

**United States Soccer Federation
Assessment Program
Assessment Guidelines
Five Category Criteria (March 2005)**

In 2005, the traditional Assessment Game Report Form has been updated. The new release of the Game Report Form reflects the changes that have been taking place in modern soccer. Instead of the traditional eight criteria, the new version lists only five criteria. The new set of criteria for the referee and the assistant referees with point allocation for each line item are shown below.

The design focus of the new form was to adopt the game report to the Web based medium. However, a separate, downloadable alternate set of forms is available on the US Soccer Referee Web Page (www.ussoccer.com/referees/).

Different Forms for Different Situations

(a) For mentoring and coaching referees and observations at many youth/adult tournaments, use the Developmental Form. No scores are generated with this form. This form is available from the referee office in a triplicate format and may be purchased for use.

(b) For normal upgrade and maintenance assessments, use either the Professional Web Based Form, when applicable, or use a set of downloaded Assessment Report and Feedback Forms which are available at www.ussoccer.com under Referee section.

(c) For professional games, use the Professional Web Based Form available on www.ussoccer-data.com.

For Upgrade and Maintenance assessments, the Administrative Protocols must have been satisfied. The US Soccer Policy regarding Procedural Requirements for Upgrade and Maintenance are contained in the newly revised Assessor Manual (US Soccer, 2004).

The Five Criteria

<i>Referee</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Assistant Referee</i>	<i>Points</i>
<i>Category</i>		<i>Category</i>	
Personal Qualities	10	Personal Qualities	10
Fitness	10	Fitness & Positioning	10
Interpretation- Application of Laws	30	Offside & boundary lines assistance	30
Performance of duties	20	Fouls, misconduct & discipline assistance	30
Discipline & match control	30	Game, wall and player management/communication assistance.	20

Examples of Observation Points (Short Version)

Referee

1. **Personal Qualities:** Appearance, attitude (toward players, coaches and game), credibility, self-confidence (not intimidated by coaches or players), reaction to criticism, impartiality, arrogance, courage and character.
2. **Fitness:** sprinting speed, recovery from extreme position, field presence, work rate and mobility.
3. **Interpretation and Application of the Laws:** Officiating in accordance with the spirit of the game, application of the Laws of the Game (first), foul recognition and selection, use of advantage, accuracy of decisions. Deals with gamesmanship, time-wasting and persistent infringement.
4. **Performance of Duties:** Attention to detail, communication and cooperation with the assistance referees and the 4th official, firm clear and approved signals, proper use of whistle, proper mechanics for misconduct management (cards), game management, static and dynamic positioning using a flexible diagonal system of control.
5. **Match Control and Discipline:** Recognizing and effectively dealing with misconduct, serious foul play and violent conduct, dissent, tactical fouls and player management.

Assistant Referee

1. **Personal Qualities:** Appearance, league protocol, attitude, equipment and field inspection, confidence, reactivity, impartiality, courage, character, focus and concentration.
2. **Fitness and Positioning:** Fitness, endurance, sprints, side stepping, dynamic and static positioning, work rate, mobility and overall mechanics.
3. **Assistance with Offside, Touchline and Goal lines:** Use of clear, approved signals, correct directions on throw ins, goal kicks and corner kicks, correct offside decisions. (Stayed with second to last defender or the ball.) Followed shots to goal.
4. **Assistance with Fouls:** assisted with serious foul play, violent conduct, penalty kicks, and Dissent; indicated fouls missed or not seen by the referee, assistance with misconduct and discipline.
5. **Assistance with game and player management:** Pre-game duties, cooperation with referee and other officials, wall management, consistency of decisions, composure, communication with the crew and players-coaches, concentration and assistance with player management.

Examples of Observation Points (Regular Version)

Referee: Observe and Note the following:

Personal Qualities

Appearance: The official's control is established from the moment of entering the premises. Did the Referee

- Arrive at the field neatly dressed, well groomed and present a professional appearance?
- Appear well groomed, neat and clean at match time?
- Wear the correct uniform for the competition?
- Wear only the correct USSF current year badge?
- Wear clean and polished shoes?
- Give the initial impression of being physically fit?
- Make adjustments at half time to restore appearance?

Personality: Attitude and the perception of attitude by others affect the game in many important ways. Did the Referee

- Create an aura of credibility and respect for the team of officials?
- Appear mentally prepared for the match?
- Build mutual respect within the officiating team?
- Show respect for fellow officials with a thorough pre-game discussion?
- Show respect toward players and coaches?
- Refrain from fraternizing with coaches and players, on or off the field?
- Show confidence in his/her decisions?
- Refrain from drawing undue attention to himself/herself?
- Refrain from over reacting to criticism from players, coaches or spectators?
- Appear calm and unaffected by pressure?
- Appear to enjoy the match?
- Maintain composure under stressful situations?
- Remain unaffected by appeals from players or coaches?
- Remain approachable, but not overly friendly to any players or coaches?

