

Professional Development Award in Scottish FA: Refereeing (GA51 47)



**BE PART OF THE GAME
BE A REFEREE**



CPD Event – 1st September 2026

- **Welcome and Housekeeping - Scott Campbell**
- **Welcome – William Collum**
- **Introductions – Qualification Scotland**
- **Introduction – SFA Attendees**
 - **Scott Campbell and Lewis Hogarth**
 - **Officials and presenters**
 - **Referee Associations**
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
 - **(SFA) To provide resource and content, the management and updates of resource and content, to monitor SQA pathway facts and figures, and to recruit and retain young referees.**
 - **(Referee Association) To be point of contact for delivering centres, to support staff involved in delivery, to take an active role with numerous touchpoints, and to ensure pupils and prospects understand the steps in the referee pathway.**

The Referee DNA

For Modern Refereeing

TACTICAL

Manager of the Game

Execute your role within the game by managing tempo and flow of the game.

Focused Officiating

Make the decisions with a clear understanding and feel of the game with purpose behind each action.

Reflection

Regularly evaluate personal performance.

TECHNICAL

Big Decisions

Accurately makes critical decisions that impact the game.

Knowledgeable

Possesses a deep understanding of the LotG and their application whilst striving to improve.

Consistent

Develop reliable processes and practices in all aspects of the game.

PHYSICAL

Efficient Mover

Moves efficiently, positioning themselves to make decisions with ease.

Physical Presence

Uses body language and positioning to assert control of the game.

Robust

Consistently handles the physical demands of the league.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Brave

Taking the right decision at the right time and seizing the moment.

Self-aware

Understands their own strengths and areas for improvement, leveraging them for better performance.

Control

Regulate emotional state to maximize performance.

SOCIAL

Leader

Takes ownership of performance whilst inspiring and motivating peers.

Personality

Brings a positive approach to establish relationships whilst retaining their unique identity.

Chemistry

Builds rapport on and off the field to integrate with the football family.

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Overview of Today

- **Focus of work**
 - Working with QS and listening to feedback from centres
 - Actioning positive enhancements to allow for effective delivery
 - Continued development of resources available
- **Goals for the event**
 - Give you an understanding of the course content, and platforms used
 - Upskill your knowledge and delivery of the course
 - Build the connection with the SFA, local RA's and referee pathway
- **AM – Focus on resources and delivery**
 - LOTG updates and content presentation
 - Good Practice – Delivering Centres
- **PM – QS, Recruitment and success**
 - SOLAR exam platform and Quality Assurance (QS)
 - Referee Recruitment
 - The Referee Association and our successes

LOTG Update & Pre-Season Guidelines



**BE PART OF THE GAME
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EXPLANATION

To prevent time-wasting, the player being substituted must leave the field of play within ten seconds of the substitution board being shown or, where there is no board, of the referee's signal for the substitution to take place.

If the player has not left the field of play within those ten seconds, they must still leave but the substitute cannot enter the field of play until the first stoppage after one minute (running clock) has elapsed following the restart of play.



ADDITIONAL TEXT

(...)

To replace a player with a substitute, the 'Time-limited substitution protocol' under 'Notes and modifications' and the following must be observed:

- the referee must be informed before any substitution is made
- the player being substituted:
 - receives the referee's permission to leave the field of play, unless already off the field, and must leave by the nearest point on the boundary line unless the referee indicates that the player may leave directly and immediately at the halfway line or another point (e.g. for safety/security or injury)
 - must be off the field of play within ten seconds of the substitution board being shown or, where there is no board, of the referee's signal for the substitution to take place, except where this is not possible due to safety/security or injury
 - must go immediately to the technical area or dressing room and takes no further part in the match, except where return substitutions are permitted

Where there are multiple substitutions during the same stoppage, all players being substituted must leave the field of play within ten seconds of the last substitution being indicated.

ADDITIONAL TEXT

(...)

