



AFL Boundary Umpire Positioning Guidelines – Four Boundary Umpires System

OBJECTIVES

There are three main objectives for the Four Boundary Umpires System.

- ***Assist Goal Umpires***
In the vast majority of cases there will be at least 1, and often 2, boundary umpires at the behind posts whenever the play is in the vicinity. This will assist goal umpires with scoring shots from close range where the ball travels close to the behind post.
- ***Boundary Umpire Decisions***
The boundary umpires will run approximately 50 – 60 metres apart, when play moves around the boundary. This will ensure the boundary umpires will always be close to play which will greatly assist with out of bounds and out on the full decision making. The short kick-in from behinds will also be covered.
- ***Reduced Physical and Mental Stress for umpires***
Two boundary umpires working on one side of the ground should lessen the physical requirements of what is expected to be a faster, harder running game as a result of the new law allowing an immediate play-on after a behind and the general preparedness of teams to play on quickly. Whilst the complete recovery has been removed, the constant solid hard running of the two umpire system is eased.

It can be anticipated that the umpires will have less throw-ins which will lessen the workload in that regard and hopefully keep umpires fresher so as to execute stronger and more consistent throw-ins.

PRINCIPLES

- Every endeavour should be made so that there is at least one umpire at the behind post for a shot on goal.
- Except during a kick out from a behind or when marking out of bounds on the full, the play should be kept between the umpires on the same side of the ground.
- The 'non-controlling' umpires will maintain a position that will allow for the immediate assistance to the other umpire should the need arise.
- Positioning at stoppages should allow for the immediate control of play plus the potential for a quick transfer of play toward either goal.
- The umpires should spread out (towards goals) when play is on the opposite wing and then close in to about 40-60m when play is on their wing.

TERMS

OUTER SIDE – Ball is located on the other side of the Major Axis of the ground.

NEAR SIDE – Ball is located on the same side of the Major Axis of the ground.

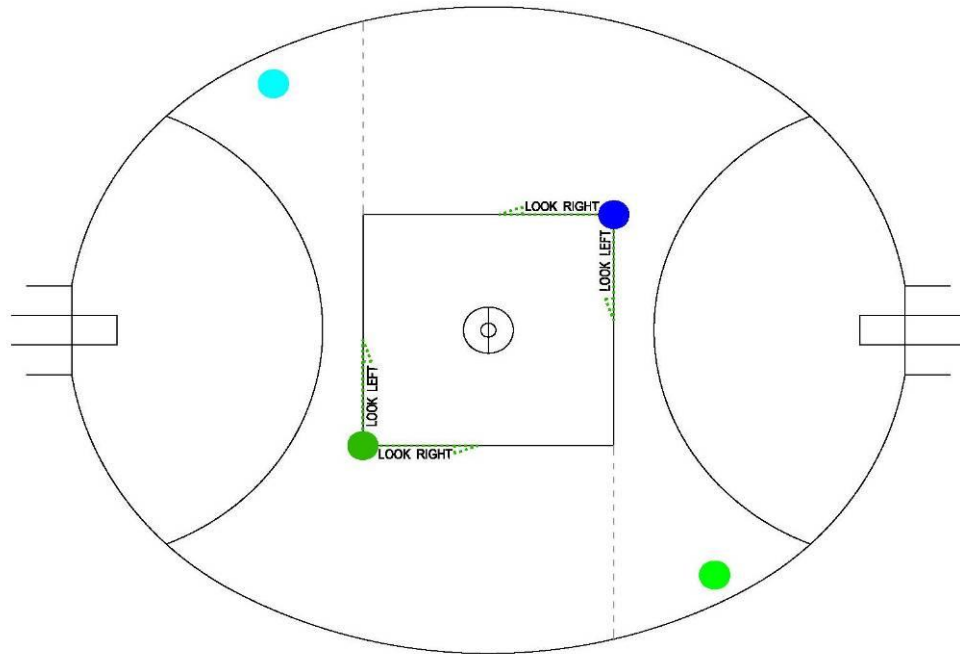
SHORT – A position where the umpire is between the play/ball and the nearest goals.

LONG – A position where play/ball is between the umpire and the nearest goals.

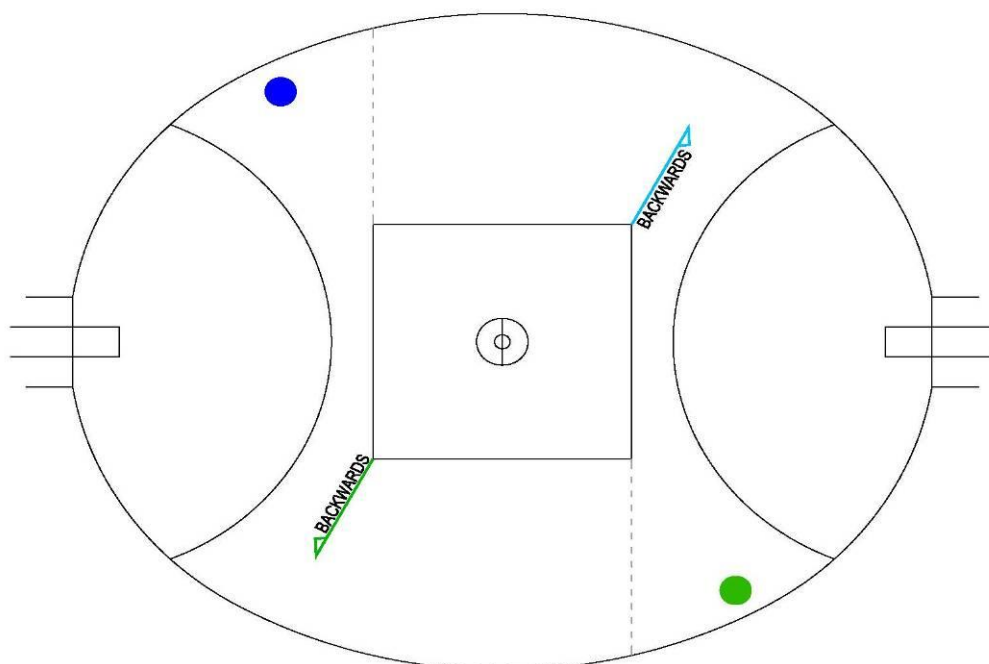
HANDOVER – Where the control of play is passed from one umpire to the other.

INITIAL POSITIONING AND MOVEMENT OFF SQUARE (START OF EACH QUARTER & AFTER A GOAL)

At the beginning of each quarter and after a goal is scored, when standing on a corner of the square, the two umpires on the square will need to observe both sides of the square as per the current two umpire system. The non-participating umpires will be positioned just inside the field of play (approximately 5 metres) between an extension of the OTHER edge of the square and the intersection of the 50m arc and the boundary line.



After the Field Umpire bounces the ball, the umpire on the square will back off the square generally toward where the 50m arc intersects with the boundary line (see below). The non-participating umpires should be ready to receive control should the ball quickly straight out towards the boundary line or sprint towards goals should play move in that direction.



AFTER A SCORE – Run Through

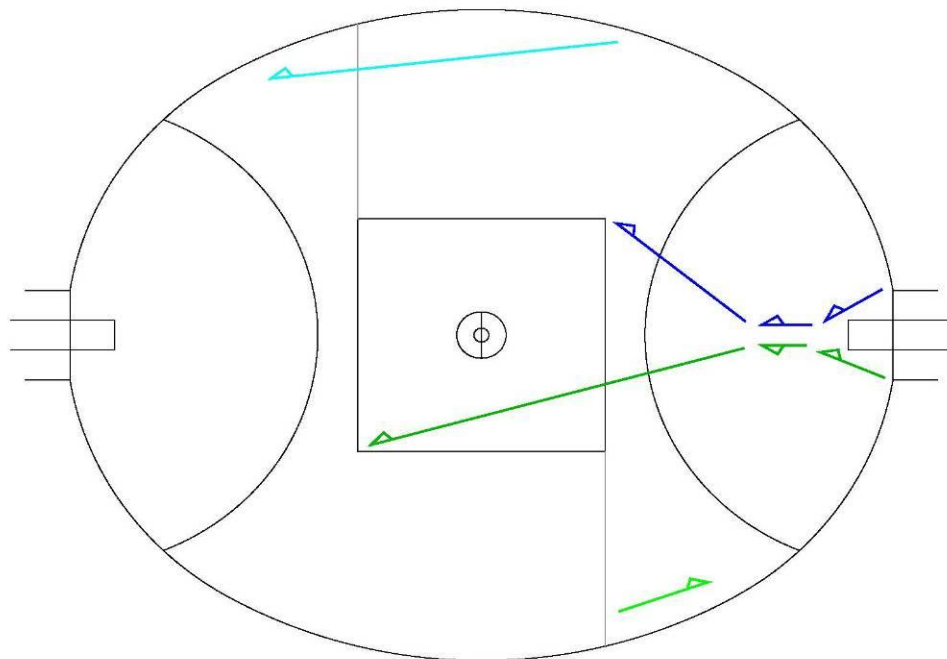
After a goal is scored the run through will be performed as normally by the two umpires stationed at the behind posts. The decision as to who will retrieve the ball and who will complete the long run through should generally be decided on the likely destination of the ball after the kick and/or with regard to workload. All umpires should ensure that a generally even spread of run throughs occur.

