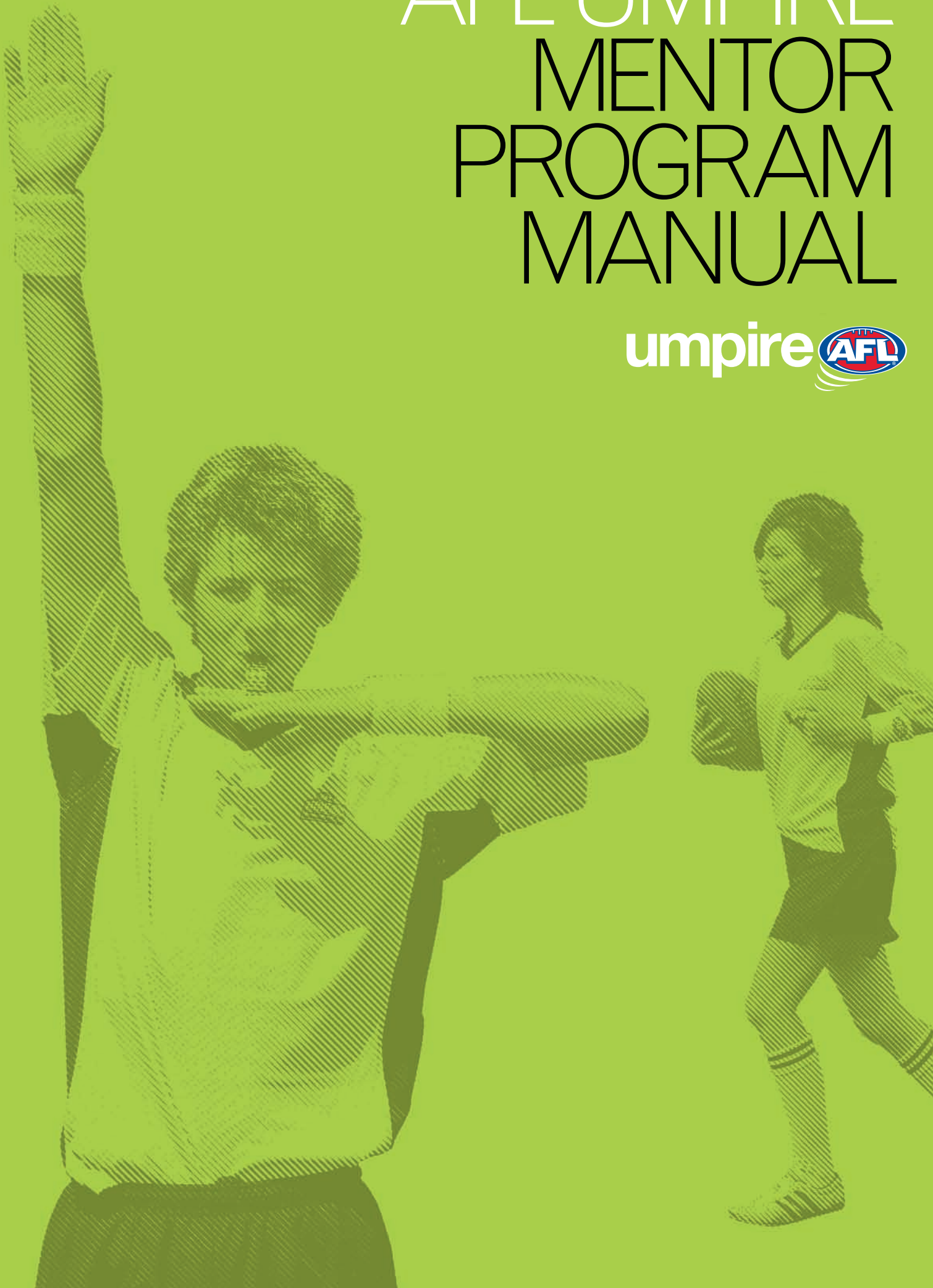


AFL UMPIRE MENTOR PROGRAM MANUAL

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AFL UMPIRE
MENTOR
PROGRAM
MANUAL



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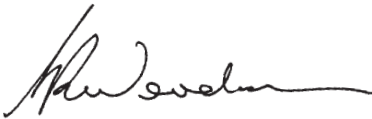
Overview of the program

The AFL Umpire Mentor Program is an initiative of AFL Game Development aimed at improving the recruitment, retention and development of beginning or learning umpires in under-age, school, local or community-based football competitions. The focus of the program is to develop individuals as mentors for these umpires – to ease their initiation into Australian Football and provide the coaching and advice to develop their skills and love of the game.

The professionalism and depth of umpiring at the elite level of our game is dependent on sufficient numbers of enthusiastic and talented umpires working their way through the ranks to push for selection at the elite level. However, community football also needs to be supported by competent and enthusiastic umpires who are capable of umpiring at all levels of the game.

There is no doubt that umpiring can be a very rewarding pastime or career. Our game is enhanced when umpired by qualified officials, so it is vital for the future of Australian Football that the development of umpires is a priority.

The role of the mentor is crucial in this program. Without the appropriate guidance, direction and coaching, we risk losing umpires before they get the chance to properly develop their skills.



Lawrie Woodman

AFL National Coaching, Umpiring and Volunteers Manager

■ Acknowledgements

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- **Mick Hockley and Andrew Whatley** – for their advice and guidance in relation to the mentor program they established and run in the Bendigo Umpires' Association.
- **The Australian Sports Commission** – for allowing use of its Making Mentors Program.
- **Contributing umpires** – Mathew Nicholls, Mathew Head, Gavin Dore, Dean Margetts, Ashley Borg, James McEwan, Patrick Gallagher, Victoria Mitchell, Locky Eccles, Clinton Markwell, Megan Chudleigh and Adrian Fisher.
- **Cricket Australia** – for allowing use of its *Have A Go Handbook*.
- **Slattery Media Group**

■ Objectives of the program

Those experienced umpires undertaking this professional development program as a mentor to beginning or learning umpires can expect to develop the ability to:

- Communicate with beginning or learning umpires, especially teenagers.
- Help teach beginning or learning umpires effective communication strategies for match-day, both verbal and non-verbal (including appropriate signalling).
- Help beginning or learning umpires prepare mentally for training and for match-day.
- Teach beginning or learning umpires how to acquire the skills they need to operate effectively at their level of the game and how to improve their skills.
- Supervise training or practice sessions.
- Observe the performance of beginning or learning umpires and determine the level of instruction and guidance they require.
- Conduct a post-match analysis and evaluation of the beginning or learning umpire.
- Help a beginning or learning umpire conduct a post-match analysis and evaluation of his or her own performance.

Benefits of mentoring to umpiring

- Can ease the difficulty and cost of providing structured in-house umpire training programs.
- Mentors are experienced umpires who can use their experience to help the development of new umpires.
- Mentoring a beginning or learning umpire can rejuvenate experienced umpires and give them a new focus and role within the group.
- Umpires who were mentored as beginning or learning umpires are more likely to do the same when they have substantial experience.
- Mentoring beginning or learning umpires can give them the courage to progress to the next level, thus strengthening the stocks of umpires in Australian Football.
- Acts as a pathway to umpire coach accreditation.