Except where leaving the field of play within ten seconds is not possible due to safety/security or injury, if the player being substituted has not left the field of play within the required ten seconds:

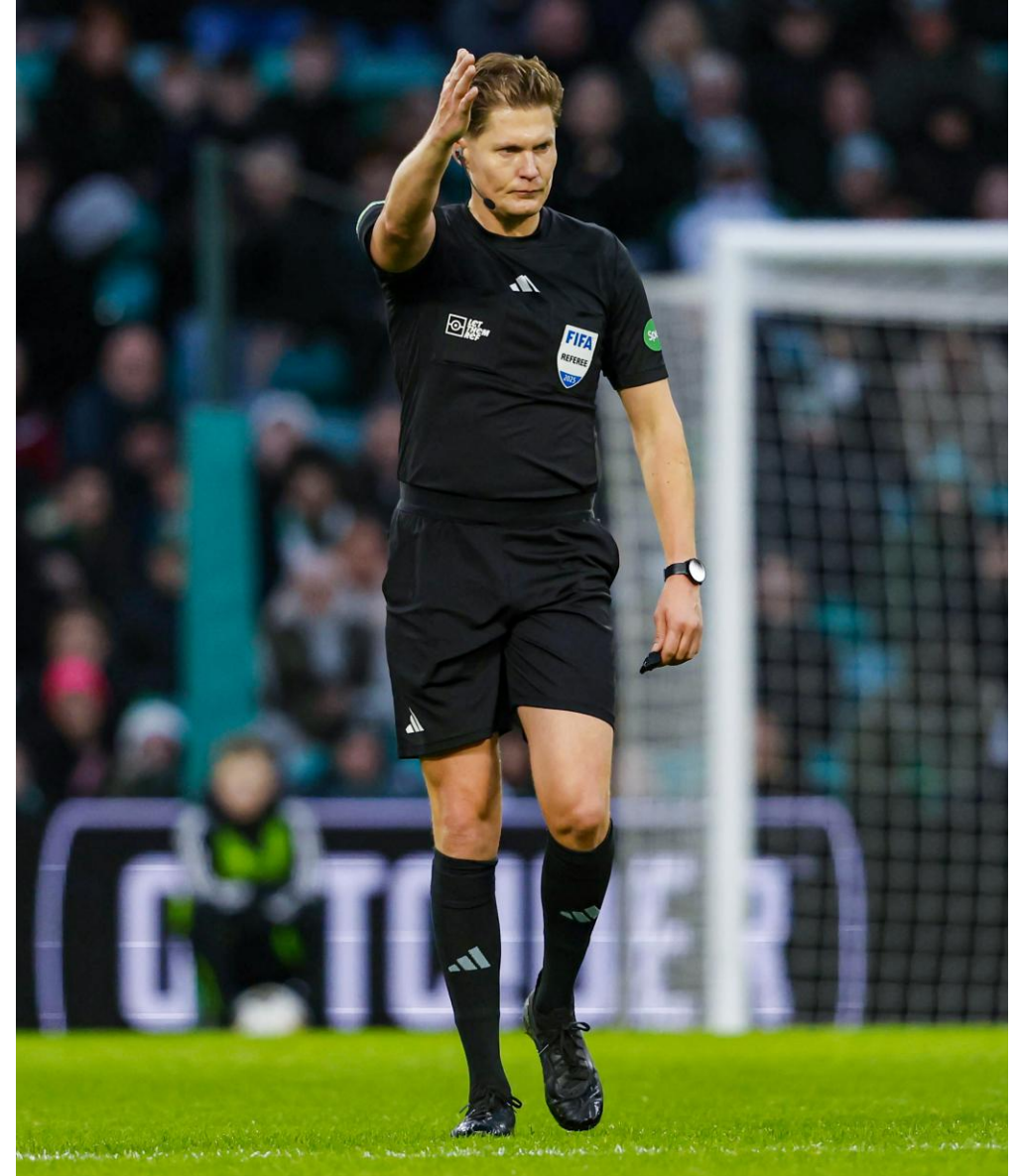
- the player being substituted must still leave the field of play; they are cautioned only if they excessively delay the restart beyond the ten seconds
- the substitute may not yet enter the field of play
- play restarts
- the substitution cannot be cancelled nor a different substitute used
- the substitute may enter the field of play only with the referee's permission during the first stoppage after one minute has elapsed following the restart

For any other offences:

- (...)

