

Shire targets more referees

NO ONE does football quite like the Sutherland Shire Football Association.

The football-mad region has been strongly linked with a bid for its own A-League team, while growth of the sport at the grassroots level has seen the SSFA grow to become the biggest football association in New South Wales and the biggest sporting association in the state.

With 26 clubs making up the association, it is a good time to get involved in football in the Shire, but if there is one area that the association would like to see even more growth, it is in the number of referees available to them.

Chris Young, President of the Sutherland Shire Football Referees Association, said the Shire boasted a fantastic number of referees with just over 300 registered referees, but said they needed even more than that to keep up with the sheer amount of fixtures on the weekend.

"We have good numbers, but we always need more



Do you want to be a referee? The theory course is available online at www.laws.myfootballclub.com.au. Once completed you can go to www.ssfra.org.au and book a practical course.

because there is just so much football being played on the weekend," Young said.

"We get referees to the vast majority of games, which is

an outstanding effort given the number of games we have to cover, but we can always use more."

Young said refereeing was

a great way to turn football from a hobby into an income.

The referees association is very accommodating to players who want to contin-

ue to play their club football as well as take up refereeing.

Young said you might even find that taking up the whistle is a great way to make

your way into the W-League or A-League.

"That pathway is always there, but it's a great way for locals to make a bit of extra cash from the sport they love," Young said.

"We have junior fixtures on Saturdays and senior fixtures on Sundays so there is always somewhere for you to get involved.

"Some of the referees that started with us have worked their way up and gone on to referee the PlayStation 4 National Premier Leagues NSW Men's competitions.

"It's a great inclusive environment that can teach young people a variety of life skills that will serve them in all walks of life."

So, how do you get involved? Young said it was as easy as taking an online theory test before signing up for a practical course, which the SSFA runs in February and March in anticipation for the upcoming season.

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