



**CAPITAL
FOOTBALL**

**REFEREE
ACTIVITY
REPORT**

2020

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This report provides information and data relating to the registrations and activities conducted throughout the year in support of referees and refereeing in Capital Football.

In a year that presented unique challenges, Capital Football was able to adapt and deliver 85 referee activities of courses, education, training and development with a total attendance of 1766 people.

This report covers broad areas outlined in the list below:

- Referee Registrations
- Referee Courses
- Referee Development
- Competitions (appointments and coverage)
- Referee Performance

REFEREE REGISTRATIONS

FOOTBALL

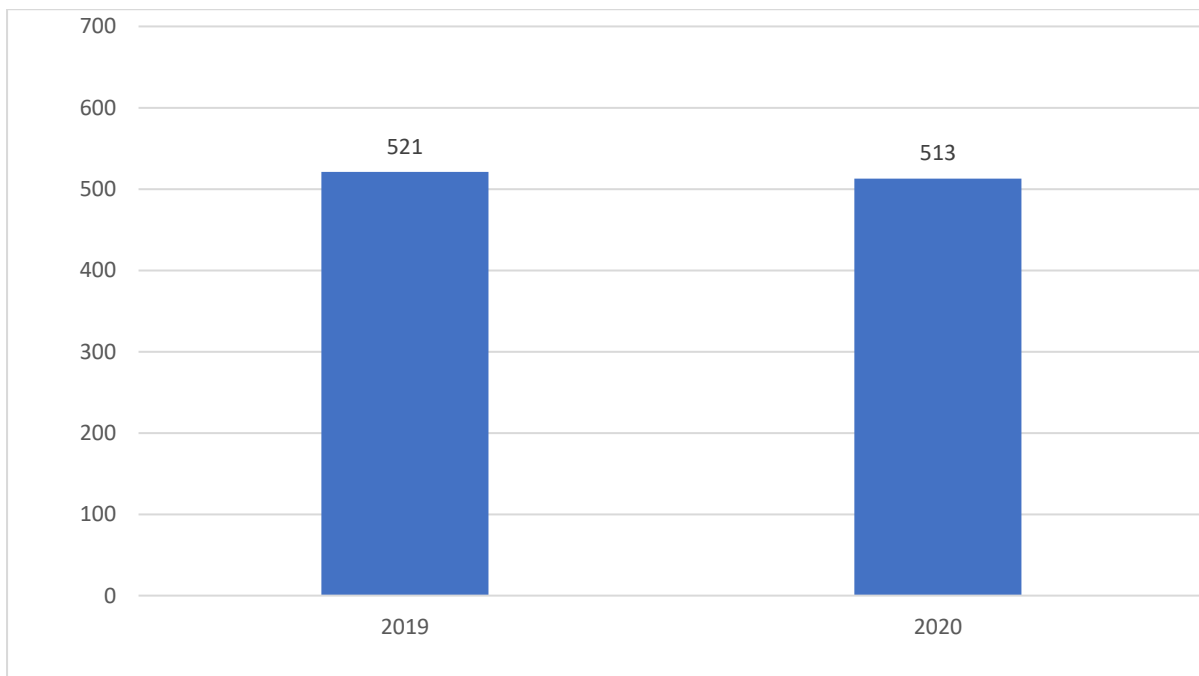
A registered football match official includes Game Leaders and Referees who officiate any of the following:

- ▶ ActewAGL Junior League and MiniRoos matches;
- ▶ Senior League matches; and
- ▶ National Premier League matches.

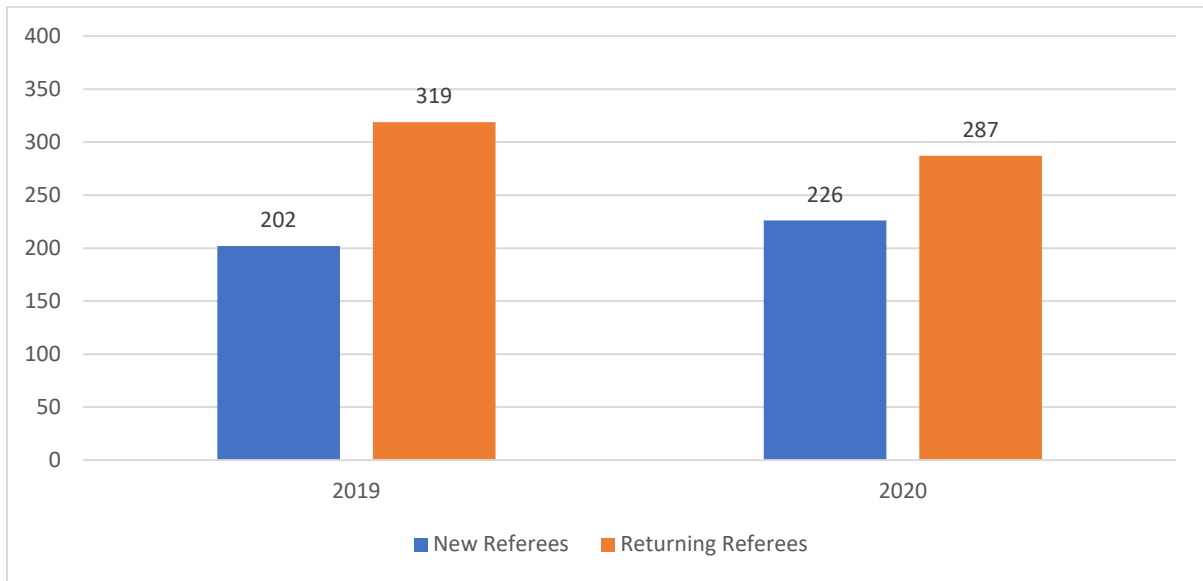
The following summary lists key insights drawn from the registration data extracted from PlayFootball and considers all registered football match officials from the 2019 and 2020 calendar years:

- ▶ New referees increased by 12%, while the churn rate remains at 45% for the third consecutive year.
- ▶ Female referee registrations increased by 18%, representing 23% of total football match officials compared to 19% in 2019.
- ▶ The majority of our match officials are <18 years (71%), particularly females (83%)
- ▶ A 100% and 24% increase in Female and Male Game Leaders respectively resulted in a 43% overall increase of Game Leaders, accounting for 39% of total match officials.