EXPLANATION

Confirmation that the referee can play advantage if a team incorrectly takes a restart (free kick, throw-in etc.), and the opponents gain possession.



EXPLANATION

- An injured player who is treated/assessed on the field of play or who causes play to be stopped must leave and remain off the field of play for one minute (running clock) after play has restarted. The referee may give permission for the player to return while the ball is in play. A protocol detailing how this will operate is included under 'Notes and modifications'.



AMENDED TEXT

*The referee:
(...)*

Injuries

- *allows play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is only slightly injured*
- *stops play only if a player is seriously injured and ensures that the player is removed from the field of play. An injured player may not be treated on the field of play and, where an injury results in play being stopped or the restart of play being delayed, the injured player must leave the field of play and may only re-enter one minute after play has restarted; * if the ball is in play, re-entry must be from the touchline but if the ball is out of play, it may be from any boundary line. (...)*

**See 'Off-field treatment and assessment protocol' under 'Notes and modifications'.*

EXPLANATION

Where an injury results from a physical offence punished by a yellow card or red card, the player can remain on the field after assessment/ treatment, even if it is not completed quickly.



EXPLANATION

- The main principle is that the ball is dropped for the team that would have kept/gained possession had play not been stopped, which includes the team that would have taken the restart if the ball would have gone out of play.
- If play is stopped because the ball makes contact with a match official or outside agent, the ball is dropped where the contact occurred.



EXPLANATION

- If the referee plays advantage following a DOGSO offence and, as a result, a goal is scored by the attacking team, the player who committed the offence is not cautioned or sent off.
- There is no caution when the referee plays advantage when a player has unsuccessfully attempt tried to stop a goal with their hand(s)/arm(s).



EXPLANATION

The location and number of attackers are included in the DOGSO considerations, as this can also help determine whether an obvious goal-scoring opportunity exists.



AMENDED SUMMARY TABLE

Outcome of the penalty kick		
	Goal <u>scored from the kick</u>	No goal <u>scored from the kick</u>
Encroachment <u>only</u> by attacking player(s)	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact: indirect free kick No impact: no retake
Encroachment <u>only</u> by defending player(s)	Impact: goal No impact: goal	Impact: penalty is retaken No impact: no retake
Encroachment by defending and attacking player(s)	Impact <u>by both defending and attacking player(s)</u> : penalty is retaken <u>Impact by defending player(s) only</u> : goal <u>Impact by attacking player(s) only</u> : penalty is retaken No impact: goal	Impact <u>by both defending and attacking player(s)</u> : penalty is retaken <u>Impact by defending player(s) only</u> : penalty is retaken <u>Impact by attacking player(s) only</u> : no retake No impact: no retake
Offence <u>only</u> by goalkeeper	Goal	Not saved: penalty is not retaken (unless kicker is clearly impacted) Saved: penalty is retaken and warning for goalkeeper; caution for any further offence(s)

Outcome of the penalty kick		
	Goal <u>scored from the kick</u>	No goal <u>scored from the kick</u>
Goalkeeper and kicker offend at the same time	<u>Penalty is retaken unless kicker commits one of the offences below</u>	<u>Penalty is retaken unless kicker commits one of the offences below</u>
<u>Double touch by kicker</u>	<u>Accidental: penalty is retaken</u> <u>Deliberate: indirect free kick</u>	<u>Accidental: indirect free kick; penalty is retaken if goalkeeper also offends</u> <u>Deliberate: indirect free kick</u>
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
‘Illegal’ feinting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker
<u>Unsporting behaviour by kicker</u>	<u>Indirect free kick and caution for kicker</u>	<u>Indirect free kick and caution for kicker</u>

EXPLANATION

Text introduced to avoid delays at throw-ins. If a team is deliberately delaying their throw-in, the referee will whistle, signal for the throw-in to be taken and then start a visual five-second countdown. If the throw-in has not been taken by the end of the countdown, it is awarded to the opposing team.

