REFEREES' MEETING

Season Kickoff 2026–27

Safe. Fair. Enjoyable matches for every player.

Soccer Association of Boca Raton

SEASON KICKOFF

A focused 60 minutes

60
MINUTES

1. Safety
2. Preparation & teamwork
3. SABR rules
4. Control & rules changes
5. Reports, support & questions

One standard for every match: safety first, then smart game management.

Safety First

You own the decision to start, pause or stop a match when conditions are unsafe.

Secure goals

Check goals are correctly positioned & anchored, including goals not in use. Ensure nets are tied down.

Field & weather

Pause for unsafe surfaces, field hazards, lightning or any risk to participants.

Safe equipment

No dangerous items. SABR standard: **earrings are not allowed, even when taped**.

Ready people

Confirm number of players, coaches, parents, and referee team before kick-off. **Coaches should be wearing an identifying shirt.**

Not safe? Do not start — or stop immediately — and escalate through the Division Rep.

Player Welfare

Follow SABR protocols, communicate calmly and never diagnose a player.

Injury or suspected concussion

1. **Stop play and involve the coach.**
2. Do not touch or move the injured player.
3. Follow the SABR concussion procedure; do not diagnose or rush a return to play.
4. Report all concussion-related removals to Brian Behrman.

Heat, water and lightning

Water Break: required about midway through each half, at a stoppage of play; keep the break to 1–2 minutes and the game clock running.

Lightning: clear the field at a detector alert or when thunder follows lightning in less than 30 seconds.

Return: only after 30 minutes without a repeat event and in line with facility protocol.

When in doubt, pause play. A schedule is never more important than player safety.
Referee has final say on readmitting a player with an apparent head injury.

Ready to Referee: prepared, professional, on time

Arrive 30 minutes early. Start on time. Keep the day moving for every team after you.

Your 30-minute arrival plan

- **30** — Field, goals, nets and weather check
- **20** — Team check-in & equipment
- **10** — Officials' pre-game
- **0** — Kick off on schedule

Professional essentials

Uniform: yellow SABR shirt, black shorts and two-stripe black socks; black cap is permitted in the Florida sun. **Refrain from wearing jewelry.**

Kit: whistle, watch, coin, cards, and flags. Use a watch, not a mobile phone. Sun block!!

Integrity: declare any team or family conflict to the assignor.

Assignments: set availability and confirm every Refr Sports assignment. Notify immediately of any problems or changes.

Work as a Team

Proper pre-game meeting to prevent confusion and make difficult moments easier to manage.

01

Pregame

Confirm roles, eye contact and flag mechanics. Agree how you will handle substitutions, foul support and restarts.

02

During the match

Communicate at the next break. Keep a shared score. Assistants flag concerns; the referee leads the restart.

03

Finish as a team

Verify the final score together, then with both coaches. Take one minute to review what worked and what to improve.

Futures Referees: 11–13-year-olds may assist U9/U10 matches. The mentor and center referee should coach them positively.

No assigned AR? Contact Brain Behrman. If you use a club AR, they signal ball out only, not direction or offside. Working with two whistles is not allowed.