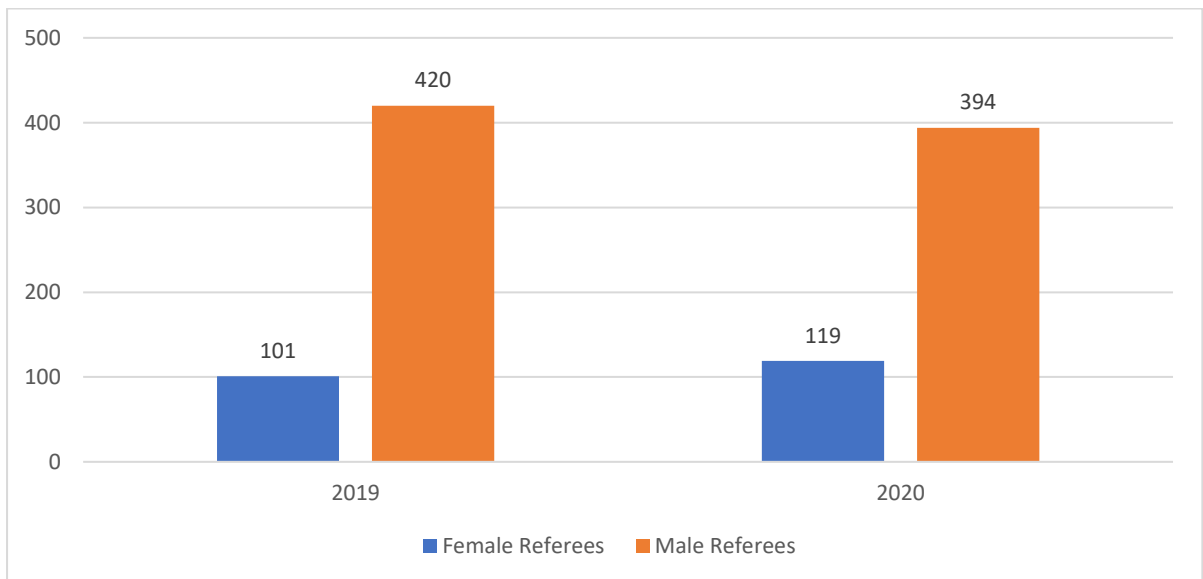
TOTAL REGISTRATIONS



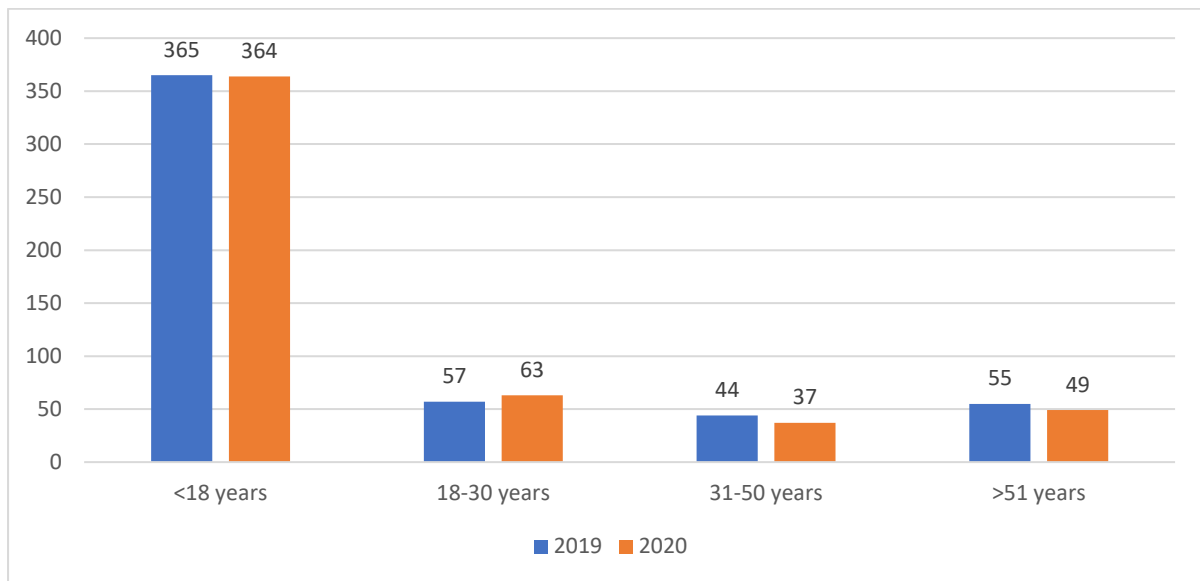
TOTAL REGISTRATIONS BY CLASSIFICATION



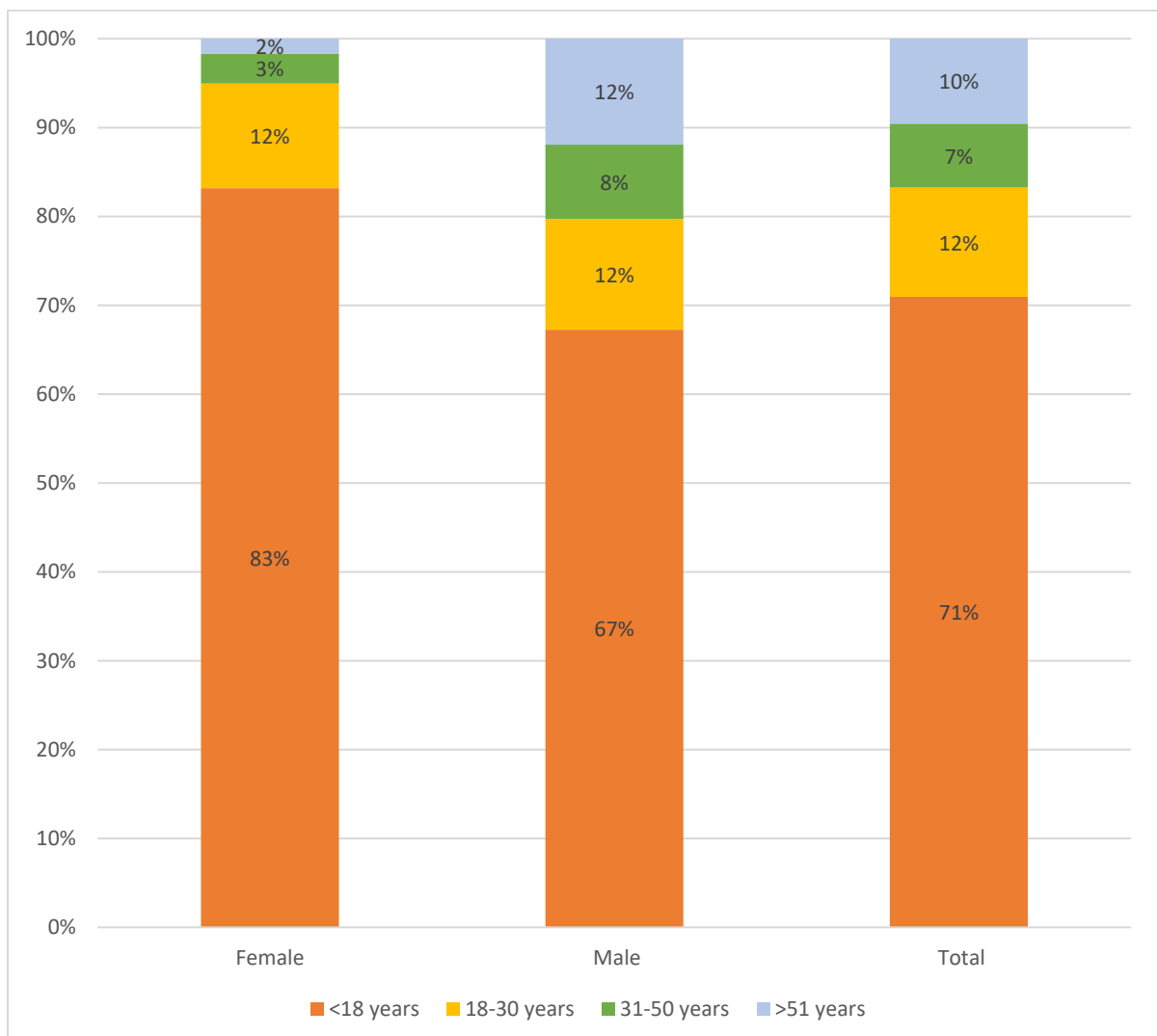
REGISTRATIONS BY GENDER



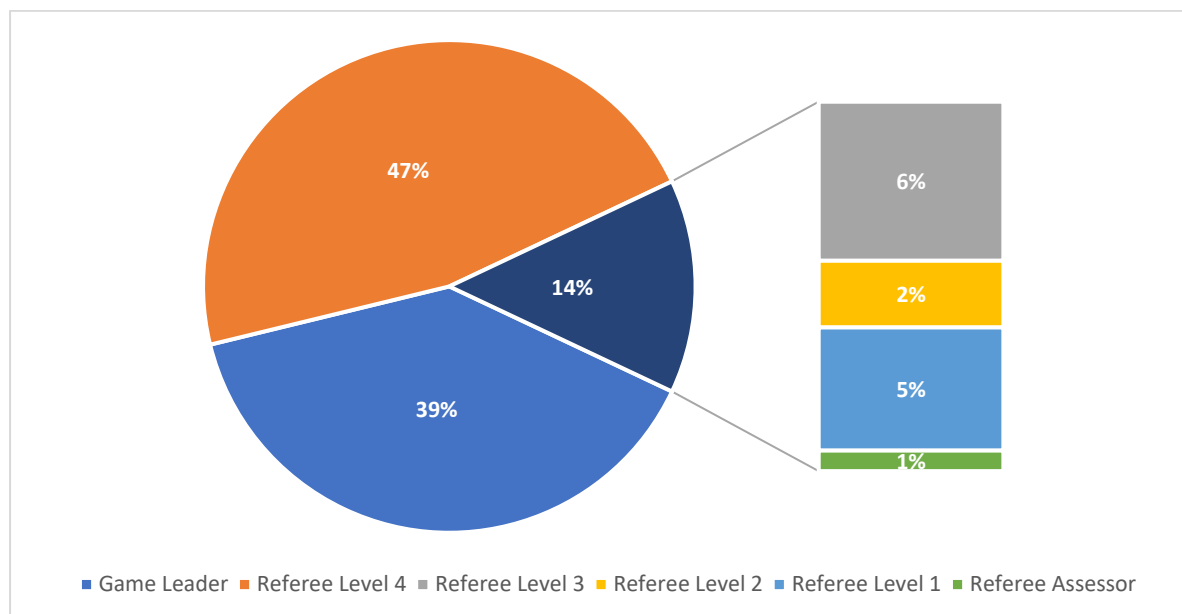
REGISTRATIONS BY AGE BRACKET



REGISTRATIONS BY AGE BRACKET AND GENDER



REGISTRATIONS BY ACCREDITATION



FUTSAL

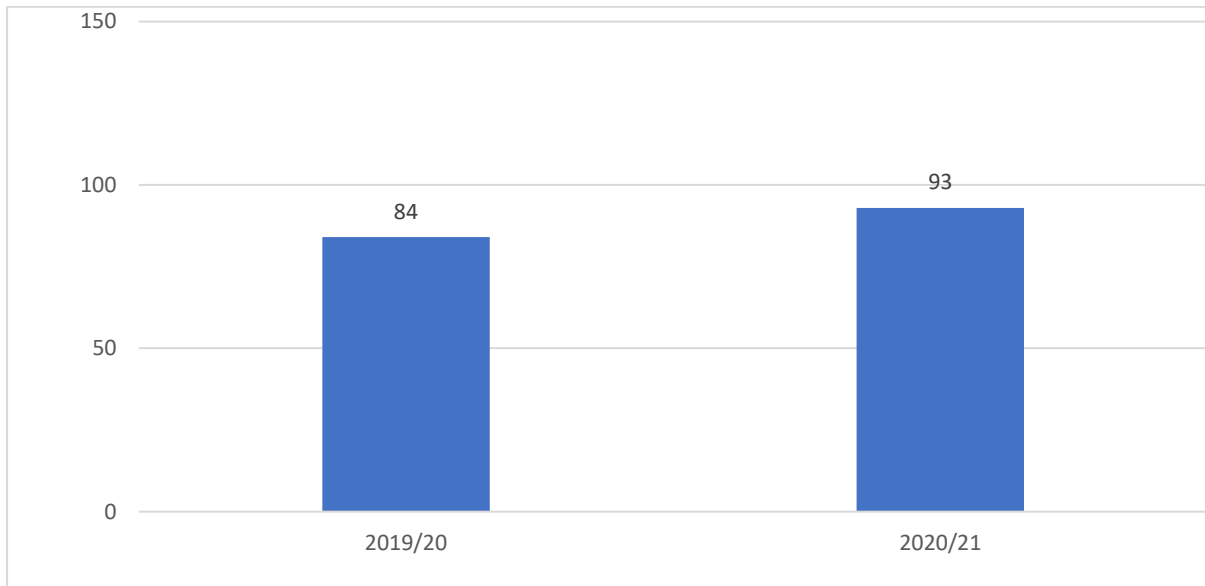
A registered futsal match official includes Referees who officiate any of the following:

- ▶ ACT Futsal Premier League matches;
- ▶ ACT Senior Social Futsal matches;
- ▶ North Canberra Futsal; or
- ▶ South Canberra Futsal matches.

