



Online Junior Coaching Course

NOTEBOOK




Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

AFL ON LINE JUNIOR COACHING COURSE

The On Line AFL Junior Coaching Course consists of five modules:

1. Introduction
2. Role of the Coach
3. Conducting a Typical Auskick Session
4. Teaching Football Skills to Children
5. Conducting and Umpiring a Match

Within each of these modules there are important pieces of information that you are introduced to in the on line course. If you wish you can download this information if you would like to have a copy for reference during or after the course. We trust you find the information useful and it greatly assists you in becoming an effective contributor to the AFL Auskick and junior programs.

INTRODUCTION TO AFL AUSKICK

Reasons Why People Become Involved in the AFL Auskick Program

Parents and others interested in the physical development of children are encouraged to become actively involved in the AFL Auskick program, as it provides an ideal opportunity to spend quality active time with children. The AFL believes it is important for parents to have an understanding of their child's sport so that they may maximize both the child's and their own experience and enjoyment.

There are a number of reasons why people become involved in the AFL Auskick program. Some of these reasons include:

1. Play with your children
2. Contribute to your child's social development
3. Learn new skills
4. Share talent and knowledge
5. Have fun, relax and make friends
6. Serve the community
7. Help others
8. Give back to Australian Football
9. Feel valued, useful and appreciated
10. Express your love of Australian Football

Core Values of the AFL Auskick Program

The program's core values are based on positioning Australian Football for primary-aged children in terms of the following qualities –

1. Fun and Safe
2. For boys, girls and parents
3. Managed by the community for the community

ROLE OF THE COACH

The AFL Auskick or junior coach's primary role, given that safety and legal and ethical responsibilities apply to coaches at all levels, is to arrange the best possible teaching and learning environments for children aged between five and 12 who want to learn to play Australian Football.

Other duties that are recommended for an AFL Auskick or junior coach to ensure that they perform their role in the AFL Auskick or junior programs include:

1. Supervise a small group of children under the guidance of the leader coach/coaching coordinator
2. Conduct warm-up games
3. Conduct skill activities and games in a safe environment
4. Offer advice and encouragement
5. Assist with the conduct of AFL Auskick Rules matches
6. Umpire AFL Auskick Rules matches
7. Have fun while contributing to the development of the children under your supervision.
8. Facilitate activities at different levels with different groups
9. Introduce one-to-one remedial assistance
10. Determine the skill levels of players
11. Monitor potential behaviour problems
12. Speed up the transition between activities
13. Keep all players involved and active
14. Review the effectiveness of sessions
15. Vary and revise session plans and activities

Aims of the AFL Auskick program

The AFL Auskick program aims to provide boys and girls with a fun teaching and playing program that offers them maximum opportunity to learn and play Australian Football.

To meet this aim, the program:

1. Relies on the community to provide the coaches and other support.
2. Acknowledges the importance of the relationship between the coach, parents and children in positively impacting on the program
3. Provides advice and training for AFL Auskick coaches and other community helpers
4. Is structured around sequenced skill development sessions delivered in drills and games that engage and challenge children.
5. Provides a set of playing rules and procedures that meet the needs of children.
6. Provides match experiences that emphasis safety, learning and fun.

Expectations of the Coach

The role of a coach is more than teaching the children how to play the game of Australian Football. The children also look up to their coaches for guidance and as a coach there are certain expectations that they must meet. The following are expectations of an AFL Auskick or junior coach:

1. Provide a safe environment
2. Players must be evaluated for injury or incapacity to participate
3. Players with an injury or incapacity should not be expected to perform any potentially harmful activity. No players should ever be forced to take part in any activity that they do not wish to do.
4. Adequate supervision is necessary to ensure the practice environment is as safe as possible.

5. Activities must be closely supervised.
6. Coaches should know first aid.

Understanding Children and Why They Play

Children play sport for a variety of reasons. Most commonly they play sport because they enjoy it. Once enjoyment disappears from the session so does the children's interest in continuing to be part of The AFL Auskick or junior program. Enjoyment can come from a variety of sources for example:

1. Learning new skills
2. Improving skills
3. Participating in a range of fun activities
4. Having a good relationship with a coach
5. Being recognized by being selected for competition or to demonstrate to others
6. Being involved in exciting and close contests
7. Being with friends
8. Being identified with a group whom they respect and whose company they like
9. Being able to do something well
10. Achieving challenging tasks and performing at one's personal best
11. The desire to be fit and healthy
12. Being involved in a well organized physical activity
13. Being given positive feedback, encouragement and/or awards
14. Being part of a friendly, good humored and caring group of people
15. Feeling safe, secure and being treated with respect

Characteristics of Children

Coaches need to be aware of the physical, emotional, social and skill learning characteristics that differentiate children from one another, and the impact this has for their role as coaches.