Benefits to the mentor

- A renewed enthusiasm and commitment to his or her own umpiring.
- An opportunity to share his or her knowledge and skills.
- Well-deserved recognition of his or her own skills and expertise.
- A chance to learn something new.
- Promotion of lifelong learning through meaningful relationships.
- Benefits to the beginning or learning umpire.
- Increased confidence and motivation.
- Constructive feedback on performance.
- Assistance in translating theory into practice.
- Novice provided with the chance to 'network' and enhance career prospects.
- Can minimise the difficulties of attending a structured training course, in terms of cost, time, travel, etc.

What does a mentor do?

Mentors can play a wide variety of roles. Some of these include:

- Developing the umpires' knowledge and skills.
- Being a role model for a beginning or learning umpire.
- Helping to build the confidence of the umpire they are working with.
- Being a resource to the umpire they are mentoring – either sharing their own knowledge or directing the umpire to other sources of information.
- Challenging and questioning the beginning or learning umpire to reflect on his or her current practice.
- Being involved in assessing the umpire for a qualification.
- Providing instructions to other people who can help.
- Developing greater self-awareness as an umpire (empowerment).

Part 1: Pre-workshop reading and reflection

The purpose of this phase of the training program is to help you focus on the aspects of umpiring you will have an impact on as a mentor. You will be asked to read and respond to a range of recollections from umpires at various levels of the game.

Your responses will make up the first section of the formal training process when you will work through your reactions with other mentors in the program.

This section must be completed by participants **BEFORE** the Mentor Training Workshop. Your responses here will make up the first section of the workshop, so please ensure you give them some thought and complete them before the day of the workshop.

FLOW CHART OUTLINING MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM TIMELINE

Nominations for appropriate mentors are sought and accepted by local coaches.

Invites are extended for those nominated to train as mentors.

Mentors are provided with learner guides to complete some pre-workshop activities.

Mentor training workshop is conducted. Usually takes about 2½ hours, depending on group size.

Mentor registered.

Mentors meet with learner umpire(s) and complete form on page 27 of learner guide for each umpire.

Mentors to return forms to their workshop facilitator so information on learner umpires can be collated.

Mentor receives benefits pack and starts work with learner umpire(s).

Learner receives benefits pack and starts work as an umpire under mentor's supervision.

Mentor completes coursework from learner guide for assessment and accreditation.

Mentors accredited.

Coursework is submitted; graduation for mentor.

Mentors can apply to an RTO for nationally accredited statement of attainment.

Remember when...

The following is an actual account of a young umpire's first foray into the world of Australian Football umpiring. The umpire is now an AFL field umpire and has officiated in more than 50 games.

"I vividly recall being petrified of going out there each Sunday knowing I was going to be abused and being unsure of what I was really doing. Within two weeks I had gone from watching my mates play footy to being a field umpire. It all happened very quickly. I started in the Doncaster Juniors in the under-12s. My first game seemed to go pretty well, I think it was just the adrenalin running through my body and my footy background that got me through. I had no reason not to feel confident about the next week. From the moment I got to the ground in Bundoora I started to feel uneasy. I was completely alone, there were no umpires' rooms, no one to point me in any direction. I paid a free kick early in the game and heard a call from the crowd abusing me in some way. It was an off-the-cuff comment that I took offence too. I then paid another free kick and heard some more heckling.

I really started to feel conscious about paying free kicks. At quarter-time as the parents walked from their viewing side of the ground through the middle of the ground to hear the coaches, I remember one parent making some comment about me and everyone else in the area laughing at what he had said. I felt really embarrassed and ashamed. In the second quarter, a player should have got a free kick but I did nothing about it.

Instead of being abused by the crowd, I heard nothing, no reaction. "This is better," I thought to myself. From then on I decided the best way to not be abused and hassled was not to pay free kicks. A player would get ridden into the ground, which was so obviously a push in the back. "You jumped forward," I would justify to myself. Still no abuse. This went on for weeks. I was paying maybe one or two free kicks a game. This went on until I had a game, still in the under-12s when I was being watched by an umpires' observer. Despite it being a spiteful game, I was still refusing to pay free kicks so as not to draw attention to myself. Each game I did, I was hoping that it would end quickly and I could get out of there. During the week, the umpires' observer spoke to my father and recommended that maybe umpiring was not right for me. Over the weeks he had received letters from coaches of the teams viewing their concerns. My dad asked about paying free kicks and I explained that I was too scared to pay them because they drew attention to me. We then devised a plan. We looked at AFL games and saw that in most games about 30 free kicks would be paid. I would look at starting off with trying to pay five free kicks a quarter. No matter what anyone said, I would pay this amount or more. My dad would come out to me at each break and tell me how many I paid. I slowly gained some confidence in paying free kicks. I was then handling games well. I then wanted to umpire two games a day to try and get it right. In the matter of a couple of weeks, I went from totally despising being out there to not being able to get enough umpiring. There is no doubt that the earliest part of my umpiring career was the hardest to get through. Once I got through those early stages I was fine."

Field umpire Matthew Head joined the AFL panel in 2001. At the end of the 2007 season, Matthew had officiated in 124 senior AFL games.

"I know when I umpired my first football game, I was verbally attacked by a woman brandishing an umbrella on the boundary line, and this was before I had actually walked on to the ground to umpire the game. So it was a rude awakening to the sport. Experience is the key to umpiring and yet it takes time to acquire this, which can frustrate you when you are trying to rise through the ranks. Exposure to different situations helps you develop that instinctual reaction when umpiring games.

I was fortunate enough to be coached early on by Kevin Mitchell, who instilled in me the professional aspects of umpiring, on and off the field – the way you dressed and presented yourself at training and on game day. Kevin made sure that I was exposed to as much football as possible, at both junior and senior level, so that I developed the necessary skills to go on and umpire at AFL/VFL level. Kevin had just arrived at Dandenong Juniors after a very successful career as a boundary umpire with the VFL, umpiring in nine Grand Finals, so I always listened intently to what he had to say. There is also no doubt that as a young umpire you watch the more senior guys and learn from them and how they react to certain situations, and that was the case through my career.

I guess when you first start out umpiring, it can feel like everyone knows you are new to the job and are quick to expose or take advantage of that. For example, Players may continually question your decisions, even though you are probably getting most of them right. However, they see it as an opportunity to perhaps pressure you into giving them one their way. They will try to distract you to allow their teammates the opportunity to block, hold or push their opponents.

Players can also intimidate you physically just by their size, and that can be very uncomfortable. Coaches often pick up on the young umpire and pressure him from the sideline, constantly criticising and alerting him to the mistakes he is making. It is important that as a new umpire you try and sell yourself by being positive and strong, blowing the whistle sharply and signalling with conviction."

Bryan Sheehan umpired 363 AFL games at the elite level from 1984-2003, including six Grand Finals, and now coaches and mentors AFL umpires.

I first learned about umpiring at school, before being mentored at the Moorabbin Saints Junior Football League. As a first-year umpire, having a mentor was good because there was always someone to provide support and tips on how to improve and become a better umpire. Having a mentor also helped build my confidence.

Megan Chudleigh, 15, Moorabbin Saints Junior Football League

After three years of mentoring young umpires, I find it very rewarding when they are able to stand on their own two feet and do what you have taught them.

Most of our first-year umpires start in modified rules games, which is another challenge as these rules can sometimes be a little confusing and difficult for a young umpire to comprehend. I enjoy being on the ground with new umpires, as I am able to mentor them on the spot, rather than have to wait until the end of a quarter.

A great highlight for me was that one of the young girls I mentored, Alexandria Anthony, was selected to umpire a half-time grid game at the 2006 AFL Grand Final. That made me extremely proud.

