

Referees for a state final soccer match are expected to arrive at least 30 minutes before kickoff to conduct a thorough pre-game walk-through and checklist. This process ensures the field, equipment, and players are compliant with the Laws of the Game and competition regulations, especially those set by organizations like the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) for state series games.

Here is a typical checklist for a soccer official's pre-game walk-through at a state final:

Area Checked	Details
--------------	---------

Field Inspection	Proper markings (lines, penalty area, goal area, center circle, corner arcs). Ensure corner flags are in place and located at outside corners. Remove any dangerous debris (rocks, glass, holes, sprinkler heads). Check for dangerous field conditions (soft/wet areas, uneven turf).
-------------------------	--

Goal Inspection	Goals must be properly assembled, anchored securely to the ground (e.g., using sandbags or stakes if portable), and centered. Nets must be secured and free of holes. Check crossbars for sagging.
------------------------	--

Player Inspection	Players must be wearing proper uniforms, including shin guards completely covered by socks, and soccer cleats (no metal spikes, baseball/football cleats with toe spikes). No jewelry of any kind is allowed, even if covered; it must be removed to play. No casts, splints, or hard-billed caps are allowed (goalkeepers may wear soft-billed caps if sun is an issue). Goalkeepers must wear a jersey color different from both teams and the referee. Shirts must be tucked in at the start of each half. Check player passes and match them against the roster for validity.
--------------------------	---

Coach/Team Officials Check-In	Introduce yourself to coaches and assistant referees (ARs). Verify coach credentials (coach passes) and identify officials listed on the game card/roster. Provide each coach with a copy of the opposing team's roster. Note any challenges on the game report. Remind coaches about sideline conduct and designated areas for players, substitutes, and spectators. Obtain the game ball from the home team and check for proper inflation. Communicate uniform colors if needed, with the home team changing if there's a conflict.
--------------------------------------	--

Referee Crew Pre-Game Meeting	Review expectations, areas of coverage, and specific instructions with the Assistant Referees (ARs). Empower ARs to assist with decisions (e.g., fouls missed by the referee, offside). Discuss communication protocols and signals to use during the game. Review rules of competition, including tie-breaking procedures. Decide on timing procedures (official time kept by field official).
Personal Equipment Check	Ensure mandatory equipment is present and functional: whistle, watch with timer (not cell phone), red and yellow cards, coin for coin toss, Assistant Referee flags, score pad/notebook, pens/pencils. Wear the correct USSF referee uniform and badge. Consider optional items: sunscreen, water, ball pump/gauge, spare whistle, extra socks, etc.
Captains Meeting / Coin Toss	Call captains to the center circle with ARs and the game ball. Perform the coin toss and record the result. Remind captains of their leadership role and respectful conduct expectations.