After the Goal Umpire has indicated a goal, the long run-through umpire will leave the post and move to the area, between the top of the square and 20m from goals, depending on the location of players. The short run-through umpire will wait at the behind post until the Goal Umpire has finished waving the flags before retrieving the ball and commencing the run-through.

The ball may be caught whilst waiting for the flag waving if the ball is retrieved and returned by the security officer or ball steward.

The run-through speed will ensure that the ball is returned to the Field Umpire as quickly as possible.

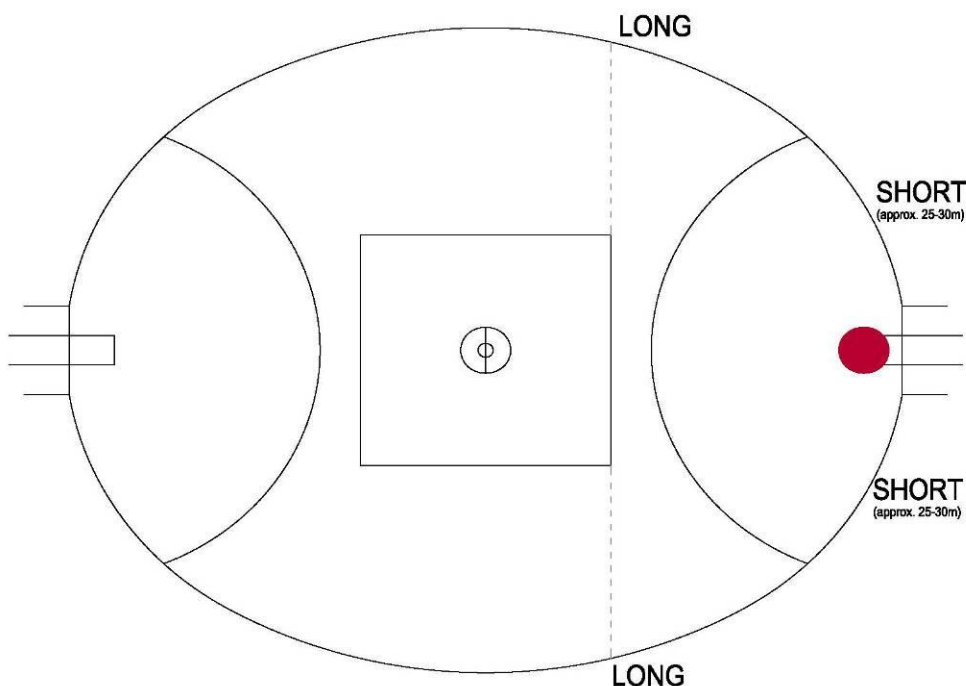
The non-participating umpires will adjust position (60-70% run) as required to ensure that they are positioned just inside the field of play between an extension of the OTHER edge of the square and the intersection of the 50m arc and the boundary line (as previously described).



AFTER A SCORE – Kick-in from a Behind

After a behind is scored (if the full back has not kicked the ball in immediately), the umpires at the behind post should back out from the behind post but should stop approximately 25-30m (depending on the ground) from the posts.

The long side umpires should be positioned at approximately the edge of the square, but should be prepared to either adjust to receive control of a long kick down the wing or a sprint towards the far goals should play move quickly in that direction, particularly if the ball is kicked long down the corridor.

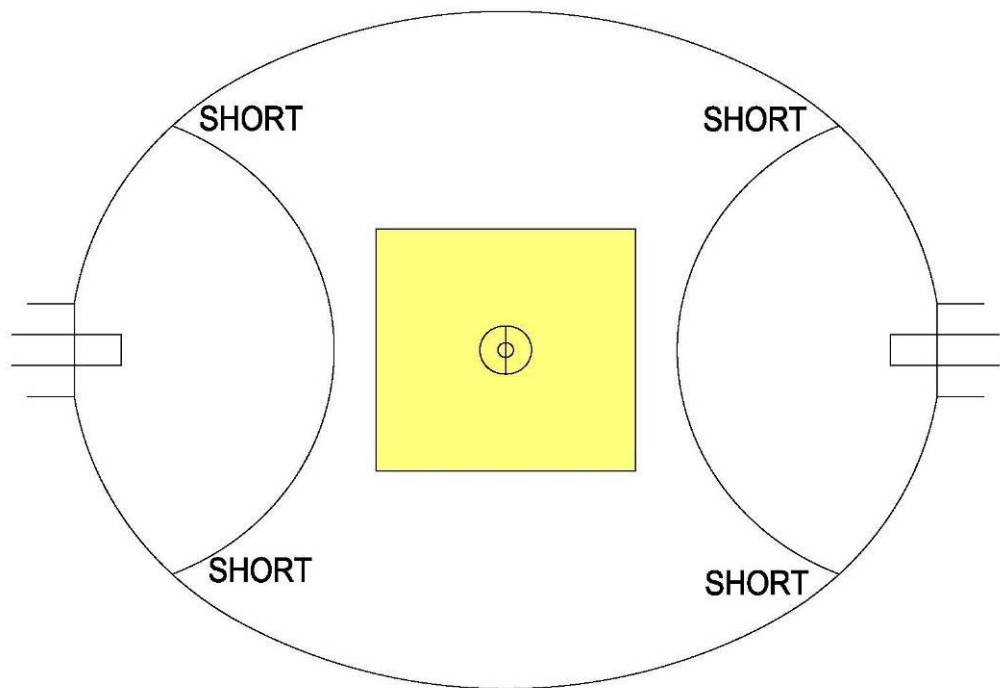


After the kick-in the short side umpire should allow the kick to pass and then follow play up the ground, ensuring that play is kept between both umpires as much as possible. The same procedure should occur for a kick from deep in the defensive area. Other than when marking the position of where the ball went Out of Bounds on the Full this is the only time when the umpires should intentionally allow for both umpires to be on the same side of play.

When marking the position of an Out of Bounds on the Full, the umpire should run about 10 metres past the mark and then adjust position, depending on where the free kick ends up, to ensure that play is kept between both umpires.

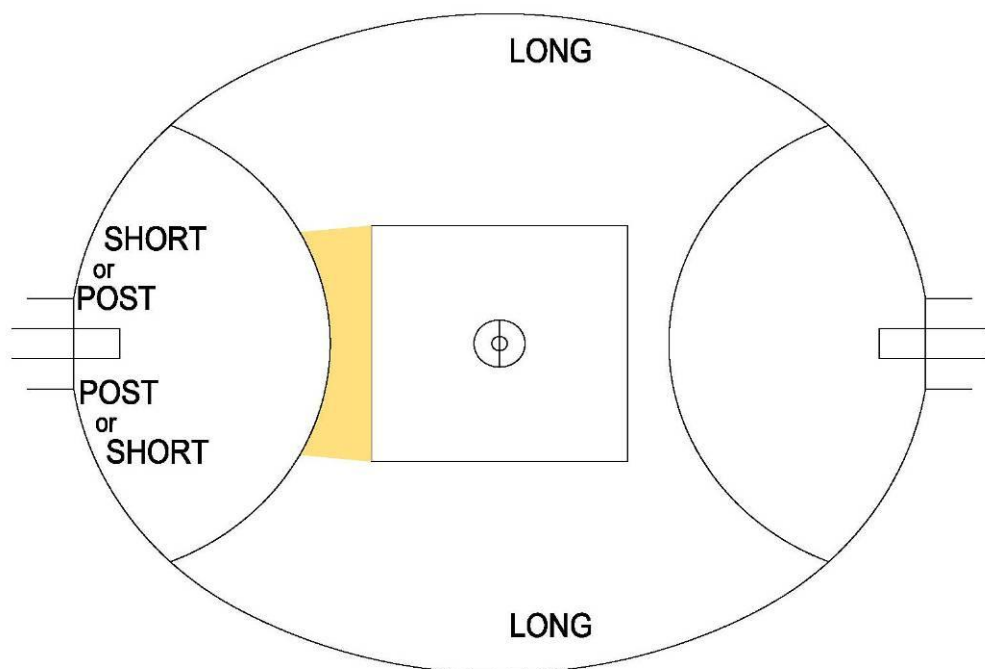
AROUND THE GROUND – Centre Corridor

The following show the approximate positioning for stoppages and general play. The umpires should make getting to the goals to assist the goal umpire a priority. The aim will be for at least one umpire on the post if play is in the vicinity. (The play is located in the shaded area.)



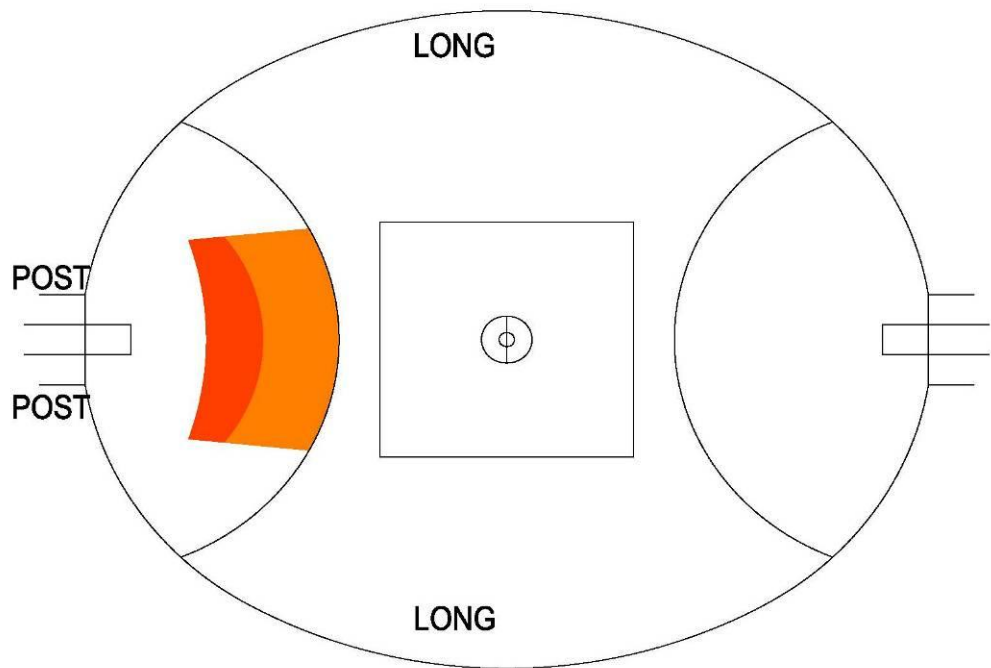
All umpires should be ready to sprint towards goal should play head in that direction.