Know Your Match Essentials

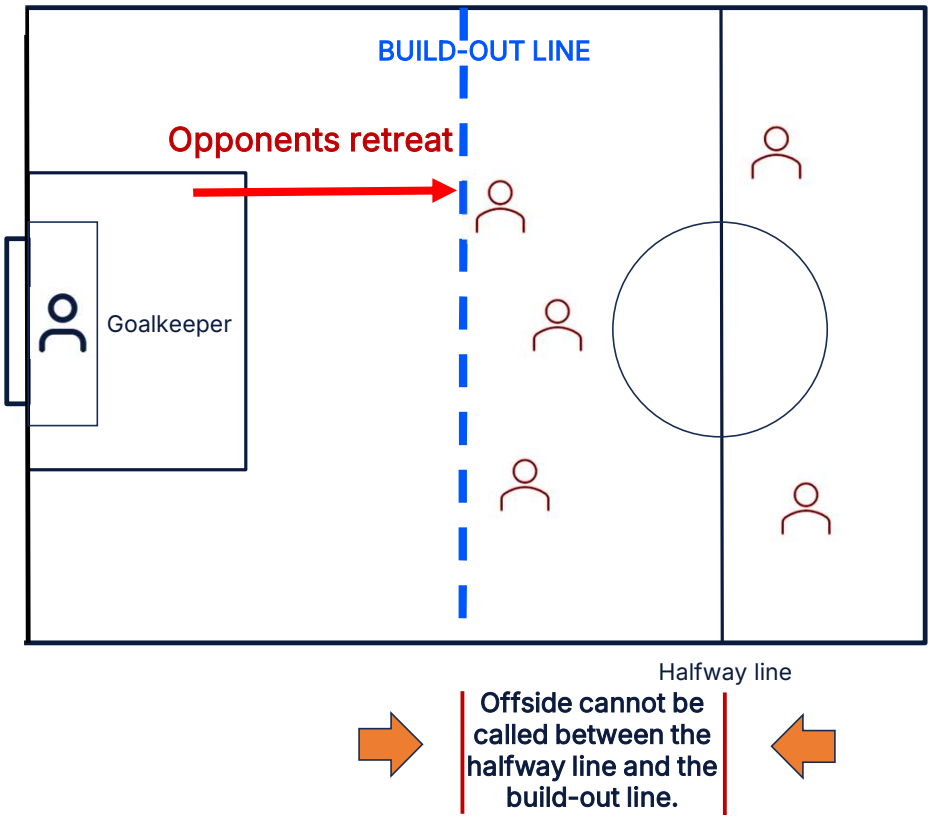
Know the Laws of the Game and the SABR Rules; these are the key match-management differences.

Match detail	U9/U10	U11/U12	U14	BU16 & U19
Ball	Size 4	Size 4	Size 5	Size 5
Players	7 / min 5	9 / min 6	11 / min 7	11 / min 7
Half length	25 min	30 min	35 min	40 min
Restart distance	6 yards	10 yards	10 yards	10 yards
Heading	No	No U11 / Yes U12	Yes	Yes
Development rule	Build-out line; one U9 throw-in retake	Standard	Standard	Standard
Game-flow timing	No 8-sec keeper or 5-sec countdowns	SABR pace rules apply	SABR pace rules apply	SABR pace rules apply

Local competition rules apply. Use the current SABR Handbook if a field condition or age-group rule is unclear.
Note: If you show a yellow card, that player must leave the field for a "cooling-off" period. They may be replaced and may return at the next substitution opportunity.
If a coach comes on the field, with or without your invitation, the player, unless it is the goalkeeper, MUST be substituted.

U9/U10 Development Rule: the build-out line (BOL)

Objective: create time & space for young players to play out from the back, without losing control of the restart; introduce the concept of off-side while relaxing the standard law to allow players to gradually get used to it.



1 **Retreat:** opponents move behind the line when the keeper controls the ball or on a goal kick.

2 **Restart:** the keeper may pass, roll or throw. **Punts and drop-kicks are not allowed.**

3 **Release:** play resumes when the ball is put into play. Manage deliberate early-entry fairly.

Positive, Professional Match Control

Set boundaries early; then let players play. Calm consistency is your most useful management tool.

Lead the match

Be decisive. Use a clear whistle and signal.

Be consistent. Adjust for age and skill, not for who is asking.

Be a teacher. Give brief explanations to U9/U10 players when it helps learning.

Manage the environment

Coaches: Enforce the technical area & manage substitutions at halfway. Show them respect.

Spectators: Work through coaches or SABR administrators. **Never debate with parents.**

Goalkeepers: Protect a keeper in possession; when unsure, choose safety.

Stay neutral — not emotional.

Do not tolerate profanity.

Use cards when needed.

Protect player safety first.

2026/27 Law Changes: keep the game moving

SABR applies the timing provisions below at U11 and above. U9/U10 are excluded from these countdowns.

GK CONTROL • 8 SECONDS



Goalkeeper control

Referee decides when control begins; visibly count the last five seconds. More than eight = corner kick.

