



AFL Boundary Umpire Positioning Guidelines – Three Boundary Umpires System

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.
- DOUBLE SIDE – The side of the ground where 2 of the 3 umpires operate in tandem. Positioning to occur generally in accordance with Four Umpire System.
- SINGLE SIDE – The side of the ground where 1 of the 3 umpires operate.

OBJECTIVES

There are six main objectives for the Three Boundary Umpires System.

1. Assist Goal Umpires

In the vast majority of cases there will be at least 1 boundary umpire 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.

2. Recruitment and Retention

3. Boundary Umpire Decisions

The boundary umpires, on the DOUBLE SIDE 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.

4. 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 for a portion of the game with two umpires working on the one side.

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.

5. Reduction of injuries

In recent seasons there has been an increase in the number of injuries to boundary umpires as a result of the intense and demanding nature of the role. The increased speed of the game, length of season and number of games played has contributed to the amount of injuries received even though the rotational system has been introduced.

One of the aims of this new system is to reduce injuries to umpires. The AFLUD will again closely monitor boundary umpire injuries whilst this system is in place to provide accurate feedback and information regarding boundary umpire injuries.

6. Development of “Team Spirit” among Boundary Umpires

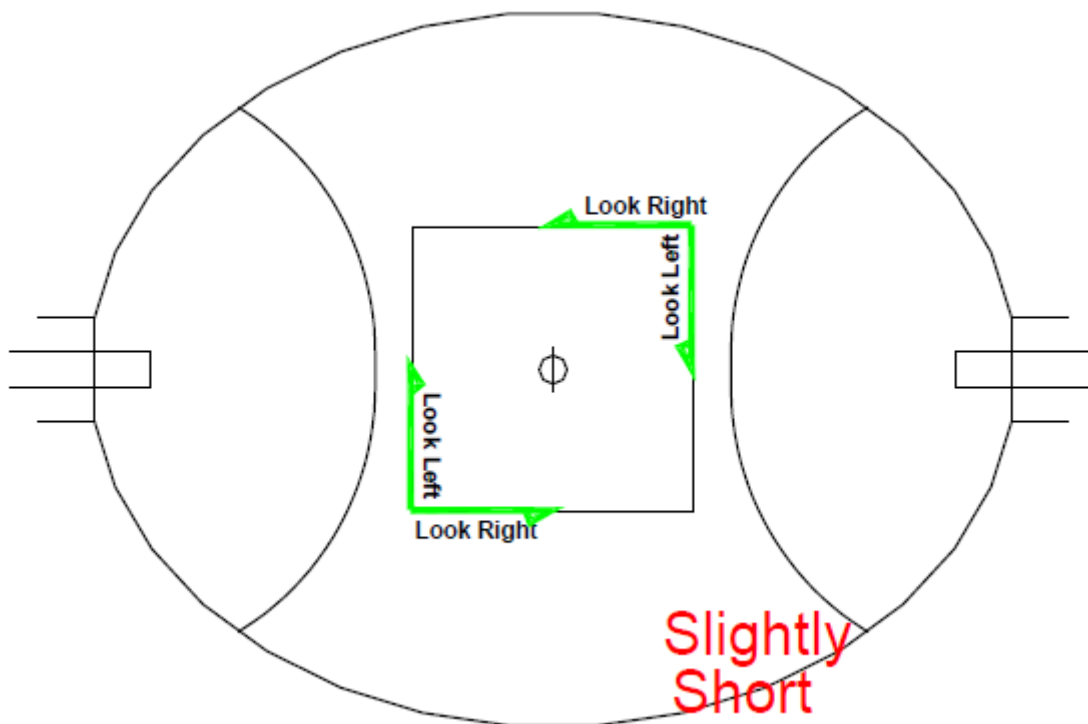
One of the positive aspects to come out of the previous trial of the Four Boundary Umpire System was the feeling of team spirit that developed between umpires due to them working together as a team of four. Working alongside and supporting fellow umpires will hopefully eradicate the individual aspect of boundary umpiring and develop a sense of “team” and working to assist each other.

PRINCIPLES

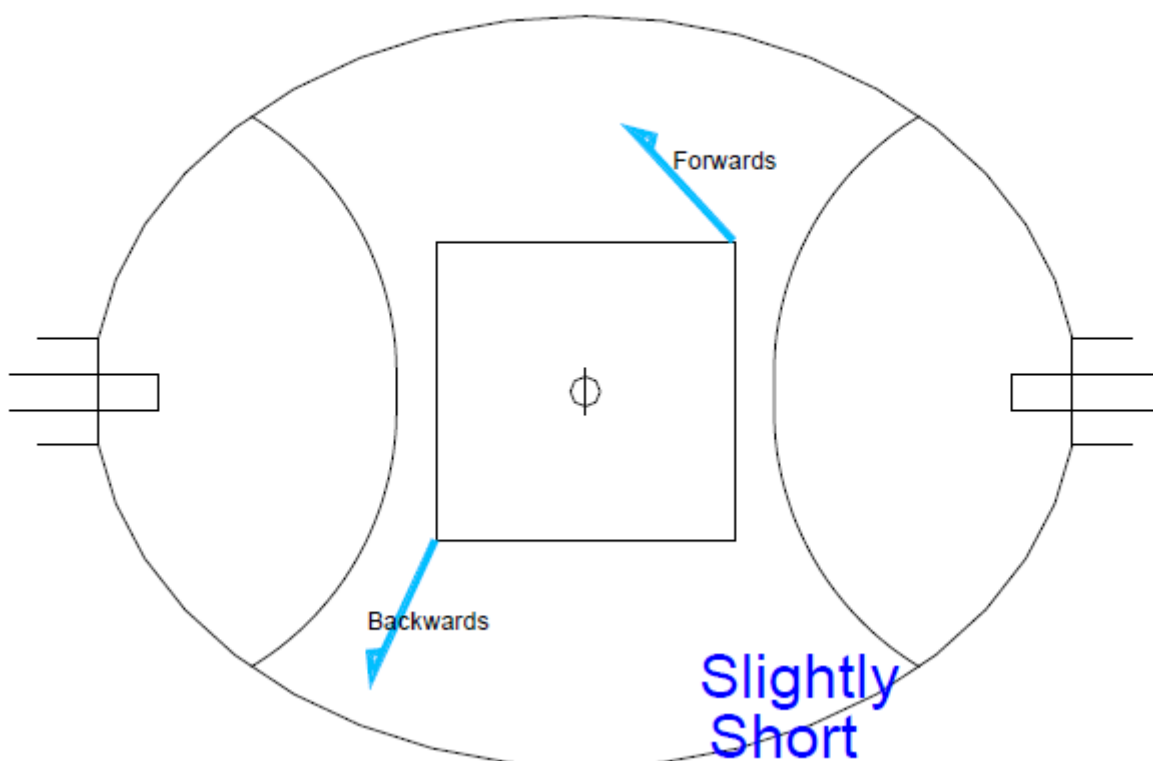
- Every endeavour should be made so that there is at least one umpire at the behind post for a shot on goal.
- The play should be kept between the umpires on the same side of the ground.
- The „single“ umpire will run and position themselves as per previous years.
- The „non-controlling“ umpire will 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 DOUBLE SIDE 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.