The most fundamental fact to grasp is that children develop at different rates and that the range of differences can be very significant.

Being sensitive to and making appropriate allowances for individual differences is an essential part of coaching/teaching.

Physical differences in children:

1. Some children have delayed growth, some grow at an average rate and others have accelerated growth.
2. Children of a younger age are generally less coordinated than older children.
3. Children of the same age can differ significantly in physical characteristics (e.g. children can differ in height by 40% and be four years apart in physical development) and capabilities.
4. Girls tend to develop physically at a faster rate than boys do.
5. Early maturers are usually successful at sport in their younger years, but this success may not necessarily continue through adolescence with most late maturers catching them up.

6. Physical maturity does not necessarily produce emotional maturity. Children can be large and well built for their age and yet extremely self-conscious about themselves.

Emotionally immature children may:

1. Appear to be hyper-sensitive
2. Be easily distracted
3. Lack confidence
4. Demonstrate poor emotion control in a variety of situations
5. Be easily led by other children
6. Not know how to adjust to the different personalities they face in a group situation

Catering for Individual Differences

Children who are enthusiastic, learn quickly, get on with others and have a happy disposition, are a delight to teach. Fortunately most children display several of these characteristics. But not all do and few do all of the time. A coach's job is not just to coach the easiest and best children; it is to engage all children in learning. There are a variety ways that an AFL Auskick or junior coach can cater for individual differences:

1. Coaching approaches and expectancies for skill learning must differ from individual to individual.
2. Emphasis should be put on the child's own progress, and not on comparing achievements with those of others.
3. Individualized instruction and individualized challenges should be provided.
4. A broad array of activities should be planned and presented.
5. Activities should be of an increasingly complex nature and be challenging but 'doable'.
6. Where possible, children of approximately the same skill levels (e.g. beginning, developing, extending) should be grouped together for instructional purposes.

There will be children who may need special help. These children especially should be assisted to overcome those behaviors that will impede their learning or the learning of others in the group. Ignoring these factors that can disrupt the group and impede learning can result in the teaching/coaching role becoming more and more difficult and children dropping out of the AFL Auskick or junior program.

Coaches should observe the children they are working with to detect those children who:

1. Lose concentration most readily.
2. Always want to be first or have difficulty sharing.
3. Have difficulty remembering or following instructions.
4. Give up most readily.
5. Are picked on or are ignored by others.
6. Are quick to anger or to express dissatisfaction.
7. Express frustration or appear confused.
8. Bully or try to dominate others.
9. Become withdrawn and reluctant to participate

Coaching Children with a Disability

It is common to feel apprehension about working with children with disabilities. The important thing to keep in mind is that every child has the right to be involved in sport, especially a sport like football and the AFL Auskick or junior programs. Including children with disabilities requires planning, enthusiasm and understanding.

Below are a few suggestions when coaching children with disabilities:

1. Encourage the carer/parent to be involved and assist in activities and be responsible for the needs of the child.
2. Every child is unique. People with disabilities are no different. All have similar needs and require the same opportunities as everyone else.
3. Work with what the child CAN do and if you are not sure ask them or their parent/carer.
4. Introduce the child to the group.
5. Youngsters with a disability must be seen as a person first – the similarities to peers should be noted, not the differences.
6. Simple adaptations or modifications of activities will allow greater participation by all. Every effort should be made to keep the activities as true to form as possible.
7. Any changes should be viewed as temporary, working towards, where possible, the original activity. If changes do not work, try another.
8. Wherever possible have the child participating in all aspects of the day's activities.
9. Check the needs and abilities of the children.
10. Provide activities where children can succeed and develop self-esteem.

Coaches Code of Conduct

Children learn best by example. Adults are the providers of AFL Auskick and junior programs and are viewed as role models. The Coaches Code of Conduct provides clear behavioral guidelines for parents in promoting a quality environment in which both the game and the participants can flourish. You have been invited to read the Coaches Code of Conduct and put your name to the code to indicate your willingness to abide by those behavioral guidelines.

