



## Guidelines for Head Referees

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So you've taken on the Head Referee role - congratulations - there are obviously people out there in the polo scene who believe you have the skills for the job.

Primarily you are a resource for players and competition officials to assist with the smooth running of the competition.

### What are your responsibilities?

- Referees draw – this takes up most of your time generally - it's your responsibility to ensure referees are allocated for the various games. In doing this you need to consider the level of game being played, the abilities of the referees, the degree of aggression expected and the importance of the game. Trying to have neutral referees can be useful also. It is your final decision as to who is appropriate to referee a game, not teams/players/coaches.

In managing the draw, referees should ideally referee no more than two games in a row as per ICF recommendations.

Where teams have been required to provide a nominated referee try to utilise as many of them as possible in the appropriate slots.

You needn't referee a lot of games yourself - but occasionally you'll need to step in when someone doesn't turn up on time etc.

You can delegate the refs draw to others, but you are ultimately responsible.

For National League A grade games all referees should have a current qualification and at least one should be Regional level. For NL A grade finals / medal games, both referees should be Regional level.

- Be present! You don't have to be there all the time but you keep a watch on what's happening and be generally around for questions / clarifications and complaints etc. If you need to head away make sure the ref draws up to date and tell the other officials.
- Be an advocate for the other referees. Try to make sure there's nothing happening making their job harder than it needs to be. This could be lane markers out of position, players / spectators in the way etc. The easier it is for them the less trouble you'll have getting them to do it again.
- Education. You're in the position because you have the skills and knowledge for the job. Where you see areas that a ref could improve their skills try to help them – at the appropriate time! Minor pointers positively expressed can make a huge difference to confidence and abilities. If you see what you perceive to be a mistake – discuss it away from the pitch and check what they saw first – there could be a good reason for the call or they may have just butchered it.
- Set an example with your behaviour. Be on time, appropriately dressed to ref, whistle, cards, cool/calm/collected.
- Get help / assistance from others when you need it.
- Competition Committee - the Head Referee is normally a member of the competition committee for formal protests – an uncommon event.

And it pays to have a good knowledge of the current canoe polo rules and a copy on hand.....

Prepared by Sean Thomson, Refereeing Director

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