INITIAL POSITIONING AND MOVEMENT OFF SQUARE

For the start of quarters 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 umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) will be 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.



After the Field Umpire bounces the ball, the SINGLE SIDE umpire should run off the square at 45 degrees in a forward direction with the DOUBLE SIDE umpire backing off the square generally toward where the 50m arc intersects with the boundary line (see below). The non-participating DOUBLE SIDE umpire 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.

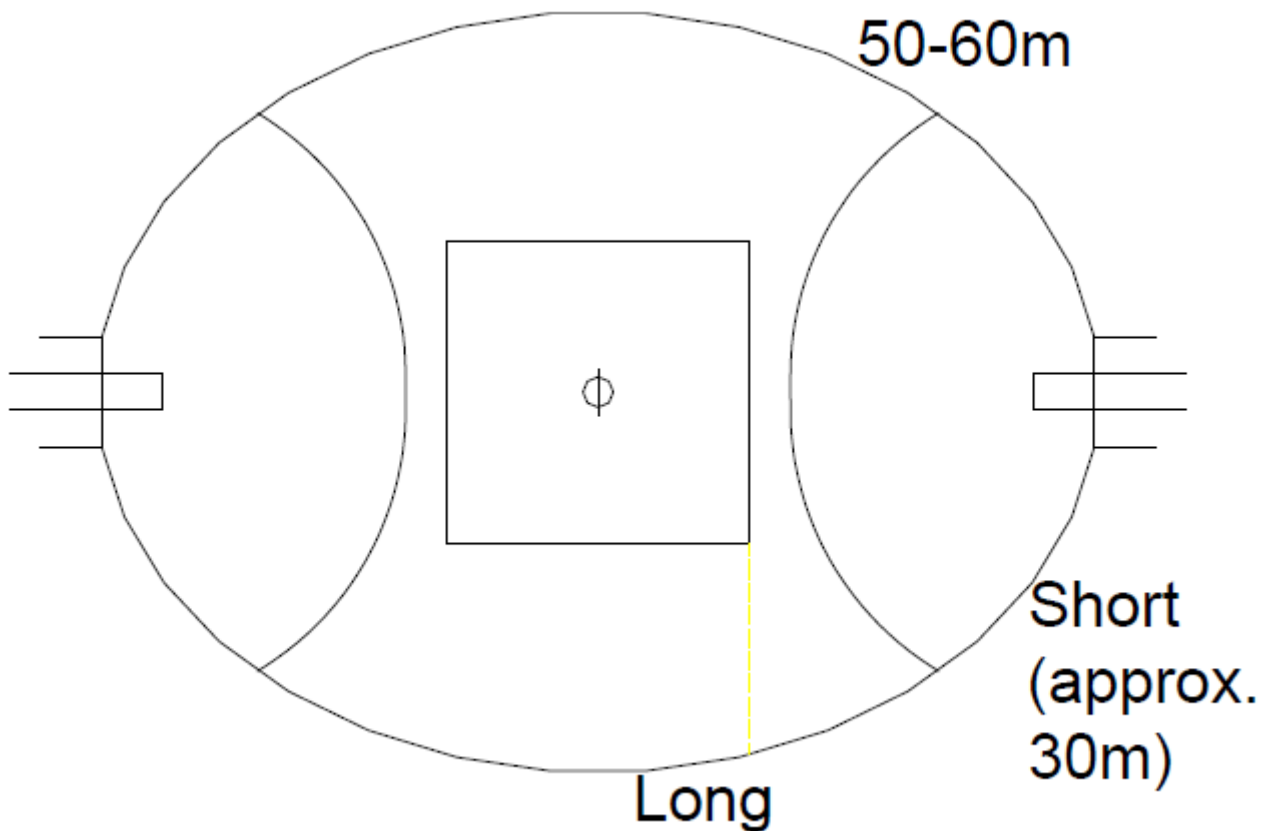


AFTER A SCORE – Kick-in from a Behind

After a behind is scored (if the full back has not kicked the ball in immediately), the SINGLE SIDE umpire should attempt to back out to 50-60 metres from goals along the boundary line.

The umpire at the behind post on the DOUBLE SIDE should also back out from the behind post but should stop approximately 30m (depending on the ground) from the posts.

The long side umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) 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.

