



HOW TO START THE GAME

Tips and Advice for Vikings Grade 9 Referees

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I. What to Bring

Prior to the game, pack a bag that has the following:

1. Watch, with stopwatch function
 - If you use a countdown timer, it helps to set the length of the halves beforehand
 - Take some time to get acquainted with how your watch works
2. Whistle with lanyard
 - The whistle needs to be worn on the wrist, not the neck!
3. Pen
4. Flip Coin for coin toss (you may use a quarter)
5. Water (snacks or food, if you're going to ref for a long time)
6. Sunblock

II. How to Prepare

Aim to arrive at the field 15-20 minutes early. If you are starting the first game of the day, you are responsible for checking that the field conditions are safe, and that the goals are anchored. The league has people that set up the field, but it is always a good idea to check anyways. Mark any gopher holes or big potholes in the grass with a disc cone, if you can get them from the coaches.

Your first and foremost responsibility is ensuring safety for yourself, and for the players. Do not start a game, if you are in doubt. Have the Vikings 2008 Hotline number programmed into your phone in case you have problems on game day. The number is: **(415) 279-0820**

Take time to make yourself presentable. Tuck in your shirt, put on your badge, pull up your socks and don't forget your sunscreen. You are in a position of authority, so you're going to want to look professional, and in charge.

III. How to Introduce Yourself to the Coach

15 minutes before game time, you need to get ready to start the game. Introduce yourself to the coaches with a handshake. Tell them your name, and ask them to get ready for check-in. Ask them if they have a team captain for the coin toss and note who that player is.

Tips and Advice: It is always wise, especially for the U8/U9 games to remind the coaches of certain etiquette that must be observed before the game, because they forget, or don't know.

1. **Only 2 licensed coaches in the technical area**
 - Do not make exceptions to this rule. It will cause problems for you.
 - Only the 2 coaches may coach, no one else, no exceptions
 - Make sure the picture on the pass matches the coach
 - Coaching can only be in the technical area
 - **No coaching from behind the goals by anyone!**
2. Remind coaches they are responsible for the behavior of the spectators
3. Remind them that if there is an injury, you will stop the game and wave them onto the field to get their player. Ask them to have a substitute ready, as the game will go on as soon as the player is off the field. **No parents are to come onto the field at any time.** Coaches are to remind the parents of this.

If you have a problem with a coach: Stop the game! Calmly approach the coach and give him/her a warning. If you do not feel safe or comfortable, it is your option to halt the game, inform the coaches that the game is over, and leave the field. You will need to file a report to the league, and/or call the Vikings Hotline if this occurs. For all other incidents/concerns during a game that you have handled, please fill out a report to the league when you report scores for the game. Vikings league strives very hard to protect the referees from any kind of harassment from coaches or spectators and will deal with such issues as they come up.

IV. How to check in the teams

Get the GAME CARD from the coach of the home team. Get the player passes from the coach. Have the away team coach fill out his player information on the game card. Get the away team player passes. Get and check the game ball from the Home coach. Ask the coaches to line their players up for check in. Checks are either done head to toe, or toe to head, your choice. Get the game ball from the coach of the home team.

1. No Jewelry, Earrings, Casts, Splints that have hard metal or hard plastic. NO EXCEPTIONS! No Tape or bandaids over earrings! They offer no protection if a ball hits the ear!
2. All shirts tucked in.
3. Have the players tap their shin guards
 - The socks must completely cover the shin guards.
 - No shin guards **outside** the socks!
4. Have them turn and show you the bottom of the cleat, or lift up their foot.
 - No baseball/football cleats. Those have a spike in the front of the bottom of the shoe. It is dangerous for soccer. If the cleat is broken and appears unsafe, you need to have the coach tell the player to change his/her shoes.

- Make sure to warn them to double-tie their laces, as you will not stop the game for re-tying.
 - Cleats are not mandatory, players can use any sneaker that is safe.
5. Next, read off the names of the player passes. Have the player turn, show you their number, and step behind you
 - Warning, from time to time coaches sneak extra players into their lineup. These players are not covered by the league, thus are a liability. You will not allow those players to play, and you must put that coach on report when you report your scores.
 6. **It is very important that you retain the passes until the end of the game! If there is a problem, you will need to turn those passes into the office so that the league can deal with the coaches of that team. It is very hard to get passes from problem coaches once you've given them back! Put the passes in your pocket, or in the front of your bag and do not return them until the end of the game.**
 7. Move onto the next team, and repeat the check-in process

V. Pre game with the VAR's, if applicable

If you are in a U9, U10, or U11 game, you will need to pre-game the VAR's. Ask them what their experience is. For some, it will be the first time.

1. Remind them of how to call in and out of bounds. The ball must completely cross the line before it is out. When in doubt, have them look to you first, before indicating direction. You make the decision and indicate direction. When in doubt, give the ball to the defense.
2. The VAR is responsible for the whole touch line on his side only. The opposite touch line is the other VAR's responsibility. The VAR calls the in and out of bounds in his quadrant only, from the center line to his goal line, his priority is to call direction first. You call the direction from the center line to the opposite line.
3. You will be running the diagonal. Try to always be on the side, where you can see your VAR, so that you have eye contact and can help each other with the in and out of bounds.
4. As the ref, you are responsible for the offside, if it is applicable to the age group (U10 and above)

VI. Starting the Game & How to Mark the Game Card

1. Place the game ball in the center circle
2. When you are ready to start the game, call for the captains to come to the center circle
3. The visiting team captain calls the toss in the air
4. Winner of the toss chooses the side to attack
5. Loser of the toss gets the kick-off
6. On the game card, **circle** the team kicking off, so you know who gets the kick-off at the beginning of the second half.
7. On the game card, the coaches should have affixed a sticker with the team name, the player names, and their corresponding jersey numbers. Have the coach **sign** on the line that says "Team Official"
8. Write on the game card the **color** of the Home team's jersey, and the color of the Visiting teams jersey in the appropriate boxes
9. Have both coaches assemble the teams on the field and make sure the numbers of players are correct
10. Ask the teams if they're ready ie: "Red team are you ready, Blue team are you ready?" Next, give the goalies a thumbs up "Red goalie are you ready, Blue goalie are you ready". When teams are ready, look at the player kicking off and say "go on my whistle". Blow the whistle, and start your watch timer.

11. See the Vikings handouts for the appropriate substitution times. You may also have the coaches remind you, in case you get sidetracked. For the U7/U8 games substitutions occur at the 6th and 13th minute. The 5 minute half-time starts at the end of 20 minutes. Use two long whistles and the signal, to indicate half-time.

Tips and Advice: As you get better, it is always nice to give the coaches a heads up that substitutions will occur within the next minute. Often, the kids at U7/U8 games are goofing off, and aren't ready when you call. The clock still runs regardless, because the games for the day are tightly scheduled, and you must keep all the games on time!

12. Nearing the end of half-time, walk on the field with the ball, and ask the coaches to assemble their teams. The teams switch sides, and Kick off is given to the team that did not start the game.
13. As in #9, ask the teams if they're ready, and start the second half on the whistle, setting your watch timer at the same time.
14. Every time a goal is scored, make a hatch mark in the appropriate box (first half, second half). At the end of the game, you will enter the FINAL SCORE at the bottom of the game card.
15. At the end of the game, blow the whistle using three long blasts, and signal end of game.
16. Pick up the game ball, and hand it to the appropriate coach, return the passes, and shake the coaches' hands. You retain the game cards for your record.