

Policy on Observers and Referees

Submitted by the Observers Committee. Adopted 8/28/03 by the Executive Committee.

In line with its previous statements, USA Ultimate endorses the use of Observers in Ultimate but does not endorse the use of Referees.

The primary difference between Observers and Referees is that Observers shall not make active foul and violation calls of a subjective nature, while Referees are empowered to make any call authorized in the rules, bylaws, officiating guide, or any set of tournament ground rules. Observers are allowed to resolve disputes on foul and violation calls if requested to do so by the players or event organizers. It is permissible but not required for Observers to be allowed to make active calls on conduct issues and objective matters in the rules, including but not limited to time violations where the disc is not in play and boundary decisions.

Observers have the responsibility to uphold the Spirit of the Game to the players on the field. While Observers can provide a neutral perspective for dispute resolution or calls of an objective nature, the responsibility for the integrity of Ultimate and the Spirit of the Game remains with the players.