When play leaves the square towards goals, the umpires in the half of the ground where the play is stationed or headed should move towards the goals and be within the vicinity to ensure they will be behind the post should play quickly head in that direction.

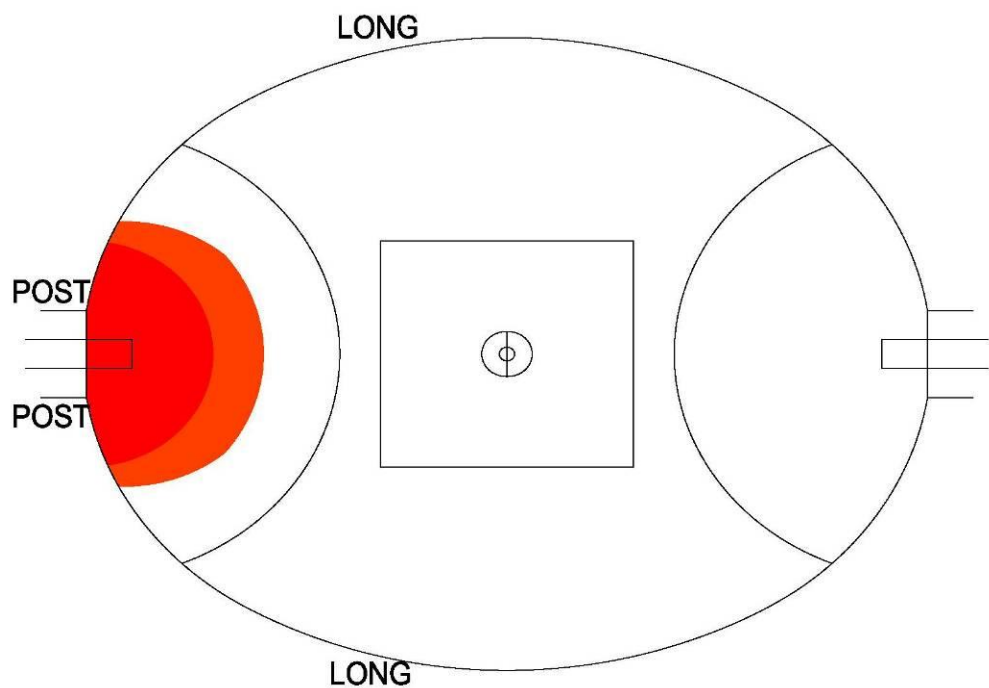


On the longer grounds (eg. Subiaco/Skilled), if play is outside the 50m arc, the short side umpires may wait slightly further away from goals. The other umpires should wait near the back of the square (approximately) should play come back towards the centre of the ground.

Anytime play is in the corridor and within the 50m arc, the Short side umpires should be positioned behind the posts (1m behind), with the other umpires waiting at about the centre of the ground.



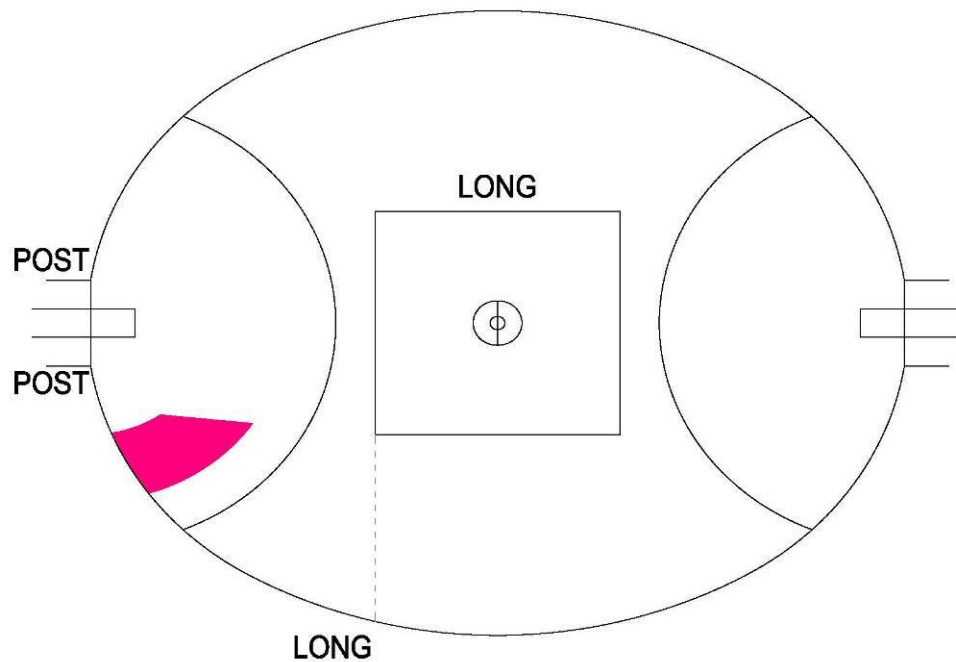
As play heads towards the goals (inside 25m) there should always be two umpires behind the posts. The other umpires should adjust position to be level with the near side of the square, but also wide to assist (if needed) should play heads towards the boundary.



AROUND THE GROUND – Near the Boundary

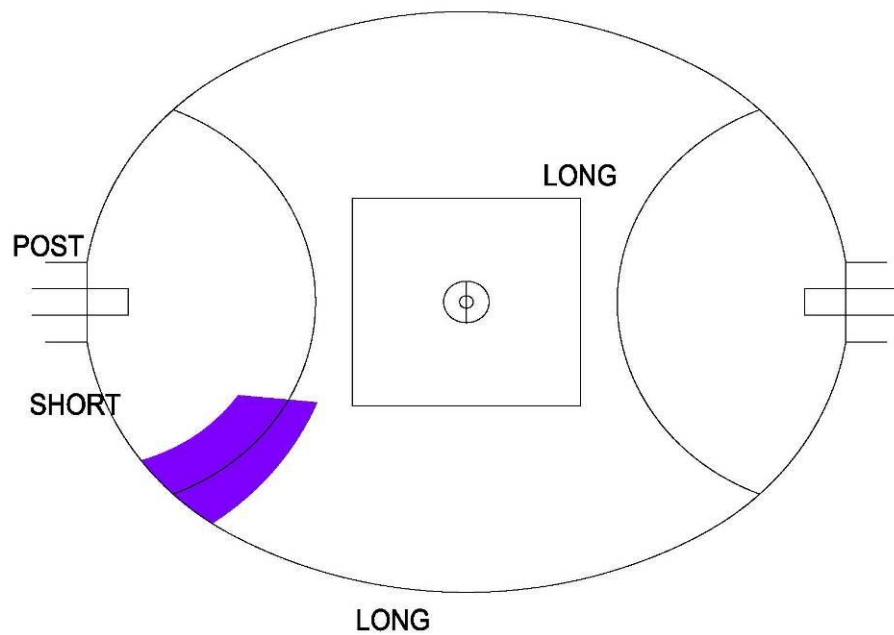
Should play head away from goals near the boundary line, on the OUTER SIDE, one umpire should remain behind the post with the other umpire adjusting position along the centre square towards the other goals, but being ready to adjust wide should a switch occur.

On the NEAR SIDE, one umpire should initially remain at the post, but adjusting wide first (to remain on the tangent) and then towards play. The other NEAR SIDE umpire should initially hold position to assist if required. It is important that this second NEAR SIDE umpire be outside the boundary line to have a clear view of any potential missed decisions by the 'controlling' boundary umpire.



When play is between 40 – 55m from goal the OUTER SIDE umpire standing at the posts should remain there. The other OUTER SIDE umpire should continue moving along the centre square towards the other goals. Both OUTER SIDE umpires should be ready to adjust position particularly if play is switched across the ground.