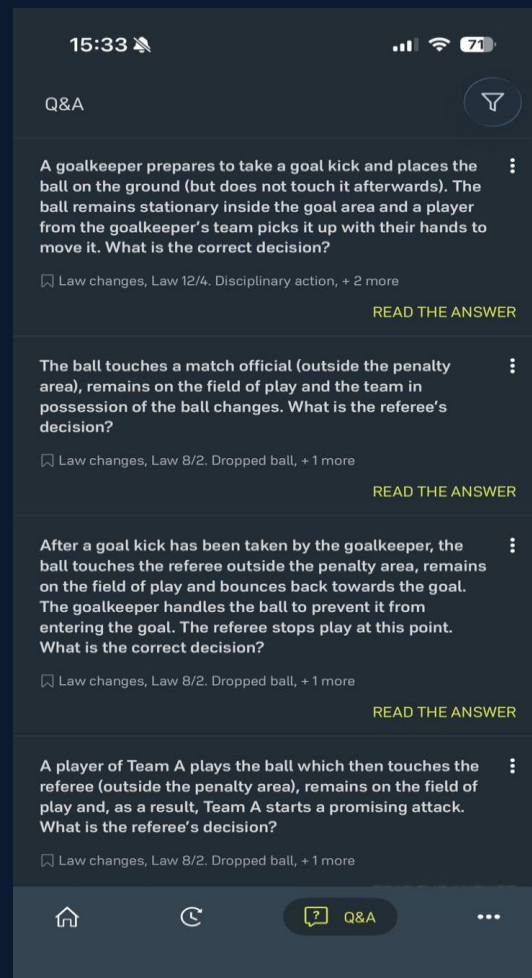
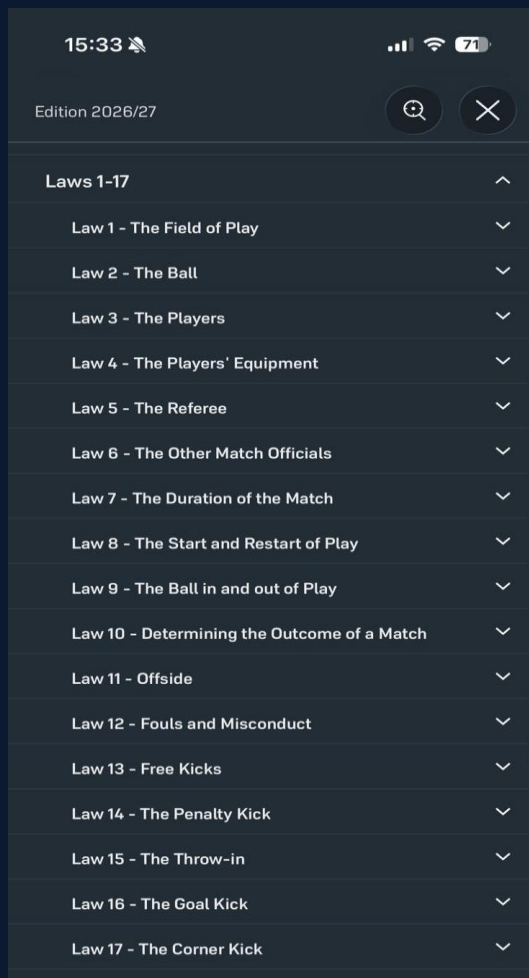
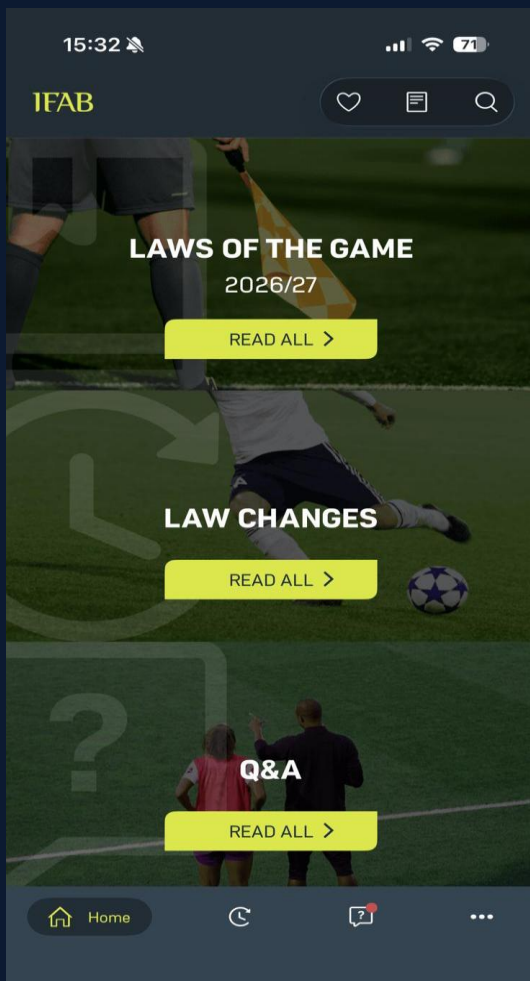