The Coaches Code of Conduct is presented here in summary by children representing the AFL Auskick family:

1. To provide a framework in which leagues and clubs can encourage constructive parental behavior.
2. Develop parental understanding of the importance of setting the right example in junior sport.
3. Increase parent ownership by providing a quality sporting environment.
4. Promote good social behavior in junior sport.
5. Promote an appreciation and increased respect for the umpire.
6. Promote encouragement of all children in the game not just your own team.
7. Reduce the number of conflict situations at junior matches.
8. Children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
9. Encourage children to participate don not force participation upon them.

10. Focus on the child's efforts and self-esteem rather whether they win or lose.
11. Encourage children to always participate according to the rules.
12. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or for the team losing a game.
13. Children learn best by example. Applaud the efforts of all players in both teams.
14. Remove verbal and physical abuse from physical activities.
15. Show appreciation of the volunteers, coaches, administrators and officials without whom your child could not participate.
16. Respect the umpire's decisions and teach children to do likewise.
17. Smoking and the consumption of alcohol is unacceptable at junior sport.

Coaches Ethical Behaviors and Legal Responsibilities

Coaches have a responsibility of respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every child within the team. Each child must be treated fairly and sensitively regardless of gender, ability or cultural background.

Coaches have a standard of care that ensures a coaching environment that promotes safety, protection and the general well-being of all participants. The coach is ultimately responsible for the physical, psychological, social and emotional performance of the children in the coaching environment. It is important that the coach establishes a safe coaching environment by thorough planning and thinking through the risk factors associated with each activity.

A coach should, under all circumstances:

1. Take all necessary precautions to prevent injuries from occurring
2. Treat injuries correctly
3. Ensure the treatment provided prevents further injury
4. Take no action that could cause injury

The Structure of a Practice Session

A typical AFL Auskick or junior practice session consists of the following seven components:

1. Arrive and kick with others
2. Assemble the group
3. Warm-up games and fun activities
4. Skill teaching
5. Skill games
6. AFL Auskick Modified Game
7. Encouragement awards and drinks

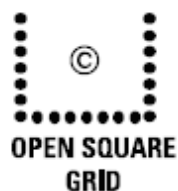
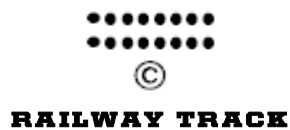
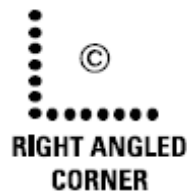
Principles for Planning an AFL Auskick or Junior Session.

There are a number of important principles that should be taken into account when planning an AFL Auskick or junior session. Jane, a Helper Coach took these principles into account in the following manner:

Principles When Planning a AFL Auskick Session	How Did Jane Take Those Principles Into Account?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The present skill level of players 2. The resources and equipment available 3. What goals are achievable 4. When various skills need to be covered 5. What the coach will do and what the assistants will do 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diligently observed the matches 2. Asked the coaches who would be present and asked how many footballs would be available 3. Observed matches and noted the skills that were performed well and those that needed attention 4. Observed matches and noted the skills that were performed well and those that needed attention 5. Carefully assigned coaches to the different components of the session and wrote out cards for each coach

Teaching Formations and Group Management

There are a variety of formations that a coach can use when teaching children. Below are a few examples:



A few suggestions to help you manage groups:

1. Have children sit down.
2. All eyes on the coach – no one behind the coach.
3. Small children to the front, taller children to the back.
4. Use your whistle sparingly – BUT make sure you use it!
5. Don't forget to ask random questions to help keep the children focused.
6. And remember not to speak too long – two points / 30 seconds will do.

Principles of Organisation of a Practice Session.

The following suggestions associated with each of the principles underlying effective practice organisation will allow Trevor to effectively manage a small group of children and deliver a quality AFL Auskick session under the guidance of a Leader Coach:

Principle	Recommendations
1. Keep children active at all times: short queues and ample equipment	1. Minimize the instructions and have more targets
2. Maximise the practice time	2. Minimize the instructions and have more targets
3. Maximise the use of footballs	3. Use the “spare footballs”
4. Minimise the time between activities	4. Set up the next activity ahead of time.
5. Adapt the activity to make it work	5. Stop the activity and make the adjustments as outlined above.

Providing and Creating a Safe Environment

Whilst running an AFL Auskick or junior session it is important to ensure you are providing a safe training environment and have the necessary risk management plan in place to avoid injury and other potential hazards. Some potential areas that a risk management plan should address are:

Pre-training

- Warm-up equipment
- Facilities/change rooms
- General environment

During training

- Training equipment
- General environment
- Ground surface
- Children's physical condition
- Children's inexperience
- Children's attire/adornments
- Climate

Post Training

- Children's physical condition
- General environment

In relation to creating a safe environment for the players it's advised that by following this checklist will help in providing that.

