

AFL NSW ACT

Ground Manager Training & Information Webinar



Introduction and Housekeeping

- Welcome and thanks for attending
- Please keep your microphones muted unless called to participate
- Open your chat window and type in your questions, we will answer them periodically as we move through the sections of the presentation
- This presentation was originally formulated for the Sydney Junior competition and some references may need checking back to your specific competition rules

Contents

Ground managing is a juggling act of games, players, timings and spectators. Learning the skills and knowledge to become a good ground manager who maintains control of their ground and ensures a great match day experience for our footballers is sometimes done on the spot. This workshop will give you best practice guides to help you survive the season.

1. General Duties
2. Paperwork / Administration
3. Umpires
4. Prioritising throughout the day
5. Dealing with conflict situations

A Day in the Life of a Ground Manager

Beginning of the day:

- *Arrive 1 hour (min) before game starts*
- *Walk the ground to ensure safety*
- *Post pads on posts*
- *Set up fields (interchange, medical, GM station, cones, chairs, etc)*

Repeat for every game:

- *Liaise with teams via manager & coach*
- *Confirm volunteers are available and have appropriate bibs*
- *Organise timing of game and siren*
- *Liaise with umpires and appoint an umpire escort*

End of day

- *Pack up field equipment - ask the last team playing to help*
- *Record and log team sheets, incident and accident reports*
- *Pack up and tidy grounds, lockup equipment*
- *Lock up grounds*



General Duties

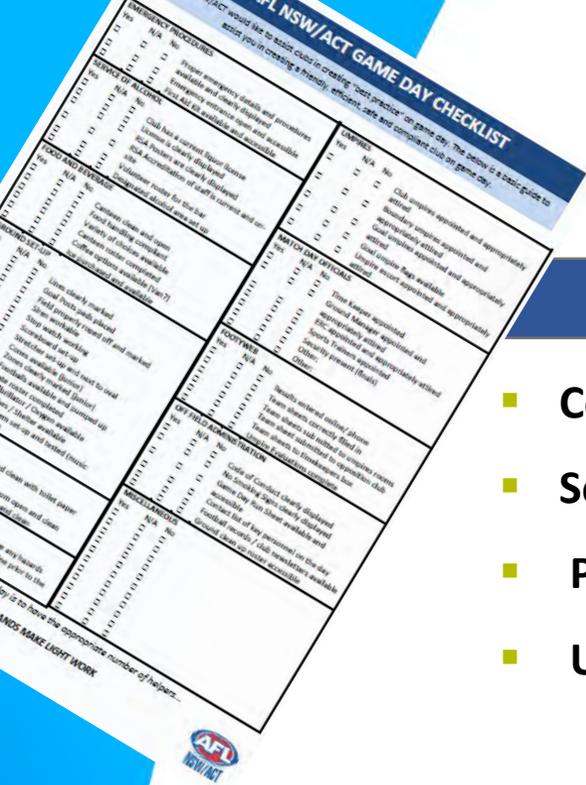
Why it is Important

- Consistency across all grounds
- Sets up expectations for everyone involved
- Positive game day experience
- Umpires control on field, GM controls off field



Maintain A Visual Presence

- Wear the ground managers bib at all times
- Set up GM station where you can see the ground and everyone can see you
- Be active and walk around the ground regularly



General Duties

Safety

- Ensure the field, changerooms and other general areas are safe
- Complete and lodge online checklist with JLT
- Recheck during the day especially with wet weather



Medical

- No medic no game
- Ensure adequate medical supplies and approved medical personnel are available for every game
- Assist medic when required for ambulance and concussion scenarios
- Make sure the stretcher is easily accessible.
- Ensure ground address and closest medical centre are easily accessible for those that need it.



General Duties

Field Set up

- Know your field sizes for easy set up for each age group
- Interchange on the wing, evenly spaced
- GM station set up with clear view of the field with access to scoreboard and siren



Timekeeping

- Allocate a time keeper for each game
- Assist time keeper to stay on track during the day
- Timers should not be left unattended
- If games get delayed, shorten game times to stay on track



General Duties

Liaising with Team Managers

- Contact with the team should be through the team manager
- Meet and greet with team managers
- Ensure pre-match paperwork and game ball is acquired
- Ensure post-match paperwork and game ball is returned



Other notes

- Be aware of [National Extreme Weather Policy](#) – lightning stops the game
- Be aware of who is allowed in the interchange and on the field of play
- Be aware of spectator behaviour and be assertive in asking for behaviours to be modified if needed, codes of conduct are meant to be followed
- Be aware of player numbers, send off rules and the 10 goal rule



Paperwork / Administration

Team Sheets

- Must have team sheets handed in before the game starts
- All player names and the names of the volunteers assisting the team must appear on team sheet
- Player numbers must appear on team sheet and there should be no duplicate numbers or triple figures.
- Managers must sign the sheet when handing it in
- Umpires must sign it at the end of the match
- Write the game scores quarter by quarter on your copies of the team sheets

