” on defense
- The midfield problem
- Player far from normal position
- Referee is fatigued
- Club linesmen
- Hard foul on attacker early in match
- Hard foul on attacker late in match

Understand Coach/Player Tactics - Be a “Student of the Game”

The better the referee understands the overall game and coach/player tactics the better the referee will be able to anticipate play and read the game.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME (What to do)

- Attacking Objectives: **Score, Advance and Maintain Possession**
- Defending Objectives: **Prevent Scoring, Delay and Regain Possession**

PRINCIPLES OF PLAY (How to do it)

- Attacking Principles: **Penetration, Depth, Mobility, Width and Creativity**
- Defending Principles: **Delay, Depth, Balance, Concentration, & Composure**

HOW OBJECTIVES CHANGE DEPENDING ON:

IV.

LOCATION

TEAM POSSESSING BALL

Our Attacking Third
Midfield
Our Defending Third

Our Team
SCORE
ADVANCE
POSSESSION

Opponents' Team
REGAIN
DELAY
PREVENT SCORING