Mentoring is very rewarding and keeps you in touch with the many wonderful young people who have so much to offer.

Adrian Fisher, umpire's advisor, Moorabbin Saints Junior Football League

I have been involved in umpiring for 38 years. The reason of late for my longevity in the game has been the introduction of the mentor program in which I was asked to be a part of last year. I was assigned three young aspiring field umpires taking the whistle for the first time. I quickly found these young men were a delight to work with, and the bond we have established can be attributed to the program.

From day one we all sat down as a team and discussed what our goals were and where the three wanted to go with their umpiring. Not surprisingly, all three expressed a great desire to umpire football to the best of their ability and ultimately at the highest possible level.

This encouraged me to play a fundamental role in their development, not just as umpires, but also as boys turning into men.

Mentoring has proven to be a rewarding experience for me personally, as it keeps me involved in the game. More to the point, the mentor program opens new doors for young umpires to achieve their dreams.

Locky Eccles, Warrnambool and District Football Umpires Association

For a young person – not just as an aspiring umpire – but also as a person establishing him or herself as an individual, the mentor program is a major factor in helping me develop, from a nervous and apprehensive first-year field umpire into a confident, motivated and knowledgeable young adult.

The skills I learned from my mentor are primarily ones which only experience can bring. I have developed skills that will be bound to me for life.

The mentor program has given me the capacity to endure, persist and succeed, but more importantly, to enjoy the work I put in.

Having the support of a mentor on match-day, at training and after hours has allowed me to show my ability in an uncompetitive setting.

It has also helped motivate me to pursue bigger dreams.

Clinton Markwell, Warrnambool



In each umpire’s account of his early days, what things encouraged him to stick at it?

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing an answer to the question.

“Glenn James was my mentor when I first got on the list. We trained from his place pre-season until he retired. The main things he impressed on me were: (1) to make each training session a quality one; (2) incorporate a balanced lifestyle with umpiring, i.e. family and work; (3) watch your diet! He also taught me a lot about tolerance, as being an umpire requires you to have a thick hide and focus on the things that are important to you in your job and ignore the idiots around you. The comments people threw at him as we ran around where we trained really shocked me, but this was 23 years ago!

Field umpire Gavin Dore umpired 302 senior AFL matches including the 1996 AFL Grand Final.

■ We all start somewhere...

Read the following account of another AFL field umpire's first foray into umpiring.

It is a refreshing reminder that no matter what level you eventually achieve as an umpire, you have to start somewhere.

I remember my first game in 1992. It was a Sunday morning at Moore Park in Reservoir for an under-13s practice match between West Preston and Reservoir Colts. I'd missed out on the under-9s and under-10s games, but assured the umpires' coach that I could do an under-13s game. He wasn't so sure, but gave me a go anyway.

I'd been out shopping during the week to get some white boots – not the easiest things to find – and had gone away with some moulded-sole adidas boots that were three or four sizes too big for me. A little cotton wool in the ends would fix that, or that's what I thought! I was dressed in my new white kit and strode out on to the rock-hard ground ready and raring to go.

Actually, I wasn't ready at all. Being the chubby little 14-year-old that I was, I had absolutely NO fitness. I didn't have a clue about where to run or even what a free kick was, but I'd played for a couple of years and figured I could get through on that experience. I'd had no coaching, no instructions. I hadn't even seen a rule book! I don't even want to think about how I bounced the ball.

By 15 minutes into the first quarter, the chaffing on my thighs was so bad that I could hardly walk, let alone run! People were screaming at me and abusing me and my feet were killing me. I shouldn't have worn those brand new boots; runners would have been a much better option, but I thought I had to wear boots. Well, nobody told me otherwise! It was hot, and I was struggling – big time!

I'm still not sure how I made it through that game, but I fronted up again the next weekend and things just went from there.

Field umpire Mathew Nicholls was promoted to the AFL senior panel and umpired his first game in round two of the 2003 season. He had umpired 65 games at the end of the 2007 season.

On the next page you will be given a section to record some of your earliest moments as an umpire in Australian Football. A mentor should be able to empathise with a beginning or learning umpire and share with him or her what it was like as a new umpire.

■ My first crack at it

As a mentor, your ability to understand what emotions, aspirations, fears, challenges and goals a beginning or learning umpire might be confronting will be crucial. The longer you have been umpiring, the further back you will have to go to recall those early days – although everyone will have one or two of those moments that will never leave them.

As an umpire rises through the ranks, he or she becomes a new umpire to some extent at each level of the game and there are new challenges to confront. Before reflecting on one or two of your earliest memories, think back to what Mathew Head, Bryan Sheehan and Mathew Nichols wrote about their early experiences.

Take time now, in the space provided, to recount two or three of your early memories as an umpire that might be useful when working with a beginning or learning umpire. They may not necessarily be from your very first matches, but from your first grand final – as long as the anecdote would have some value to another umpire who wants to learn more about the game and develop his or her skills.



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About Mentoring

Extractions in this section adapted from Australian Sports Commission

– Making Mentors, 2002.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is nothing new – particularly in sport. We have all turned to an experienced friend or colleague for advice, especially when we are learning something new or are facing a new challenge.

Most sportspeople and many coaches and officials would freely admit they have sought the advice of an experienced player, coach or official at some point in their career.

What *is* new, however, is the concept of using a mentor in a more structured way to help guide you through a challenging learning process.

Think back to your earliest games as an umpire. What were some of the immediate challenges you faced? Managing the players? The abuse from the crowd? Aggression? Knowing the rules? Being fit enough to do your job as an umpire? The pressure of getting it right in the heat of the moment? Those times when you got it wrong?

Have a quick think about the immediate challenges you faced as a fledgling umpire, and list them below.



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Mentoring is a highly effective way for new umpires to learn the 'art' of their role and apply theory they may have learnt in the classroom or through independent study. Mentors can bring life to a theoretical concept, demonstrate practical officiating skills, be a sounding board for problems, help you to identify weaknesses or be a source of motivation and a reminder that you are doing a great job!

Mentoring relationships can be formally structured, with mentors assigned to umpires, or they can grow out of a chance encounter with a like-minded umpire and remain very informal. They can be equally as useful for a new umpire just starting out in the sport as for an elite umpire with significant experience. It doesn't matter what form a mentoring relationship takes, as long as the umpire and the mentor see value in the relationship and it helps both to develop and become better at their jobs.

"Mentoring is a process rather than an event; mentors must see themselves as managers of a process rather than passing on knowledge."

Galvin, 1998

Pathways to Mentoring

Every mentoring scenario will take a different shape, as every umpire you will work with will have different skills and attributes and display differing levels of competency. The environment in which the mentoring takes place will also be a significant factor.

Mentoring will take place at all different levels of the game and thus a mentoring approach needs to be adapted to the level at which you are working.

The following pages will outline some pathways to umpiring that a junior umpire might take and the role of the mentor in this process.

■ Colour recognition

It is worth discussing the issue of wearing a different colour with the new umpire you are mentoring. Identifying him or her as a learner can have a range of different responses – much in the same way as placing ‘L’ or ‘P’ plates in a car. The umpires from the Bendigo ACES program have given almost unanimous support for wearing a different colour and emphasise that supporters, coaches and players all know they are learning the role of central umpiring and therefore go a little easier on them.