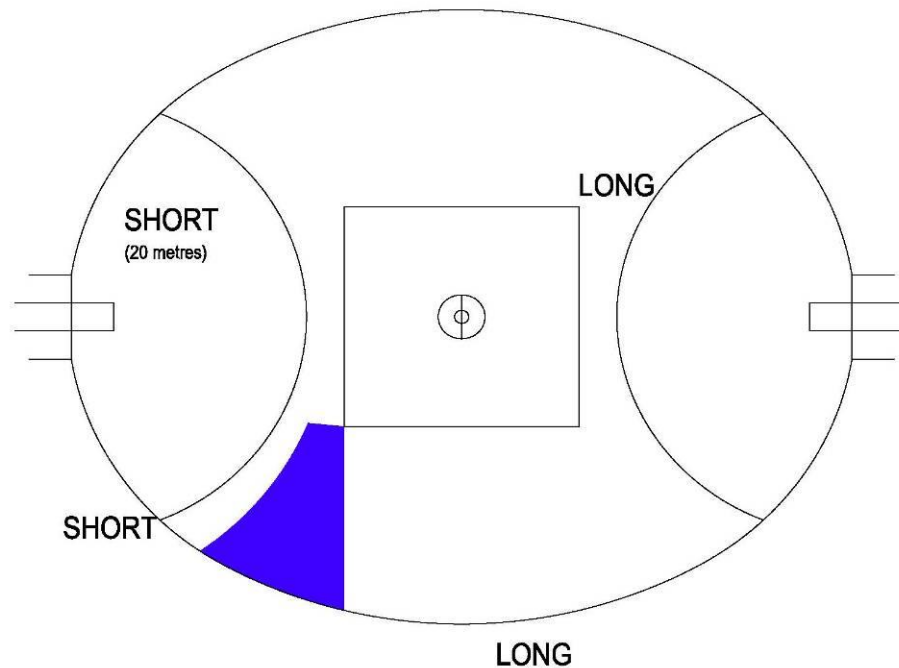
The NEAR SIDE umpires should be adjusting position to maintain separation (approx. 50m) with the short side umpire in 'control'. During stoppages the 'non controlling' NEAR SIDE umpire should ensure that they are not positioned within the interchange area and should also be aware of players and trainers warming up/cooling down outside the boundary line.



When setting up behind a player with possession about to kick the ball down field, the 'Short' umpire on the NEAR SIDE will be just behind the player and ready to chase the ball down field. The other NEAR SIDE umpire should be in a position to receive control of the long kick along the wing.

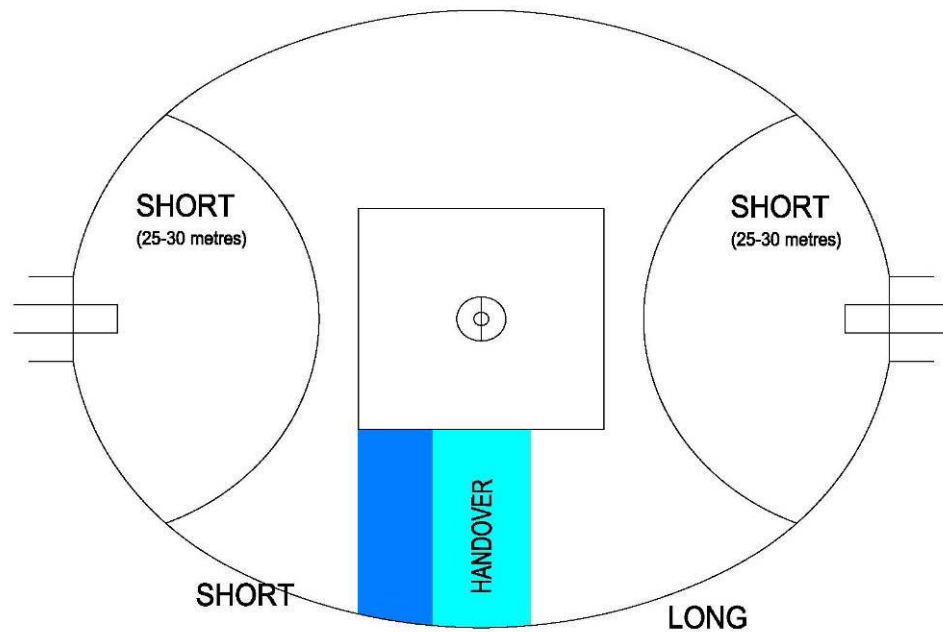
The ball/play should be kept between the umpires at all times. There is no need to run past play, and should a kick/handball be smothered or a turn-over occur there is potential for one umpire to get back to goals.

The NEAR SIDE umpires should continue to adjust position so that one umpire is approximately 15-20m from play with approximately 50-60m separation between both umpires. The OUTER SIDE umpires should be spread towards goals.

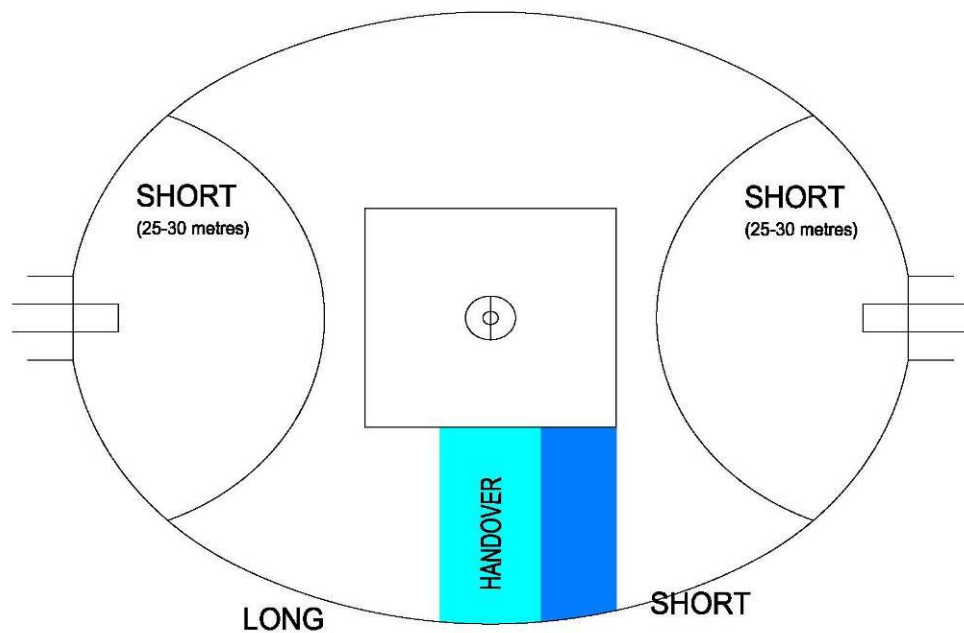


As play crosses the halfway mark of the ground the NEAR SIDE umpire with 'control of the play' should hand-over 'control' (indicate and acknowledge). Both umpires should then adjust position accordingly. Were the ball passes the interchange area control should be given to the umpire on the same side of the interchange area as

the ball. This will ensure that the umpire is not obstructed by the interchange area when viewing play.



The OUTER SIDE umpires should be positioned approximately 25-35 metres from goals.



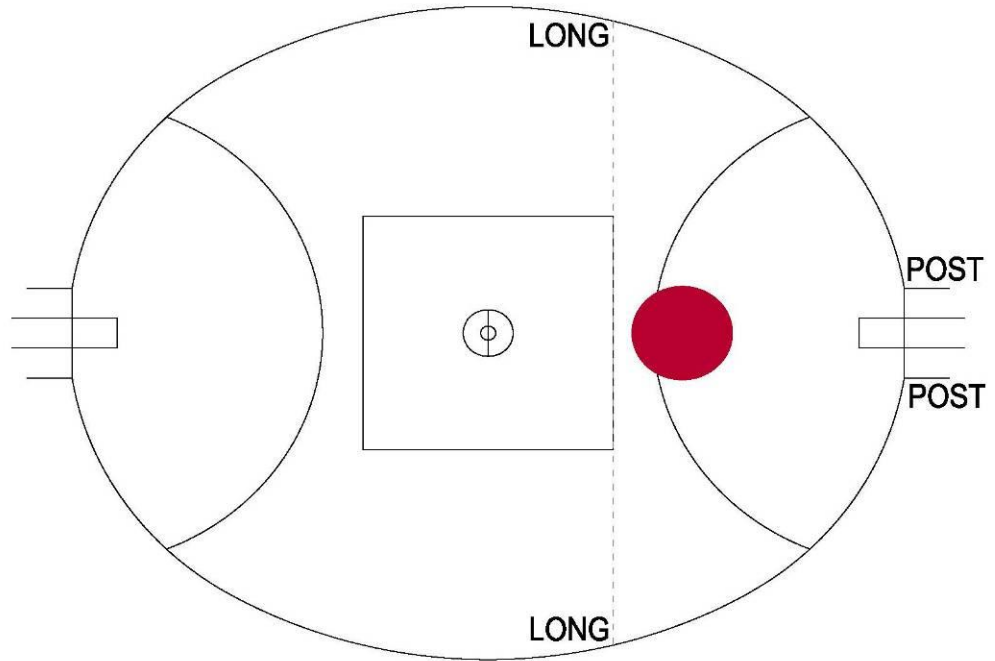
The umpire following play on the NEAR SIDE should try and maintain control for as long as possible to allow the other NEAR SIDE umpire to stay well ahead of play.

