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Being a Referee is Hard

By [abbotsfordfemalehockey](http://www.abbotsfordfemalehockey.com/author/abbotsfordfemalehockey/) (<http://www.abbotsfordfemalehockey.com/author/abbotsfordfemalehockey/>) | February 27, 2018

Being a Teenager is not an easy thing to do. Being a Leader is not an easy thing to do. Being a confident decision maker is not an easy thing to do. So why is it that if you go to any ice arena in any association and take a listen, you are probably likely to hear negative comments towards Referees, Individuals who possess all of these great qualities?

The Abbotsford Female Hockey Association is a small association so you can imagine the small pool of officials we have. Almost all of our Officials are either in their first or second year as we have very few officials that have 3 or more years of experience. In general, all associations are losing 10-20% of their officials every year so at this rate, in 5 to 10 years, there will be none left.

I believe there are two main reasons for this. The first reason being that as referees get older, their hockey playing career, social life, or education becomes more of a priority. **But what I believe to be the main cause is because officiating becomes more of a hassle than it's worth in time,**

money and or enjoyment. This is a problem and something we need to fix right away and it starts with an association wide change in attitude when viewing referees. It has to include everyone associated with the game of hockey starting with Coaches and players but also including parents, Score-keepers and Time-keepers.

I ask you to take a moment and think about your own job:

- Did you know how to do your job without any mistakes when you started or did you have to get trained and learn from those mistakes?
- Do you have to make every decision in a split second or do you get the time to think about it?
- What if every time you made a mistake you had a large group of people yelling at you?
- Could you work in an environment where people are generally displeased with you?
- Do you enjoy people only pointing out only your weaknesses and never your strengths?

Now think about how many players, coaches, and spectators in total there are at any given hockey game. That is a large amount of people with various views and opinions to keep happy and pleased at all times. Would you ever go and interrupt or yell at a teacher? A Police officer? Your Boss? So why is it any different when it's a referee? **Would an Adult Yelling at a teenage be acceptable in any other situation?**

So the next time you are at a hockey game, just remember that the Referee is someone's child, someone's parent, someone's friend. This is something that all players, parents, and coaches need to remember so we can help change the fact that Hockey Canada loses over 10,00 referees a year. We need to show more support for them because without Referees, there is ultimately no hockey game.

Thanks,

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