Players

1. Health – Check for medical conditions, medication needs. Ensure full recuperation before resuming activity.
2. Instruct – Highlight risks to avoid and stress safety practices with children.
3. Approved dress – Ensure children are appropriately dressed. Check boots and for jewellery that could cause injury.
4. Correct protection – Example of this may be to insist on a mouth-guard and encouraging the use of shin guards.
5. Warm up – Provide adequate warm-up exercises that will help avoid injury.
6. Supervision – As mentioned previously having the assistance of multiple parents and volunteers can help in providing adequate supervision at all times.
7. Activities – Judge the activities to be undertaken to tie in with the skill level of the players.
8. Injury management – Have a plan/process in place for managing injuries that occur during a session.

9. Group management – Appropriate strategies are needed to manage large groups of children.
10. Grading – To be fair and for children to learn more, be sure to match players of similar size, strength and skill levels.
11. Re-hydration – Be sure to encourage regular drinking especially in hot weather conditions so they do not become dehydrated.
12. Warm down – Provide adequate warm-down exercises
13. Physical conditioning – Don't over-tire children by running an activity too long
14. Food handling – Check out the Food Safety site available in our links and resources section for more information.

Activities

1. Intensity – Avoid stressful and high intensity activities
2. Appropriateness – Avoid activities which you judge might cause injury or based an in-appropriate skill level.
3. Procedures – Stay within recommended procedures and conform to all rules. Quickly intervene if children engage in potentially harmful behavior.

Responding to injuries or emergencies

1. First Aid – Have a trained first aid person and appropriate first aid equipment
2. Contacts – Have emergency telephone numbers in a prominent location
3. Communication – Have a telephone handy.
4. Transport – Have emergency transport ready and available.

5.

TEACHING FOOTBALL SKILLS TO CHILDREN

Positive Coaching

To facilitate the learning and enjoyment within the AFL Auskick program it's important that the coach is a positive coach. A positive coach says and acts in ways that make players feel good, important, happy and successful. The following are approaches that positive coach's use:

1. A warm greeting, using the player's name.
2. A smile
3. A pat on the back for encouragement
4. Talking, joking and playing some games with the children
5. Asking advice and listening to the response
6. Helping children to set and adjust learning goals
7. Giving individuals specific suggestions for improvement
8. Being well organized
9. Energetic and enthusiastic
10. Patient and understanding
11. Encouraging and supportive
12. Fair and consistent
13. Caring and interested in the players' well-being
14. Fun to be around

Stages of learning

Children proceed through a number of stages as they learn physical skills. As an AFL Auskick or junior coach it is important to identify the characteristics of the players in each stage to develop appropriate practices so that each player is motivated and challenged.

The characteristics at each stage of learning are presented here:

Early Stage

Players in the early stage of learning tend to make a large number of errors and may look and feel clumsy and uncoordinated. A player's performance might be characterized by one of the following:

1. Parts of the skill performance are missing, particularly the preparation and follow through components
2. Some parts of the skill are exaggerated, while some other parts are characterised by the restriction of use of parts of the body.
3. Rhythm, coordination and control are poor
4. Minimal outcomes result from maximum effort
5. Poor decisions are made regarding response options

Intermediate Stage

Players in this stage have a basic command of skills and are able to perform skills at a faster pace and, therefore, can be placed in competitive situations

1. Movements have better control, coordination and rhythm
2. Some parts of the skill continue to be either restricted or exaggerated
3. While the overall skill produces reasonable results, some components of the skill are performed incorrectly
4. Many of the movement patterns, such as an individual's unique kicking action, remain throughout life because of the lack of opportunities to practise; poor motivation and/or lack of qualified coaches

Final Stage

In this stage, players are able to perform skills sub consciously and under pressure. The player is ready to advance to more complex skills

1. Mechanically efficient and coordinated movements
2. Automated performance of the skill, which allows the player to process other information while performing the skill - the types of information includes strategies to counter opposition movements, responding to changes in the environment and planning for the next game play
3. Confident and purposeful movements
4. All components of the skill are correctly performed, well-sequenced and optimally timed
5. Minimal variation in the outcome of the skill performance

The S.P.I.R. Method of Teaching Skills

When teaching children football skills it's advised that coaches have a sound method of teaching. The S.P.I.R method of teaching is the approach recommended when teaching skills within the AFL Auskick program.

