



AFL Umpire Coach Professional Development Program E-Newsletter 2009 – Week 27

*Visit the AFL Umpiring Development website for the latest umpiring info -
<http://www.afl.com.au/umpiring>*

Through the AFL Umpire Coach PD program the Australian Football League along with each State Umpiring body is continuing to commit to its promise of providing stronger support and training to Umpire Coaches throughout Australia. The AFL sees Umpire Coaches as having the greatest influence over the environment in which an umpire participates in, and sees the coach as the key person in providing support for all umpires within their group.

Umpire Coach Advice – Remote Coaching

The issue of remote coaching is something most umpire coaches have to deal with during a season. Roy Reichart from Newcastle Junior Umpires provides this article that explains some strategies he has implemented to address the challenges of umpires not being able to attend training consistently. The AFL would like to thank Roy for taking the time to provide this article.

Remote Coaching

Remote Coaching is quite challenging. How can consistency in umpiring be established? In the Newcastle junior competition, the travel times exceed 1 hour each way to training for more than half of the umpires, who rely on parents to complete their work and then provide them with a lift to training. Therefore, regular attendance at a common venue by most umpires is rare. What tools can be used to address the issue of isolation?

Email is one common tool to reach the whole group but the message needs to be simple to be effective. Text messages can also be effective for today's youth. Overhead presentations that can be emailed to umpires is another essential communication strategy.

Distribution of common training videos for self paced review can make up for some training and instruction. However, we need to offer more. I tend to use four concepts to reduce the isolation:

1. Take training / education sessions to the umpires closest football club on a regular basis, generally once per month.
2. Spread senior / experienced umpires across each game day venue.
3. Feedback under match conditions at each break from the senior umpires or mentors using open questions. For example, asking them how they thought they went and then reinforcing the key messages around getting to position, working the angles to get clear view and triggering in at key moments in the match, particularly the inside 50 decisions.
4. Review the feedback provided with the mentors to determine areas to work on for the group and individuals.

Because of the limited group training I encourage the umpires to train at or with the local club in addition to any personal training efforts. This concept has reduced the amount of umpire abuse, without creating bias. It seems to be improving the knowledge of the rules and interpretation of the rules within the footy community. And because umpires are answering the questions to the footy community they are reinforcing their learning and asking for information from the coach when they are unsure. This symbiotic relationship appears to be creating greater consistency, because one of the most common references used by the umpires is the DVD's provided each year.

Another observed change from this distributed training would appear to be that the number of reportable incidents has dropped significantly. This year only 1 player was reported and suspended during the 225 home and away matches umpired. Also, the finals series thus far is also without incident despite some very close and intense matches.

The key in remote coaching is the sharing of information and responsibility. This sharing of responsibility can extend down to the umpires themselves.

Could you encourage your umpires to train with local football clubs if umpire training is too far away? How could you foster these relationships between umpires who cannot make umpires training and local football clubs?

If you have any coach advice you would like to submit to the network of umpire coaches please email them to Umpire.Development@afl.com.au. We encourage umpire coaches to submit their advice.

Have your say – AFL Umpire Development's 2009 Umpires Survey

The AFL in consultation with State Umpiring bodies has produced a survey designed to determine the influential factors that motivate an umpire to commence and then continue umpiring. This is your opportunity to let your umpires have their say and help guide the AFL's approach to recruitment and retention of umpires. Ultimately, we would like to identify words that umpires associate with umpiring that we can use consistently to assist branding nationally.



This survey is quite simple and was created using survey monkey. It has only 10 questions and should only take several minutes to complete. **To complete this survey please [click here](#).**

Could you please forward this survey link onto your umpires requesting that they take the time to complete the survey?

Thank you in advance for your support in forwarding the link to your umpires.