Fitness: Sound decision making under pressure depends on good field positioning and fitness. Mental fatigue, loss of concentration and inconsistent decision-making lead to poor game control. Decisions made close to play are less likely to be appealed or contested by players. Willingness to go wide and deep on the diagonal in response to play and into the penalty area as needed in a manner that enhances game control. Did the Referee

- Maintain an appropriate level of effort throughout the match?
- Exhibit the ability to sprint when necessary to take new position quickly?
- Exhibit mobility, moving laterally and backwards when required?
- Take and then recover easily from extreme positions ahead of play, off the field and elsewhere as the game demands?

Refereeing Ability

Interpretation and Application of the Laws: Foul recognition, foul discrimination, awareness of gamesmanship by players and coaches, recognition of persistent infringement, time wasting, wall management on free kicks and the proper use of advantage are critical to game control. Did the Referee

- Distinguish between unintentional and intentional handball?
- Recognize the difference between legal shielding and holding/obstruction?
- Recognize the blatant shirt/short grab as a tactical foul demanding a caution?
- Recognize the difference between jumping for the ball and jumping at an opponent or backing under an opponent?
- Recognize late tackles and reckless tackles?
- Recognize late challenges after the ball is played?
- Give proper advantage and award the foul if it didn't develop within a few seconds?
- Incorrectly give advantage when none existed to avoid the calling a foul?
- Know what a trifling offense is based on the skill level of the players?
- Avoid giving advantage when misconduct, serious foul play or violent conduct is involved?
- Show consistency in foul recognition regardless of where the foul occurred on the pitch?
- Have the courage to give a penalty kick when the foul is committed within the penalty area, regardless of score or time in the match?
- Correctly apply the laws for direct vs. indirect free kicks?
- Allow the quick free kick or if requested get the 10 yards and set the wall?
- Restart the game quickly to maintain game flow after fouls were awarded?
- Identify and deal with time wasting tactics?
- Recognize and deal with persistent infringement by one player or multiple opponents on a single player?
- Recognize and deal with gamesmanship (i.e. dives, trickery, delay, etc)?
- Appropriately deal with tackles that endanger the opponent?
- Recognize the first foul and not the retaliation?

Performance of Duties: Attentive to detail, league protocol, effective use of the whistle, allowance for added time, game management and proper pre-game conference with fellow officials. Positioning during static and dynamic play is essential for making proper decisions. Did the Referee

- Arrive at the game site on time?
- Show a professional and courteous demeanor prior to the match?
- Give a thorough and proper pre-game session to AR's/4th?
- Check the field, player equipment, rosters, etc. before the match?
- Start the game on time?
- Keep an accurate record of the game and file a game report?
- Deal effectively with injured players and their removal from the pitch?
- Assume the recommended positioning and prescribed mechanics on set plays and make adjustments when the game demanded it?
- Adjust positioning during dynamic play to meet the tempo, level and needs of the game?
- Stay near to critical play but not in the way of play?

- Keep the ball between him/her and the assistant referee to avoid missing signals from the assistant referee?
- Look at the assistant referees during stoppages of play and acknowledge their indications with a gesture?
- Stay out of playing lanes?
- Read, anticipate tactical changes and adjust accordingly?
- Assume the recommended position on goal kick, corner kicks, free kicks near goal and re-starts?
- Assume the correct positioning on kick offs, penalty kicks and offside restarts?
- Use intelligent positioning during dynamic play to not interfere with developing play yet to be in position to see developing play and the resulting challenges for the ball?
- Handle substitutions properly?
- Ensure the goalkeeper released the ball in time?
- Use clear signals made with conviction?
- Give signals in a timely manner?
- Use the proper mechanics for cautions and send offs?
- Acknowledge the assistant referee's signals?
- Communicate with assistant referees using eye contact and verbal/hand signals?
- Show the correct signal and verbal comment when awarding advantage?
- Manage ceremonial free kicks with proper wall management mechanics?

Match Control and Discipline: The crux of a successful game is the ability to see the incident, recognize it for what it is and to act accordingly to ensure that justice is served. A well-controlled game is a game that is enjoyed by the fans, coaches and players. Did the Referee

- Observe and deal with off the ball situations?
- Make prompt decisions and enable quick restarts?
- Deal with dissent by players when it occurs?
- Deal with dissent from coaches or bench personnel?
- Demonstrate knowledge of team tactics?
- Properly apply the Spirit of the Laws when required?
- Allow bending but not breaking the Laws?
- Deal with misconduct, serious foul play and violent conduct appropriately when it occurred?
- Use the approved mechanics in dealing with misconduct?
- Use man management skills to diffuse tense situations and to maintain the spirit of the game?
- Carry out the punishment in a firm, calm and non-inflammatory manner?
- Make the punishment match the crime?
- Appear to be approachable and communicate with players on decisions and their concerns?
- Not give advantage when violent conduct, misconduct or serious foul play occurred, but stopped the game to deal with the situation?
- Use the quiet word, a verbal warning, a strong whistle, a caution or a send off as the means of game control when needed?
- Identify and deal with serious offences against the Laws of the Game and the Spirit of the Game?