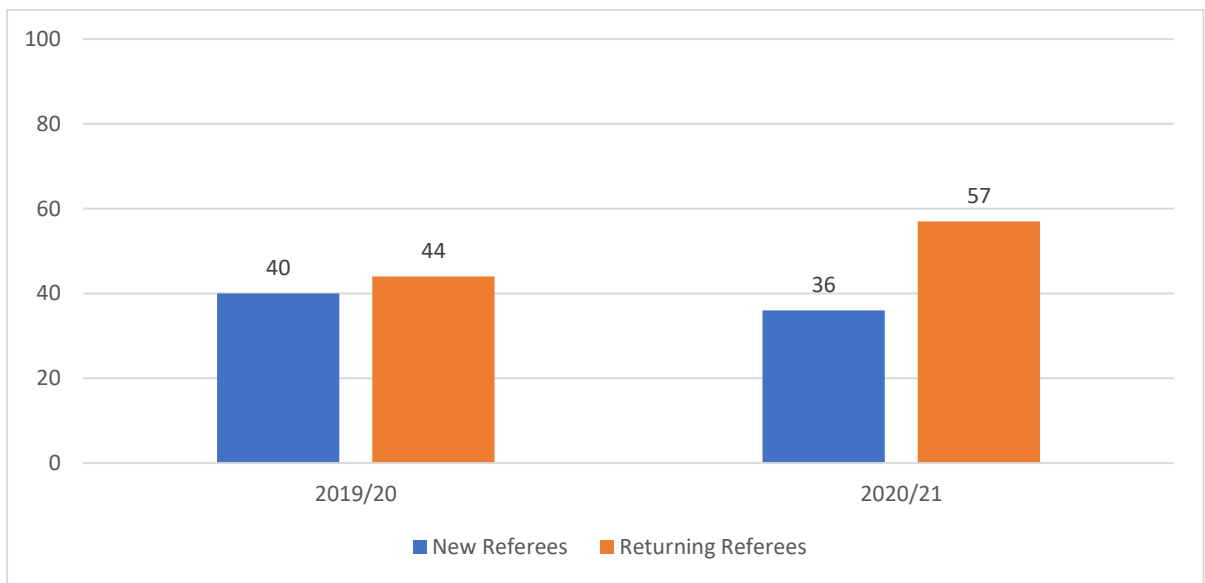
The following summary lists key insights drawn from the registration data extracted from PlayFootball and considers all registered futsal match officials from the 2019 and 2020 calendar years:

- ▶ Futsal referee registrations increased by 9 (11%).
- ▶ The futsal referee churn rate fell significantly from 42% to 32% as the number of returning referees increased by 13 (30%).
- ▶ Male and female futsal referee registrations are trending upwards, however female referees only represent 13% of total futsal match officials.
- ▶ The vast majority of our match officials are <30 years (81%); there are no female referees aged 31 or older.