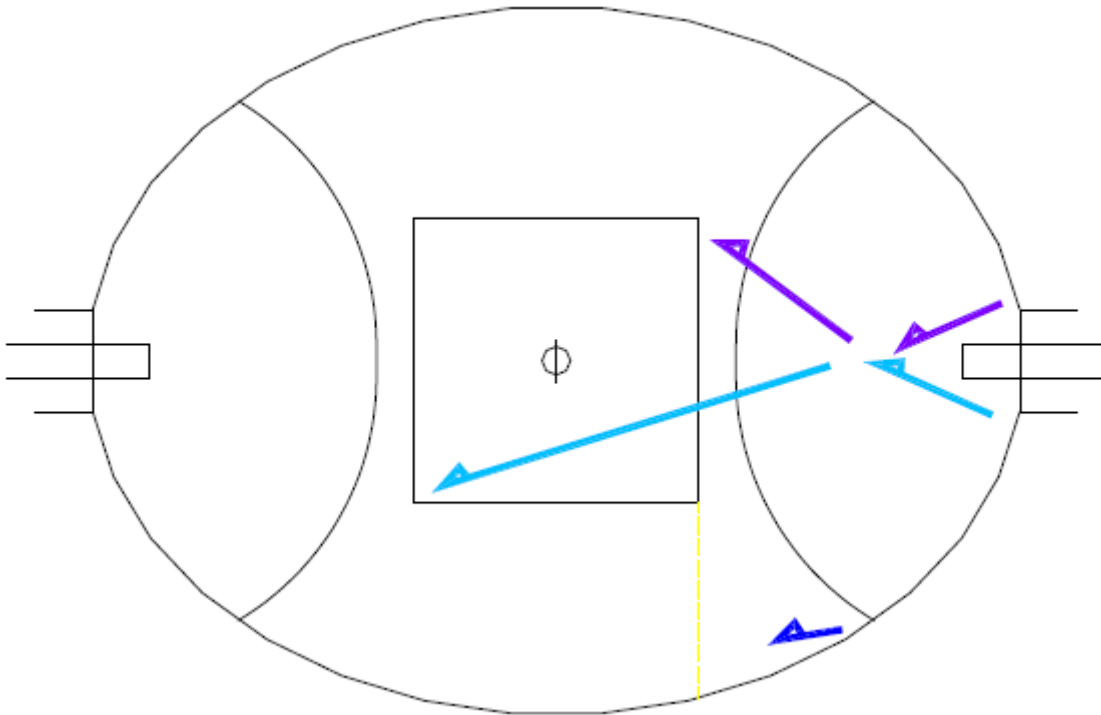


After the kick-in the short side umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) should allow the kick to pass and then follow play up the ground, ensuring that play is kept between both umpires as much as possible. The same procedure should occur for a kick from deep in the defensive area.

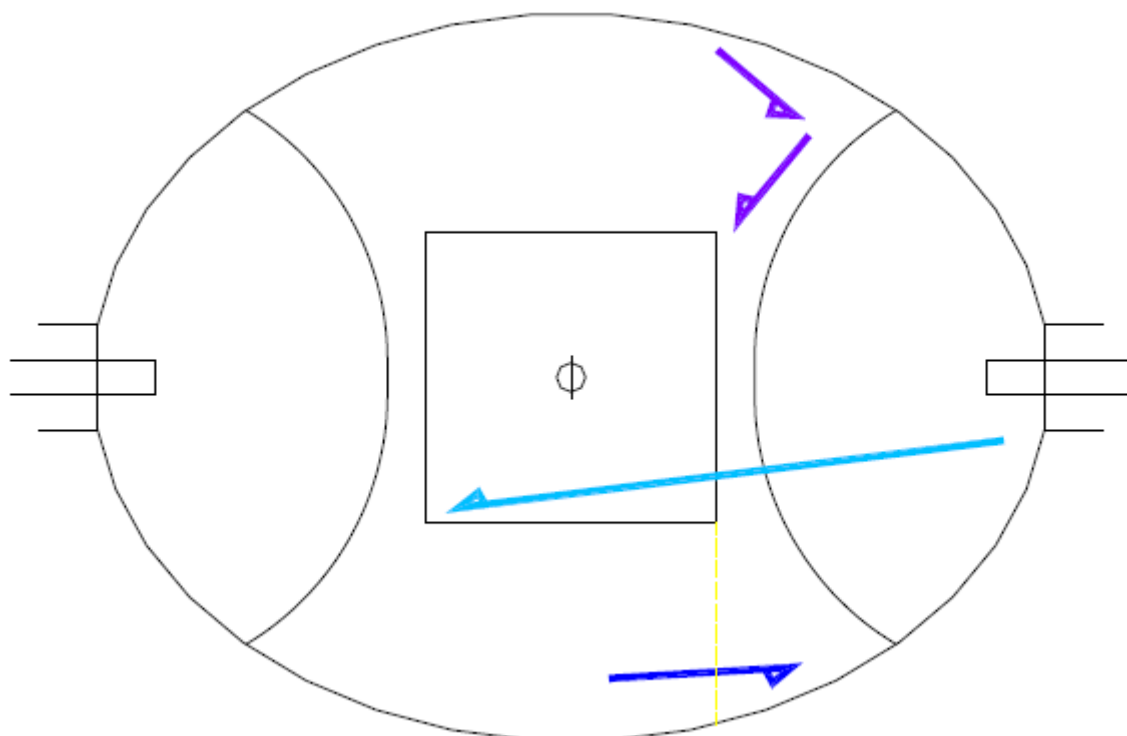
AFTER A SCORE – Run Through

After a goal is scored the run through will be performed as normally by the two umpires stationed at the behind posts. Where possible the participating DOUBLE SIDE umpire should run the long run-through.

The non-participating umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) will adjust position (jog) 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.

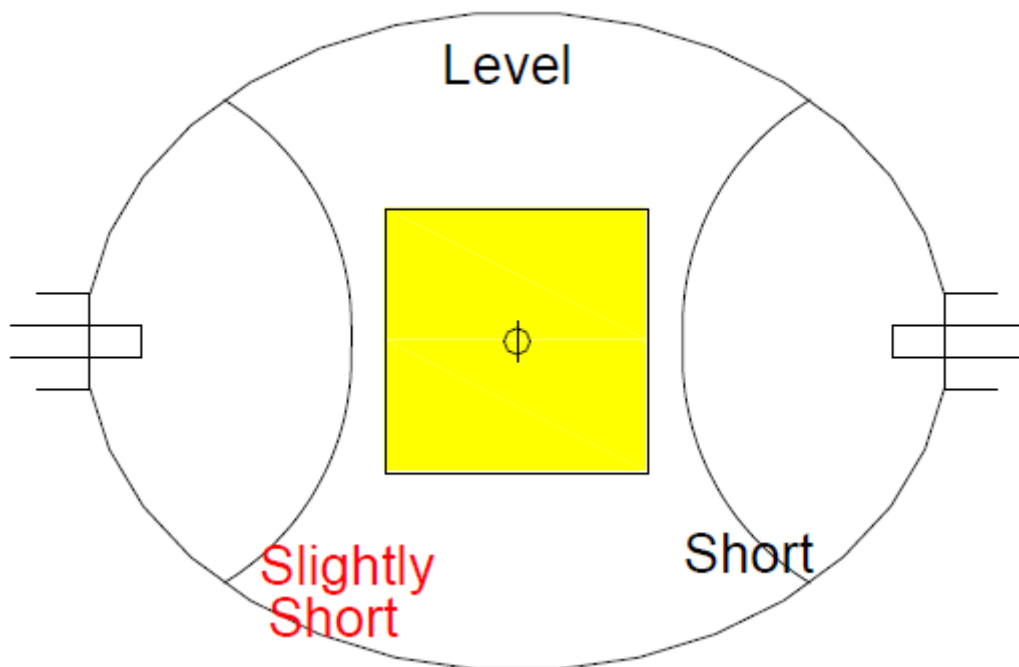


If the goal is kicked „on the run“ after an „end to end“ passage, where the SINGLE SIDE umpire is caught behind, the participating DOUBLE SIDE umpire is encouraged to complete the whole run-through without a ball handover to ease the running load on the SINGLE SIDE umpire.