EXPLANATION

Text introduced to avoid delays at goal kicks. If a team is deliberately delaying their goal kick, the referee will whistle, signal for the goal kick to be taken and then start a visual five-second countdown. If the goal kick has not been taken by the end of the countdown, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.



IFAB App



SFA Platforms

- **Referee Registration – COMET**
 - Working with QS and listening to feedback from centres
 - Expectation versus implementation
 - COMET process currently removed
 - Will keep centres updated with alternative process
 - Certificates
 - RA's will be informed of schools participating and will be in touch

SFA Platforms



SOLAR – Qualification Scotland assessment platform where the Laws of the Game exam is hosted, supported by a helpdesk.



HALO – Scottish FA resource site hosting all resources for the qualification provided by the Scottish FA including Laws of the game and video clips.



SFA Platforms

- **Course Resources – HALO**

- Complete LOTG resource site with additional approved resources
- New resources will be uploaded by Friday 11th September
- HALO video links
- Reviewing Calendar – When do we upload new resources?
- LOTG assistance – Referee Associations
- Development of resources – What do you need?

Removing Barriers

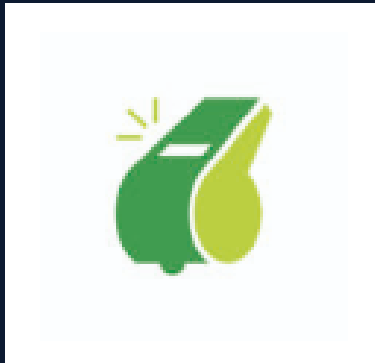
- **Headlines**

- Internal review meetings all summer for R&R, focus on PDA award
- Only 5% pf PDA participants convert to active refereeing – why?
 - Lack of information – All centres will know local RA contacts
 - Lack of contact – Focus from RA's on making contact at key points
 - Knowledge of what's next – key contacts for candidates, pass or fail
 - Membership cost – FREE membership for 1 year minimum

The Refereeing Pathway



Where to start?



NATIONAL REFEREE INTRODUCTORY COURSE



Then what?



From there...



Nick Walsh



Scottish Junior Cup
Final

Scottish League Cup
Final

UEFA Champions
League

UEFA Europa
Conference League ½
Final

Scottish Cup Final x2

UEFA Elite Referee

UEFA Europa League ¼
Final

UEFA U21 European
Championship ½ Final



What's Possible?



The Refereeing Pathway



WHERE WILL REFEREEING TAKE YOU?



Becoming a Referee - SFAR Lanarkshire

- **From School to Joining local Association**

- ✓ Pass the LOTG exam
- ✓ Pupil sends an email to local referee association contact
- ✓ Receives a hyperlinked PDF step by step Referee Process document:

- 1) Sign up to Comet
- 2) Apply for Level 1 Disclosure
- 3) Complete CWB module
- 4) Attend Face to Face session
- 5) Join leagues/ Minor Grade matches



Becoming a Referee - SFAR Lanarkshire

Sharing Best Practice

- Communication x Procedures x Support = Retention.
- Professional Network: Lanarkshire Schools TEAMS page.
- Face to Face sessions: monthly practical sessions for new entrants at Clyde Valley HS astro on a Tuesday evening.
- Lanarkshire WhatsApp community: updates and mentoring.
- Attending weekly training: 7PM Tuesday, Clyde Valley HS astro.
- Strong links with local youth league CLYFA: supported first games.