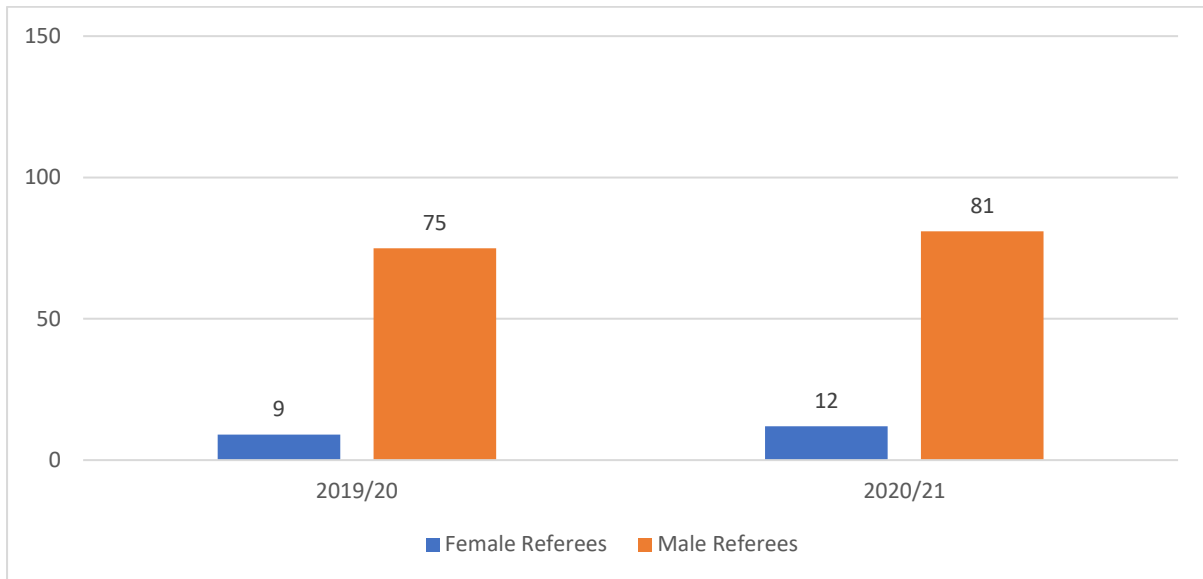
TOTAL FUTSAL REGISTRATIONS



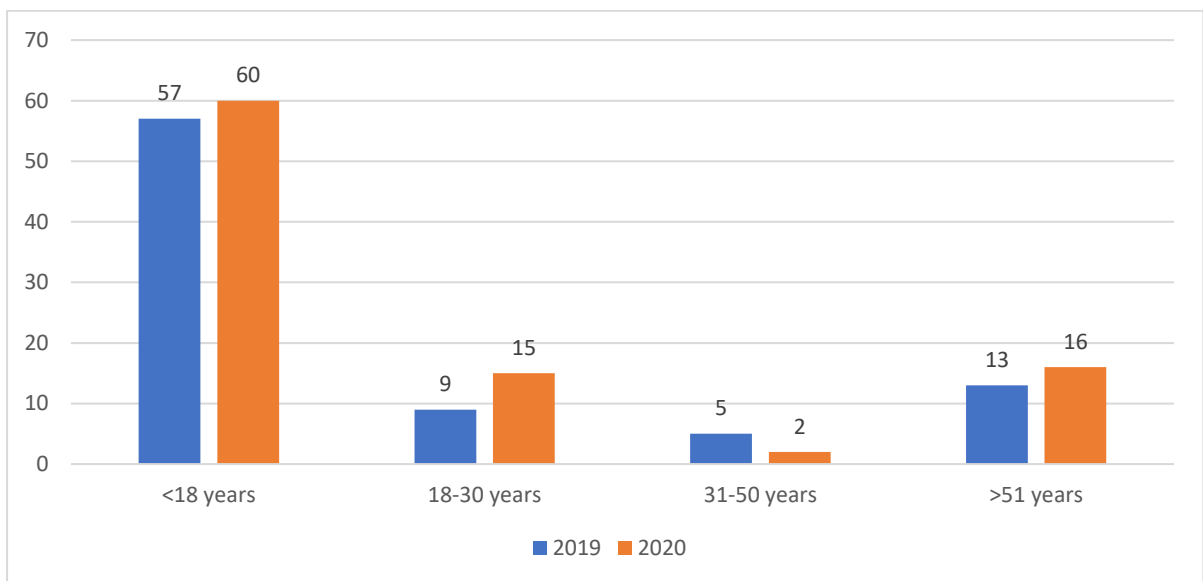
TOTAL FUTSAL REGISTRATIONS BY NEW AND RETURNING REFEREES



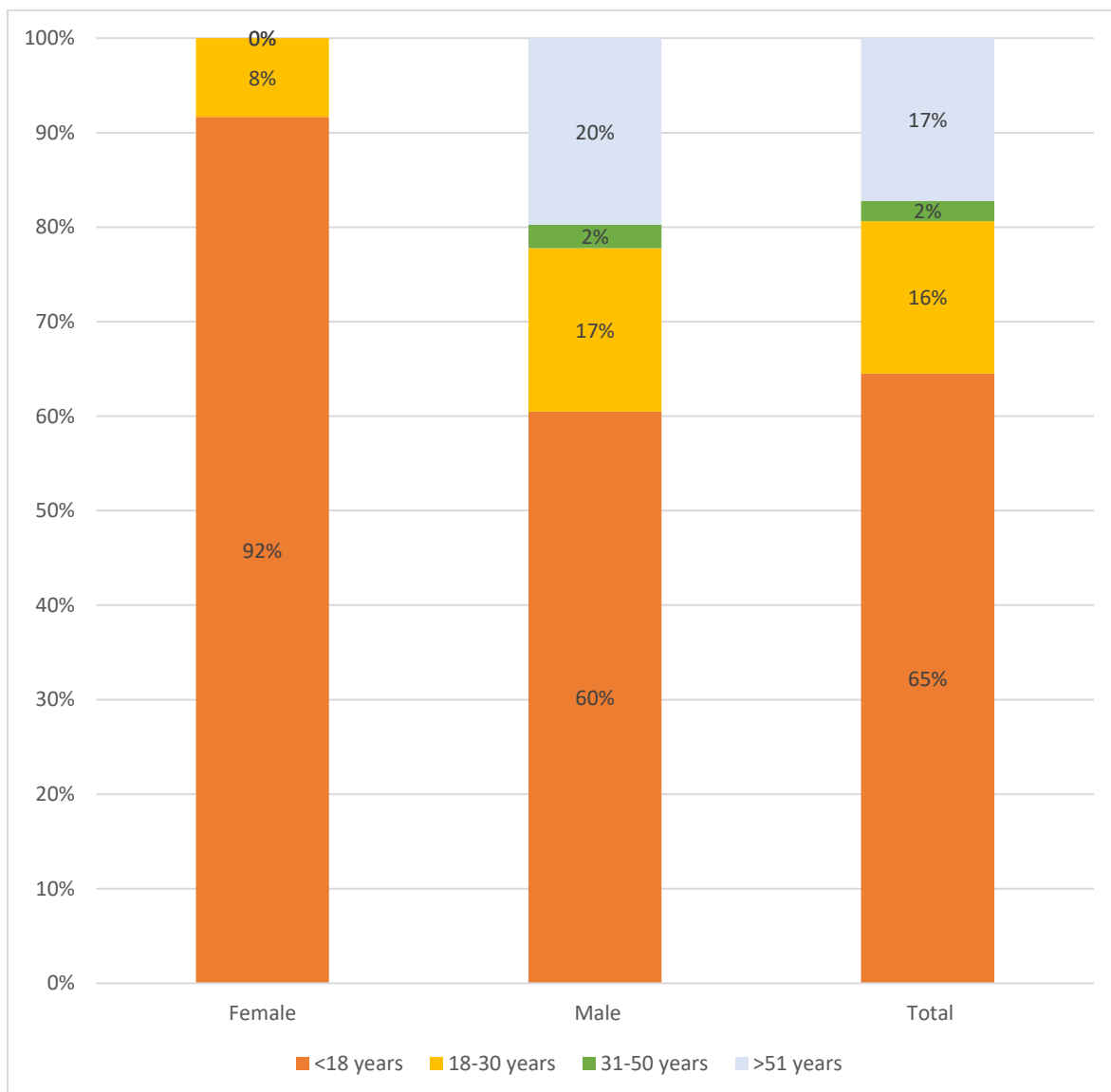
FUTSAL REGISTRATIONS BY GENDER



FUTSAL REGISTRATIONS BY AGE BRACKET



REGISTRATIONS BY AGE BRACKET AND GENDER



2020 FEMALE REFEREE SURVEY

Capital Football distributed a survey in August 2020 to seek feedback on what changes could be made by Capital Football and clubs to create a more positive environment for female referees.

The survey was sent to circa 90 recipients, including registered female referees (2020) and registered female referees (2019) who had not registered for the 2020 season.

- ▶ A total of 31 female referees completed the survey.
- ▶ 42% have 2-5 years refereeing experience, 39% less than 2 years refereeing experience and 19% with 11-15 years refereeing experience.
- ▶ The majority of respondents were under the age of 18 (58%). 35% of respondents aged between 18 and 30.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Key insights drawn from the Female Referee Survey are listed below.

- ▶ With 10 being extremely satisfying and 1 being extremely unsatisfying, the average rating of the refereeing experience is 7.7
- ▶ 70% of respondents believe clubs provide an inviting and inclusive environment for female referees
- ▶ The main reasons that respondents became a referee were:
 - ▶ 60% - Financial benefits
 - ▶ 61% - Making a contribution to football
 - ▶ 58% - Personal skill development
 - ▶ 55% - Participation in football
- ▶ The main reasons that respondents believe females are underrepresented in refereeing in comparison to their playing colleagues were:
 - ▶ 57% - Abuse from spectators, players, coaches and officials
 - ▶ 52% - Time pressures of School / University
 - ▶ 47% - The environment provided is not welcoming
 - ▶ 43% - Not having enough time to play and referee

KEY LEARNINGS

Following are key learnings drawn from the Female Referee survey analysis that will be used to inform female recruitment and retention initiatives:

- ▶ There is feedback suggesting that the most challenging task of being a female referee is the lack of respect shown from participants, particularly male participants.
- ▶ There is feedback suggesting clubs need to be more proactive on matchday when female referees are subjected to inappropriate behaviour from participants, particularly incidents of sexism.
- ▶ There is support for the continuation of female training and development sessions provided by Capital Football, with an increased focus on Junior League refereeing.

2020 LAPSED REFEREE SURVEY

Capital Football distributed a survey in August 2020 to non-registered referees to better understand what motivates a referee to stop officiating, and what we can do to encourage them to remain or return.

The survey was sent to circa 300 recipients who were registered referees in 2019 but had not yet registered in 2020.

- ▶ A total of 19 completed the survey.
- ▶ 42% of respondents have 2-5 years refereeing experience, 31% with less than 2 years refereeing experience and 27% with 6 years or more refereeing experience.
- ▶ The majority of respondents were male (84%).

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Key insights drawn from the Lapsed Referee Survey are listed below.

- ▶ With 10 being extremely satisfying and 1 being extremely unsatisfying, the average rating of the refereeing experience is 7.2

- ▶ 63% of respondents believe clubs provide an inviting and inclusive environment for referees.
- ▶ The main reasons respondents stop refereeing were unlisted (70%) which included:
 - ▶ Moving out of Canberra region
 - ▶ Physical fitness / Injury
 - ▶ Work commitments

KEY LEARNINGS

Following are key learnings drawn from the Lapsed Referee survey analysis that will be used to inform referee recruitment and retention initiatives:

- ▶ There is feedback suggesting that the most welcoming club environments are because of the matchday support provided by club officials, not just via the Club Referee Coordinator.
- ▶ There is feedback supporting the flexible delivery of referee development programs implemented in 2020.
- ▶ There is feedback suggesting the application of stricter sanctions for individuals and clubs found guilty of abusing referees.
- ▶ There is support for increased coaching of referees officiating Junior League matches.

REFEREE COURSES

ENTRY LEVEL COURSES

GAME LEADER

This is a two-hour practical course that provides basic refereeing skills and knowledge to officiate MiniRoos games.

Before the suspension of football activities in 2020, one course was held. Other courses were postponed until a resumption of activities was allowed and rescheduled for early July.

Game Leader Dates	Number of Participants
15 Mar	49
4 Jul	43
5 Jul	32
12 Jul	47

LEVEL 4 REFEREE

This program provides a basic introduction to the Laws of the Game, interpretations as well as providing fundamental practical skills to build competence and confidence to officiate junior 11v11 matches. In 2020, Capital Football changed the delivery structure of this course to hold theory and practical components separately.

In February 2020, a course dedicated towards female participants was held and scheduled in conjunction with a Canberra United home game and the appointed match officials attended the course to present and chat with participants.

With the impact of COVID-19 and the suspension of football activities, theory components were held through video conferencing over three 1.5hr sessions. The practical parts of the course were held in-person, after the resumption of football activities and before the season recommenced.

L4 Theory Dates	Number of Participants
16 Feb (Female)	23
12, 13, 14 May	45
2, 3, 4 Jun	21

Practical Dates	Number of Participants
4 Jul	20
5 Jul	24
12 Jul	18

LEVEL 3 FUTSAL REFEREE

This program provides a basic introduction to the Futsal Laws of the Game, interpretations as well as providing fundamental practical skills to build competence and confidence to officiate futsal matches.

The structure of these courses was the same as for Level 4 Referee. Theory subjects were held over three video conferencing sessions with a separate practical session.

L3 Futsal Theory Dates	Number of Participants
28, 30 Sep, 5 Oct	40

Practical Date	Number of Participants
11 Oct	40

DEVELOPMENT COURSES

These are accreditation courses available to existing referees that provide opportunities to move up the accreditation scale and/or move into different roles. All referee development courses in 2020, were delivered through video conferencing due to the impact of COVID-19. Some courses were also brought forward to take advantage of the suspension of football activities.

Course	Dates	Number of Participants
L3 Referee	5, 7, 12, 14 May	13
L2 (Theory) Referee	26, 28 May, 2, 4 Jun	6
L3 Assessor	28, 29 Oct, 4 Nov	5
L1 (Theory)Referee	16, 18, 23, 25 Nov	4

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

REFEREE EDUCATION

The education of referees during the year occurs on two levels. The first is the Preseason Seminar and the second are ongoing Education Sessions.

PRE-SEASON SEMINAR

The most important date of the year is the Preseason Seminar. This is the only day in which Capital Football endeavours to get all the referees together in preparation for the season ahead. The objectives of the seminar are to:

- ▶ Cover areas of focus for the season ahead
- ▶ Introduce any new procedures / processes
- ▶ Introduce and cover the main changes to the Laws of the Game
- ▶ Conduct video and Laws of the Game tests of members

For the first time, the seminar in 2020 was a full day, catered event (9am to 5pm) with the highest participation rate seen in recent years and very positive feedback. The seminar was opened by the Chair of the Board of Directors and presenting on the day were the FFA Referee Manager, an expert psychologist on mental resilience and a Sports Chaplain regarding referee welfare and support offered to members.

EDUCATION SESSIONS

Education sessions are opportunities for referees to receive ongoing development during the season and they are offered to all members, with any registered referee welcome to attend. The education sessions aim to:

- ▶ Cover topics that are not included in the preseason seminar
- ▶ Address anything that arises or needs to be reinforced during the season
- ▶ Maintain engagement with members

In 2020 for the first time, sessions were scheduled twice per month and female only education sessions were introduced.

With the impact of COVID-19 and the suspension of football activities, education sessions continued as scheduled using video conferencing with additional sessions introduced in July in the lead up to the resumption of competitions.

The use of video conferencing for delivery meant that sessions were able to be recorded. This enabled referees who were not able to attend, to view the session later as well as give people the opportunity to go back to revisit and review the content.