HAND-OVER SIGNALS

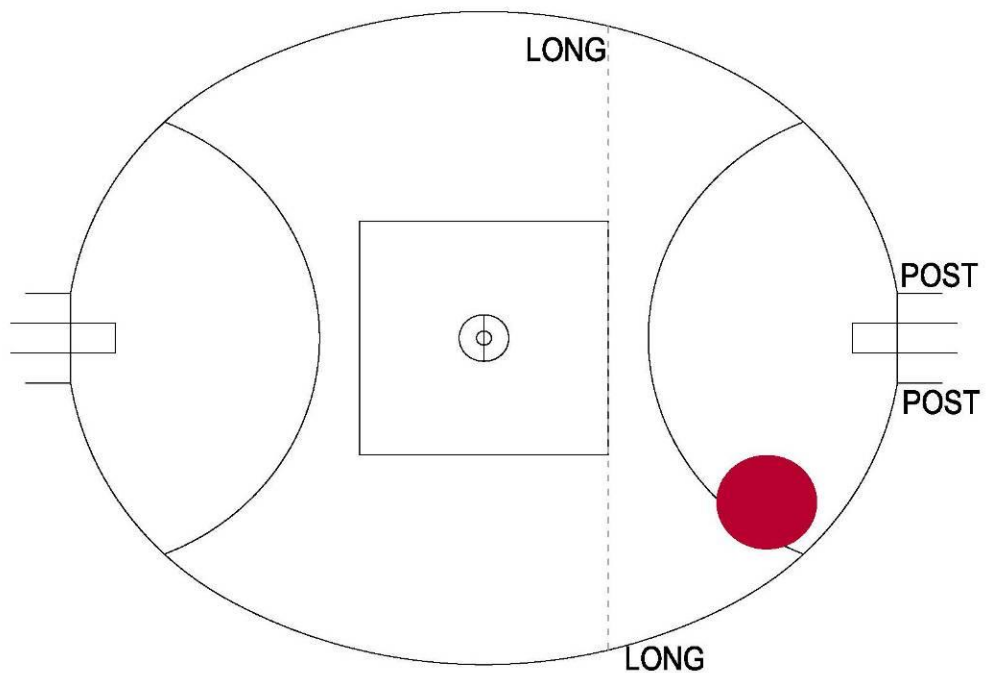
The signals used to demonstrate the hand-over should be identical to those used when standing at the behind post to indicate who will retrieve the ball after a goal. Should the controlling umpire wish to 'hold onto play' he should tap his waist. The non-controlling umpire should acknowledge by displaying the 'hand-over' signal. To hand-over control the arm should be out-stretched slightly away from the body. The receiving umpire should acknowledge the hand over by tapping his waist. As at the behind posts, umpires should verbally enforce the hand-over or retention of control.

AROUND THE GROUND – Set Shot on Goals

For a set shot from the centre of the ground the long side umpires should be positioned behind the player taking the kick (in case the kick is smothered) and should be ready to adjust wide and towards the goals after the ball is kicked.



For a shot at goal near or outside the boundary the long side umpire should be in a position to ensure that should the ball be smothered or the kicking player plays on over the boundary are observed. As with the previous, the other 'long' umpire should be in a position and ready to adjust should the kick not be successful.



SUMMARY & NOTES:

- When play is on the other side of the ground, spread out to cover the goals.
 - When play is on the same side of the ground, close up so that both umpires are in a position to make a decision if required. The non-controlling umpire should also be positioned wide, where required to view the line.
 - The non-controlling umpire should endeavour to keep wide to retain a view of play.
 - Keep play between the umpires on the same side of the ground.
 - Ensure a generally even spread of run throughs throughout the game.
 - At the beginning of each quarter, all umpires will swap sides, keeping the pairings from each side.
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Play-on Outside Boundary Line

This directive relates to the following situations:

1. Marks Near the Line
2. Change in Direction (Prior to 'Play-on' call)
3. Change in Direction (After 'Play-on' call)
4. Running Around the Mark
5. Running Over the Mark

Extract From Laws:

16.5 DISPOSAL — FROM OUT OF BOUNDS

16.5.1 When Permitted

- (a) A Player who is awarded a Free Kick or a Mark may bring the football into play from beyond the Boundary Line provided that the Player moves in one direction whilst in the act of Kicking, Handballing or moving to cross the Boundary Line.
- (b) If a Player taking his Kick from outside the Boundary Line
 - (i) fails to bring the football into play;
 - (ii) attempts to play on outside the boundary line; or
 - (iii) does not bring the ball into play in accordance with 16.5.1 (a) then the ball shall be deemed to be Out of Bounds and the boundary Umpire shall throw the ball back into play at the spot where the original Mark or Free Kick took place.

Overall Objective

To allow the player with possession to bring the ball directly back into play without gaining any undue advantage.

MARKS NEAR THE LINE

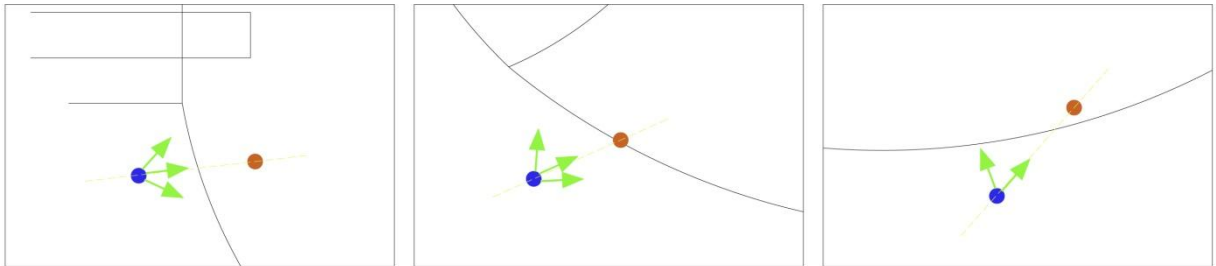
Where a player marks the ball inside the boundary line but after marking the ball ends up outside the boundary, if there after a brief delay there is no whistle from the field umpire, the boundary umpire should indicate OOB (touched) and then go to the field umpire and confirm that the ball was marked prior to going OOB.

Where a player, attempting to mark the ball, first touches the ball inside the boundary line in a manner that may be paid as a mark, but then juggles it over the line, ending up outside the boundary, the boundary umpire should, after a brief delay (allowing time for the field umpire to pay a mark), indicate OOB (touched) and then go to the field umpire and question which attempt at the mark the field umpire paid as being the mark.

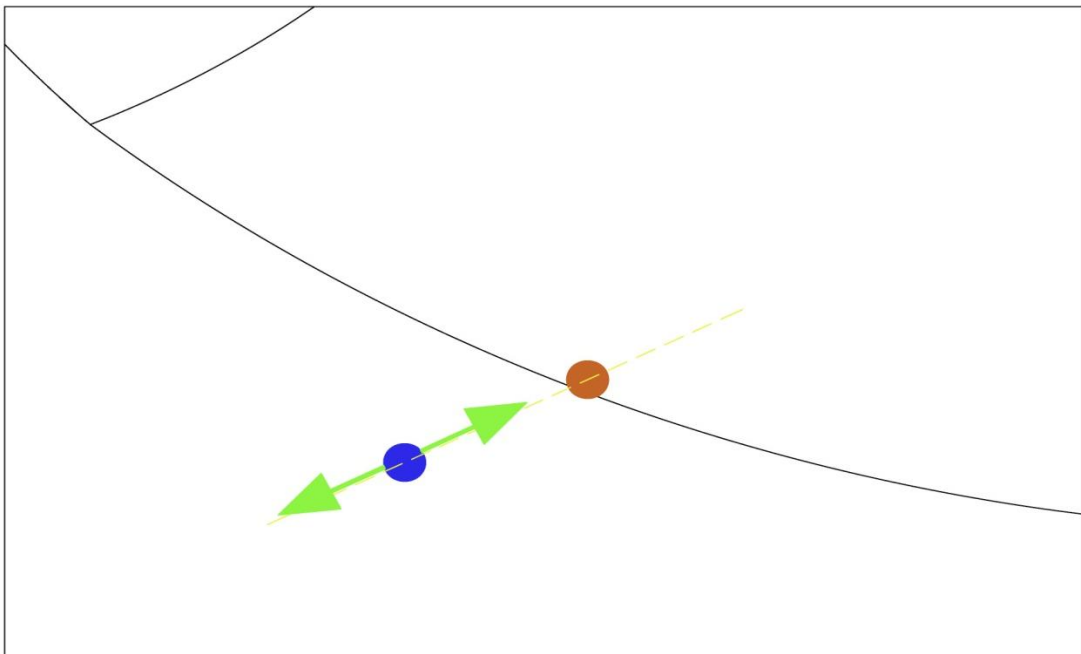
Where a player, attempting to mark the ball, first touches the ball inside the boundary line but does not control the ball and then juggles it over the line, ending up outside the boundary, the boundary umpire should indicate OOB (touched).

CHANGE IN DIRECTION (PRIOR TO 'PLAY-ON')

A player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may bring the ball into play either directly over the mark or directly into the field of play.



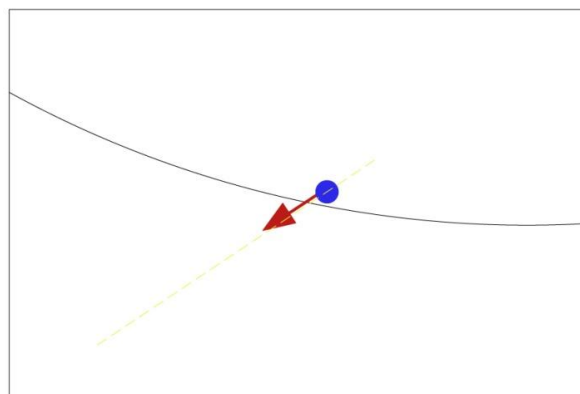
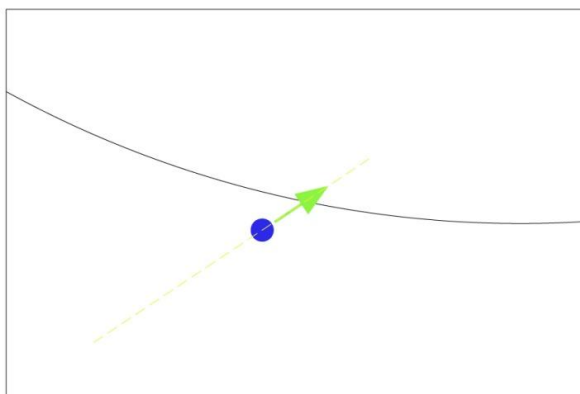
A player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark.