Female Umpire Sets New Ground for EDFL

Essendon District Football League (EDFL) umpire, Penny Godsell, is paving the way for female umpires. In a rare occurrence for the EDFL, on Saturday the 22nd of August Penny umpired a senior A grade match. Having started as a green shirt umpire she now mentors younger female umpires looking to reach senior A grade too. We would like to thank Jason Fischer from the EDFL for providing this article.



Essendon Umpire Sets New Ground for EDFL

On Saturday the 22nd of August the Essendon District Football League had a rare occurrence when a female field umpire officiated in its senior A grade competition. Penny Godsell, at the age of 21, officiated in her first senior A grade game between Avondale Heights and Maribynong Park football clubs.

Maribynong Park coach Brodie Holland commented on her performance after the match in a favorable manner. Penny's performance highlights the opportunities that other female umpires can aspire to with dedication and hard work.

Penny has been umpiring with the EDFL since a young age. She commenced her umpiring in the underage competition. Over the years, Penny has developed into a very accomplished senior field umpire; and has progressed through the junior umpiring system within the EDFL.

Penny has been involved in the green shirt program and has also mentored young female umpires. Penny is a level 2 accredited umpire and this season was selected to be part of the female umpiring academy, which has led to her being selected to officiate on the Gold Coast in September for the youth girls under 18 challenge between Victoria and Queensland. Penny will this week have the opportunity to umpire in her first senior final.

The EDFL umpires appointment board hopes that Penny continues her development and enthusiasm towards umpiring, and continues to be a role model for other female umpires in the coming season.

There are nearly 700 female umpires officiating football matches each weekend.

NT Pair Umpiring Way to the Top

Two indigenous umpires from remote areas in the Northern Territory last week participated in the 2009 Qantas AFL Kickstart Camp that culminated in a curtain raiser before the Richmond v Hawthorn Match at the MCG on Saturday 22nd August. The following article was taken out of the Northern Territory News.

NT pair umpiring way to top

AFLNT umpires boss Mark Noonan is confident indigenous field umpires Aloysius Lantjin and Gerard Watson will become standard bearers in their trade. Both Territory umpires (pictured) took charge of a junior curtain-raiser game featuring the best under-15 indigenous players in Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground last week.

Aloysius is from Wadeye on the Territory's west coast and Gerard hails from Maningrida on the midnorth coast. Noonan said they earned the trip south through their performances at this year's under-15 Country Championships in Darwin. "We encourage all the teams from different regions to bring their own umpires to the championships and these guys were the best of the group," Noonan said.

"They trained with the AFL umpires at Monash University while in Melbourne where they joined in skills and general umpiring sessions. The end result was to umpire the best forty 14 and 15-year-old indigenous kids in Australia in last week's curtain-raiser to the Richmond-Hawthorn game at the MCG," Noonan said.

The curtain-raiser was the climax of the annual AFL Kickstart Camp. Meanwhile, Noonan has called on all prospective field, goal and boundary umpires to attend a "Come'n'Try" session at TIO Stadium next month. The 90-minute session from 5.30pm-7pm is set down for Wednesday, September 9.



Ask the Ump

In this section coaches are invited to send in questions which are answered by the AFL Umpiring Department (Jeff Gieschen, Rowan Sawers and Peter Howe). The idea is that this provides an opportunity for umpire coaches from across the country to seek technical advice on any area of umpiring they may be interested in learning more.

We would like to thank Jeff, Rowan and Peter for taking the time to answer these questions.

Please send your questions to Umpire.Development@afl.com.au.

Umpire Coach Activity

If you have any coach activities you would like to submit to the network of umpire coaches please email them to Umpire.Development@afl.com.au. We encourage umpire coaches to submit their activities.

Umpire coach activities from last year can be found on the AFL website by clicking [here](#).

Heading Overseas?

If you have an umpire that is heading overseas and may be interested in umpiring or helping some of the locals out, we would like to hear from you. Please email Umpire.Development@afl.com.au with the umpires name, email address, phone number and overseas destination and we will aim to put them in touch with the local group to get things started.



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