Assistant Referee: Observe and Note the Following

Personal Qualities: Pre-game, league protocol, attitude, equipment and field inspection. An official's control is established from the moment he/she enters the premises. Did the Assistant Referee

- Arrive at the field neatly dressed, well groomed and present a professional appearance?
- Wear the correct uniform and current year badge?
- Wear clean and polished shoes?
- Give the initial impression of being physically fit?
- Make adjustments at half time to restore appearance?
- Refrain from "socializing" with players, coaches and fans?
- Assist the referee in inspecting the field?
- Assist the referee in correcting deficiencies noted during the inspection?
- Possess the basic pieces of equipment? (Watch, coin, notepad, etc.)
- Possess supplementary equipment? (Flags, pump, etc.)
- Listen attentively and participate during the Referee's pre-game instructions?
- Assist the Referee in obtaining and checking the game balls?
- Assist the Referee in checking players, player's equipment, numbers and shirt colors of players and goalkeepers?
- Assist the Referee in checking rosters and player passes, if required?

Personality: Attitude and perceptions of attitude by others affects the game in many important ways. Did the Assistant Referee

- Show an aura of credibility and respect for the team of officials?
- Appear mentally prepared for the task?
- Build mutual respect within the officiating team?
- Show respect for fellow officials by calmly accepting Referee's over-ruling and quickly moving to positions in accordance with pre/post play mechanics?
- Show respect and consideration for players, coaches, spectators, and others?
- Show confidence in his/her decisions?
- Refrain from drawing undue attention to him/herself?
- Refrain from over-reacting to criticism from players, coaches or spectators?
- Appear to be unaffected by game pressure?
- Appear to enjoy officiating the game?

Fitness and Positioning: Lack of physical fitness contributes to physical and mental fatigue, loss of concentration and erratic decision-making. Decisions made from the proper position are less likely to be appealed or contested. Did the Assistant Referee

- Maintain the appropriate level of effort throughout the game?
- Exhibit the ability to sprint when needed to stay with the 2nd to last defender or to move with the ball to the goal line?

- Exhibit mobility, moving laterally and backwards, when required, to concurrently survey boundaries, 2nd to last defender and play near touchline?
- Quickly change positions on touch line or goal line for special situations and recover as needed?
- Assume the proper approved positioning during set plays: kick off, free kicks near goal, penalty kicks, throw ins, goal kicks and corner kicks?
- Assume the proper approved positioning during dynamic play

Assistance- Offside, Goal line, and Touchline: Did the Assistant Referee

- Use clear signals with the correct direction when the ball crossed the touch-line?
- Use the correct signal for a ball that crossed the touch-line on the Referee's diagonal?
- Give clear and timely signals when the ball crossed the end line for a corner or goal kick?
- Indicate offside only when the attacking player was in an offside position ***and*** gained an unfair advantage or interfered with play or an opponent?
- Stay with the second to last defender or the ball to make correct offside judgements?
- Indicate when the whole of the ball passed between the goal posts and under the crossbar for a good goal with the proper mechanic?

Assistance- Foul, Misconduct, SFP, VC, and PK: Did the Assistant Referee

- Accurately assess foul play in areas where the AR was in a better position than the referee to see the incident and transmit the information to the Referee in a timely and correct manner?
- Visually check with the Referee prior to conveying information on foul play or misconduct?
- Consistently scan the areas of the field that the Referee could not or did not cover for incidents of foul play or misconduct off the ball?
- Help the referee with game management by assisting in the taking of free kicks, which were within the AR's sphere of influence?
- Promptly and correctly relay information from the opposite AR if the Referee was not in a position to see the initial signal?
- Provide information to the Referee on serious incidents and assist the Referee in identifying players engaged in misconduct, serious foul play or violent conduct?
- Enter the field to come to the aid of the Referee or to assist in controlling players involved in major incidents and to record information for the Referee's game report?
- Talk to players or step on the field to diffuse situations after hard challenges in their area?

Assistance- Game and Player Management, Communication and

Teamwork: Consists of player management, teamwork, and eye contact with Referee; Maintaining focus and concentration for 90+ minutes The Assistant Referee needs to assess many situations during the match and to convey information to the Referee. Timely decision-making and personal fortitude are critical essentials. Did the Assistant Referee

- Maintain composure under stressful situations?
- Remain unaffected by appeals, or pressures from players, bench personnel or spectators?
- Make consistent decisions favoring neither side?
- Handle substitutions efficiently and effectively if required.
- Make timely decisions?
- Remain approachable but not overly friendly to players or team officials?
- Follow the protocol in bench control?
- Use sharp, crisp approved signals for throw ins, corner kicks, goal kicks, offside?
- Use the approved signal for fouls and misconduct, substitutions, mirroring other AR signals?
- Assist with setting the wall on free kicks near goal in his/her area of influence as directed by the referee in the pre-game discussion?
- Have frequent eye contact with the referee on dead ball situations?
- Help maintain control with verbal communication to players (player management)?
- Have total concentration for the entire match?

Final 4/8/2005