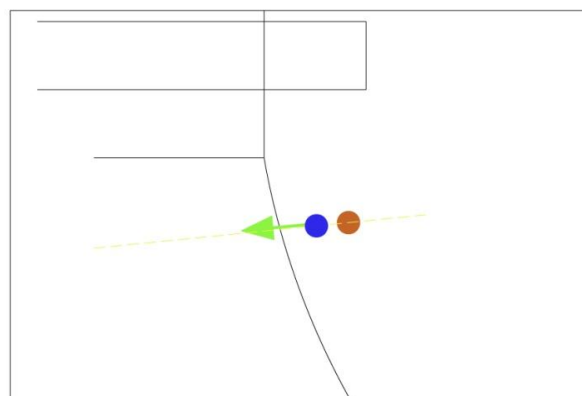
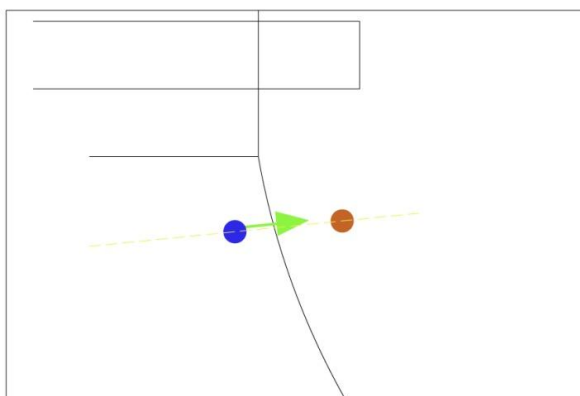
Where a player who has possession of the ball after an opposition **OOF** and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark, provided that the player does not enter the field of play (ball crossing the line) **along the line of the mark** (therefore over the mark). If the player does enter the field of play with the ball crossing the boundary line **along the line of the mark** he is over his mark and has therefore played on. If he then backs over the boundary line outside the field of play taking the ball across the line, the boundary umpire will indicate OOB.

The ball must clearly cross the line both into play and back outside of play. The boundary umpire will give the player the benefit of the doubt where the player may be inside the line of the mark, therefore not in front of the mark.

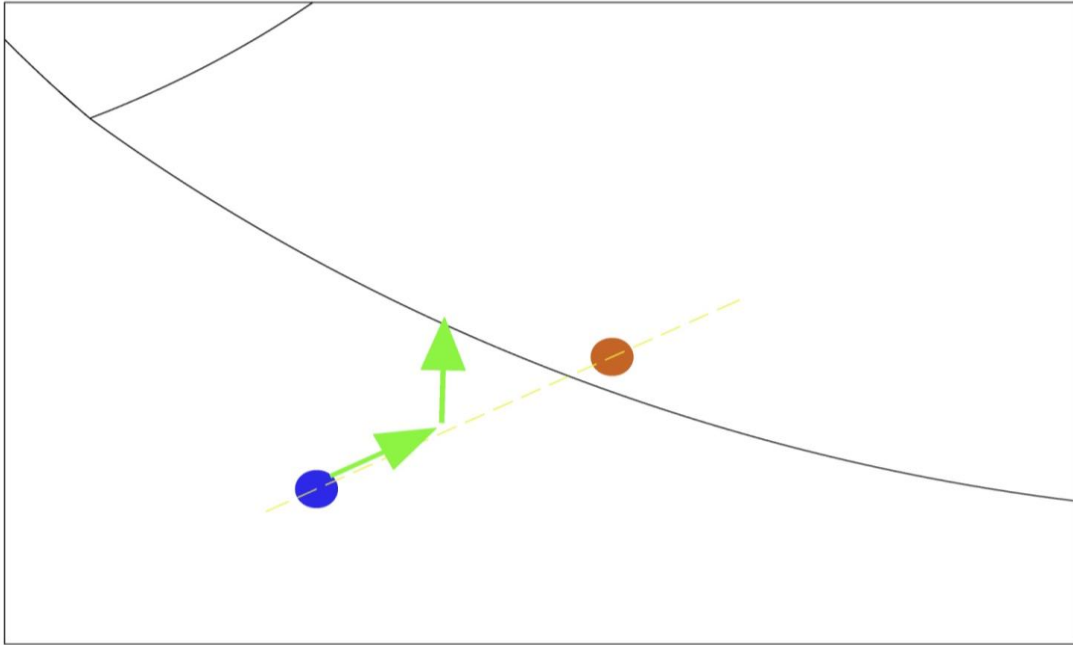
Usually the field umpire will call play-on when the player steps into play.



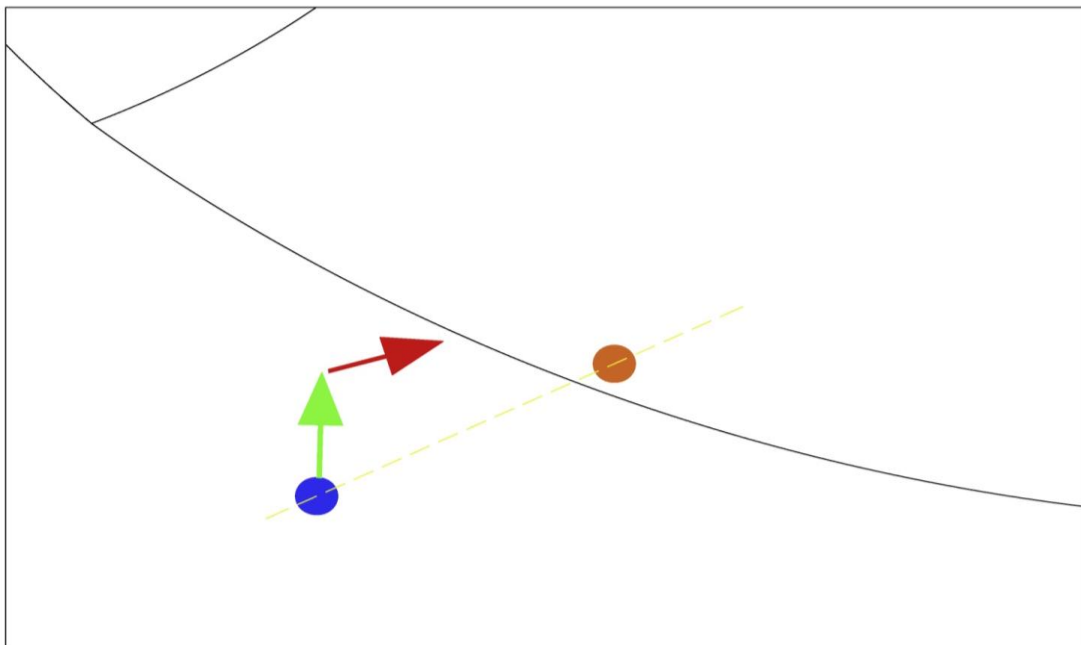
With regards to the above where the OOF has occurred in the back pocket, the field umpire will move the mark back 5 metres. In this circumstance the player may cross the boundary line if maintaining the line of the mark.



A player standing outside play but on the line of the mark, may turn in any direction. Should the player start to bring the ball into play, proceeding directly towards the mark, and then change direction, directly into the field of play, the boundary umpire shall allow play to continue.



Should the player start to bring the ball directly into the field of play, proceeding off the line of the mark, and then change direction and moves in the new direction (including backwards towards the line of the mark), the boundary umpire shall signal OOB. There is no requirement to wait for the field umpire to call "play on".

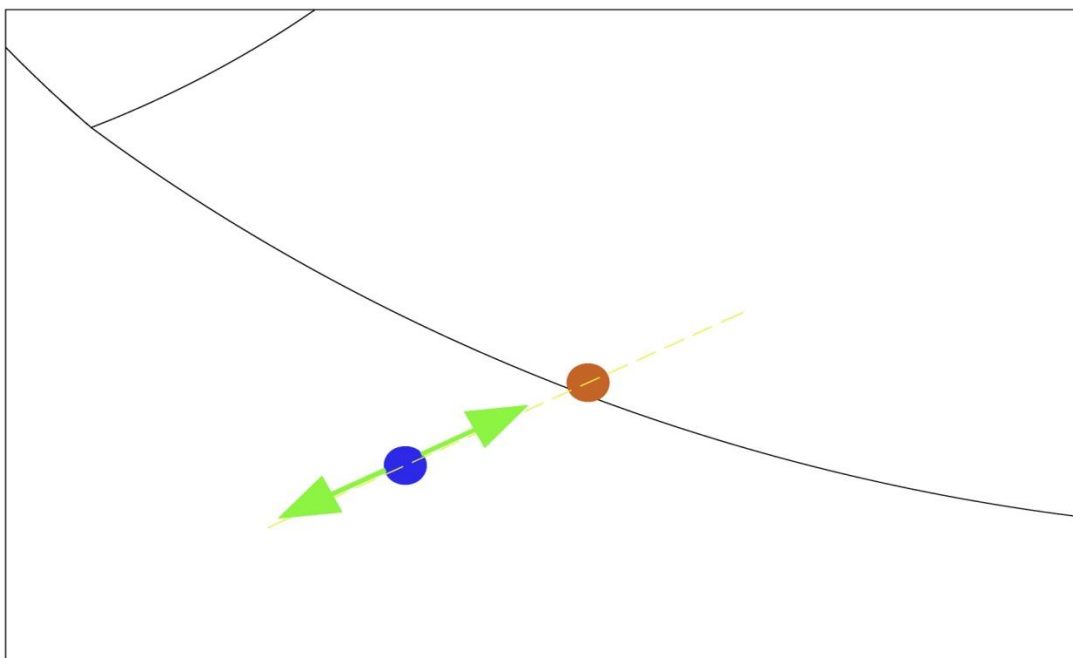


CHANGE IN DIRECTION (AFTER 'PLAY-ON' CALL)