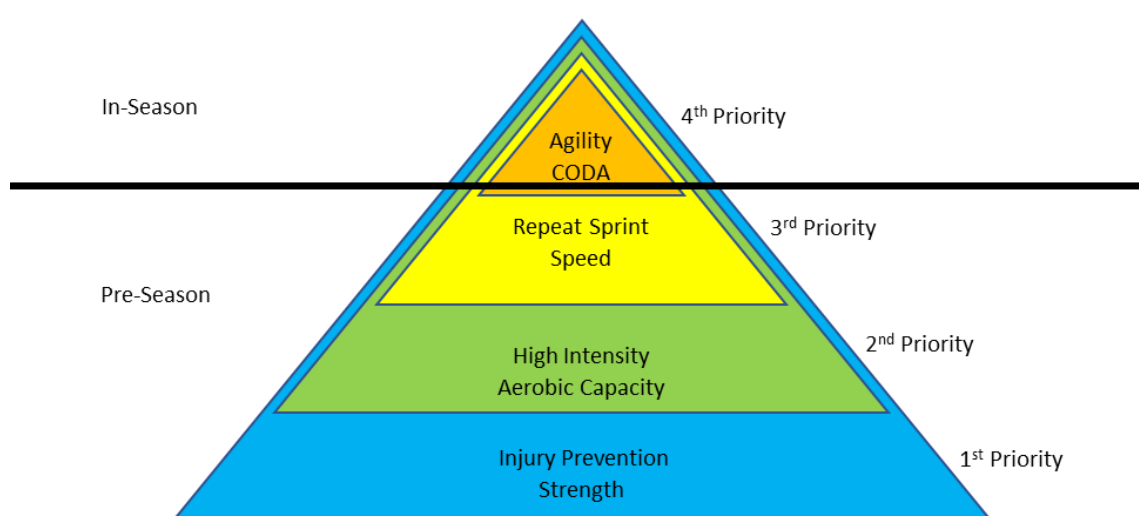
Course	Date / Frequency	Attendance
Preseason Seminar	23 Feb	88
General Education	2x per month (Mar-Sep) 2x per week (1-16 Jul)	554
Female Education	27 May, 8 Jul	31

FITNESS TRAINING

Referees, like the players, need a degree of physical fitness to be able to cope with the demands of the game as well as prevent injury.

Providing opportunities for referees to work on their physical fitness is important for the game as well as the longevity of the referees. Training is accessible as well as scalable for differing fitness levels and expectations within the same session. Furthermore, training programs are structured in a way to:

1. Prevent or limit injuries
2. Build physical capabilities



Training also served another important function as a social opportunity for referees. With the movement of education sessions and courses to video conferencing, the opportunities for referees to catch-up with their colleagues in person and outside of their duties became limited. Training sessions allowed referees to catch-up with each other and is important in fostering a collegial environment.

Notwithstanding the impact of extreme heat, smoke, COVID-19, the suspension of football activities, wet weather and issues with venues, more training sessions were delivered in 2020 than were scheduled for the entirety of 2019.

Course	Frequency of Sessions	Number of Sessions	Attendance
Fitness training	2x per week (Jan-Mar) 1x per week (Jul-Sep)	37	413
Fitness tests	7x scheduled during March	2 (before COVID-19 shutdown)	23

CADET AND ACADEMY REFEREE PROGRAM

The Cadet and Academy Referee Program (CARP) is an intensive development environment for referees to transition from junior football to NPL age grades and eventually to senior football.

Over the last ten years, most Capital Football match officials that have officiated on Y-League, W-League, A-League and FIFA participated in CARP during their development.

CARP is targeted at referees between the ages of 15y and 20y, who have at least one full year of refereeing experience and have shown the desire to progress to a higher level of refereeing.

CADET	ACADEMY
Available to officiate on NPLY / NPLW (Typically, NPLY U13-14 and NPLW13-17)	Available to officiate on NPLY / NPLW (Typically, NPLY U16-18 and NPLW Res)
Attend 2x sessions per month (Mar-Sep)	Attend 2x sessions per month (Mar-Sep)
Committed to developing as a REF and ARF	Committed to developing as a REF and ARF
	Attend CF education sessions
	Attend CF training sessions
	Agree to coach juniors and/or Game Leaders

Participants of the CARP are involved in:

- ▶ Refereeing in the Junior NPL competitions throughout the winter season
- ▶ Theory and practical sessions held twice a month covering topics such as foul identification, offside, positioning, psychology etc.
- ▶ Training / education sessions with the broader Capital Football Referee membership
- ▶ Mentoring from senior Capital Football referees

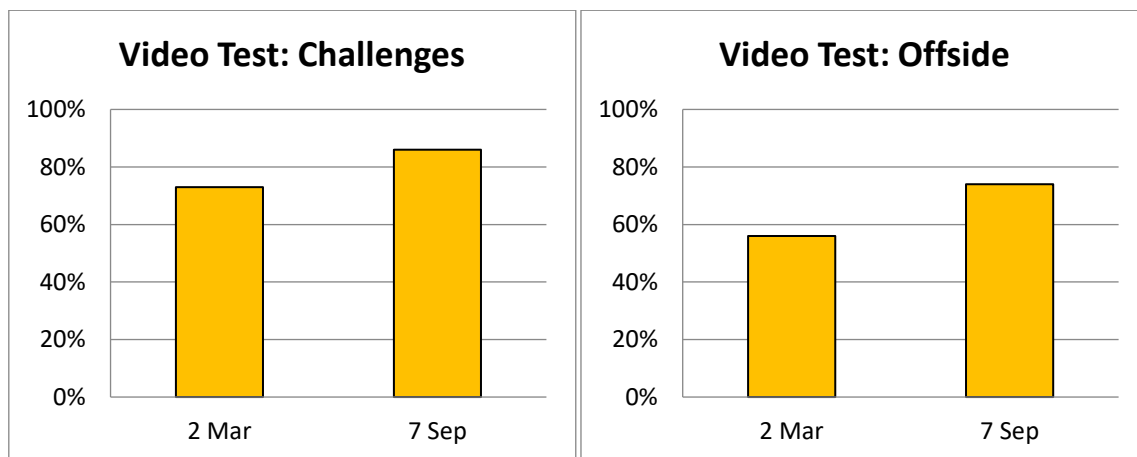
SCHEDULE

Sessions were scheduled for the first and third Monday of each month from March to September. Video conferencing was used to deliver theory sessions during and after the suspension of football activities in 2020. Also during the suspension, sessions were moved to Wednesdays.

Course	Date / Frequency	Attendance
Cadet and Academy Referee Program	2x per month (Mar-Sep)	154

TESTING RESULTS

Video testing is conducted on CARP participants to gauge their development across the length of the program. There are two video assessments, one on challenges and the other on offside decisions.



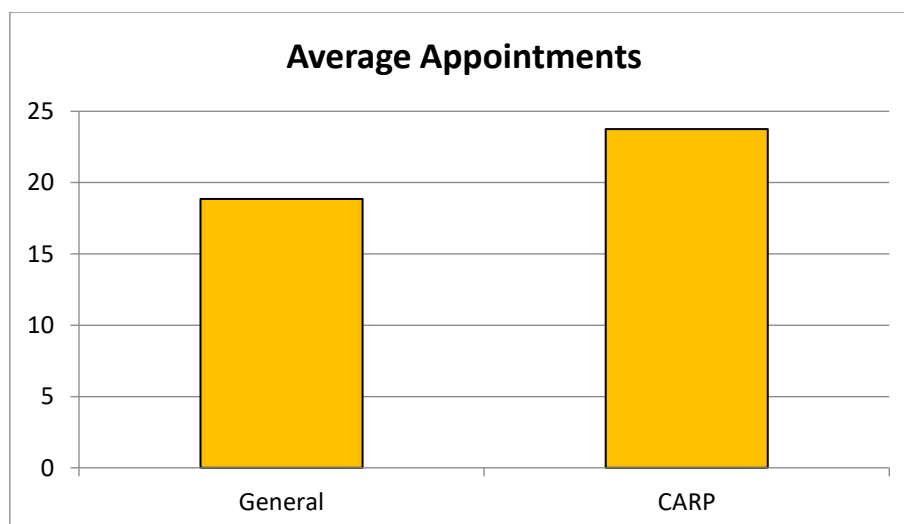
APPOINTMENTS

Of the 23 CARP participants, 20 were appointed to games that ranged across all of NPL and State League Women's, while many of the participants were also active in Junior Leagues through their clubs.

The table below outlines the spread of appointments as both referee and assistant referee in NPL and Senior Leagues.

	NPL1	NPLW Snr	NPL2	NPLY	NPLW U13-U17	SLW
Academy	46	34	12	56	12	1
Cadet	2	25		120	86	

The average number of appointments for CARP participants (23.75) compared to the general referee population (18.85) is illustrated below.



FUTSAL REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

Development in Futsal has been somewhat overlooked and it is important that investment is made. The principle being, to the extent possible, to approach futsal referee development in the same way as football referee development.

A preseason seminar for FPL and senior competitions was held and, for the first time, was a full day event. The seminar followed the same principles as that for football in preparing referees for the season ahead and looked to provide direction for consistency.

Due to the frequency of futsal games, it can be difficult to hold education or training sessions. It is unlikely that training sessions will be held given that most referees officiate 2-3 times per week and to add a training load puts them at risk of injury.

Futsal referee education sessions were held in a similar format to football referee sessions using video conferencing facilities. Sessions were held in October and early November reviewing topics from the preseason seminar as well as reviewing results of video / Laws tests.

Although it is still early days, this lays a good foundation for future development in futsal refereeing.