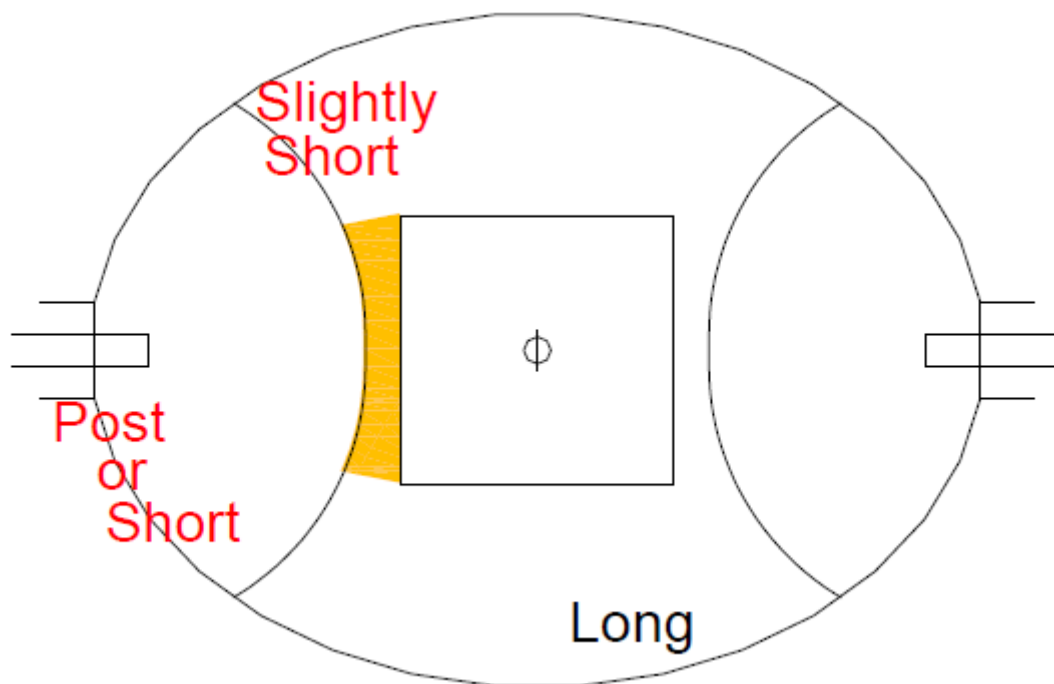
AROUND THE GROUND – Centre Corridor

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

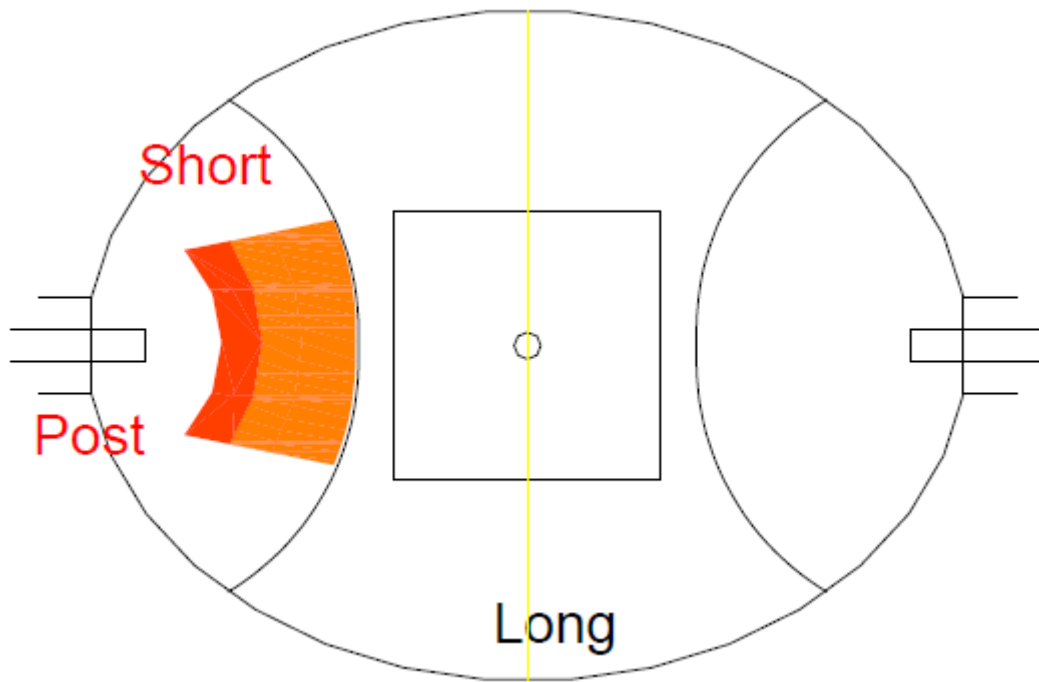


The DOUBLE SIDE umpires should be ready to sprint towards goal should play head in that direction.

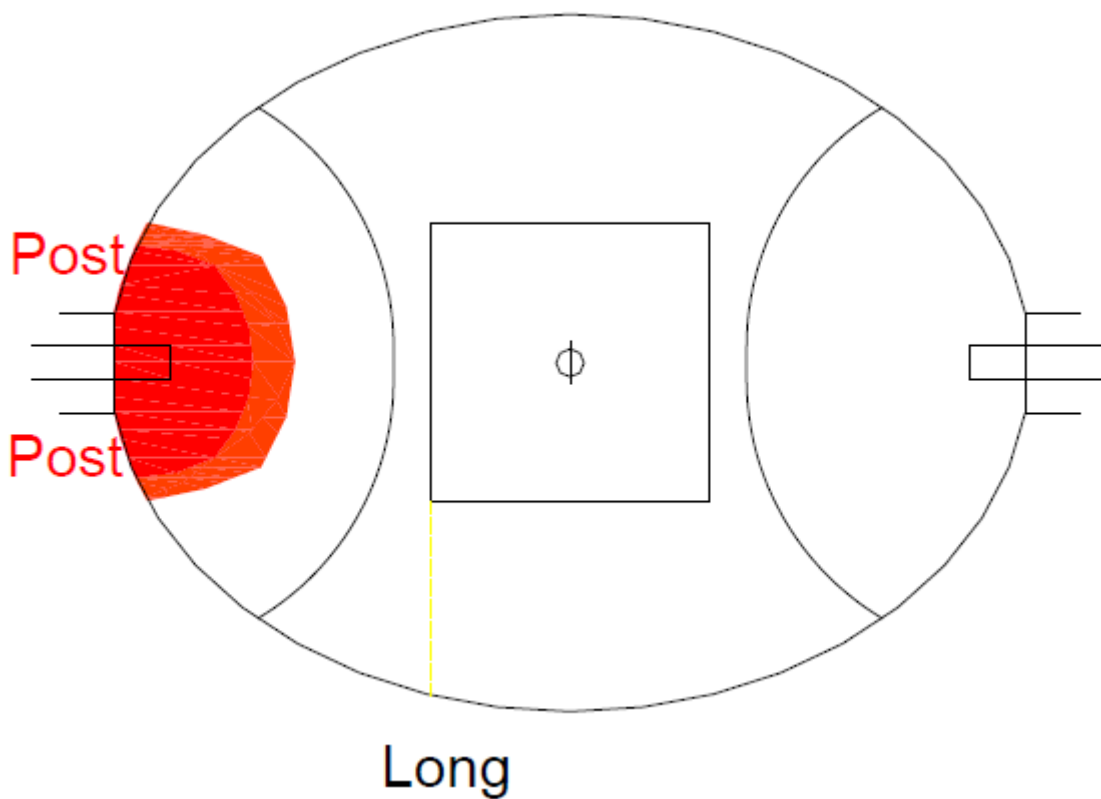
The SINGLE SIDE umpire should be ready to run with play.