An older or adult umpire might find this especially the case, as most supporters would expect an adult to be an experienced umpire, not a learner, and feel they are fair game for abuse. Again, evidence out of the Bendigo ACES program suggests adult learners would prefer to wear an identifying coloured shirt.



Qualities of a Mentor

Mentors come in all shapes and sizes, but to be effective they need to have appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. Knowledge may include their understanding of technical umpiring matters such as the rules and how they are interpreted, understanding people and what makes them tick (especially in pressure situations during a game), their understanding of the umpiring process, their political awareness, etc. Skills might include honesty, empathy, planning, goal setting, time/people/process management, and the ability to communicate one-on-one with individuals from a range of backgrounds. Attitudes might relate to the process of mentoring, philosophy towards umpiring, attitudes about the league or group they work within, as well as their general outlook on life.

Some of the qualities mentors should possess are:

- An ability to focus on the umpiring process, rather than on the umpire's performance.
- A willingness to assist another umpire's development and growth and create a positive environment for learning.
- Exemplary communication and feedback skills (especially with constructive criticism of the beginning or learning umpire's performance).
- Up-to-date technical skills and experience as an umpire – preferably they are umpiring themselves or were recently an umpire with substantial experience.
- Trustworthiness and an ability to maintain confidences. The beginning or learning umpire must feel confident he or she can talk openly to the mentor.
- An openness to new ideas. Mentors should learn more about themselves and about umpiring through the process of umpiring. A mentor should never feel awkward about having to clarify his or her understanding of the technical side of umpiring so as to advise the beginning or learning umpire.
- A strong network of umpiring and football contacts.
- Sufficient time and inclination to commit to the mentoring relationship and be easily accessible. A beginning or learning umpire must feel free to phone or email with a question and get a friendly and timely response from their mentor. The beginning or learning umpire should never feel he or she is taking the time of an unwilling mentor.
- Ability to handle conflict situations.

Thinking specifically about those who have had an impact on you as an umpire, in business or in your personal life, try to identify some of the qualities of that person as a mentor. This person will ideally have inspired you to develop a talent and showed an interest in you.

What are the two most significant qualities in this person that you admired and that helped you to learn?



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What are some of the qualities you feel you might be able to tap into to help you operate as a successful mentor to young umpires? Refer to the previous pages, look through the qualities of a mentor and indicate those on this list that you feel are your real strengths. Add any others you feel you possess.

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Are there any obvious weaknesses you feel you have as a mentor? Self-awareness is an important skill as a mentor and helps you focus on improving those aspects of yourself that might make you a better mentor.

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■ **When can mentoring occur?**

Mentoring can occur at any stage of the learning and accreditation process. It can become the key learning vehicle for umpires undertaking accreditation; it can be a component of the umpiring practice requirements, or it can be an informal relationship that is entirely independent of the accreditation process.

Some other opportunities for mentoring include:

- **At training** – A mentor can be invited to attend some of the umpire’s training sessions or he or she may even take part in the training session to give the umpire being mentored a chance to see him or her in action on the training track.
- **At matches** – However, you must always consider the effect that any mentoring will have on the performance of the umpire. Perhaps scheduling some time with a mentor after a game to review the umpire’s performance is the best compromise.

Consider the possible positive or negative impacts on an umpire if you give him or her advice at each break.



- **Video analysis** – It may be difficult to have a mentor attend a practice session or even a match for that matter, particularly in rural areas. A good alternative is to videotape the practice session or match and send the tape to the mentor for comment. It is also important in this scenario to provide the mentor with some background information about the practice session or the match that is the subject of the videotape. It might also be an idea to focus on a particular goal for the session for the mentor to comment on specifically or to focus on. Eg.: “I was really looking at my set kick management in this game – particularly in lining up players shooting for goal. I wanted to make sure my instructions were clear to the player taking the kick as well as to the other players around the mark.” The video process should be a catalyst for discussion and feedback and should ideally have some form of written feedback for the umpire being viewed. A feedback form, such as one on page 38 in this training manual, is a good idea.
- **Planning of sessions/seasons** – Having a mentor comment on plans can help to identify any shortcomings and enable coaches to build better plans for the future. Goal setting as part of the mentoring process will be dealt with later in this training manual.

■ Match-day mentoring

Many of the beginning or learning umpires you will work with as a mentor will be between the ages of 12 and 16, although a beginning or learning umpire may be any age. Similarly, mentoring need not necessarily be only for entry-level umpires. Even AFL umpires require mentors so they can be at their best.

When undertaking your mentor’s role on match-day, a structured approach is vital. On the following page is a method for coaching taken from Cricket Australia’s publication, *Have a Go Handbook*.

■ The S.P.I.R. Method

When teaching a new skill to an umpire, the S.P.I.R. method offers an approach that may be adopted by the mentor. It has been proven to be an effective way to assist children learn and develop new skills.

Take some time and fill in your own examples in the right-hand column.

SHOW (demonstrate)

- Name the skill you will be focusing on with the umpire.
- Show how to execute the entire skill.
- While making instructional points to the umpire, show them again.
- Make sure you try to “keep it simple” and give them as few points as possible – perhaps keeping it at under three.
- Give them a chance to ask questions.
- Finally demonstrate one more time, asking the umpire to again watch closely.

EXAMPLES

- Hand shake
- Building rapport and respect
- Positive body language

PRACTISE

- Get the umpire to practise the new skill immediately.
- Children will copy what they have been shown.
- Get them to demonstrate the whole skill first.
- If required, break the skill into individual parts.

INSTRUCT (or correct errors)

- Observe the umpire either during practice or during a match.
- Repeat the key point (if this is done during a match, perhaps wait until a quarter break).
- Provide further instruction if required.

REWARD

- Praise good effort as well as good results. Remember that while learning, the beginning or learning umpire will not always get it right. Look at ways of pulling positives out of the effort he or she has shown.
- Show pleasure in their efforts. This will come naturally, no doubt, as you see the impact you are having as a mentor, but always keep this as an emphasis.
- If you are working with a range of umpires, make sure you are recognising them all. Sometimes we find it easy to forget elite performers, or we struggle with those who are having real difficulties. Make sure these umpires are always recognised.

ENTRY-POINT INTO UMPIRING

FIRST STEPS

Junior umpire runs the boundary to get a feel for the game.

SECOND STEPS

Junior umpire moves to field umpiring under guidance of a mentor.

STEP ONE

Junior umpire shadows mentor. Mentor takes time to talk the junior umpire through the game.

Alternate entry points

Umpire enters as an ex-player.

Umpire bypasses boundary umpiring and goes straight into field umpiring.

Parent involved with child's team moves into umpiring.

STEP TWO

Junior umpire calls specific decisions. For example, junior umpire calls only the marks, mentor makes other decisions.

STEP THREE

Junior umpires parts of the game, alternating with mentor who continues giving support.

WHEN READY

Junior umpire takes control of full game with mentor observing from the boundary and providing support during and after the game.



■ A 'staged' approach to mentoring

Each experience with a 'learner' umpire will be different. As a result taking a 'staged' approach will allow you to pace the types to experiences and methods you will use to develop an umpire that you are mentoring. Some times an umpire may advance through one or more stages and then revert back depending on the level of competence and the standard of match.

Stage 1 – The first stage involves the learner umpire 'shadowing' you. This gives them a chance to be out there seeing and experiencing first hand the game from the umpires perspective. From time to time you should make comments that provide additional insights into the role, skills and responsibilities of an umpire during the match.