Course	Date/s	Attendance
Preseason Seminar	4 Oct	30
Education Sessions	13 Oct, 15 Oct, 10 Nov	43

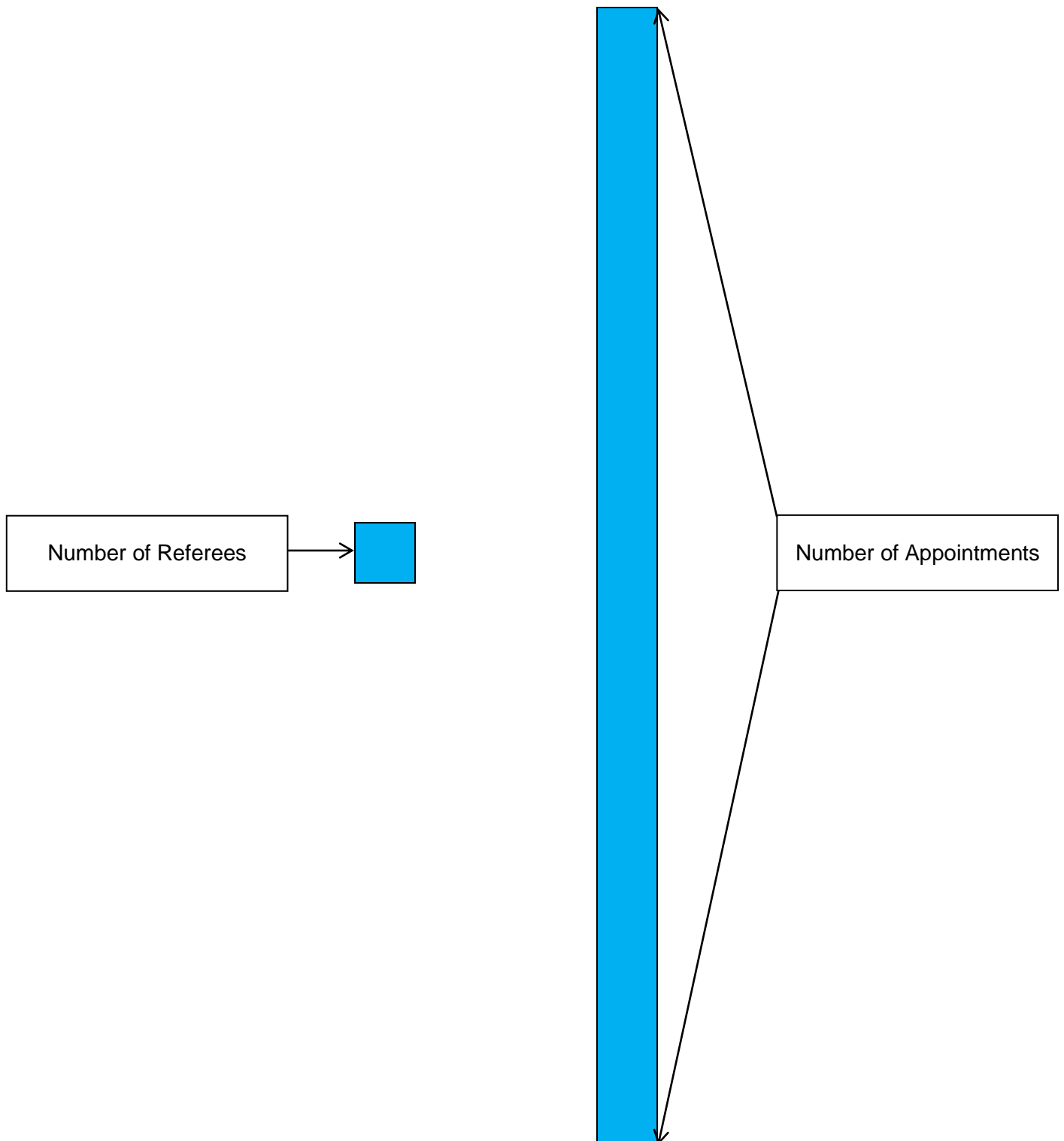
COMPETITIONS

APPOINTMENTS

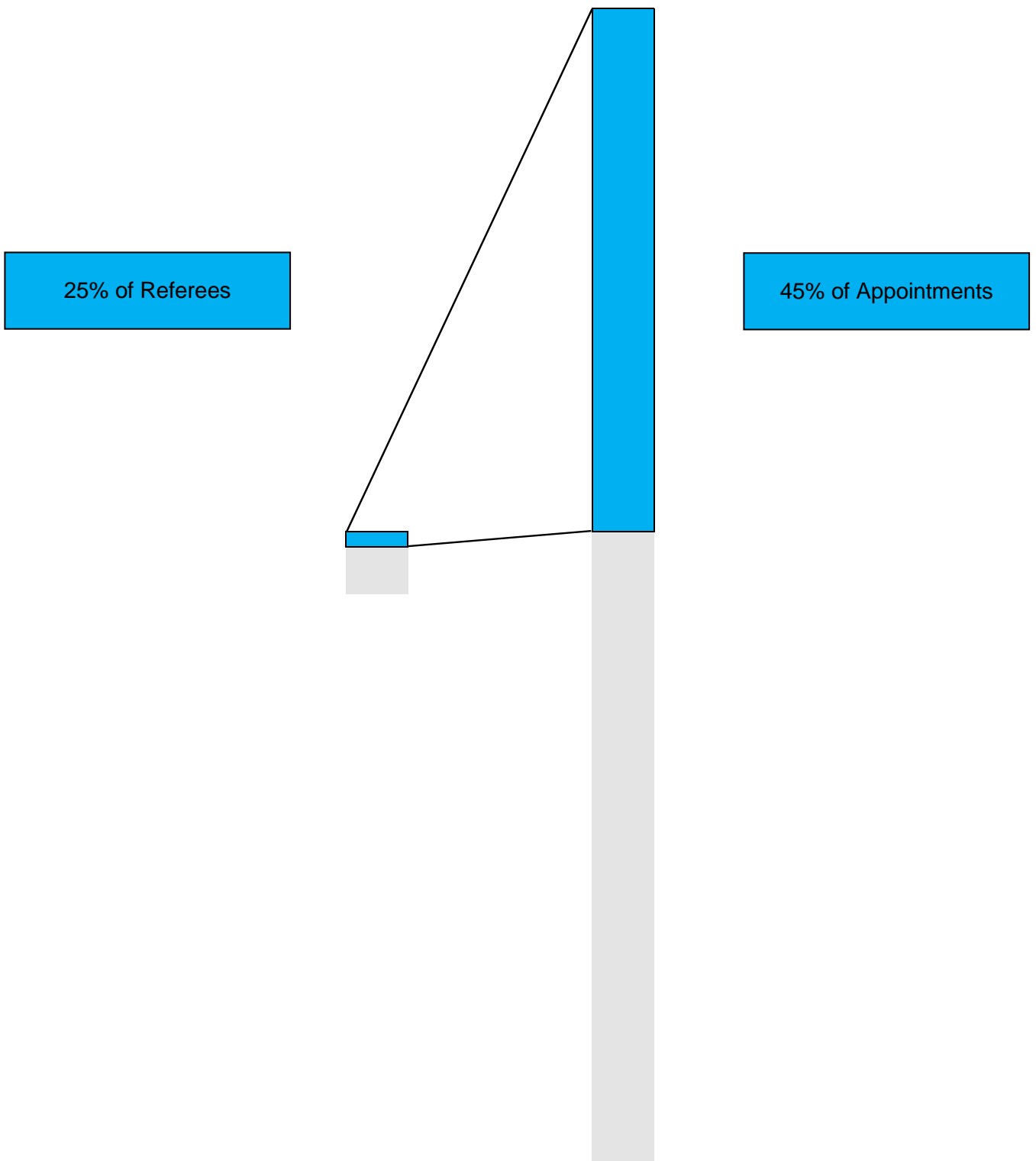
Capital Football regularly appointed referees to the following winter football competitions.

NPL1 Men's	NPL Women's	NPL2 Men's
NPL1 1st Grade	NPLW 1st Grade	NPL2 1st Grade
NPL1 U23	NPLW Reserves	NPL2 U23
NPL Youth	NPL Women's Youth	
NPLY U18	NPLW U17	
NPLY U16	NPLW U15	
NPLY U14	NPLW U13	
NPLY U13		
State League Men's	State League Women's	Community League Men's
SLM D1	SLW D1	CLM D1
SLM D1 Reserves	SLW D2	CLM D2
SLM D2	SLW D3	CLM D3
SLM D2 Reserves	SLW D4	CLM D4
SLM D3	SLW D5	
SLM D3 Reserves		
Masters League Men's	State League Women's	
MLM D1	MLW	
MLM D2		
MLMD3		
MLM D4		
MLM O45		
MLM (NC)		

A total of 99 referees did 1,868 appointments during the competitive winter football season, with an average of 18.87 games per referee. The comparison of referees to appointments is illustrated below.



The busiest 25% of referees did 45% of the appointments at an average of 34.16 per referee.



The preceding information is drawn from data of winter football and does not include:

- Trial matches (408)
- Women's Preseason Tournament (29)
- Walking Football (170)
- ACT Schools competitions (88)
- Veteran's Shield (32)
- Summer Masters (31)
- Futsal competitions (543)
- Navy Football Federation (15)

These activities resulted in an additional 1,316 appointments bringing the total number of appointments in 2020 to 3,184.

COVERAGE

The data is drawn from the online system Capital Football uses to appoint referees.

Challenges that affected the appointment of referees during 2020 included:

- The withdrawal of Tigers FC and Griffith FC from NPLY U18 which resulted in its separation from other NPLY grades, and several stand-alone games.
- Yoogali SC (NPL2) and Griffith FC (NPLY) playing games in Cootamundra because of NSW Government changes to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
- Wet weather and several ground closures resulting in a high volume of appointment changes at short notice.

Notwithstanding the above, referee coverage rate across all winter football competitions (NPL and Senior Leagues) increased to 82.83% in 2020 from 81% in 2019.

NPL COVERAGE

Referee coverage rate across all NPL competitions increased to 99.42% in 2020 from 95% in 2019. The tables below provide information on referee and assistant referee coverage for each NPL competition. Please note for assistant referee coverage, calculations are based on two AR appointments per match.

