

Provisional referees --

This note is intended for those of you who may be interested in pursuing a Regional rating this season.

First, we recognize that our referee training program has neglected our Regional upgrade candidates. We work hard with our new referees to get them certified, and we also spend a fair amount of time with our Junior National and National referee candidates, but we've neglected to offer a solid training program for our Regional upgrade candidates. So, this year, we're starting a program to help YOU in your endeavors to achieve the next level of certification!

While we will continue to do on-court ratings at some of our pre-season scrimmages/friendship tournaments, for those who want extra time to prepare and hone their skills, we're doing a training session early in the season to help you get started on the right foot. We'll then complete your certification later in the season at our Bid Tournament (April) or our Regional Championships in May.

So here's the scoop:

#1 - If you're interested in upgrading to Regional THIS year, please respond to me via email (Hemelgarn@ovr.org) to let me know that.

#2 - We are planning a training/feedback session during our Boys' WinterFest on the weekend of February 11-12 at the Ohio Expo Center in Columbus. It's not required to attend this session if you want to upgrade, but it will surely be helpful. If you are interested in attending, please reply to this email to let me know.

Regarding the training sessions in February, you will NOT be paid for matches during the training session. AND, if you aren't a hired/paid referee for the tournament, I cannot guarantee a hotel room (I will do my best to help with lodging for those who are not local.)

While not being paid may be a concern for some of you, please look at it as an investment in your officiating career. You will get feedback and training from some of the best referees in the country -- it's worth foregoing a couple match fees!

There are limited spots each day, so I cannot guarantee that everyone can be accommodated, but we'll do our best. We want to help as many Provisional referees as possible. Our focus will be on working as a second referee, but we want to help people improve in all aspects of their game.

As you may/may not know, our Regional upgrade ratings can be a challenge, and I take the blame for that. We haven't helped you (Provisional refs) as much as we've helped others. It's your turn now!

Keep in mind that attending this training session doesn't guarantee that you'll get a Regional rating - you still have to show competence at that level. But I can guarantee that everyone who attends will be better referees after the tournament is done.

So, please let me know your interest in upgrading AND whether you'd like to attend this training session in Columbus. The next few weeks (month!) are going to be busy, but feel free to ask questions if you have any. I'll respond as timely as possible.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Brian Hemelgarn
OVR Referees Chair