Breaks in play and intervals between quarters are a time when you should encourage the learner to ask questions and explain to you what they are 'picking up' in terms of the basic skills of umpiring including communication, positioning, decision making, signals and cooperation with players, officials and other umpires.

Stage 2 – Providing the umpire with practical match experience is the key to the next stage. Allowing the umpire to do things like – blow the whistle and call in the captains, toss the coin, throw the ball up after a goal, give an all clear after a score or pay a mark are some of the ways in which the umpire can develop confidence, communication and decision making skills. Many of the 'in game' skills are best done during the middle of a quarter, and you can use your judgement on which and how many that you also introduce the concept of the 'over rule' which is done in a supportive and corrective way so the game is umpire fairly and the learner umpire and get immediate feedback on what they are doing well or can improve upon.



MODEL A

STEP ONE

Shadow the mentor on the ground.

GAME TWO

Take only specific decisions in the game.

GAME THREE

Umpire all decisions in parts of the game.

GAME FOUR

Umpire whole quarters, building up to a whole match.

GAME FIVE

Umpire whole quarters, building up to a whole match.

GAME SIX

Umpire whole quarters, building up to a whole match.

GAME SEVEN

Progress to higher grade competition.

Be aware that the learner umpire is trying to process many things, often for the first time, so when and how you provide feedback and ask questions is important. Clear breaks in play (after a goal) and the time between quarters are good examples.

Stage 3 – As you gain a greater understanding of the learner umpires abilities you can begin to provide them with greater exposure to periods of the match where they are in control. You may even consider them starting quarters, and completing paperwork. At any time you may utilise strategies described in earlier stages to support the umpires development.

Stage 4 – By this stage the umpire is controlling extensive periods of the match. You may even be observing from the sidelines. Again there is flexibility in your approach. An example of this may be when an umpire advances to a higher standard or experiences a challenging period during a match. At any time you may use strategies from earlier stages to help support and encourage the umpires development.

MODEL B

GAME ONE

Shadow the mentor during first quarter.

GAME ONE

Take control of second quarter in the game.

GAME ONE

Take control of the final quarter.

GAME TWO

Move to one-umpire system and umpire whole match.

GAME THREE

Progress to higher grade competition.

■ Characteristics of beginning umpires

On the previous two pages, there are two potential pathways for a mentor umpire. Review the two models and list the characteristics you would be looking for when adopting either model. List also the characteristics of the mentor umpire you would be looking for when following either model.

Model A approach – gradual development of the learning umpire

The characteristics I would be observing to consider a gradual development plan with a learning umpire are:



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Model B approach – fast-tracking the learning umpire

The characteristics I would ideally be observing to consider fast-tracking a learning umpire are:

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■ Focus for first season as a field umpire

The speed at which the new umpire progresses will vary from individual to individual and every mentor will need to exercise his or her judgement about this process. The stage at which the new umpire is ready to take a full game might come very quickly or it might take many games.

This process is intended to be tailored by you as the mentor. Use your discretion and apply the process to be outlined in the way you feel best fits the new umpire. Keep in mind their age, maturity, experience and personality.

As a starting point, it is a good idea to get to know them personally so they feel comfortable with you. On page 53 (Appendix C) there is a simple form you may use to help build this rapport. It will also be a useful resource as you learn more about the umpire. It will be especially useful if you are mentoring a range of umpires. Perhaps you might be working with four at one time. A ratio of 1:4 is generally regarded as appropriate. If you take on more than this, you might find the workload too onerous.

Providing match feedback

Some important advice on communication

Communicating with children or teenagers

As much of your role as a mentor will require you to communicate with teenagers, it is appropriate to examine some of the more important aspects of this. We will examine some of the more general rules about communication – those that apply to all situations, those that apply to children and those that apply to adults. The following section should help shape the way you communicate with the beginning or learning umpire, during the match and after matches or at training, both verbally and in writing. Remember, communication is a skill and, like all other skills, requires practise and reflection to improve.

Some tips about communicating with children and teenagers:

- Draw young people out to speak about the things on their minds. If the person you are mentoring seems to be a little upset about a particular match or aspect of a match, work on getting him or her to verbalise what is going through his or her head.
- You can 'prime the pump' by talking with them about their favourite foods, toys, movies, video games, etc. Basically, this means starting with something a little more informal, then moving on to the aspect of the game or performance you wish to address.
- Verbally reflect on the emotions of a young person before giving in to your need to teach him or her something. You can do this by paraphrasing – repeating what they have said, but in your own words – to ensure you have got the message straight.
- Adults are constantly making the error of educating young people when that person expresses pain. "I had an absolute shocker today – I don't think I can make it as an umpire" is often met with, "You did fine" and the child may be left to feel all alone with what could become a problem for them. It is important to deal with the negative feelings of poor performance, because he or she will have bad days even if they make it to the top.
- Lower yourself physically to a young person's level by sitting down, bending down or sitting on the floor.
- It may have been months since any adult has joined the young person on his or her own level. Sit with them on the bench after a game rather than stand over them and talk down to them.
- Tell the young umpire anecdotes about your past and/or present experience as an umpire.

- You can make up the stories, but it is preferable to draw them from your own experience, especially as a new umpire. This manual will be a great resource for you in the types of anecdotes to share with a developing umpire. There are anecdotes from a range of umpires at a range of levels, but perhaps the most important and useful ones will be those from your own experience. The ones you have recounted earlier in this manual will be useful in the right circumstances!
- Act on the promises that you make the beginning or learning umpire.

Children and teenagers are usually more hurt than adults by broken promises. Ironically, many people treat their promises to children and teenagers as less important than their promises to adults. Remember, as a mentor, you need to follow up with the umpire you are mentoring. If this means you can't promise time, then don't. In your own umpiring network, you may well have other people you can refer the beginning or learning umpire to for extra support.

- Master the art of Socratic questioning. This means that instead of expressing facts or lecturing, you ask a question to stimulate the young person's own reasoning process. Socratic questioning opens up a place in a person's mind for the answer to be remembered. For example, you could ask, "How do you think you could have managed that set kick in front of goal a bit better?" instead of telling the umpire what to do.

Professor Albert Mehrabian has pioneered the understanding of communications since the 1960s. He received his Ph.D. from Clark University in the US and in 1964 started an extended career of teaching and research at the University of California, Los Angeles. He devotes his time to research, writing and consulting as Professor Emeritus of Psychology, UCLA.

Aside from his many and various other fascinating works, Mehrabian established this classic statistic for the effectiveness of spoken communications:

- 7 per cent of meaning is in the words that are spoken.
- 38 per cent of meaning is paralinguistic (the way that the words are said).
- 55 per cent of meaning is in facial expression.

Mehrabian's model has become one of the most widely referenced statistics in communications. The model is particularly useful in illustrating the importance of considering factors other than words alone when trying to convey (as the speaker) or interpret (as the listener) meaning. Style, expression, tone, facial expression and body language account for 93 per cent of meaning. Keep this in mind when you are communicating with an umpire over the phone or even via email, which we will address soon.

The understanding of how to convey (when speaking) and interpret (when listening) meaning is essential for effective communication, management and relationships, especially in a mentoring relationship which, by nature, needs to be built on trust and clear, open and effective communication.

While Mehrabian's research was for spoken communications, these statistics also give a strong indication to the effectiveness or otherwise of written (memo, email, etc) and telephone communications, which are not nearly so reliable and effective as generally believed.