Bylaws & Policies

- Ensure you have the latest version as reference
- When in doubt, refer to the by-laws or call your match day contact
- Use common-sense in applying rules and by-laws
- If you can't solve the issue walk away and send through a report to the CMC

AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission Limited



AFL Sydney Juniors
By-Laws
2019



Umpires

Pre & During Game

- Meet and greet field umpires before the game
- Ensure field umpires see team sheets and have match ball
- Provide an umpire escort for each game
- Provide refreshments during breaks
- Ensure there are 2 volunteers for goal umpires and a further 2 for the boundary if needed

Post Game

- Escort from field - **UMPIRES NO GO ZONE**
- Ensure score cards and team sheets are signed by field umpires
- Organise payment (if applicable in your League) and refreshments



Prioritising throughout the Day

- **Keeping games running on time – if anything effects game times, amend times to fit the rest of the day**
- **Ensure the ground and other areas remain safe all day, especially in case of wet weather**
- **Look out for the umpires**

Conflict Resolution

Dos and Don'ts

- ✓ **Treat** complaints seriously
- ✓ **Act** promptly
- ✓ **Treat** people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
- ✓ **Stay** neutral
- ✓ **Keep** parties to the complaint informed
- ✓ **Try to Maintain** confidentiality if possible
- ✓ **Protect** against victimisation
- ✓ **Keep** accurate records
- ✓ **Make** decisions based only on information gathered not personal views
- ✓ **Disciplinary** action should be relative to the breach

- × **Get** angry
- × **Engage** in an argument
- × **Endanger** yourself or volunteers

Resolving Game Day Issues

Your game is about to start, and your medic has not arrived, what should you do?

DO NOT START THE GAME

- Check your by-laws and league recommendations – **some solutions:**
 - Check your by-laws for rules around how long you hold your game to find someone
 - Ask your spectator groups if someone qualifies to do it
 - Check with opposition to see if someone can fill the role
 - If the GM is qualified, get someone to fill in as GM and GM dedicates time to medic role

Resolving Game Day Issues

Ground set up:

- It has been suggested to set up the interchange area and benches on the opposite side of the field to the spectators – is this permissible? Should the GM desk be set up on that side too?
- Both teams want their own interchange area, at their interchange benches. Is this permitted? Does it have any parameters?

Best Practice:

- Confirm with your by-laws and league for specific rules (tip – mark the by-laws with tabs for regular used by-laws and easy reference)
- Yes, permissible to be on the opposite side of the field, yes a GM should be on that side and so should medic – but not necessarily the GM desk with timekeeper and scoreboard
- Own interchange is permissible for some junior age groups in some leagues – not preferred
- Best practice – keep interchange as far away from spectators as practical, preferably behind a fence

Resolving Game Day Issues

You have a game scheduled to start at 12.30pm, it is 12.20pm and the away team has not arrived. What is best practice in the following situations:

- a. Someone has told you that the other team have forfeited, what do you do?
- b. The team arrives a couple of minutes after scheduled start time, are they allowed to play?
- c. Team doesn't show up, when can you call it a forfeit?

Again, check your by-laws for correct application of the ruling:

- **Best practice** is regardless of a forfeit or not (obviously if forfeit rules apply, apply them), let the game go ahead in the scheduled time. There is time allocated, you have umpires, play a friendly and get the coaches to use it as a training session.

Resolving Game Day Issues

The game is about to start; one team doesn't have minimum numbers yet but are expecting players to arrive. What should you do?

Refer back to your by-laws and league guidelines

Best Practice:

- If numbers are expected to arrive, regardless of whether they do or not, continue with the scheduled game.
- A friendly match under your by-laws and guidelines is never a bad thing, treat it like a normal game even if it is a scratch match or friendly game.
- Keep the umpires there and pay them
- Get the goal umpires to record the scores, regardless of if they are needed (just in case)
- Get the coaches to use it as an extra training run

Resolving Game Day Issues

You have a game due to start and one team has minimum numbers and the other team has maximum numbers, what should happen regarding evening up?

Go back to your bylaws and league recommendations:

- Best practice – apply the by-law with the maximum number of players on the field as possible. Games should be about maximum participation not for the coach to formulate the best combination to win today.
- Enforce the by-laws and recommendations with confidence and don't give choices, be fair and firm.

Resolving Game Day Issues

If you are handed a team sheet with one or more of the following issues, what should you do?

- A. Two players have the same guernsey number
- B. No coach's name/hand written coach's name
- C. Goal umpire name is missing
- D. More than maximum number of player listed
- E. Has players listed that are yet to arrive at the game
- F. Manager hasn't signed the sheet

- In all instances go back to your manager of the team. Get them to sort it, the game should not start until you have the team sheet sorted. Best practice is for you to check it when the team manager hands it to you and then you can resolve any issues then and there and you are not wasting time following up with things.
- **Best practice** if a player is not present when the sheet is handed in, then they are crossed off. If the player then arrives they are re-added to the sheet.
- Remind managers to put amendments in to Footyweb when they do the scores

Resolving Game Day Issues

A game is in progress. What do you do in the following circumstances?

