

# Where do Referee Instructors come from?

Brent Morrison Section Two Referee Administrator

Your region may be bigger or smaller than the one I am in, but, no matter what size region, we all face similar problems. How do we train the hundreds of new referees across the country who volunteer each year and who will do that training?

Most referees expect the training to be offered but don't really worry much about who will do the instruction. However, regional referee administrators and/or regional directors of referee instruction do worry about this. Why? Because, it takes a new referee at least 2-3 years to become an intermediate referee, which is required to become a referee instructor and, normally, by this time this referee's son or daughter has advanced one or two age groups. Their child may play soccer a few more years and then go on to something else like a job or high school events. Most of the time parents follow their children's activities and usually when the player stops playing soccer, the parent stops volunteering. Additionally, not every referee wants to be an instructor or has the necessary skills or desire to spend the time needed to become an instructor. All of these factors limit the pool of available referee instructor candidates and the time they will be available as volunteers.

Thanks to years of work by lots of very talented volunteers, AYSO has what has been said to be the "best amateur referee training program in the world." The Referee Instructor Program is an integral part of that program and includes three levels of referee instructor certification: Referee Instructor, Advanced Referee Instructor and National Referee Instructor. Each level helps the referee grow in his or her knowledge of the Laws of the Game and the skills and techniques needed to teach others how to referee. Part of the requirements to move through the referee instructor certification levels includes requirements to move through the referee certification levels as well which means our instructors also gain experience on the field by doing a certain number of required games. This combination of requirements gives the referee instructor not only a better overall understanding of the Laws of the Game but the practical application of the spirit behind the Laws as well. AYSO has a great referee instructor program. All we need are volunteers to step up and take a shot at teaching others how to experience the joy of refereeing.

So where do the instructors come from? Look inside yourself! Do you enjoy refereeing? Do you watch soccer matches on TV? Do you talk to other referees and coaches about soccer? Do you go to soccer matches, even when you don't have to? If you answer yes to any of these questions then you should consider becoming a referee instructor. **DON'T WAIT FOR AN INSTRUCTOR CLASS TO BE ANNOUNCED.** Talk to, call or e-mail your regional referee administrator or regional director of referee instruction and tell them you want to become an instructor. Instructor classes are offered when enough interest is expressed to justify scheduling a course so add your name to the "interested list". As soon as enough people are identified, a class can be scheduled. Region, area and section staff will often work together to offer instructor training. Instructor Supercamps, where instructor training is offered for referees, coaches and managers, are becoming a popular and fun way to do instructor training.

Once you take the class and complete the training, you will be assigned to work with an experienced instructor/evaluator in a "student teaching" situation in a course with real students. The experienced instructor/evaluator that will help mentor you as you begin your instructor career. The more you teach the more you will want to teach. Experiencing the satisfaction of being a teacher awaits you in AYSO. You will never experience that satisfaction until you try. Help us, help you to help them!