Who am I?

Name: Cameron Stirling

23 Years Old

Category 1 Referee

Occupation: High School Business Teacher

Length of Time as a Qualified Referee: 7 Years



Why Did I Become a Referee?

Another way to be involved in football alongside playing

Great way to make money

Keep fit

Make friends

Massive opportunities



My Refereeing Journey so Far

- **2019** – Qualified. Refereeing Club Academy Scotland and youth football (**Category 7**)
- **2020** – Refereeing Under 20s League and operating as an Assistant Referee in the East of Scotland League and Lowland League (**Category 4 Development**)
- **2022** – Refereeing East of Scotland Division 1, 2 & 3 (**Category 3 Development**)
- **2023** – Refereeing Lowland League, SWPL 1 & 2 and operating as an Assistant Referee in SPFL League 1 & 2 (**Category 3**)
- **2024** – Refereeing Lowland League, West of Scotland Premier Division, Scottish Cup and SWPL 1 (**Category 2**)
- **2025** – Refereeing in the Scottish Professional Football Leagues (**Category 1**)



How Else I am/Have Been Involved in Refereeing

- **Youth Ambassador** for the Edinburgh & District Referees Association between February 2022 and May 2024
- Former Edinburgh & District Referees Association **Instruction Team Leader**
- Part of the **SCORE 24** Group
- Selected to represent Scotland as the Referee at **UEFA CORE** in Switzerland this year
- Current **Vice President** of the Edinburgh & Districts Referee Association
- Coach for the **National Referee Introductory Course**



Prestigious Appointments so Far

- **Referee** for Johnstone Burgh vs Tranent – Scottish Junior Cup Final (01/06/2025)
- **4th Official** for St Mirren vs Falkirk – SPFL Premiership (10/01/2026)
- **Referee** for Dunfermline Athletic vs Arbroath – SPFL Championship (01/05/2026)
- **4th Official** for Rangers vs Celtic – Women's Scottish Cup Final (31/05/2026)
- **Referee** for Inverness Caledonian Thistle vs St Johnstone – Premier Sports Cup (21/07/2026)
- **4th Official** for Rangers vs AS Saint-Étienne – Friendly (22/07/2026)



What Life Skills Can Young People Develop?

Great for building key life skills such as:

- Communication
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Time Management
- Decision Making
- Confidence
- Courage
- Composure
- Problem Solving
- Emotional Intelligence
- Resilience



SFA Youth Presentation



Meet the Ref – Tommy Stark- Proctor

- Hi, I am Tommy, I am based in Aberdeenshire and am part of the ADRA (Aberdeen & District Referee Association).
- I have now been refereeing for 1 year 5 months and 22 days
- Currently a Category 3 development referee and aspire to go as far as I can reach. I am on the Referee pathway although the SFA offer many other choices to suite your preferences.



The Start Of My Refereeing Journey

- I got started into refereeing when I was 16 after watching my uncle officiate consistently within the Highland Football League for a number of years which showed me what refereeing has to offer.
- I got into refereeing because I knew it would be my way to maintain a prime role in football week in week out
- My first game was on the 9th of March 2025 and was Aberdeen vs Rangers U10's the score ended 7-17 and although I had a lot of work to do, I knew this was for me.
- I never would have thought refereeing was like this.

What has changed since last year?

- I am no longer a 'new' referee and am now a buddy to young referees
- Significant progress up the ranks (Cat 5- Cat 3D)
- So much more games and friendships
- Much more mature and composed within life and refereeing
- 120 matches within 12 months
- I now have a job and pay for my own car, insurance etc

Where Am I Now

- I am now Category 3 Development Referee allowing me to operate consistently within the top games of the North of Scotland Football league and as an assistant in the Highland Football League. This means I have a role in senior football every week and I am on the senior list of referees.
- I started off at Category 7, moved into Category 5 in July of 2025, then Category 4D in October, and was promoted to my current position in January.
- I am now working towards Category 3 this season which means consistent football in the HFL but this is a big jump and will take extended amounts of hard work and impressive observations.



