

CLUB DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2026

REFEREES IN THE CLUB SPACE

SAM KERR FOOTBALL CENTRE

SATURDAY 11TH APRIL



**FOOTBALL
WEST**

WELCOME



FOOTBALL
WEST



CURRENT REFEREE LANDSCAPE

- Increasing demand for referees
More teams = more games =
more referees needed
- Heavy reliance on a core group
of experienced referees
- Senior appointments requiring
more referees
- Junior referees entering at U13
level
- Weekend availability is a
REQUIREMENT
- Current coverage -
approximately 75% of games



REFEREE STATS

	2025 (whole season)	2026 (April)
Current Registrations	515	426
First Year Referees	172	64
Second Year Referees	93	95



REFEREE NUMBERS

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Lack of information and knowledge of refereeing pathway
- Weekend availability
- Fear of abuse and confrontation – poor sideline behaviour
- External pressures and commitments
 - Other sports – netball, AFL, basketball
- Perceived as a 'thankless role' - limited recognition or appreciation
- Burnout – over allocation of games

How does this affect clubs?

- You need to provide the referees!
- Untrained referees increases risks and liability
- Clubs influence the game day environment
- Club reputation – word spreads quickly in the refereeing world

BARRIERS TO REFEREE RETENTION

A photograph of a referee in a yellow shirt shaking hands with a player in a red shirt on a football field. The referee's shirt has a New Balance logo, a Football West logo, and the word 'REFEREE' on the sleeve. The player's shirt has 'CANTON' visible. The background shows a grassy field and some trees.

**THERE IS
NO GAME
WITHOUT
REFEREES.**



**FOOTBALL
WEST**

BECOMING A REFEREE

Encourage Junior players and club members to take the course!



- Junior School holiday courses
- Better learning and understanding of the rules
- Earn while you learn!

Course consists of:

1. Online learning modules:
 - Laws of the Game
 - Match Day Modules
2. In Person Learning
 - Practical game understanding and movement
 - Game scenarios

All for \$172!

Full 2026 Registration

New Balance Refereeing Kit

Refereeing Equipment (whistle, cards, flags)



NON-CENTRAL CLUBS

Regional courses!

Have your club reach out to us and we can look at organising a regional course and presenter to come to you.

Up coming regional courses:

- Kalgoorlie (Junior match official course)
- Tom Price (Junior match official course)
- Karratha (Senior match official course)
- Esperance (Junior match official course)
- Albany (Junior match official course)

*Dependent on numbers

OUR NEW REFEREES

Our newly accredited Junior Match Officials receive a New Balance green match officials shirt as a part of their refereeing kit. This shirt signifies they are at the start of their officiating journey.

We appreciate **all club members** kindness and patience as these referees gain more experience!

We ask all club representatives, coaches, players, and spectators to:

- Show patience and understanding
- Provide a positive and respectful environment
- Support their growth and confidence on the pitch

Club game day environment!



**GREEN SHIRT
AWARENESS**

What can clubs do to help referees on game day?



**FOOTBALL
WEST**

MATCH DAY SUPPORT



DESIGNATED REFEREE SUPPORT PERSON

Who:

- Previous refereeing experience or current referee
- Experienced football person (flow and emotions)
- Parent or guardian, trained for intervention if needed
- Ground marshal

Tasks:

- Wear a clearly identifiable vest and introduce yourself to the referee
- Signage for referee areas (referee changeroom) & keep areas clear
- Check ins throughout the day
- Offer water and shaded areas!
- Spectator control – sideline behaviour
- End of match check in

CLUB ENVIRONMENT

MATCH DAY SUPPORT



Help these referees feel valued and appreciated!

Small gestures seen by young athletes and spectators instills the club values and respect towards referees!

Protect the standard through consistency

Model the behaviour through your coaches, captains, managers and other club officials. Standards do not change under pressure!

Recognise and award your referees within your club!

Any questions?



FOOTBALL
WEST

Thank you for your attendance



FOOTBALL
WEST