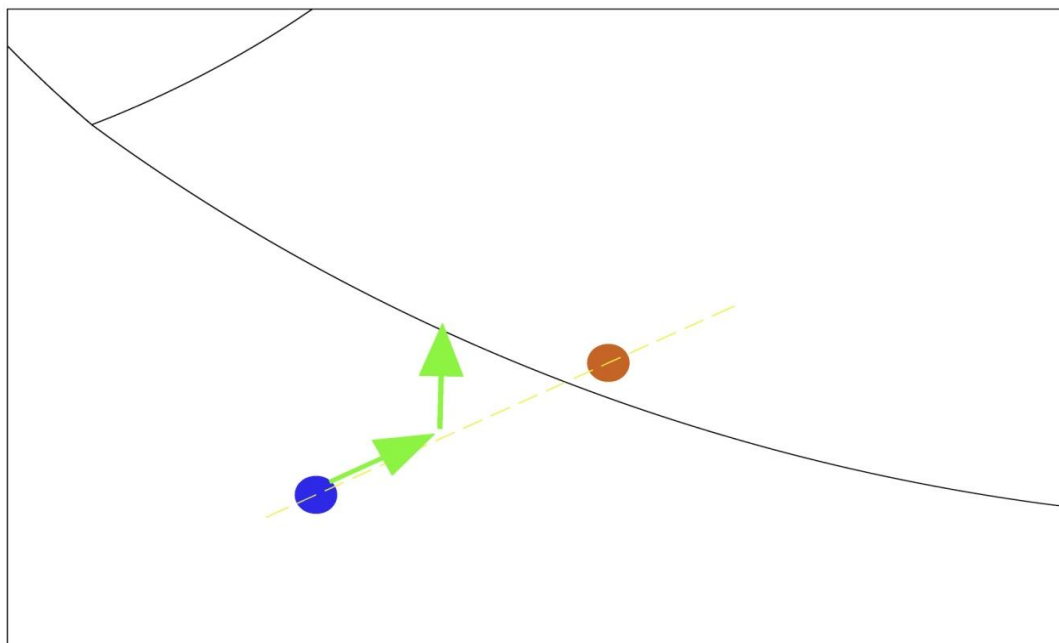
After the 'play-on' call the player outside the line may kick over the mark or directly into play.

The player outside the line, may also stand still for any length of time, before kicking the ball back into play. The boundary umpire shall allow play to continue.

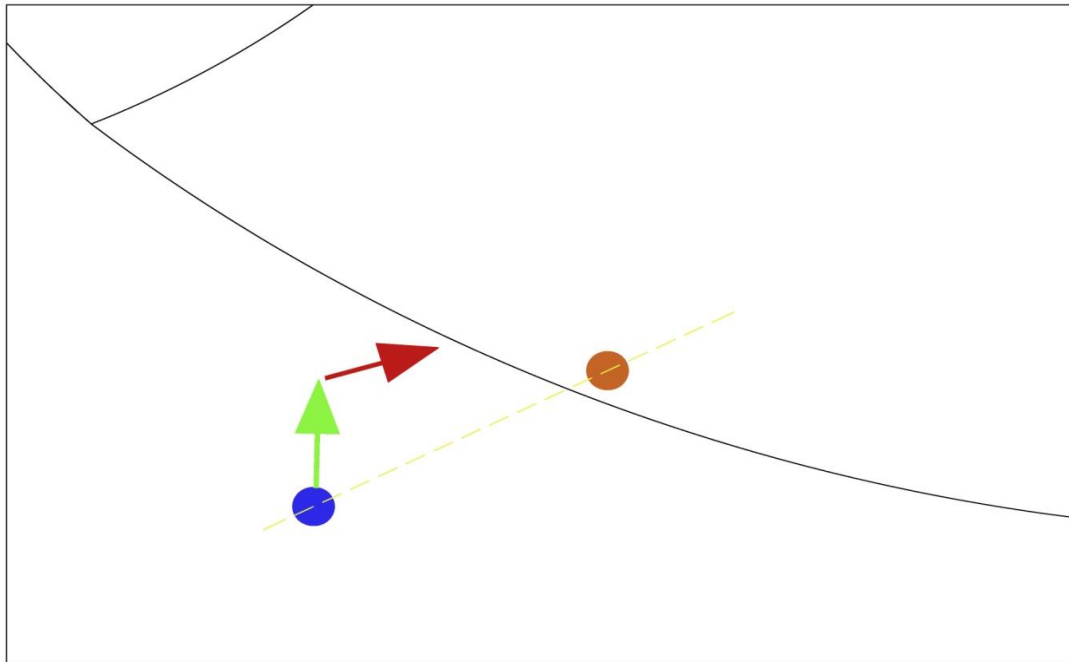
A player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark.



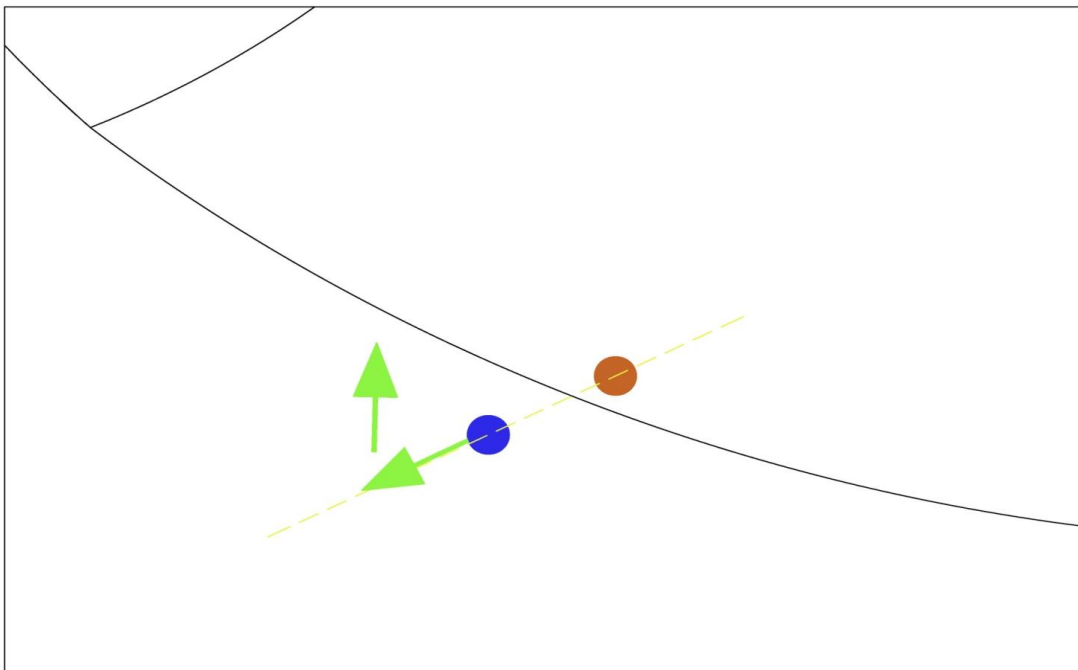
Should the player start to bring the ball into play, proceeding directly towards the mark, and then change direction, moving directly into the field of play, the boundary umpire shall **allow** play to continue.



Should the player start to bring the ball directly into the field of play, proceeding off the line of the mark, and then change direction and moves in the new direction (including back towards the line of the mark), the boundary umpire shall signal OOB.