Telephone communication can convey words and the way the words are said, but no facial expression, which explains why telephone communications are not suitable for sensitive or emotional issues or for difficult or detailed discussions.

The Mehrabian statistics also suggest that typical video-conferencing communications are not nearly as reliable as face-to-face communications, because of the intermittent transfer of images, which is, of course, incapable of conveying accurate non-verbal signals.

■ Body language messages – exercise

Look at the following two photographs of someone communicating over the phone.



What do the facial expressions suggest about the communication that may not be conveyed because it is a phone conversation?



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Remember that the umpire you are mentoring may not have much support around him or her. This is especially likely to be the case if the umpire is from a regional area. Make sure you provide plenty of support and encouragement and help them find the information and expertise they need to learn. It can also be helpful to set some ground rules at the start of the relationship about how and when you will communicate.

Don't forget that learning is a social activity. There is no harm in having some fun along the way by injecting appropriate personal experiences. It would be fair to say that if the process wasn't fun, at least for some part, the umpire may feel disinclined to continue with the relationship. Remember to follow the ground rules mentioned in this section when injecting some humour.

A picture tells a thousand words. Never underestimate the value of a videotape when mentoring at a distance. Umpiring is a practical activity and, as a mentor, you will be far more effective if you can actually see the umpire in action. Not everyone has a video camera, but many people can get access to one given enough time – so recommend early in your relationship that this may be very beneficial. Always ensure that you respect the privacy of the umpire and always return the videotape to them when you have finished with it. If you consider using it as a coaching tool with another umpire, always get the permission of the umpire first.

Email tends to be quite informal.

Write your emails as if you were speaking directly to the umpire. If the umpire sends you an email and you don't have time to reply immediately, try to acknowledge its receipt within 24 hours. This gives the umpire an indication of when you will be able to address the email. Don't leave it too long, as the implications are that you are not overly interested in your role as a mentor or in him or her as an umpire.

■ Feedback during and after the game

Providing feedback during the game clearly makes up a large part of your role as a mentor, particularly during the 'run-with' phase of the umpire's development. You will be able to talk to him or her during the game and give immediate guidance and feedback.

Another crucial aspect will be providing written feedback after their games. This is vital early on in the development of a new umpire. You will have to take some time to consider the nature of how you approach this.

A good rule of thumb is to start informally with beginning or learning umpires. Talk to them to gauge their response to the game they have just been involved in. If they are negative, take time to work on improving their demeanour before engaging in the written feedback process. Think back to the earlier part of this manual and use one or two anecdotes to lift the spirits of the young umpire after a bad game.

When you get to writing feedback for the young umpire, always try to start with positives. Then, think of the next stage as part of a goal-setting process. Look at areas to improve and set some realistic but achievable goals for the umpire and give advice as to what they need to do to achieve them.

For example:

Position was excellent. Your fitness and speed allowed you to be in the best position to make the right call most of the time. Next game, focus on you positioning when a player is having a shot on goal. Make sure you are close enough to enforce the protected space around the player. Have a look at footage of an AFL game and watch how the umpire handled a set kick in front of goal – especially when there are defenders in close proximity to the player taking the kick.

As a mentor, you can advise the learning umpire to focus on the following aspects of feedback:

- Value feedback.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Gain confidence from strengths.
- Identify strategies for improving weaknesses.
- Train effectively and/or mentally rehearse correct procedures.

*The form on the following page is adapted from the AFL Umpires' Logbook
© Australian Football League 2002.*

Match report and feedback form

This will form a significant component of your role as a mentor

Match report		
Umpire's name:		
Match No.:	Date:	
Match: vs	Venue:	
Grade	Conditions:	
Co-umpires	Field:	
	Boundary:	
	Goal:	
Mentor's name		
Umpire's coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Umpire observer
		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ump D.O.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Senior umpire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football club rep
		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Performance feedback		
DISCIPLINE: FIELD/BOUNDARY/GOAL UMPIRE		
<i>(Delete disciplines not applicable)</i>		
Rating: NA Not applicable for this discipline NI Needs improvement at this stage		
S Satisfactory VG Very good E Excellent		
SKILLS	MATCH MANAGEMENT	
Indications	Communication	
Observation	Composure	
Positioning	Control	
Running	Decision-making	
Time on/off	Presentation	
Whistle	Set plays	
Bouncing	Team work	
Throw-ins		
Flag-waving		

continued on the following page

Strengths for the game:

1

2

3

Detailed comments:

Areas to work on:

1

2

3

Detailed comments:

Actions to improve umpiring performance:

Signed:

Feedback exercise – What's your decision?

Following is a match feedback form for an umpire who has just run his/her third game. The match was run using the two-umpire system with the mentor being the second umpire. This is the written feedback the mentor has given the mentor umpire. You will be asked to read over the feedback and comment on its value for the beginning or learning umpire.

Match report		
Umpire's name: Billy RODGERS		
Match No.: n/a	Date: 12/04/04	
Match: Creswick vs Maryborough	Venue: Ballarat Oval	
Grade u13	Conditions: Wet, very windy and very cold	
Co-umpires	Field: Roger Moore	
	Boundary: George Lazenbury	
	Goal: Pierce Brosnan	
Mentor's name Roger Moore		
Umpire's coach <input type="checkbox"/>	Umpire observer <input type="checkbox"/>	Ump D.O <input type="checkbox"/>
Senior umpire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Football club rep <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Performance Feedback		
DISCIPLINE: FIELD/BOUNDARY/GOAL UMPIRE		
<i>(Delete disciplines not applicable)</i>		
Rating: NA Not applicable for this discipline NI Needs improvement at this stage		
S Satisfactory VG Very Good E Excellent		
SKILLS		MATCH MANAGEMENT
Indications NI	Communication NI	
Observation NI	Composure NI	
Positioning NI	Control NI	
Running S	Decision-making S	
Time on/off S	Presentation VG	
Whistle NI	Set plays S	
Bouncing NA	Team work NI	
Throw-ins NA		
Flag-waving NA		

Positives for the game:

- 1 Your presentation on the ground was very professional.
- 2 Your running was good – pretty fit.
- 3 You made a couple of good decisions.

Detailed comments:

Keep up the fitness work, it's got you running well. When you walk out on to the ground, your uniform is excellent which helps to create a good impression.

A few of your decisions, especially the one in the last quarter for in the back in front of Creswick's goals, were very good.

Areas to work on:

- 1 Communication, composure and control of the match.
- 2 Your signalling still needs work.
- 3 Your observation and positioning still require work.

Detailed comments:

Once or twice you got flustered by players' comments and probably some comments coming from the boundary line. You will have to improve this. You are pretty fit, but are missing the best positions to run into, this will have to be something you work on. Be aware that making the right signals is not only important to let the players know what's going on, but also lets the coaches and supporters know what you are doing. This will help deal with some of the comments that threw you during the game.

Actions to improve umpiring performance:

- Learn the signals off by heart.
- Practise running to position.
- Practise how you talk to the players.

Signed: Roger Moore

What aspects of the written feedback does the mentor handle well?



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If you were the mentor, which aspects of the feedback would you change and why?

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What value will the beginning or learning umpire get out of the feedback as it is currently written?

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Tips for mentoring at a distance

Extract adapted from Australian Sports Commission – Making Mentors, 2002.

While the principles of good communication still apply when mentoring at a distance, there are unique issues that need to be considered when you cannot meet the young umpire face-to-face.