When play leaves the square towards goals, on the DOUBLE SIDE on umpire should head 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 as outside the 50m arc, the short side umpires may wait slightly further away from goals. The other umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) should wait at the back of the square (approximately) should play come back towards the centre of the ground. The SINGLE SIDE umpire should be slightly short of play near the 50m arc, ready to accelerate towards goals.



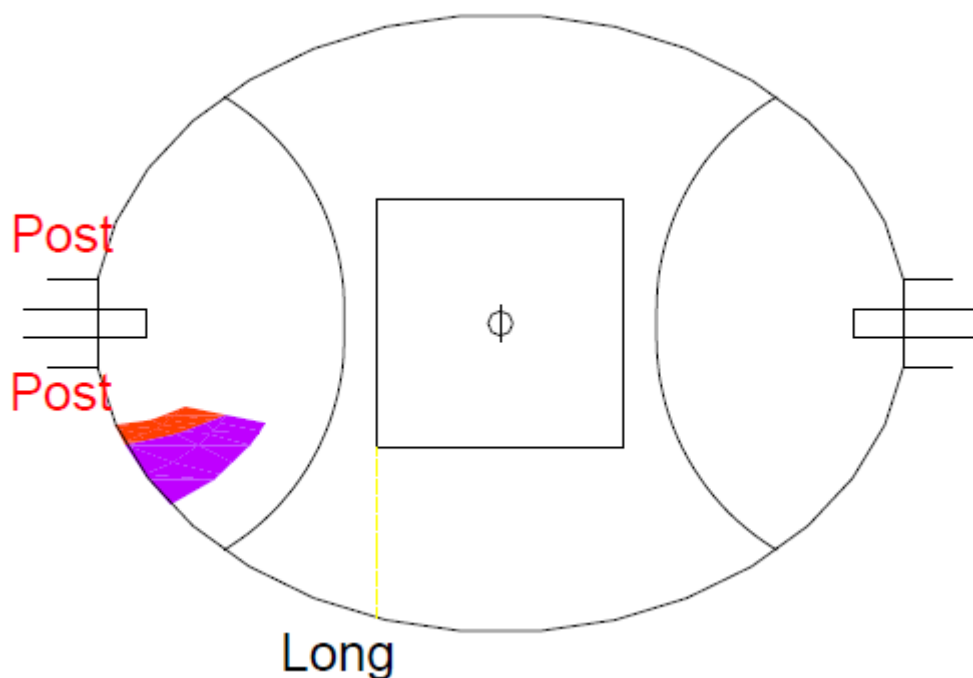
Anytime play is within the 50m arc, on the DOUBLE SIDE, one umpire should be positioned behind the post (1m behind), with the other umpire waiting at about the centre of the ground. The SINGLE SIDE umpire should on be slightly short of play and ready to accelerate towards goals.



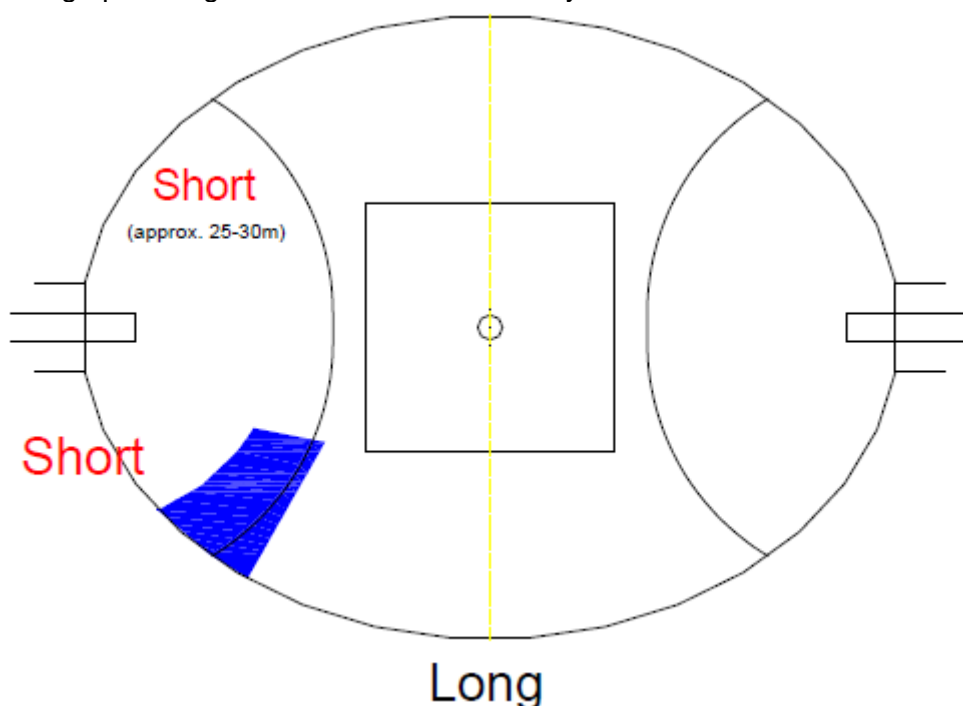
As play heads towards the goals (inside 25m) there should be two umpires behind the posts. The other umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) should adjust position to be level with the near side of the square, but also wide to assist (if needed) if play heads towards the 50m near the boundary.

