

# Guidelines for Recruiting and Using Linesmen In U-7 and U-8 Games AYSO Region 104

In U-7 and U-8 games referees may recruit and use of linesmen for their games. In Region 104 we encourage this. This document is intended for you, the referee, to guide you through this process come game day.

There are several benefits of using linesmen. The primary one is that it will directly help you call the game better. The people you bring in to assist you are essentially dedicated to the task of indicating to you when the ball has gone out of play, and what the proper restart is once it does go out. Also, having linesmen has the side benefit of teaching you and them to work together as a team. Finally, it will help bring new volunteers into our program, and in particular, those to assist with the officiating aspect of our games. This is important, since as a referee, there are few things more crucial than having people trained, knowledgeable and experienced as assistants, even if they are team-affiliated. The people that you include and train this year will likely be involved in our program for years to come (based on returning player statistics for children playing in U-7). And who knows, they may later decide that from this experience they too would like to become referees.

Note that at these ages, linesmen do not use AR (assistant referee) flags. Flags aren't really needed at these ages mainly because of the smaller field as compared to those at U-9 and above. Instead, linesmen in U-7 and U-8 games use arm signals, and these signals are essentially identical to those made with flags by ARs/linesmen in U-9+ games.

## Recruiting Your Linesmen

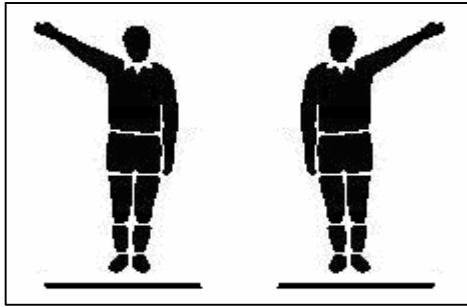
Linesmen are typically people recruited from the pool of spectators associated with one or both teams (also known as "club" linesmen). To recruit these individuals, you will likely need to ask the coach of the visiting team for someone who can help "run the line". Likewise, you will also want to get someone to assist you from your team. That person should be someone you know (or suspect) to be familiar with the game and you judge capable of doing the job. If you'd like, you may choose to have both individuals come from the same team, either your team or the visiting team. This decision is entirely yours as the referee.

## Pre-game Instructions

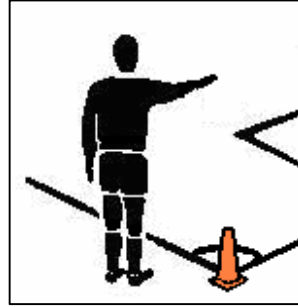
Tell and show them about ball in and out of play. A good tip is to ask them to wait and signal only after the whole of the ball has completely crossed over the goal line or touch line.

A key part of your pre-game discussion will be explaining each of various linesmen-related restarts: throw-ins, goal kicks & corner kicks. Discuss the situations that lead to each of these and physically show them what each looks like (see diagrams below).

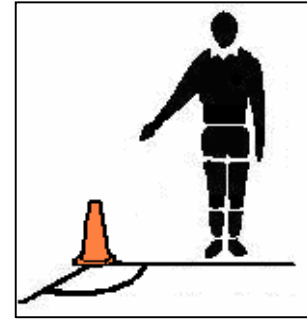
The best way to explain the throw-in signal is that it should be the mirror image of your signal (which means, of course, that as the referee, you're consistently showing these signals yourself). They should be pointing with their right or left arm in the direction of the team receiving the throw-in. Their arm signals should be at a 30-45° angle above horizontal as shown in the diagrams.



Throw-in Signals



Goal Kick Signal

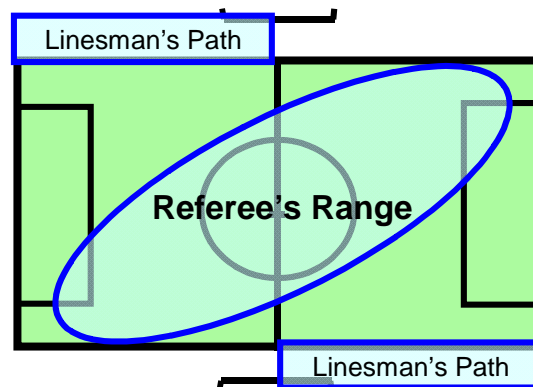


Corner Kick Signal

For goal kicks, tell them that they are simply pointing straight out towards the goal area. And for corner kicks, they are pointing downward with their right arm to their near-corner cone or flag. These signals are for the most part straightforward and intuitive. The one exception is the far side-of-field corner kick. In situations where the ball was last touched by a defender and goes out over the goal line across the field from the linesman, the linesman's *signal is the same* as if the ball had gone out on the near side of the field. In other words, the linesman should not be pointing to the other side of the field on corner kicks. If so, it would be confused with a goal kick signal.

#### Position of Linesmen During the Match

Instruct your linesmen that they should run just outside the touch line between the halfway line and the goal line (refer to the Linesman's Path in the diagram below). Instruct them to stay *even with the ball* when it's on their side of the field.



Having your linesmen do this will allow you to not have to cover the entire field, and in particular, that portion nearest to where they are. You'll be able to run a route, known as the referee's diagonal (in this case, a left diagonal) with your linesmen helping you on the other side of play. This will allow you the advantage of having someone with a different viewing angle of play. The end objective is a higher percentage of correct ball-out-of-play calls and their corresponding restarts.