Capital Football appreciates the assistance of the Griffith & District Soccer Referees Association and the Football Wagga Wagga Referees Branch who appointed match officials across all NPL competitions in their region as well as in Cootamundra.

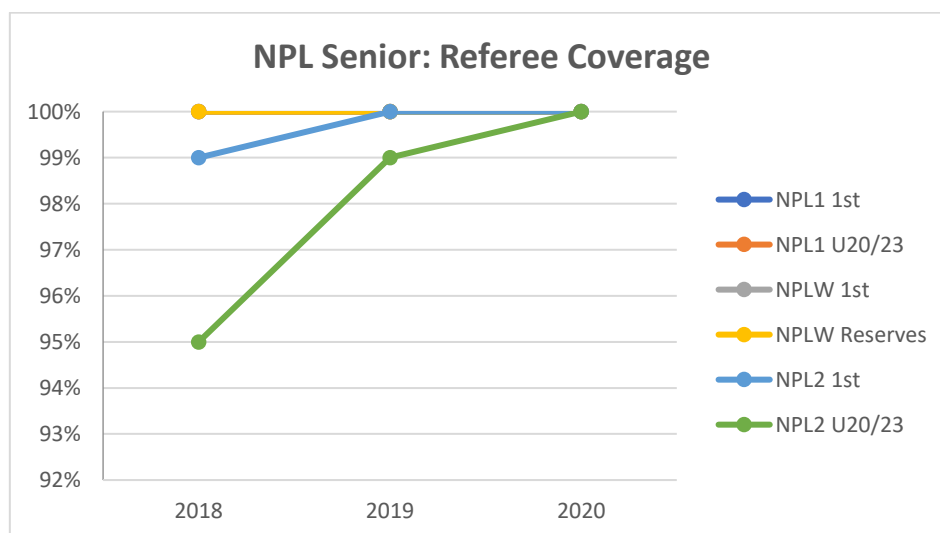
NPL SENIOR					
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments		Assistant Referee Appointments	
NPL1 1st	42	42	100.00%	84	100.00%
NPL1 U23	42	42	100.00%	84	100.00%
NPLW 1st	41	41	100.00%	82	100.00%
NPLW Res.	41	41	100.00%	82	100.00%
NPL2 1st	40	40	100.00%	59	73.75%
NPL2 U23	40	40	100.00%	55	68.75%
Average			100.00%		90.42%

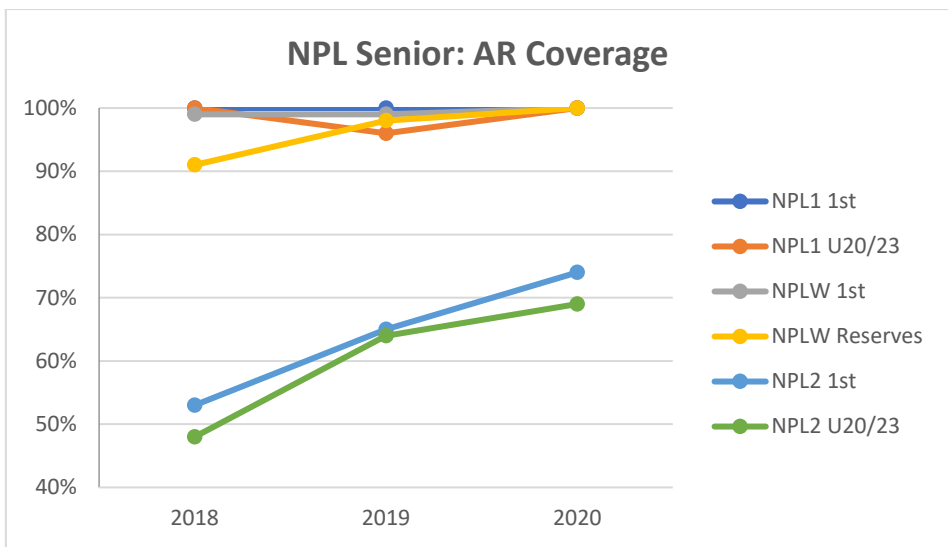
NPL YOUTH					
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments		Assistant Referee Appointments	
NPLY U18	58	57	98.28%	48	41.38%
NPLY U16	70	68	97.14%	70	50.00%
NPLY U14	71	71	100.00%	78	54.93%
NPLY U13	69	67	97.10%	73	52.90%
Average			98.13%		49.80%

NPLW YOUTH					
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments		Assistant Referee Appointments	
NPLW U17	41	41	100.00%	47	57.32%
NPLW U15	41	41	100.00%	47	57.32%
NPLW U13	41	41	100.00%	44	53.66%
Average			100.00%		56.10%

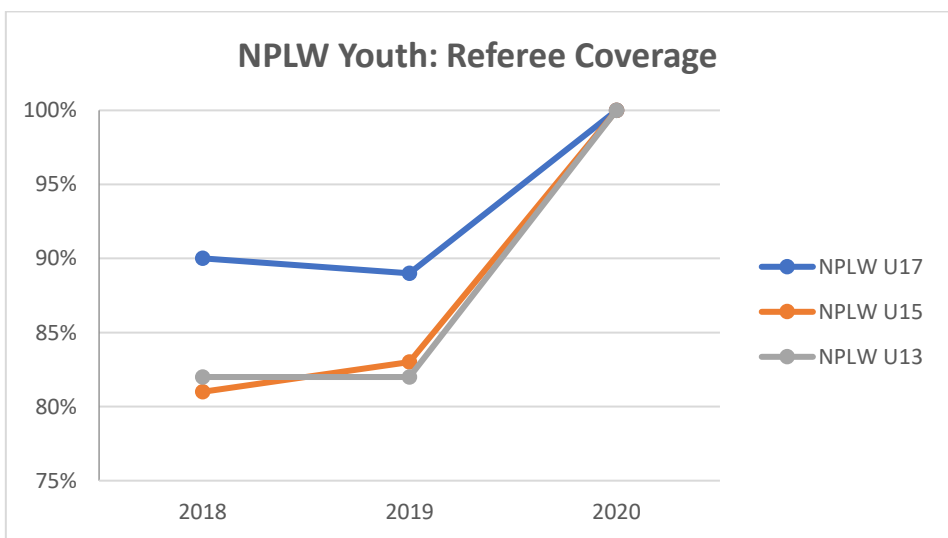
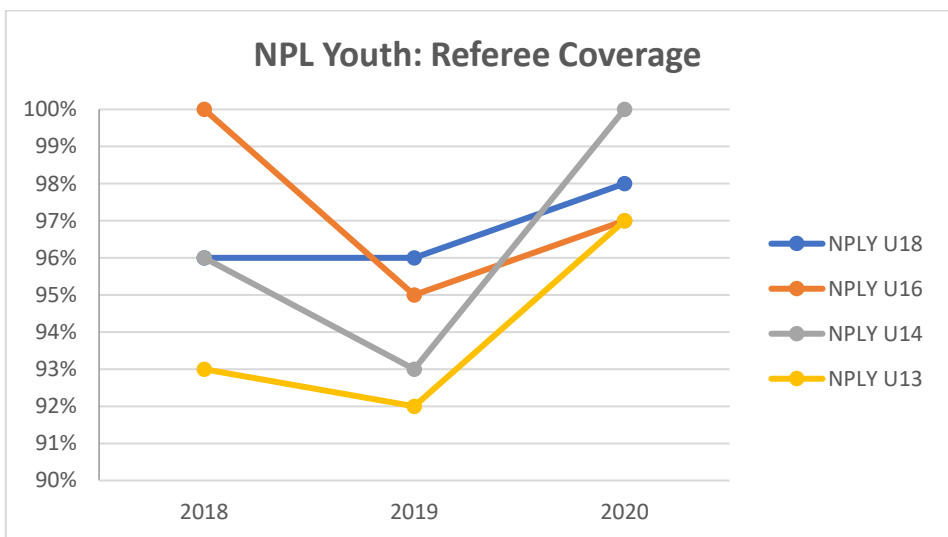
NPL COVERAGE TRENDS

The graphs below illustrate the trend of coverage in NPL and equivalent competitions since 2018.





(AR coverage is calculated on the basis of two ARs appointed per game)



SENIOR LEAGUES COVERAGE

The referee coverage rate for Senior Leagues' increased to 72.56% in 2020 from 68% in 2019.