AROUND THE GROUND – Near the Boundary (DOUBLE SIDE)

Should play head away from goals near the boundary line, the SINGLE SIDE umpire should initially remain behind the post and then move to a position short of play as play heads towards the 50m arc, but should be ready to trigger back towards goals should the need arise. On the DOUBLE SIDE, one umpire should initially remain behind the post, but adjusting wide first (to remain on the tangent) and then towards play. The other DOUBLE SIDE umpire should initially hold position to assist if required. It is important that the second DOUBLE SIDE umpire be outside the boundary line to have a clear view of any potential missed decisions by the „controlling“ boundary umpire.

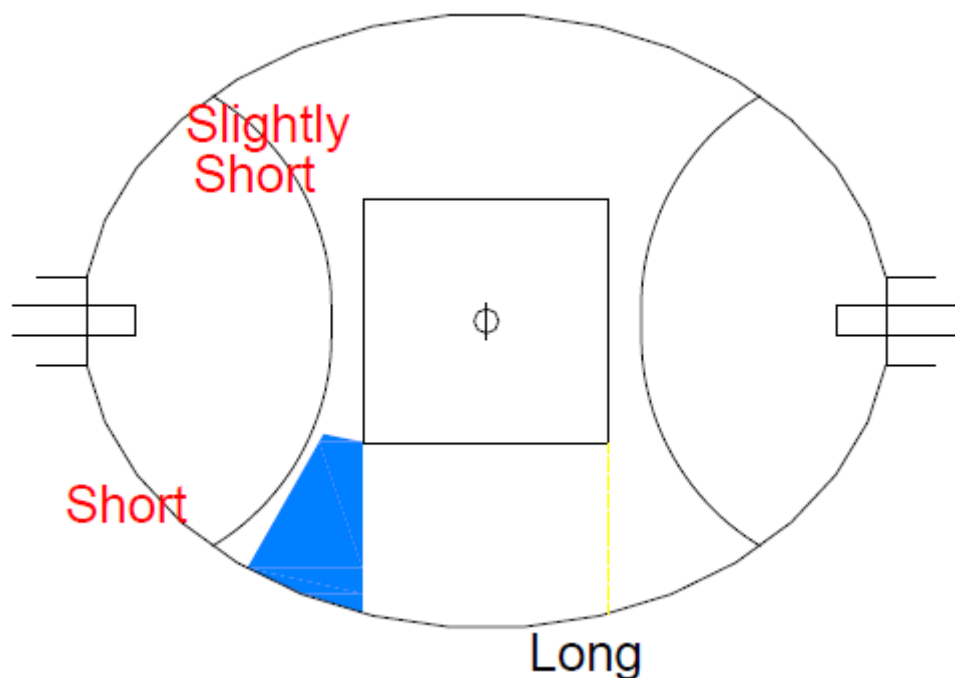


When play is between 40 – 55m from goal the SINGLE SIDE umpire should be short of play about 25 – 30m from goals, and ready to sprint to goals should the ball be kicked in that direction. The DOUBLE SIDE umpires should be adjusting position to maintain separation (approx. 50m) with the short side umpire in „control“ . During stoppages the „non controlling“ DOUBLE 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.

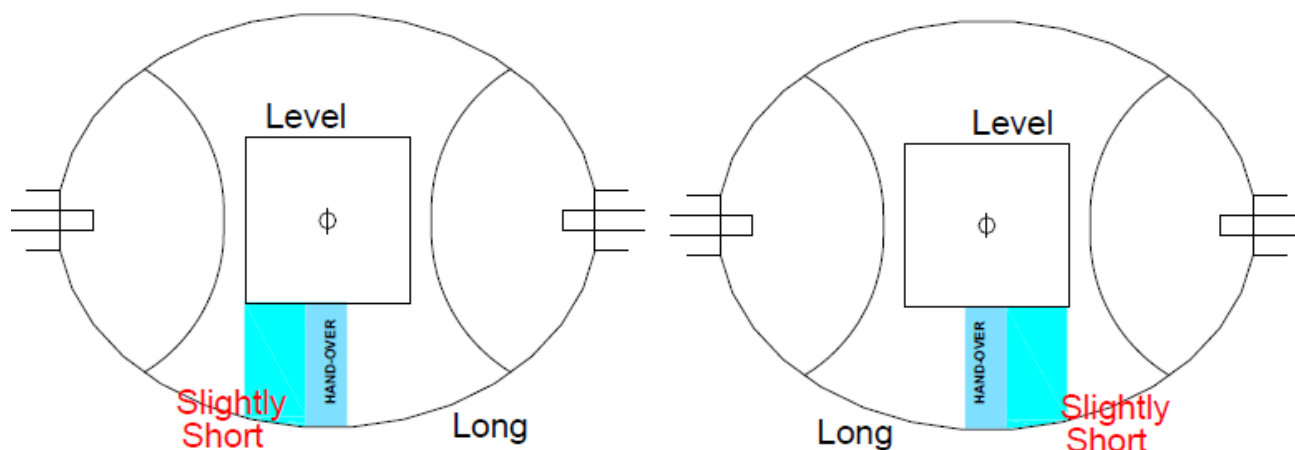


When setting up behind a player with possession about to kick the ball down field, the „Short“ umpire on the DOUBLE SIDE will be just behind the player and ready to chase the ball down field. The other DOUBLE SIDE umpire should be in a position to receive control of the long kick along the wing.

The ball/play should be kept between the **DOUBLE SIDE** 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 **DOUBLE SIDE** umpires should continue to adjust position so that one umpire is approximately 15m from play with approximately 50-60m separation between both umpires. The **SINGLE SIDE** umpire should be almost level with play when it is close to the centre square.