S	Show	Name the skill. Demonstrate three times. Provide three coaching points (max)
P	Practise	Have the players practise immediately via an appropriate activity
I	Instruct	Give feedback on their performance based on what they have been taught
R	Reward	Encourage and reward effort and achievement

Key Teaching Points of the Skills of Australian Football

Fundamental to coaching children in Australian Football is the need to know about the skills of the game. The following are the key teaching points for handballing, marking including the chest mark and the overhead mark kicking and picking up. These key teaching points accompany the vision of the skill performances shown in the course. Take time to learn these key points for each of these skills and your coaching will be more effective.

Handballing: Main Teaching Points

1. The ball must rest on the platform hand and be hit with a clenched fist. Players should have their eyes on the ball
2. The punching fist is formed by placing the thumb outside, not inside the fingers
3. The stance is nearly side on to allow the punching arm to swing through freely. Keep knees slightly bent to maintain balance
4. For a right-handed handball, the left foot is forward, and vice versa for a left-handed handball
5. Punching arm is also slightly bent
6. After contact is made with the ball, the fist remains on the platform hand - "catch the fist"

Marking: Main Teaching Points

1. Your eyes must be focused on the ball all the way from the player's boot to your hands
2. Position your body in line with the flight of the ball
3. Move forward to meet the ball; never wait for it to come to you
4. Skilful players should take the ball in both hands with fingers spread and thumbs close together ("W" shape). Beginners should use the chest mark (see next skill)

Chest Marking: Main Teaching Points

1. Keep your eyes on the ball and line up the body with the flight of the ball
2. The fingers and hands are extended-palms up. Tuck the elbows into the side
3. The ball is taken on the hands and arms and guided to the chest
4. The ball is hugged tightly to the chest.

Overhead Marking: Main Teaching Points

1. Keep your eyes on the ball and line up your body with the flight of the ball
2. Jump off one foot and swing the other knee up to gain maximum height
3. Fingers outstretched and thumbs almost together ("W" shape)
4. The ball is met slightly in front of the head with arms extended-'long arms'. The ball should be firmly gripped with the fingers.

Kicking: Main Teaching Points

1. Line up your body with your target. Have your head slightly bent over the ball. Hold the ball over the thigh of the kicking leg
2. Guide the ball down with one hand
3. Kick the ball with a firm foot (point your toes at your target) – watch the hit your foot
4. Follow through straight toward the target.

Picking Up: Main Teaching Points

Stationary:

1. Approach the ball on the opposite side to your preferred hand (e.g. if right handed approach on the left side of the ball)
2. Your foot opposite to your preferred hand should be one step ahead of the ball on approach.
3. Lower your body to the ball by bending both knees and bending at the waist.
4. Brace yourself in this position in case of a bump.
5. Place your preferred hand at the rear of the ball whilst your other hand in front and focus by picking up the bottom half of the ball.

Moving:

1. Get your body in line with the ball as it comes towards you.
2. As the ball is close, bend both knees and at the waist to get into the crouch position.
3. Both hands should be extended down so that they are almost touching the ground.
4. Palms should be open and facing the oncoming ball.
5. Keep elbows close together and pick up the bottom half of the ball.

Identifying and Correcting Skill Errors

Children tend to display similar problems when trying to master the skills of Australian Football. Group or individual instruction can target common problems and help remediate skill barriers. A number of common problems in the execution of skills are identified here and suggestions are made that might assist the coach to correct those skill errors:

Common Problem	Remediation Suggestion
Kicking: the ball is dropped using two hands	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Player grips the ball in the hand on the kicking leg side, walks a few steps and drops the ball onto a mark on the ground2. Player repeats the previous action but brings the kicking foot through to connect with the dropping ball3. Action repeated, this time with a finger of the opposite hand on the side of the ball and the controlling hand moved from underneath to the side of the ball

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Player holds the ball in two hands, walks through the kick guiding the ball down with one hand
<p>Chest mark: the arms are too far apart leaving a gap through which the ball slips</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practise shaping the arms for the mark without the ball 2. Check posture is correct 3. Practise correct marking style with a ball held out by a player walking or jogging past the marking player 4. Progressively increase the difficulty
<p>Overhead mark: the ball bounces off or goes through the hands</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practise shaping the arms for the mark without the ball 2. Practice correct marking style with a ball held high off the ground by the coach so that the player can run and jump to mark the ball 3. Proceed to the player throwing up and catching the ball using the correct style 4. Proceed to marking the ball thrown by another player 5. Progressively increase the difficulty
<p>Handball: throwing the ball in the air with the platform hand before hitting it.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilise the platform hand by resting it on a table or a player's back or the coach could hold the hand firm 2. Practice the 'catch the fist' technique where after the ball is hit, the clenched fist remains in the platform hand