STATE AND MASTERS LEAGUE WOMEN			
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments	
SLW D1	34	34	100.00%
SLW D2	39	35	89.74%
SLW D3	34	24	70.59%
SLW D4	45	37	82.22%
SLW D5	37	33	89.19%
MLW	18	12	66.67%
Average			83.07%

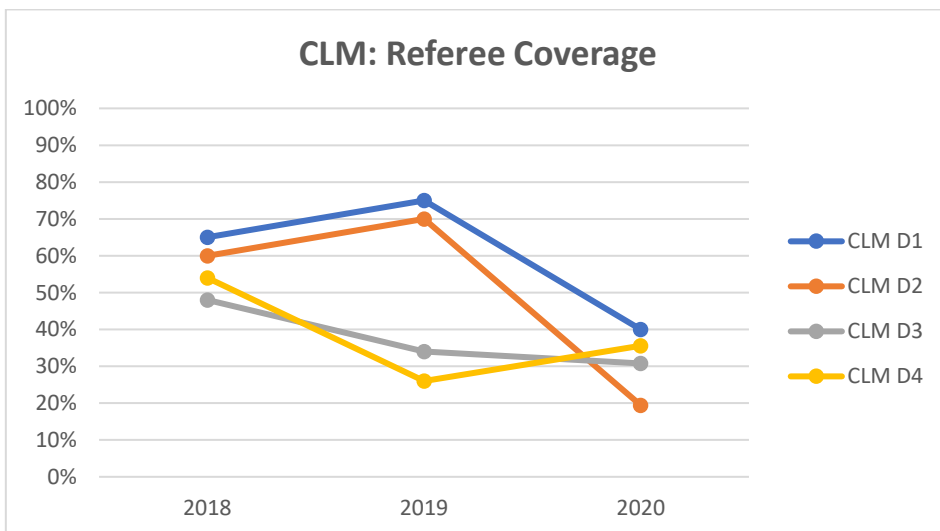
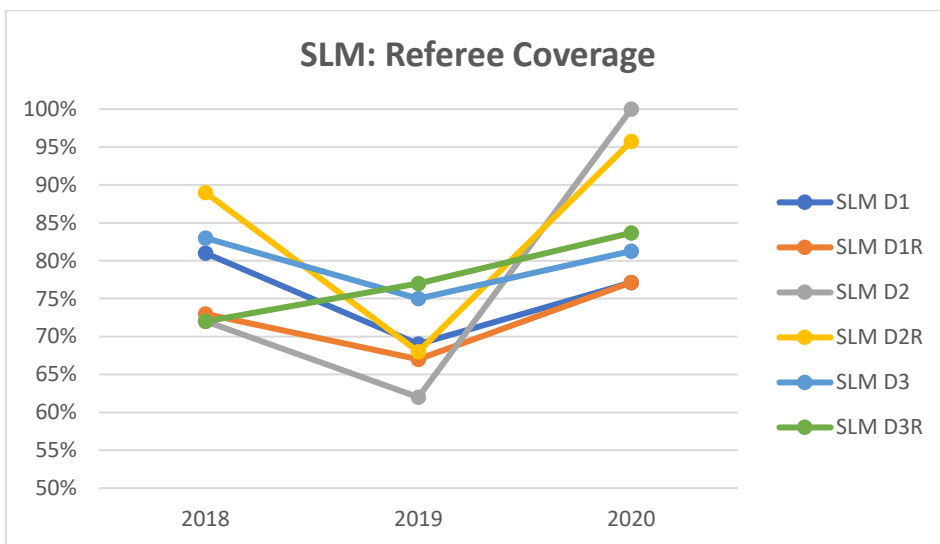
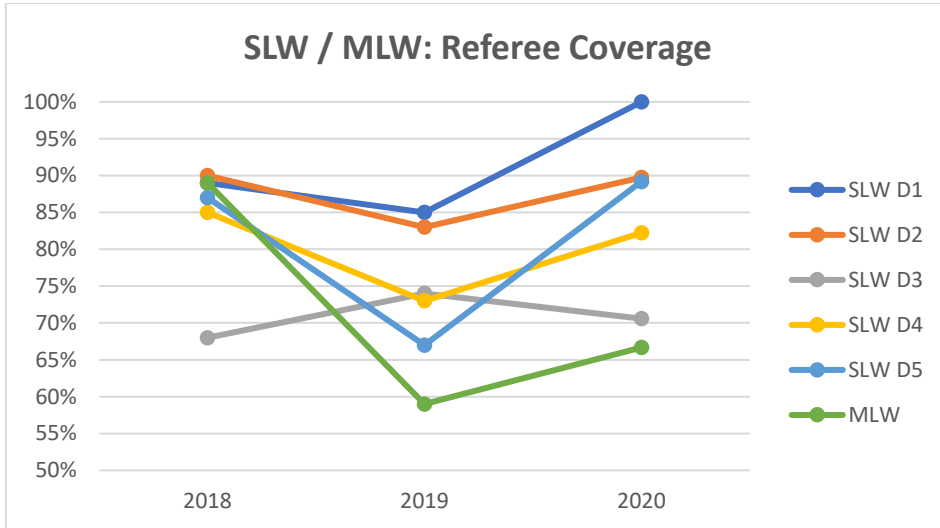
STATE LEAGUE MEN			
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments	
SLM D1	35	27	77.14%
SLM D1R	35	27	77.14%
SLM D2	49	49	100.00%
SLM D2R	47	45	95.74%
SLM D3	48	39	81.25%
SLM D3R	49	41	83.67%
Average			85.83%

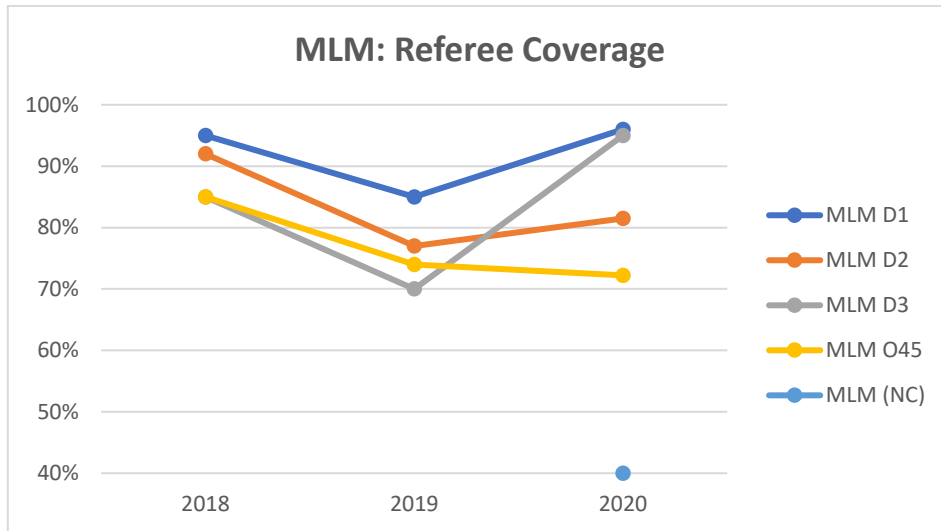
COMMUNITY LEAGUE MEN			
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments	
CLM D1	45	18	40.00%
CLM D2	36	7	19.44%
CLM D3	39	12	30.77%
CLM D4	45	16	35.56%
Average			31.44%

MASTERS LEAGUE MEN			
Grade	No. of Games	Referee Appointments	
MLM D1	25	24	96.00%
MLM D2	27	22	81.48%
MLM D3	20	19	95.00%
MLM O45	36	26	72.22%
MLM (NC)	15	6	40.00%
Average			76.94%

SENIOR LEAGUES COVERAGE TRENDS

The graphs below illustrate the trends of referee coverage in Senior League and equivalent competitions since 2018.





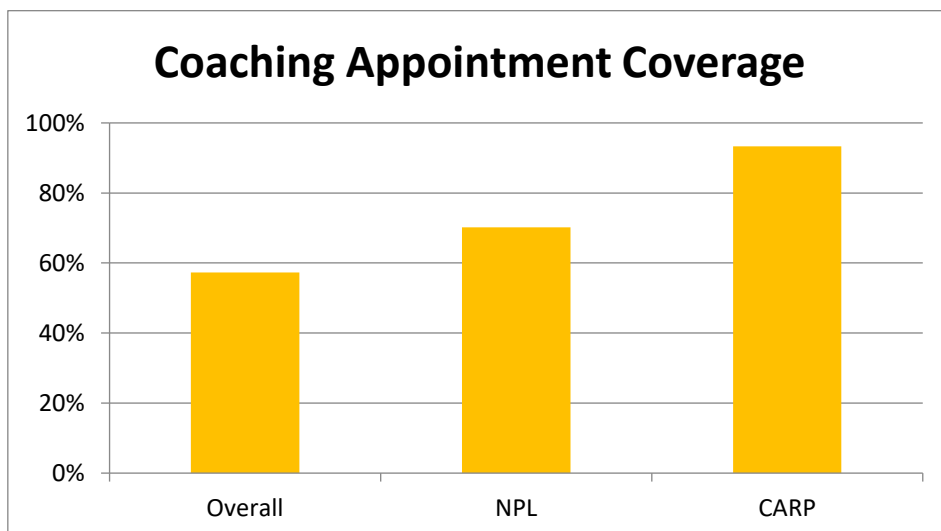
COACHING APPOINTMENTS

Referee coaches were appointed to 64 matches in competitive winter football season in 2020. Of the 40 accredited coaches, 11 were appointed across the season, five of whom did 82.81% of all coaching appointments.

Capital Football has five members dedicated solely to assessing / coaching of referees, four of whom were active during the season. Other accredited coaches, also being active referees, were appointed to officiate matches which reduced their opportunities to coach.

While the overall coverage of coaching appointments was 57.33%, most coaching appointments were in NPL competitions (61 of 64). CARP is a priority for coaching and 14 out of 15 CARP participants who refereed more than five games received coaching in 2020 (93.33% coverage).

Coverage of referees with coaching appointments is outlined below:



(coverage is based on comparing unique coaching appointments to referees who refereed 6+ games in 2020)

REFEREE PERFORMANCE

KEY MATCH DECISIONS

Match officials may make important decisions that have a significant impact on the outcome and/or control of the game. These are known as Key Match Decisions (KMD) and include:

- Red Card situation
- Goal / No Goal decisions
- Penalty Area decisions
- Crucial Offside decisions
- Other decisions with an important impact on the game

In 2019, Capital Football introduced assessment procedures to identify KMDs which continued in 2020. Referee coaches are required to note when a KMD occurs during a match, the decision taken by the match officials on the field and provide their opinion of the decision and actions. The options for coaches are:

- Agree; the decision / action by the match official was correct
- Support; the decision / action by the match official appears to be correct or acceptable given their position or the circumstances
- Doubtful / Disagree; the decision / action is either incorrect or not supportable

	Penalty Area Decision	Goal / No Goal Decision	Red Card Situation	Other	Crucial Offside
Total KMD	34	-	9	-	6
Agree	21	-	6	-	6
Support	8	-	1	-	-
Doubtful / Disagree	5	-	2	-	-