

Cooperating with Goal Umpires

Boundary Umpires

The boundary umpire is the sole judge of when the ball is out of bounds, except when the field umpire awards a mark before the ball passes completely outside the boundary line or awards a free kick, or a goal umpire over-rules the boundary umpire in relation to a score or when the ball hits or goes directly over the behind post (in which case the goal umpire directs the boundary umpire that the ball is out of bounds).

The goal umpire may over-rule the boundary umpire if he considers that the ball has passed across the goal or behind lines and the boundary umpire signals the ball out of bounds, or the goal umpire considers that the ball has not passed across the goal or behind lines and the boundary umpire is of the opinion that it has.

If the ball goes outside the boundary line near the behind post and the goal umpire is in a better position to see than the boundary umpires and/or the boundary umpire is looking to the goal umpire for assistance, the goal umpire is required to assist the boundary umpire by indicating as follows:

1. (Goal Umpire Assists) Ball Out of Bounds on Full - when the goal umpire is to give an out of bounds on the full indication they will face the boundary umpire and extend their outside arm straight and level with the shoulder. If the ball was touched before going out on the full, the goal umpire will extend their outside arm straight up and tap the back of their fist three times.
2. (Goal Umpire Directs) Ball Hits Behind Post on Full - when the ball hits the behind post on the full or goes directly over the behind post from a kick without having been touched by a player, the goal umpire shall give the out of bounds on the full indication, as per the previous example, until acknowledged by the boundary umpire. The goal umpire will then hit the behind post three times if the ball hit the post.
3. (Goal Umpire Assists) Ball Out of Bounds - having touched the ground - when the goal umpire is to give an out of bounds indication, they will face the boundary umpire and extend their outside arm straight up.
4. (Goal Umpire Directs) Ball Hits Behind Post - having first touched the ground or being touched by a player - when the ball hits or goes over the behind post after first having touched the ground or having been touched by a player, the goal umpire shall give the out of bounds indication, as per the previous example, until acknowledged by the boundary umpire. The goal umpire will then hit the behind post three times if the ball hit the behind post.

Whilst these indications are to assist the boundary umpire, the decision is still the boundary umpire's responsibility. However, when caught behind play or out of position, they should look to the goal umpire for assistance.

In instances where the boundary umpire has been positioned at the behind post, they must wait until the goal umpire has given their decision before moving away from the behind post.

When the boundary umpire is positioned at the behind post and the ball hits the behind post on the full, the boundary umpire will tap the post three times after signalling out of bounds.

Where the goal umpire is giving assistance regarding normal out of bounds signal (no hitting of the behind post) they are not to continue giving signal until acknowledged. If the boundary umpire does not see the signal, or chooses to ignore it, the goal umpire is to resume normal position and if necessary indicate and record any subsequent score.

When the ball passes across the goal or behind line resulting in a behind, and the boundary umpires are not by the behind posts, the goal umpire will clearly tap their chest three times. This will indicate to the boundary umpires that if the goal umpire receives an "all clear" from the field umpire, they will be signalling a behind, therefore informing the boundary umpires that they do not have to run to the goal area to pick up the ball.

Field Umpires

Where a mark is taken on or just before the goal line, the goal umpire shall immediately place his hands behind his back and quickly back away, keeping his eyes on the ball at all times.

Where a mark is taken just behind the goal line, the goal umpire shall step up to the line and look to the field umpire for an all clear. If all clear is not immediately given, the goal umpire is to run out to the field umpire and seek all clear, provided a free kick has not been awarded to a defender prior to or at the same time as the score.

If the field umpire awards a free kick or a 50 metre penalty to a forward concurrent with their being a score (e.g. a player is downed after kicking but the ball goes through for a score), then:

1. If the score is a goal, the goal umpire will immediately step up to the goal or behind line seeking the "all clear" from the field umpire. If there is a delay in receiving the "all clear" (e.g. because the field umpire is attending an incident arising from the awarding of a free kick), the goal umpire is to run towards the field umpire to inform them that a goal has been scored. In this case, the field umpire will give the "all clear" at the spot where the two umpires meet and the goal umpire will run backwards to the goal line to give the indication for a goal.
2. If the score is a behind, the goal umpire will clearly tap his chest in the usual manner for a behind, or give the touched signal, or the hit the post signal. Seeing this, the field umpire will run directly to the correct position to control the awarding of the free kick. If the forward declines the free kick in favour of a behind being registered, the field umpire will then give the "all clear" while moving towards the goal umpire from the spot where the free kick would have been taken. Whilst this is a very rare event, but the goal umpire should nevertheless be alert for the possibility of it happening.

If there is any doubt in the field umpire's mind about whether a goal or behind has been scored, he will immediately run to the goal umpire to clarify the situation. In this case, the goal umpire should run to meet the field umpire as soon as he/she realises that the field umpire wishes to confer with them.

When the field umpire is 100% sure the ball has hit the goal post, he will give all clear whilst tapping one forearm with his other hand three times. If the field umpire gives this signal and it appears obviously incorrect (out of context) the goal umpire is to run out and talk to the field umpire before making a decision.

When the field umpire sees the ball go out of bounds close to the behind post and the boundary umpire is caught out of position, in order to assist the field umpire will signal to the goal umpire by extending his arm with clenched fist at a 45 degree angle to his body. The goal umpire then makes the appropriate signal to the boundary umpire who will signal out of bounds.

Consultation Process

Any umpire can commence the consultation process. However, the field umpire will control the process. This process is commenced if for any reason there is uncertainty about a decision or course of action that may be required and may involve a boundary or goal umpire.

From a goal umpiring perspective it will in most instances be in relation to the value of a scoring decision or if in fact there is a scoring decision. Regardless of the purpose of the consultation an umpire should not get involved if they cannot add value to the process.

If for example there is a scramble for the ball on the line and the ball crosses the line with the goal umpire uncited then a consultation will be initiated to determine the result and the boundary umpire might have been in a better position then they would assist in the consultation process. If in this situation a decision cannot be reached then the lesser result would be awarded, in this case it would result in a behind.

These tips have been provided by Nick Abbate (QAFL - Goal Umpires Coach). Local rules and regulations should take precedence over any specific advice provided.