CONDUCTING AND UMPIRING A MATCH

The Main AFL Auskick Rules

The AFL Junior Match Policy, designed by the best experts available to the AFL, aims to:

1. Ensure a fun and safe environment.
2. Maximise participation, skill learning and development
3. Offer rules and procedures appropriate to the children involved.
4. Involve appropriately accredited coaches.
5. Provide a logical, sequential transition from introductory level through to competitions at clubs and/or schools.
6. Be managed by the community.

Rule Modifications

AFL Auskick and Junior Match Rules are heavily modified at the early age levels. As children proceed through middle to later age levels, less modification occurs until by age 13, the standard rules are recommended. The rules are modified to ensure the emphasis is clearly placed on skill development, safety and enjoyment in AFL Auskick and Junior Rules Football. A number of these rules are presented here along with the rationale for their inclusion in the AFL Auskick and junior programs:

Rule	Rationale
The AFL Auskick policy is committed to a reduced playing area, playing time and suitably modified equipment	Takes the emphasis away from endurance and allows greater skill development because the children have more frequent and longer contact with the ball
Once a ball is deemed to be out of bounds there will be no boundary throw-in	This increases the opportunities for children to kick the ball, reduce congestion in the game and always keeping the ball in motion
A mark is awarded when the ball is caught directly from a kick, irrespective of the distance travelled or whether it has been touched in flight.	Reduces congestion, encourages players to attempt to catch the football. Also recognises that many children cannot kick the ball over 15 metres
Within the two teams it is required that players are paired up.	This prevents ball-chasing and subsequent congestion. It also encourages players to think about their positioning on the ground prior to being allowed the freedom to move wherever they wish.
A player is only allowed to bounce the ball once when in possession of the football	This attempts to prevent players running excessive distances with the ball. This encourages disposal skills and team play allowing other children to be

	brought into the game.
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Modified Rules Applied to Tackling and Bumping

1. In the 5 to 8 year-old age group there is to be absolutely no **contact** or **spoiling** whatsoever, except accidental and light shoulder-to-shoulder contact while running to and at the ball.
2. In the 9 to 10 year old age group **grabbing** the arms or applying a wrap around tackle is not permitted
3. In the 11 to 12 year old age group a player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent who uses both hands to grip the player in the area below the top of the **shoulders** and on or above the knees.
4. Bumping is allowed in **11-12 year olds** as per AFL Laws of Australian Football.

Match Day Address

It is important to plan your pre-match talk on match day as it enables you to know what to say to individuals and to the team. The following suggestions might assist you in preparing that talk:

1. Keep the message simple
2. Encourage players to do their best and
3. Use the game as an opportunity to practice their skills.
4. Throughout the game you will have the opportunity to address players. The following guidelines will assist you in effectively communicating with the players:
5. Use words and expressions they have heard before to enhance their understanding.
6. Use statistics as positive reinforcement during breaks.
7. Make sure all the players are attentive and focussed when being spoken to.
8. Reinforce plans and policies that they have practiced.
9. Comments during game breaks could refer to the playing conditions, skill strengths and areas for improvement, position play, good efforts and plans for the next stage of the game.

The post match address could focus on:

1. What was well done throughout the game?
2. What aspects of the game need improvement?
3. What was learned from the opposition play?
4. What the team should aim to do better next time?

The Coach/Umpire Partnership

Through the junior club system, the education of spectators, players, coaches and administrators about the role of the umpire is vital in order to change negative community attitudes and football culture to create an environment of more recognition, support and respect for the umpires' contribution to the game.

The joy and the rewards of umpiring are best summed up by Andrew, a 16 year-old umpire from AFL Capricornia.

"I started umpiring due to the monetary incentive but soon started to appreciate it for more than that. I now love umpiring. It is a great challenge because you deal with slightly different scenarios every week. It also keeps me fit, which increases my self confidence and enables me to do well in other aspects of life, not just umpiring. I have developed great friendships since taking up umpiring, both within the umpires group and with football players and clubs. I look forward to the football season now. I am still making money although this is not the reason I umpire. I have gained so much out of umpiring."