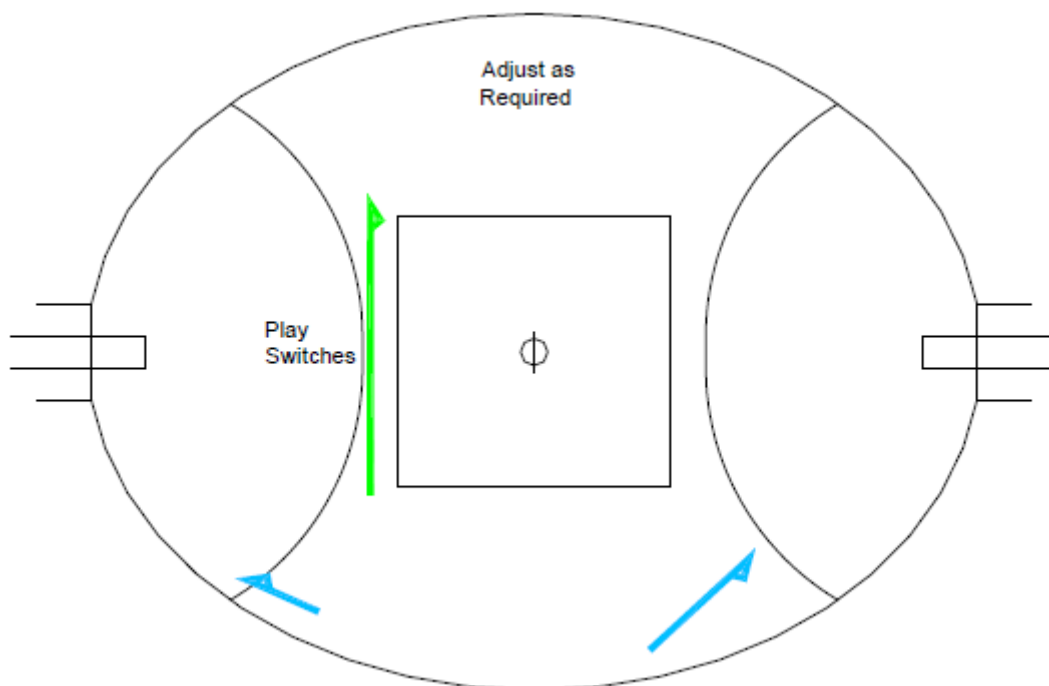


As play crosses the halfway mark of the ground the **DOUBLE SIDE** umpire with „control of the play“ should hand-over „control“ (indicate and acknowledge). Both umpires should then adjust position accordingly. The **SINGLE SIDE** umpire should be positioned level with play. The umpire following play on the **DOUBLE SIDE** should try and maintain control for as long as possible to allow the other **DOUBLE SIDE** umpire to satay 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. 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.

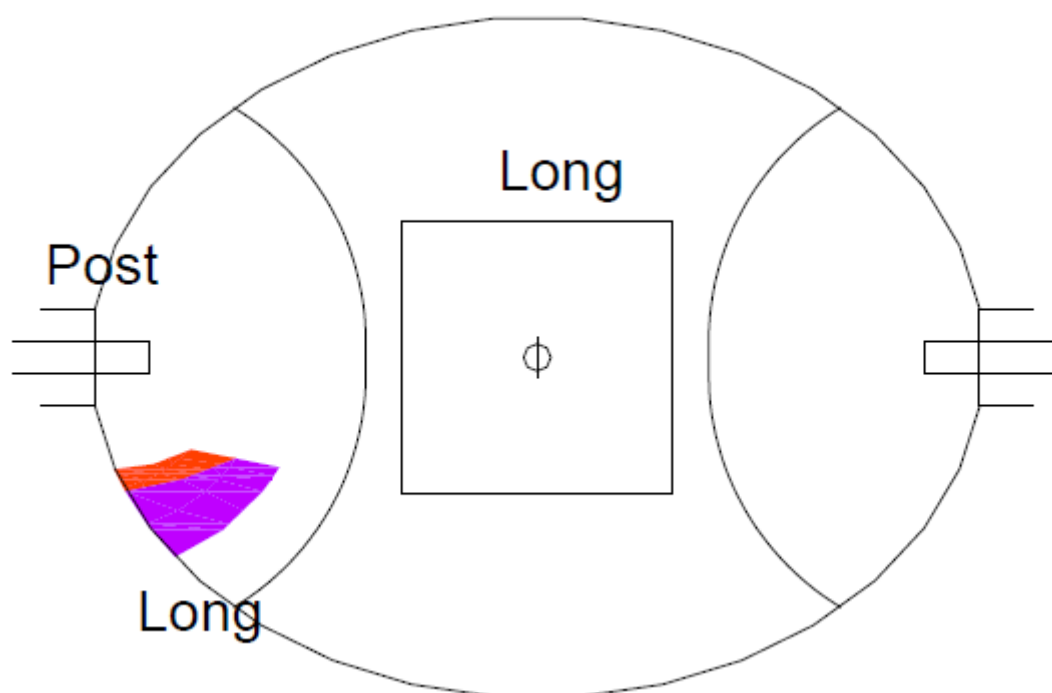
SWITCH OF PLAY



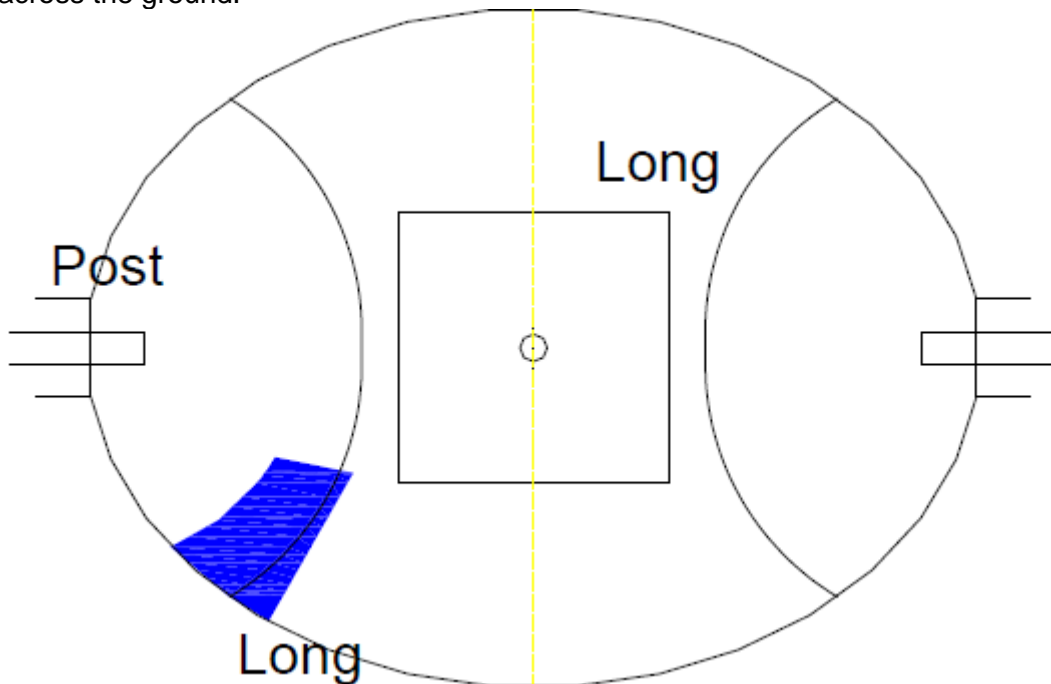
Should play switch sides the DOUBLE SIDE umpires should initially adjust position towards goals and then follow play. This is particularly important for the short side umpire in case of a turn over during the switch. The SINGLE SIDE umpire should adjust position as required.