- a) a parent comes up and asks you how old one of the players is, as they look older than the team age they are playing in.
- b) the opposition team manager asks you how old one of the players is, as they look older than the team age they are playing in.

This is obviously a junior related question, however, the same will apply if someone is accused of playing in an age or division, they are not supposed to play in.

- **Best practice** – it is not up to you to intervene or stop the player from playing.
- Allow the complainant to make their case, go to the opposition team manager and ask them and the player to sign a statement on the back of the team sheet to state they can play in the team. Ask the complainant to make the complaint to the league through regular channels and you follow through with a statement and copy of the signed teams sheets if and when required.

Resolving Game Day Issues

During the game a player is injured, and the stretcher is called. What should you do?

Best Practice

- Refer to your by-laws and league recommendations in relation to what constitutes a game and what doesn't regarding quarters played (after the injury situation is under control – you need to ensure all bases are covered and then step back)
- Keep the rest of the players on the field and in separate huddles, a team runner or water carrier/trainer can assist with this
- Get the stretcher and appropriate medics and trainers to the injured player as soon as possible
- Ensure time clocks are still running as if game is still in progress, if there are time outs for injury, notate times and follow this protocol – BUT KEEP TIMERS GOING TO RECORD TIME LOST
- Assist those dealing with the injury as best you can, if an ambulance is called, arrange for gates to be opened if required and volunteers to flag down the ambulance.
- Once the field is clear of the injured player recommence game from the point it is now.
- Unless there are provisions to have time out for injury the game starts back at the point in the game where it is now with the timers, i.e. where should have been had the injury not occurred.

Resolving Game Day Issues

The game in progress is a close game and you are in the last quarter; the spectators have been vocal during the match. To this point, although vocal, the spectators have been positive in their comments. As the game approaches full time the spectators start to get more vocal and the comments move to more negative, derogatory and abusive. What do you do?

Spectator abuse to anyone is not OK under any circumstances.

Best practice

- **First warning** - ask the appropriate team managers to ask their spectators to calm down and use appropriate language
- **Second warning** – the GM approaches and speaks to the spectators and asks them to calm down and use appropriate language
- **Third warning** – they are out, ask them for their name, club and contact number then ask them to wait in their car for their player(s) to finish.
- **Don't put yourself in danger**, ask for other committee to help, if there is refusal to comply, get a description and as much details as possible. Document the incident at your first possible chance, submit it through your normal league recommended channels. Call the police if needed, however, the offender may have left before they arrive.

Resolving Game Day Issues

It is the 2nd quarter of a game, there are reports to you from one of the team managers that the Goal Umpire is talking to players. What do you do?

- Speak to the Goal umpire immediately and reiterate their role as goal umpire (use reference cards)
- Speak to the umpires at the next quarter break – accept their ruling regarding the replacement of the person goal umpiring
- If they want the goal umpire removed, talk to the team manager and ask them to replace the volunteer. Field umpires should put this in their match day report.

Resolving Game Day Issues

A game is in progress, it is close to the end of the 3rd quarter, during the game one team have been unhappy with the officiating. During the game they have indicated to you several times that they have not been happy with the player protection and the coach has decided that they are not taking the field again for the 4th quarter. What do you do?

Best practice

- At this stage, a discussion with you and coach to ascertain why? This should include a discussion on consequences. Speak to umpires and the opposition coach.
- Aim to keep everyone calm, teams together. If you think you can talk them back to play, delay the start of the quarter by a few minutes. If you need, deduct delayed minutes from the quarter duration.
- If you are not able to convince the team to take the field again, at the time the game is due to recommence, get the team wanting to continue to take the field in their positions and wait. All umpires in place. Ask the umpires to start game and put the ball in play. Allow the umpires to determine the time they wish to wait until they then end the game. Start the timer for the game and record what happens.

Severe penalties apply for game abandonment – try to avoid it at all costs

Resolving Game Day Issues

During a game in progress, play seems to stop, and players are being lined up to count. What is the procedure from here?

Basically a head count is not a recommended practice, however, should it occur the following is best practice:

- Wait on the sideline until the umpires perform the count
- Call the umpire over to confirm findings
- Check that the head count was called by the captain, if it wasn't then it was incorrectly called and should not be enforced however discuss consequences with the umpires, this one is **their** call, you just need to assist them
- Follow the guidelines of your league and bylaws on head counts and apply the rulings as advised by the umpires

Resolving Game Day Issues

**During a game, a player is given a red card and they refuse to leave the field.
What do you need to do to assist the umpires?**

Best practice:

- If a player is refusing to leave, engage the team manager of their team to encourage them to leave the field – send runner or water carrier/trainer on to the field
- If this fails, stop the game until they have left the field, bearing in mind this could induce a forfeit for the team depending on bylaws
- Be aware of the consequences for your league
- Ask the player to leave the area so they are no longer causing an issue for the rest of the game, they cannot remain in the interchange area.