

REFEREE U — WEEK A

Crew Moment: Building a Crew

TCAOA 2026 Referee University | Week A

PEOPLE & PERSONALITY

01 Personality Alignment

- Mix confident leaders with steady, quiet stabilizers.
- Avoid stacking dominant personalities in conflict positions (e.g., R and U who are both highly controlling)
- Balance in the crew helps create stability under pressure.

02 Ego Management

- Ideal crew mindset: “Do your job exceptionally well and trust others to do theirs.”
- Crews fall apart when someone needs to be the loudest voice on every play.
- Ego in check = cleaner conferences, faster resolution, better outcomes.
- As the R, you set the standard for this by modeling it first.

ALIGNMENT: LANGUAGE & PHILOSOPHY

03 Communication Style Alignment

- Can this official relay information quickly under pressure?
- Do they use standardized language - pre-snap calls, penalty announcements, sideline explanations?
- A crew that speaks the same shorthand works faster and cleaner.

04 Game Management Philosophy

- Have a shared philosophy discussion before the season.
- How does this crew handle a heated sideline? When do you conference? Who initiates?
- Best practice: discuss it before Week 1, not in the middle of a tough game.
- Crews with aligned philosophy make consistent decisions when it matters most.

WHAT THEY BRING: SKILLS & PREPARATION

05 Complementary Skill Sets

- Who excels at rule interpretation? Who excels at game flow?
- Who handles player interaction? Who handles coaches?
- Great crews don't need five identical officials. Continuity is the key.

06 Work Ethic & Preparation Consistency

- Film study: do they actually watch tape between games?
- Rules knowledge: do they go beyond the basics and study edge cases?
- Pre-game preparation: do they arrive ready, or warm up during the first quarter?
- Preparation is observable and it is contagious in both directions.

CULTURE: ACCOUNTABILITY & LEADERSHIP

07 Accountability Culture

- Best crews: review plays post-game and self-critique without being asked.
- They give each other honest feedback - respectfully.
- An accountable crew gets better every single week.
- Ask yourself: will this official tell me when I miss something?

08 Leadership Structure Beyond the R

- Who is the consistent voice in the pregame?
- Who keeps the crew focused at halftime?
- Who steps in when someone is struggling and pulls them aside?
- The R leads but a great crew has leaders at every position.

WHEN IT MATTERS: COMPOSURE & PRESSURE

09

Emotional Intelligence & Composure

- Can this official stay composed after missing a call?
- Do they de-escalate tense sideline situations or add fuel?
- Can they handle a difficult coach without losing poise or authority?

10

Pressure Performance

- How does this official perform in the 4th quarter of a close game?
- Are mechanics still sound when the crowd is loud and stakes are high?
- Do they make the same quality decisions late in the game as early?
- Pressure reveals what preparation built. Watch for it in scrimmages and early games.

THE CREW CHECKLIST

PEOPLE	Personality Fit - Ego Management
ALIGNMENT	Communication Style - Game Management Philosophy
SKILLS	Complementary Skill Sets - Work Ethic & Preparation
CULTURE	Accountability Culture - Leadership Beyond the R
PRESSURE	Emotional Intelligence - Pressure Performance