THROW-IN / GOAL KICK • 5 SECONDS



Delayed restart

Initiate a visible countdown for delay: throw-in to opponents; delayed goal kick becomes a corner kick.

SMART APPLICATION



Manage before you punish

Use a clear prompt first. Apply the countdown when delay continues.

Law 4: non-dangerous items may be worn only when safely secured and covered.
SABR still prohibits earrings, even if covered.

Source: IFAB Laws of the Game 2026/27; SABR local adoption.

When Things Go Wrong: give facts, not opinions

Protect people first. Then record enough detail to help SABR respond appropriately.

Red card

Identify the participant and offense; report to Brian Behrman and Bruce Spidell at the end of the match.

Injury/concussion

Stop and protect the player. Report any serious injury to Brian Behrman and Bruce Spidell at the end of the match.

Abuse or assault

Keep the referee team safe; involve the appropriate SABR leader and report promptly.

Unsafe field or weather

Pause or do not start. Escalate the hazard through coaches and the Division Rep.

Spectator issue

Ask the coach or Division Rep to manage it. Never argue with spectators.

Delay or unusual event

Record the timeline, decisions and restart. A short factual report supports learning.

Every report includes: Time & location • people involved • exact language/actions • discipline/restart • injury or safety action • names of relevant witnesses. Use the language in the Laws of the Game.

Start the Season Ready

Do these five things before your first match — and ask early if you need support.

1. Complete 2027 recertification before December 31.
2. Set availability and confirm every **Refr Sports** assignment.
3. Send a W-9 if you are new or your details have changed.
4. Read the SABR Handbook and your age-group rules.
5. Ask for a mentor or clarification before match day.

Questions or a concern?

Director of Referees
Bruce Spidell •
referees@sabrsoccer.net
561-350-4148

Recreational Assignor
Brian Behrmann • briansabr@aol.com
561-504-5862

AVAILABILITY & ASSIGNMENTS

app.refrsports.com/staff-signup

References: SABR Handbook • Florida Soccer Referees • IFAB Laws of the Game 2026/27

2026 – 2027 Calendar

SABR Recreational Season

November 1	Begin November 7	Begin February 9	Saturday February 28	March 7 & March 8
				
JAMBOREE	REGULAR SEASON	PLAYOFFS	TOM CUP	ALL STAR GAMES



Jamboree assignments today!

SABR Recreational Referee Payment Schedule

2026 – 2027 Season.

Age Group	Referee	Assistant Referee
Futures U9, U10		$15
U9, U10	$38	$24
U11, U12	$47	$32
U14	$69	$42
BU16	$70	$43
U19	$72	$44

These figures reflect a Cost-of-Living adjustment from last year

How Do I Sign Up for Games?

New scheduling system

- SABR has a new scheduling system.
- The new scheduling system allows referees to input their availability each week.
- **You must sign up** @ the Refr Sports website https://app.refrsports.com/staff-signup
- Brian Behrmann will assign games.
- Referees will receive an email notification.
- ***Referees must confirm that they will indeed referee the games assigned.***

IFAB Advice on Handling

Handball

A less-is-more approach to handball will be maintained, recognising that not every instance of contact between a player's hand or arm and the ball constitutes an offence.

The focus remains on letting the game flow while penalising only those handball situations that clearly meet the criteria for an offence.

No handball offence mitigating factors:

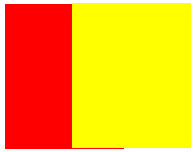
- Justifiable position/action
- Supportive arm
- Player plays ball onto own arm
- Clear change of trajectory when touched by the same player
- Played by a teammate
- Proximity

Handball offence considerations:

- Deliberate movement of arm to the ball
- Clear additional arm movement to the ball after it has hit another body part
- Arm makes body bigger as a result of being in an unjustifiable position

Helpful Article on Distinguishing Between

Stopping a Promising Attach (SPA - Yellow Card), and



Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity
(DOGSO Yellow or Red Card)

https://www.refereepov.com/blogs/blog/what-is-dogso

Referee Resources