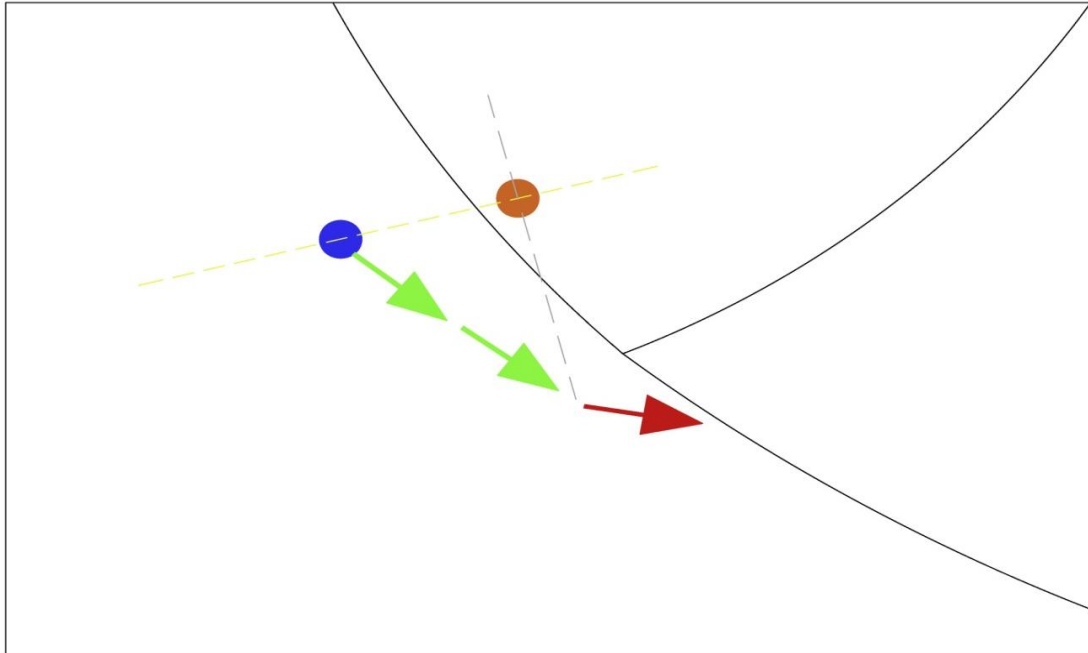
Should the player walk backwards away from the mark, not trying to avoid being tackled, the boundary umpire shall allow play to continue. The player may then bring the ball directly into play or over the mark.



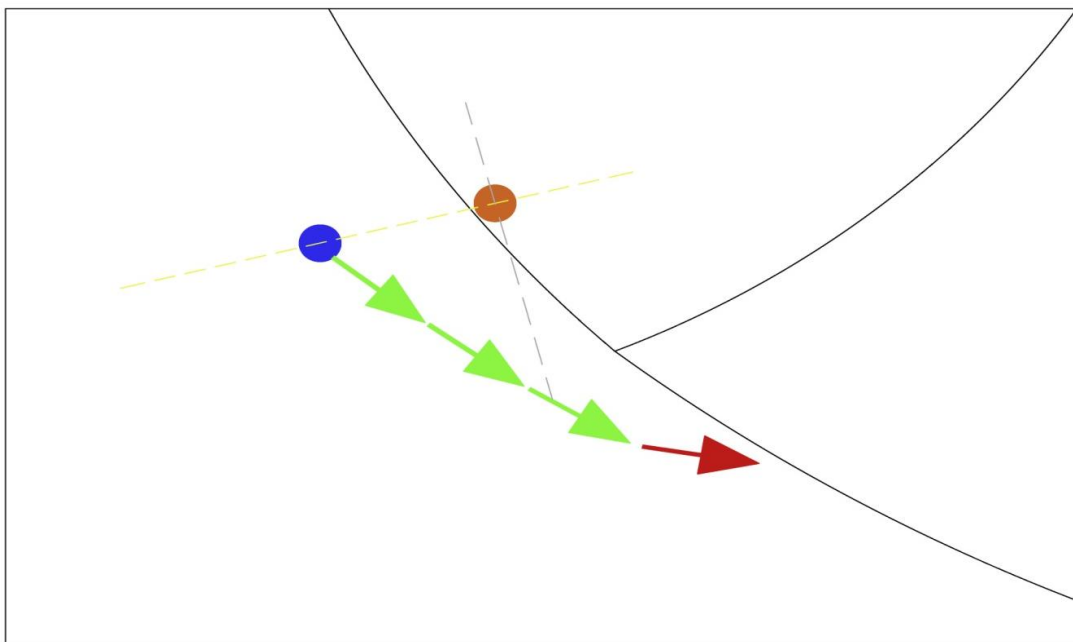
Should the player attempt to avoid a tackle or be tackled, the boundary umpire shall indicate OOB.

RUNNING AROUND THE MARK

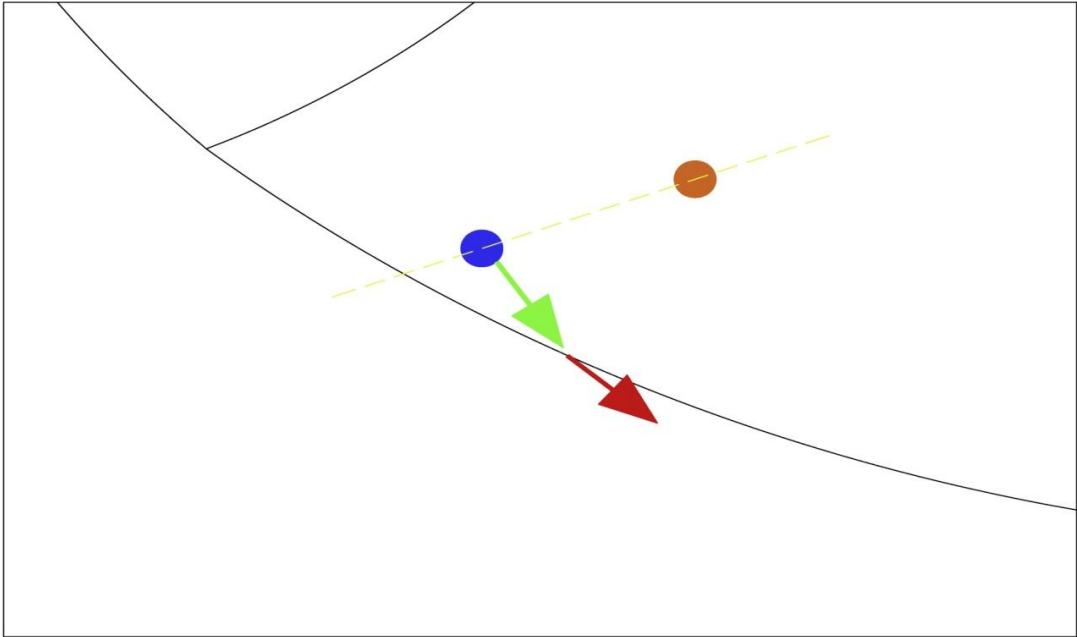
Where a player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing **outside** the boundary line, behind the mark, attempts to run around the outside of the player on the mark, the **field umpire** will determine whether the player has gained an advantage by running past the mark and if so **will stop play** and indicate that the nearest boundary umpire will throw the ball in. That boundary umpire should signal OOB.



In the unlikely event that a field umpire misses this call and it is **clearly** obvious that the player has run past the mark (ie the opponent on the mark has turned to chase), the boundary umpire should signal OOB.

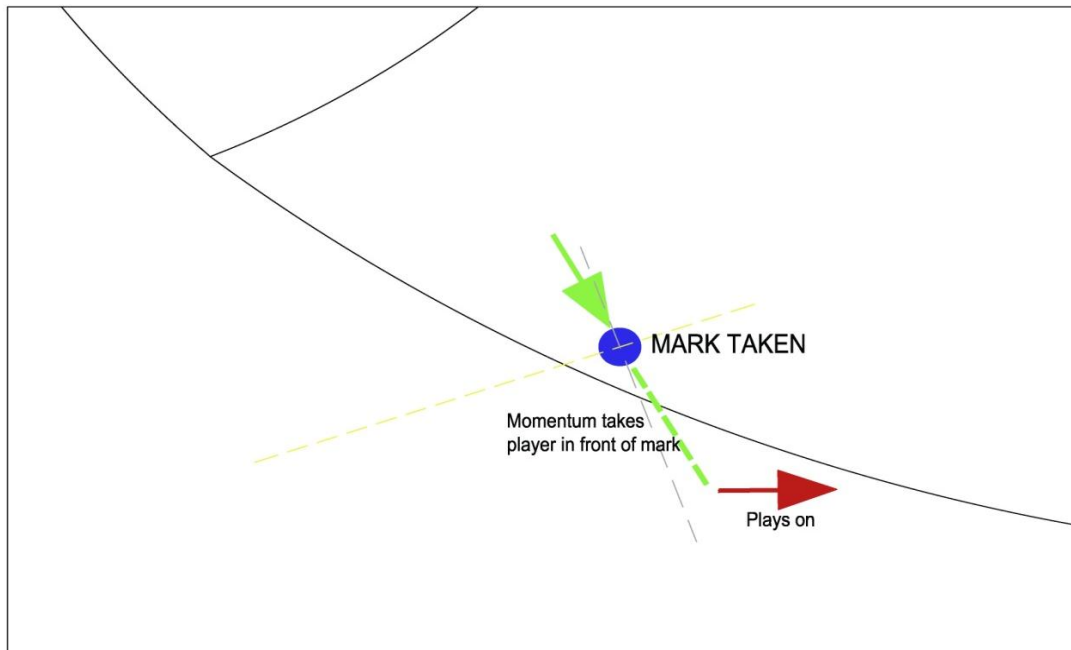


Where a player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing **inside** the boundary line, behind the mark, attempts to run around the outside of the player on the mark, and in doing so the ball crosses the boundary line (regardless of whether the player is behind or past the mark), the boundary umpire shall signal OOB.



RUNNING OVER THE MARK OUTSIDE BOUNDARY

Where a player who has taken a mark inside play and ends up outside the boundary line, **clearly** in front of the mark, and continues to run outside boundary line, the boundary umpire should signal OOB. There is no need to wait for the play-on call from the field umpire.



Where a player who has taken a mark inside play and ends up outside the boundary line, **clearly** in front of the mark, and attempts to bring the ball directly into play, the boundary umpire should signal OOB. There is no need to wait for the play-on call from the field umpire. (A discussion with the field umpire should occur. The field umpire may choose to reset the mark)