You may have little knowledge of the umpire and his or her strengths or weaknesses. Start by taking time to get to know them better – get them to tell you about themselves. Ask them what they feel are their strengths and weaknesses and what they would like to work on as an umpire.

Make sure you tell them a little about yourself as well. You might even like to send them a video of yourself coaching or umpiring so they can observe your style and approach. You might have started the process by doing this – giving the umpire something he or she can look at and reflect on.

Remember that you (and the umpire) will have no body language to help you understand the meaning of the message you are imparting. We rely heavily on body language to help us decipher the meaning of face-to-face communication. When mentoring at a distance, you will not have the aid of these extra cues and the implied meaning they add to communication. Therefore, you should start conservatively (or at least until you know the umpire better) in your communication. Don't be the first to use humour, as humour can be very culturally specific and may cause confusion or offence. Instead, listen for the style or humour used by the umpire and try to mirror that.

Bendigo ACES program

Much guidance and advice in putting this training manual together has been provided by umpiring groups around Australia who run their own mentoring programs. The Bendigo Football League ACES program is one such program.

As you take the next steps in actively engaging in the mentoring program, please take time to read and consider the reflections of three ACES umpires from the Bendigo league.

James McEwan

James was a first-year umpire and successfully progressed to under-18 matches.

What have been the benefits of having an experienced umpire as your mentor?

When umpiring, I was a lot more confident having an experienced umpire as my mentor. I knew that if I made a mistake for any reason that he would be there to overrule me if that's the case. Also, with an experienced umpire officiating with you, if there is a player who wants to challenge any of your decisions and you are not exactly sure if you made the right decision, then the mentor will be able to back you up and make you confident with the decision that you made.

Do you think other new umpires should use a mentor and, if so, why?

I believe that new umpires should use a mentor because their progress as a field umpire will be greatly quickened up as they will be able to learn a lot from the mentor and aren't thrown in the deep end at the start of their careers.

Do you have anything else you think is important about learning to be an umpire that you would like to comment on?

I believe that having a mentor available for people to start central umpiring with means that there will be a lot more people keen and eager to take up umpiring. I believe a lot of people consider it, but decide not to do it as they do not have the confidence to go out there and do it by themselves. However, having a mentor there to guide them through it, I think they might give it a crack and find it quite enjoyable, like I have.

Victoria Mitchell

Victoria was a first-year and successfully navigated the domain of umpiring boys' football. Victoria was 16 for the larger part of the season. She has ambitions to umpire under-18 games in the Bendigo league. Victoria had virtually no experience with Australian Football before starting the ACES program. Her background was in refereeing basketball.

What have been the benefits of having an experienced umpire as your mentor?

You get to learn from lots of different experienced umpires, their views, what to call and not to call, what angles to run, and also you're not put out there in the centre by yourself straight away. You've got someone there to help and guide you.

Do you think other new umpires should use a mentor and, if so, why?

Yes, I think other new umpires should use a mentor because, so far as I know, none of our new ACES umpires had a bad experience and we all really want to continue.

Do you have anything else you think is important about learning to be an umpire that you would like to comment on?

No, just stay focused and work at it.

Patrick Gallagher

Patrick, 18, was a first-year umpire in 2003.

What have been the benefits of having an experienced umpire as your mentor?

Increased confidence in yourself and about what you're doing is right. A sense of security is also achieved via having an experienced umpire with you.

Do you think other new umpires should use a mentor and, if so, why?

I think other new umpires should use a mentor because it helps newer umpires gain a sense of control, a clearer understanding of the rules and delivers positive feedback to them outlining what they are doing well, and what they need to do and work on to improve their skills.

Do you have anything else you think is important about learning to be an umpire that you would like to comment on?

A sense of respect is important when learning to be an umpire and is another benefit of being part of the ACES program.

Testimonials from mentors

Following are the testimonials of three mentors who have been central to the development of mentoring programs in Victoria and New South Wales.

Andrew Whatley – Bendigo ACES program

The mentoring program I have been involved in with the Bendigo Umpires' Association has had benefits not only to those 'aspiring' umpires but also to my satisfaction levels as an umpire. To work with quality young people and, in some cases, not so young people who that have a goal in mind, and to see them develop skills, knowledge and confidence gives me enormous satisfaction. I have gained much from being a mentor and I would strongly recommend anyone with a passion and commitment to the future of umpiring to become involved in a mentor role.

Michael Hockley – Bendigo ACES program

I have gained a great deal out of mentoring young and older people in umpiring. Having umpired approximately 400 games and being in my mid-50s, I was beginning to think that there was not much more for me to do in umpiring until we developed the ACES program which has given me a new lease of life in the sport. It is a great opportunity to pass on umpiring knowledge to other people and still be involved in the game, and I feel I could lose interest if I was not actively involved on the ground. I believe this program adds a great deal to the development of umpiring because we are working with a very keen and impressionable group of people and one of the reasons that we lose many young people is that they cop a good deal of abuse which they can't handle on their own. However, with a mentor by their side they have someone to help them through it and encourage them to keep going and not take any notice. These people are like sponges – they soak up all the knowledge and endeavour to put in practice what they are learning. It is encouraging to watch their development and will be even better to see them reach their potential. To be a good mentor of umpires, you have to sacrifice your own aspirations so that a young person can achieve theirs.

Your own personal goals

As a way of tying this program together and giving you a continued focus for the future, write down some of your own reasons for starting your role as a mentor and some of the things you hope to achieve as a mentor in years to come.



A series of horizontal dotted lines provided for writing personal goals and reasons for starting as a mentor. The lines are arranged in two main sections: the first section consists of 10 lines, and the second section consists of 10 lines, with a small gap between the two sections.

Questions for the Learning Umpire

The mentor should have the learning umpire complete this form after one season.

1. Did you receive your umpire pack? Do you think it was worth receiving?
Would you recommend any other items?

2. What are the main things you feel you have learned in the mentoring relationship you have had this season?

3. Do you feel you had enough contact with your mentor?
If not, what would you have preferred to have happened?

4. Do you think you will continue in umpiring?
If so, what would you like to achieve as an Australian Football umpire?

5. Would you recommend the mentor program to others?
If so, have you mentioned the program to anyone you feel might be interested?

Appendices

Appendix A – (THHGLE21B) Provide mentoring support to business colleagues

Description

This unit deals with the skills and knowledge required to act as a business mentor to other individuals in the industry or workplace. This role is carried out by those with significant workplace experience.

Elements of competency and performance criteria

Establish a relationship with the person being mentored

- 1.1 Use effective communication styles to develop trust, confidence and rapport.
- 1.2 Make agreements on how the mentoring relationship will be conducted including:
 - The amount of time involved for both parties.
 - Confidentiality of information.
 - Scope of issues to be covered.
- 1.3 Discuss and clarify expectations and goals.

Offer mentoring support

- 2.1 Assist to identify and evaluate options to achieve agreed goals.
- 2.2 Share personal experiences and knowledge to assist in progress towards agreed goals.
- 2.3 Encourage the person to make decisions and take responsibility for the courses of action or solutions under consideration.
- 2.4 Provide supportive advice and assistance in a manner which allows the person to retain responsibility for achievement of his or her own goals.
- 2.5 Recognise and openly discuss changes in the mentoring relationship.
- 2.6 Make adjustments to the relationship to take account of the needs of both parties.

