



Assigning, Mentors and Ratings Chairs: A Collaborative Approach

The LBC and Assignor **must** work closely and collaboratively to maximize retention of new officials. Establish a mentoring committee that will identify individuals who are willing to be mentors to new umpires. Establish guidelines and offer direction for mentors to help new officials.

In the past, trend was:

- More competitive regular season games were assigned to the best umpires, and newer or less experienced teams had newer officials
- Middle School and Youth games had two new people working together
- Created an atmosphere of veterans vs. 'newbies'
- New people felt isolated and lacked confidence
- High turnover of new officials, little retention from year to year
- Problem magnified as teams added in the state
- Time and resources were used to train new umpires that did not return the following year.

New Approach

New umpire Training:

- Train people in classroom per TTT guidelines
- Assign a mentor
- Mentors chosen by Mentoring Committee
- Mentor is taken into consideration when assigning games

Choosing Mentors

- Mentors chosen based on rating, experience, personality, and geographical location (no bad attitudes)
- New people can request a mentor, someone they feel comfortable with
- Mentors get service hours

Effective Mentor is defined as someone who:

- Is dedicated to **women's** lacrosse & **safe growth** of the game
- Possesses a friendly personality and is willing to share their knowledge
- A good teacher and a good listener
- Remembers what it feels like to be new or moving from one level of officiating to the next
- Agrees to have a collaborative relationship with LBC, assignor, and ratings chair



Role of Mentor/Mentee in Game Assignments

- Mentor shares schedule with her 'mentee' and recommends/highlights game to come and observe.
- Mentee observes at least one complete varsity game.
- Mentee does not get game fee, but counts as service hours; mentor collects game fees.
- Can shadow mentor for a half or a whole JV game.
- Benefits: See what types of fouls are called, how players are set up, learn communication and professionalism, and can get immediate feedback

Requirements of New Umpires:

After classroom session: must have 3 hours of off field work prior to on field rating.

Training continues in 3 phases:

1. Observe an official, hopefully their mentor
2. Shadow – run with an official, hopefully their mentor
3. Call/umpire a half or game with another umpire, hopefully their mentor

Role of Ratings Chair with Assignor

- Ratings Chair tracks observation hours of new umpires; counts as service for her
- Ratings Chair communicates with assignor; assignor ensures new officials are assigned to youth and MS games with a partner with a local rating or higher
- Two apprentices or new officials are not scheduled on the same game until the end of a season

Results of New Program

- Apprentice umpires have more confidence going at their on field rating
- Feel like they are a vital part of the board
- Establishes camaraderie with mentors and other officials who may work with them
- Increased retention of new umpires

Retention: Identifying of Umpires to Move Up

Three Tier Approach

1. Identify strong/enthusiastic L-1 umpires, assign frequently with L3 and Ds on games
2. Identify strong/enthusiastic L2 and 3, pair frequently with District/National umpires (when available-usually not until later in the season) on competitive games
3. Identify strong Locals who are near District caliber



Moving Locals toward Districts

- Assign to competitive games with experienced umpires; encourage veteran to pass along their knowledge and game management experience
- Assign to early round playoff games
- Assign 3-person games for experience (3rd person will not get paid) so District clinic or rating is not first time to experience

Actively moving up to a District

Integrate into playoffs 3-person officiating as much as possible **one year** before attempting rating.

Invite to be a table official at semis and final **one year** before attempting rating

- Split cost with state association
- Started 1 round earlier for experience
- Add Table umpire in regional semis and finals

Result: District candidates feel better prepared

Mentoring Officials

Establishing a Mentor Committee

- Reach out to board members who are willing to serve on the committee
- It is recommended to keep the number of people on the committee manageable – 3-4
- When identifying potential mentors seek out individuals who are knowledgeable, positive and enthusiastic about women's/girls lacrosse
- Keep in mind all the individuals who are mentors will be helping each of the new officials

Key: individualize continuing education

- Cannot be done by one person
- Must be collaborative effort
- Will have a trickle-down effect
- More people “buy in” to local board
- Opportunities to be involved
- Increases standard for each rating
- Healthy competition vs. status quo

Another Key for Success: Communication

- Expectations at each level of the mentoring program are clearly stated for all involved – mentors and ‘mentee’
- Identify potential leaders & embrace them (teach them the “ropes”)
- Identify coaches who support umpire development and use their scrimmages and games as observation, shadowing and informal feedback