

AYSO Region 13: 2021 Sportsmanship Instructions and Ratings

Guide to Referees and Coaches for Fall Season 2021

Region 13 expects coaches, players, parents and other spectators to balance their desire to win with respect for their opponents, their teammates, the game officials, and the Laws of the Game. Toward that end, the Referee, with input from Assistant Referees, will again rate the participants' behavior and conduct before, during and after a game.

This document is intended to provide a standard for Region 13 referees when preparing the sportsmanship section (reverse side) of the game reports for 6U to 8U and the game cards for 10U to 14U regulation competitive soccer matches. Cumulative sportsmanship points will enable Region 13 to identify and reward teams whose players, coaches and spectators exhibit exceptional "spirit of the game." The ratings are to promote positive behavior and encourage good sportsmanship, and identify potential trouble spots before they become worse.

If a referee or coach has any questions about interpreting these guidelines, contact your Division Referee Administrator (DRA) or the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA - referee@ayso13.org). In addition, coaches are encouraged to provide feedback about the performance of their game officials; constructive feedback assists with improving referee skills and instruction. Coaches are requested to communicate feedback directly to their DRA or the RRA.

The Rating System:

Region 13 uses a 5 point rating system, with 3 representing an average game. "Zero" is an option for extreme situations. If, by the end of the game and the post-game sportsmanship ceremony, nothing out of the ordinary has happened, then the referee team should mark a default value of 3 points in each of the three categories: Players, Coaches and Spectators, for a total of 9 points. Any game cards received with other than 3 awarded in any category should have referee comments to justify the rating. If no comments are provided, any extreme ratings (i.e., 1's or 5's) will likely default to 3's when the data are recorded by the region statistician.

It is difficult to develop a truly objective standard. For fairness, region officials will also compare a Referee's subjective ratings over time, in an attempt to calibrate the evaluator. However, because Referees are somewhat randomly assigned to games; this should even out any inherent bias in their individual rating strategies.

Process:

The criteria must be applied appropriately to the youth division being officiated. The first games of the season are to familiarize the participants and the referees to the sportsmanship rating strategy. Referee team officials monitor and evaluate the behavior, not the technical skills, of the coaches, players and spectators. They observe:

1. Attitude and comments (e.g., cheering, positive instruction, verbal abuse)
2. Adherence to technical directions (e.g., location of coaches and spectators)
3. Adherence to referee decisions (e.g., restarts, fouls, cautions, etc.)

Some typical characteristics of an average game are listed below. If most of those conditions are generally met, three (3) sportsmanship points are awarded in the players, coaches and spectators categories, for a total of nine (9) points.

Examples for each rating:

Average (3 points)

- PLAYERS: The teams come to the centerline when beckoned, properly attired, occasional reminders by the coaches for their team to pay attention or to look presentable.
- PLAYERS: Play is without yellow or red cards.
- PLAYERS: Sportsmanship ceremony at end of the game is without incident; players shake hands with each other and thank the referee team for their help.
- COACHES: Coaches shake hands with each other and thank the referee team for their help.
- COACHES/SPECTATORS: Coaches and parents on the whole provide positive comments and do not dispute the referee's calls.
- SPECTATORS: Spectators and parents cheer their team without rancor.
- SPECTATORS: Do not attempt to distract players by yelling "shoot!"
- SPECTATORS: Do not draw players aside during the game to discuss their performance.
- SPECTATORS: Leave the viewing area clear of trash or debris.

However, if a condition listed in the other rating categories is exhibited, the points should be increased or decreased accordingly. Take the entire game into account and all circumstances; good behavior can and should redeem poor behavior.

Excellent (5)

- PLAYERS: In the face of adverse luck and circumstances, the losing team still genuinely congratulates the winners for a game well played.
- PLAYERS: The team thanks the referees for a job well done, even if the calls have been adverse or erroneous (here, the referees themselves would know the context).
- COACHES: Coaches show genuine respect and congratulate each other sincerely.
- SPECTATORS: Parents applaud the opposing team even if their team is in a losing situation. They are congratulatory to all match participants.

Very good (4)

- PLAYERS: Teams line up for inspection without any problems and give close attention to the referee's instructions at the coin toss and during the game.

- COACHES: Coach does not disagree with calls but sincerely asks for explanation or clarification to help his team in the future.
- SPECTATORS: Parents cheer with intensity for a losing team.
- SPECTATORS: Parents or spectators go out of their way to thank the referees.
- SPECTATORS: Leave the field cleaner than when they arrived.

Fair (2)

- PLAYERS: Although we do not expect that players will be happy when calls go against them, we do expect them to avoid verbal responses and gestures that question the referees' authority. Any lapses in accepting the decisions of the referees are deemed to be a form of dissent and are the basis for a lower rating. More than just a few lapses becomes continuous and is the basis for a poor rating.
- PLAYERS: Teams talking or not paying attention while the referee is giving directions or instructions.
- PLAYERS: A higher incidence of fouling beyond what one would normally expect given the level of play.
- COACHES: Occasional negative comments by the coach or assistant coaches directed at their players, the referees, or the opposing team.
- COACHES/SPECTATORS: Coaches or parents entering the field of play before being given permission by the referee.
- SPECTATORS: Occasional adverse comments by parents directed at their players, the referees, or the opposing team.

Poor (1)

- PLAYERS: Players criticize teammates or taunt opponents.
- PLAYERS: Players frequently contest the referee's decisions and ignore instructions or other directions.
- PLAYERS: Excessive fouling by players deemed to be inconsistent with fair play and the Spirit of the Game, whether or not sanctioned by the Referee through the use of yellow or red cards.
- COACHES: The coach continues to run up the score in a match that is clearly one-sided and not competitive.
- COACHES: Coaches or assistant coaches fail to remain in the technical area after being reminded repeatedly by the referee or the assistant referee.
- COACHES: ALL players don't play at least three-fourths of the game without a reasonable explanation.
- COACHES: Stops the game to argue with referee.
- COACHES/SPECTATORS: Coaches or parents make critical comments or constantly question the decisions of the referee team.
- COACHES/SPECTATORS: Coach or parent entering the field of play to protest a call.
- SPECTATORS: Spectators/parents fail to keep the touchlines clear even after being reminded repeatedly by the assistant referee.

- SPECTATORS: Leave a mess at the field.

Unacceptable (0)

- PLAYERS: Refusal of one or more players to shake hands with opponents after the game.
- PLAYERS: Snide or insulting comments to opponents.
- PLAYERS: Use of racial, homophobic, or similarly offensive language.
- PLAYERS: Arguing or yelling at opponent's coach or parents or arguing with own coach or parents.
- COACHES: Negative comments by a coach to his team, to individual players, or to opponents.
- COACHES: Steps onto the field to argue with referee.
- COACHES/SPECTATORS: Abusive language, constant negative comments or similar behavior exhibited to the referee team whether or not such coaches/spectators have been sent-off from the field of play.