How I've Developed Physically 🏋️ ⚽

Refereeing has also been a huge part of my physical development. I've had to become fitter and learn to keep up with play for the whole match which benefits me during games but also lets me be a lot fitter out with football





The connections you make along the way

Important Matches I have officiated in

Aberdeen vs Fraserburgh FC

This match was in the Aberdeenshire Cup and was significant to me as I was officiating on the same field as players I had watched on TV

The match ended 0-2

Inverurie Loco Works vs Sauchie Juniors

This match up was a Men's Scottish Cup game; the same competition Celtic went on to win against Dunfermline Athletic.

Our match ended 0-2

Fraserburgh United vs Hall Russell United

This was the Elginshire Cup final played at Cove with a very high attendance.

The match finished 1-1, (4-2) on pens.

Craig Brown Tournament

In this tournament I refereed the U18's teams of clubs such as Aberdeen, Celtic, Rangers, Southampton, Lillestrom, PAOK, Preston NE, and Bohemian FC.

Buchanhaven Hearts vs Largs Thistle

This was the Junior Scottish Cup semi final and was a massive occasion to both sides.

This Match ended in a tense 1-1

157 Games, 251 , 32 , 25 Observations.

What is it like being a young referee?

- Players can be older than you
- Decisions happen quickly
- Mistakes **WILL** happen
- People will disagree
- Confidence is key
- You improve every game, it doesn't happen overnight

You don't have to be the loudest or oldest person on the pitch to be a good referee.

Remember- You are supported every step you take.

What you gain

- Confidence- Trust in yourself through decision making
- Communication- Your communication skills will become clear and concise
- Keeping Calm- Being able to stay calm when everyone else is frustrated is a great skill that refereeing helps develop
- Resilience- When you make mistake and bounce back, you build resilience each time.
- Responsibility- Knowing everything you do has an impact on the game.

These are all skills employers will identify and look for, if you mention your refereeing this will help you when trying to secure a job or place in university/college.



Is it worth it? 🙄

For me, I would say 100%

What's difficult?

- Pressure
- Mistakes
- Criticism
- Difficult Decisions

The positives?

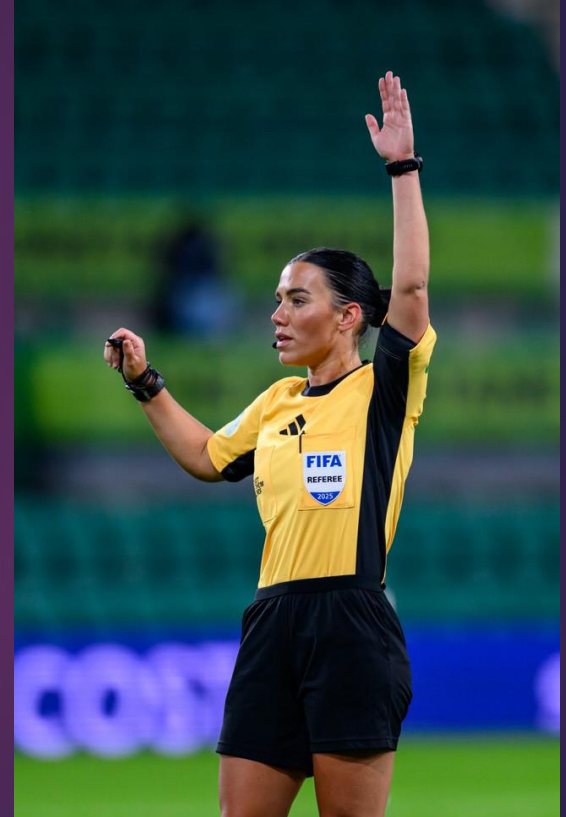
- Confidence+
- Meeting new people
- Staying involved in football
- Useful and desired skills
- Developing skills and ability each day

So.. why not give it a go?