Appendix B – Umpire match-day feedback

(taken from Umpires' Logbook, © 2002 Australian Football League)


Match report			
Umpire's name:			
Match no.:		Date:	
Match: vs		Venue:	
Grade		Conditions:	
Co-umpires	Field:		
	Boundary:		
	Goal:		
Mentor's name			
Umpire's coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	Umpire observer	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Ump D.O	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior umpire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football club rep	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance feedback			
DISCIPLINE: FIELD//BOUNDARY/GOAL UMPIRE			
<i>(Delete disciplines not applicable)</i>			
Rating: NA Not applicable for this discipline NI Needs improvement at this stage			
S Satisfactory VG Very good E Excellent			
SKILLS		MATCH MANAGEMENT	
Indications		Communication	
Observation		Composure	
Positioning		Control	
Running		Decision-making	
Time-on/off		Presentation	
Whistle		Set plays	
Bouncing		Team work	
Throw-ins			
Flag-waving			

Positives for the game	
1	
2	
3	
Detailed comment	
Areas to work on:	
1	
2	
3	
Detailed comments:	
Actions to improve umpiring performance:	
Signed:	

Appendix C – Umpire mentor program registration form

This form should be filled in at your first meeting with the learning umpire.

A copy should then be sent to the trainer who ran your mentor training workshop.

Initial meeting with mentor																										
Umpire name and age:																										
Address:																										
Email address:																										
Shirt size:																										
Mentor:																										
Date:																										
<p>Privacy: your information will be provided to your local umpiring association so that from time to time it may contact you for umpiring-related issues. Your information will not be provided to any other third parties without your consent. Please indicate your consent for these details to be passed on to your local umpiring association below:</p>																										
I give my consent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Signature 																								
<p>General notes: What are the aspirations of the new umpire? What does he/she hope to achieve in umpiring?</p>																										
Underpinning Knowledge/experience	<p>Does the new umpire understand these elements of umpiring?</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y</th> <th>N</th> <th></th> <th>Y</th> <th>N</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Decision-making</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Positioning</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Communication</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Bouncing/throwing-up</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Signalling</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Set kick control</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Y	N		Y	N		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Positioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bouncing/throwing-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Signalling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set kick control
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Overall experience with umpiring																										
<input type="checkbox"/> Very good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal	<input type="checkbox"/> None																							
Notes for mentor reference																										
Initial observation of the new umpire																										
Focus for mentoring this umpire. Are there specific areas you feel will be the main focus with this umpire?																										
Mentor's signature																										
Umpire's signature																										

** Note for mentor: please remember to copy this form once completed and return to the appropriate person indicated in your training seminar.

Appendix D – Making the transition

How long does the umpire wear the green shirt?

At least one year in each new discipline – this allows an extended period of support for the umpire. It also ensures that the green shirt remains visible for the whole season and helps minimise coaches, parents, supporters and players thinking that once an umpire removes the green shirt, he or she is 'fair game' for criticism or abuse.

You may even consider an umpire staying in the green shirt for his or her second season and beyond as inexperienced umpires get going again or progress to higher and more challenging levels of football.

Should green shirts be worn during finals?

Most definitely. This is when the important message conveyed by the learning umpires can be highlighted to the biggest audiences of the season. It is also when clubs and crowds can assume a win at all costs attitude, with the umpire often vulnerable to criticism and abuse.

Leagues and umpiring groups should be proud of green shirt umpires being appointed to officiate in finals and recognising that umpire development is no different to player development in terms of providing a safe and supportive environment.

Can an umpire change back to wearing his or her green shirt?

They sure can. Any time an umpire feels that they need support and encouragement, wearing the green shirt can afford them that security. This may be considered when an umpire moves up to a higher grade of football, and definitely when he or she moves to a new discipline.

AFL umpire development awards

At the end of each year, green shirt umpires and their mentors are formally recognised at functions held in each state and territory. Families, friends and umpiring groups are also invited to attend. Attendances of more than 700 are not unusual at these events.

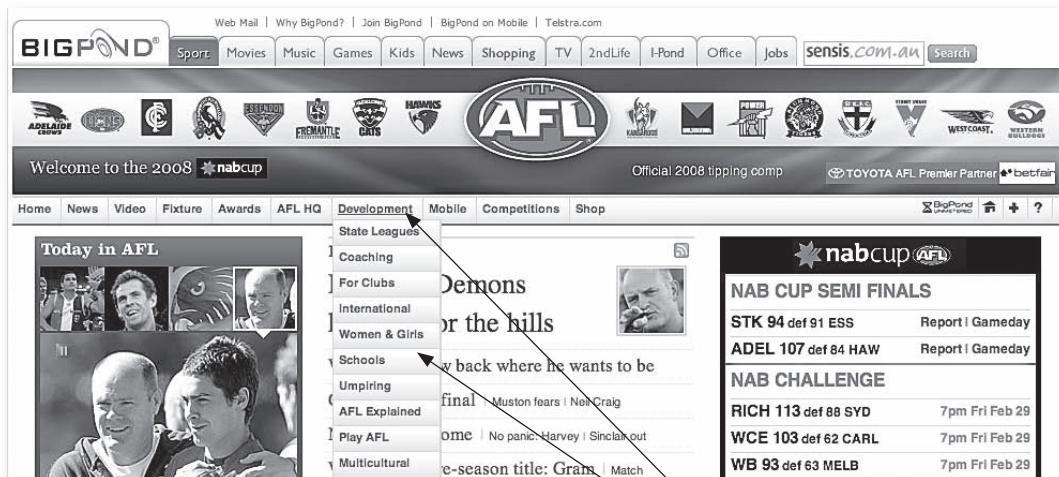
The aim of the functions is celebrate the important contribution community mentors make to umpiring development and to acknowledge the involvement and commitment of the green shirt umpires.

The presentation of a small gift of thanks is made to both the mentors and umpires during the graduation-style ceremony.

Appendix E – Umpiring on the web

The AFL website, afl.com.au, has a section dedicated to umpiring which mentors and the learning umpire should be aware of. It is an excellent resource for all umpires and is regularly updated with more content.

The link for the umpiring section can be found on the homepage for the AFL under the 'Development' link.



LINK TO UMPIRING SECTION

You will find this on the AFL homepage under the Game Development section.

On the umpiring page, there are a range of useful resources and interesting information about umpiring. Mentors should have a look at the page and refer the umpires they are mentoring to this section.

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Umpiring News

Next 5 ▶

One on one with Jeff: part one
AFL Umpires Manager Jeff Gieschen speaks exclusively to afl.com.au
Friday, February 29, 2008 - 5:27 PM

Umps hit the road
North Qld umpires get a taste of the big league from elite AFL officials
Friday, February 29, 2008 - 12:49 PM

NAB Cup Umpire Appointments - Round 3
Umpire appointments for round three of the NAB Cup and round two of the NAB Challenge.
Friday, February 29, 2008 - 7:00 AM

Laws of Australian Football DVD
The 2008 Laws of Australian Football DVD has been released and is available for download.
Friday, February 29, 2008 - 11:20 AM

Adelaide Hills whistle-stop tour
AFL Umpire Roadshows get underway.
Thursday, February 28, 2008 - 9:51 AM

AFL Umpires Profiles
For information about AFL Umpires click here

Resources
Manuals, workbooks and resources and references for umpiring development, coaching and training.
...more

Development Quick Links

- ▶ AFL Clubs
- ▶ Influence of Aboriginal Players
- ▶ AFL Explained
- ▶ Events
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Laws Of The Game

Information relating to the Laws of Australian Football



umpire 