- Be part of the game. Meet great people. Build Confidence. Make a difference.
- The game needs young people so we can keep football going in Scotland.



From Grassroots To Category 1



About Me

- ▶ Abbie Hendry
- ▶ 27 years old
- ▶ Sports Massage Therapist & co-own a gym
- ▶ Passed referee course on 16th birthday
- ▶ Category 1
- ▶ Officiate in Highland/Lowland/League 2/ SWPL



Journey

- ▶ Girls football
- ▶ Club Academy
- ▶ Men's Amateur
- ▶ Men's junior assistant
- ▶ Women's Championship
- ▶ Men's junior referee
- ▶ Women's Premiership
- ▶ Men's Highland/Lowland
- ▶ FIFA
- ▶ SPFL League 2



Early Challenges

- ▶ Resilience
- ▶ Confidence
- ▶ Player and Coach Behaviour
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Commitment
- ▶ Dedication
- ▶ LOTG



Referee Pathway

- ▶ Category 7 to Category 1
- ▶ Observations
- ▶ Observer marks
- ▶ Fitness tests
- ▶ LOTG tests
- ▶ Category 3 Decision



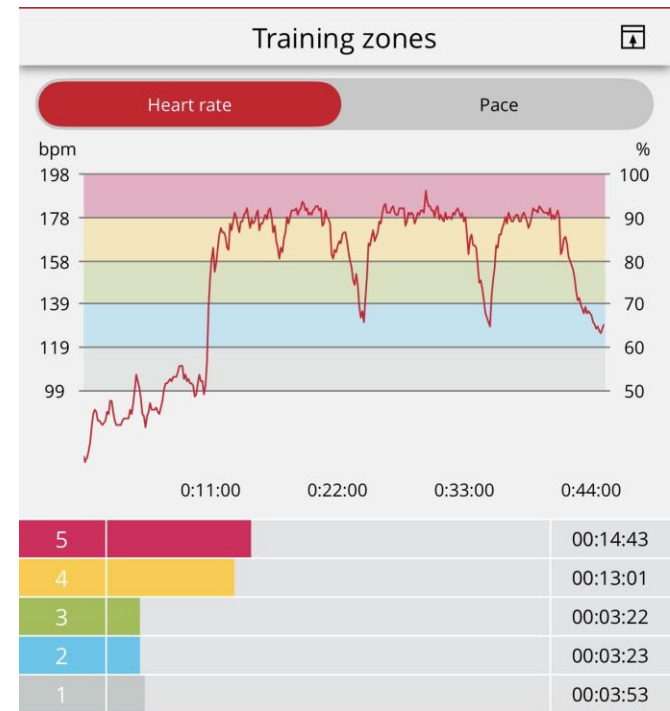
International Appointments

- ▶ U17s Mini Tournament in Edinburgh
- ▶ W Euro 2022 Group stage: Lithuania Vs Romania
- ▶ UWCL Wolfsburg Vs Bordeaux
- ▶ UWWC 23 Qualifying round group stage: Italy Vs Moldova
- ▶ UWCL Group Stage BK Hacken FF Vs OL Lyonnes
- ▶ UWCL Group Stage Bayern Vs Benfica
- ▶ W Euro 2025 League Stage: Lithuania vs Cyprus
- ▶ W Euro 2025 League Stage: Ukraine vs Croatia
- ▶ WU17 2025 Mini Tournament in Spain
- ▶ UWNL Liechtenstein Vs Armenia
- ▶ UWCL Mini Tournament in Slovakia
- ▶ WU17 2025 Mini Tournament in Spain
- ▶ Australia Exchange



Fitness

- ▶ Match Day Saturday
- ▶ Monday: stretch & mobility/ full body circuits
- ▶ Tuesday: High intensity running
- ▶ Wednesday: Strength & continuous run (5k etc)
- ▶ Thursday: High Intensity running
- ▶ Friday: Speed & Agility/ strength
- ▶ Saturday: Match day
- ▶ Sunday: Active recovery / rest



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