AROUND THE GROUND – Near the Boundary (SINGLE SIDE)

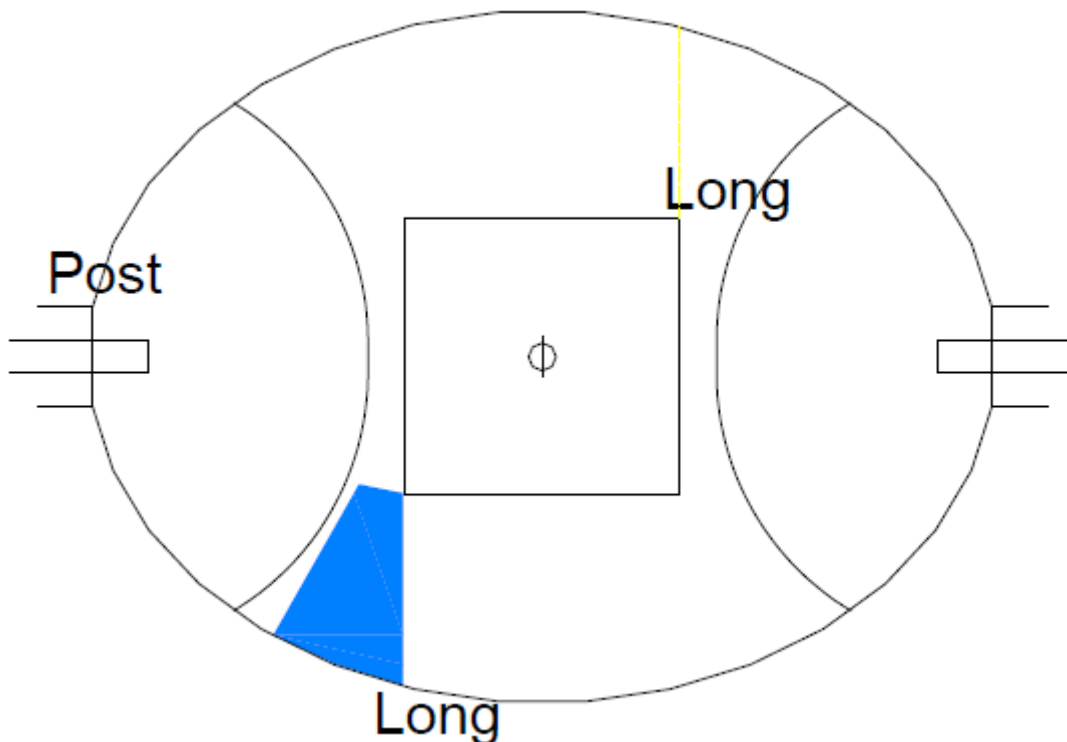
Should play head away from goals near the boundary line, the SINGLE SIDE umpire should initially remain behind the post and then should a stoppage occur, move to a position on the long side play (play between umpire and goals). On the DOUBLE SIDE, one umpire should remain behind the post with the other umpire adjusting position along the centre square towards the other goals, but being ready to adjust wide should a switch occur.



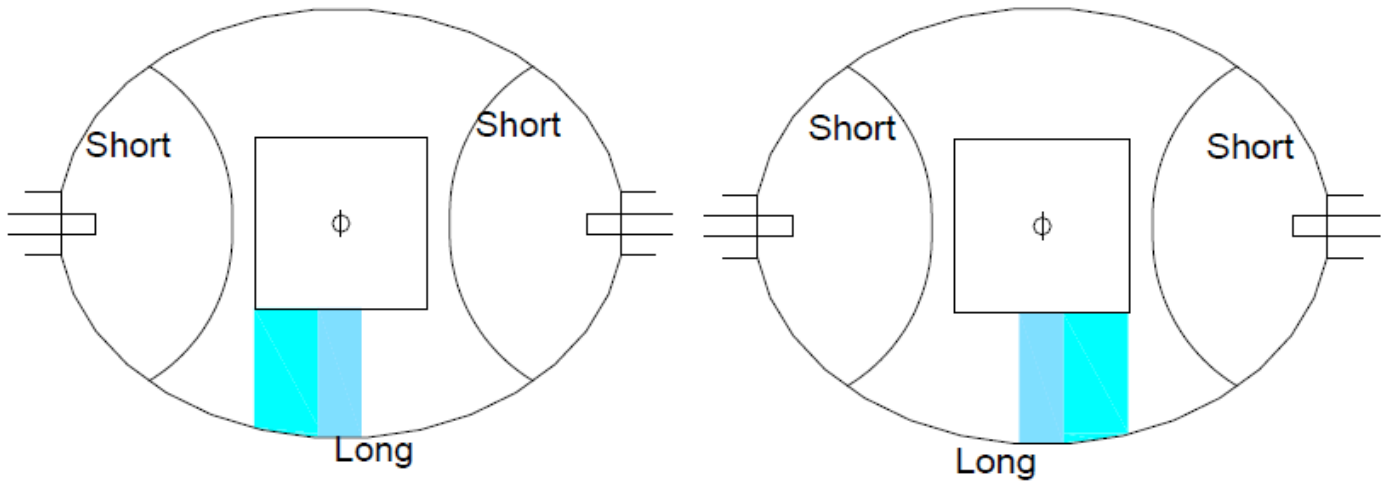
When play is between 40 – 55m from goal the SINGLE SIDE umpire should remain on the „long side“ approximately 15m from play. On the DOUBLE SIDE, one of the umpires should remain behind the post with the other heading towards the back edge of the square. Both DOUBLE SIDE umpires should be ready to adjust position particularly if play is switched across the ground.



When play is outside the 50m arc the DOUBLE SIDE umpire on the post should move up the ground but ready to trigger back towards goals. The other DOUBLE SIDE umpire should be heading towards the other goals. The separation between the DOUBLE SIDE umpires may be approximately 100m. The SINGLE SIDE umpire should remain on the long side for stoppages but remaining mindful of the location of the interchange area.



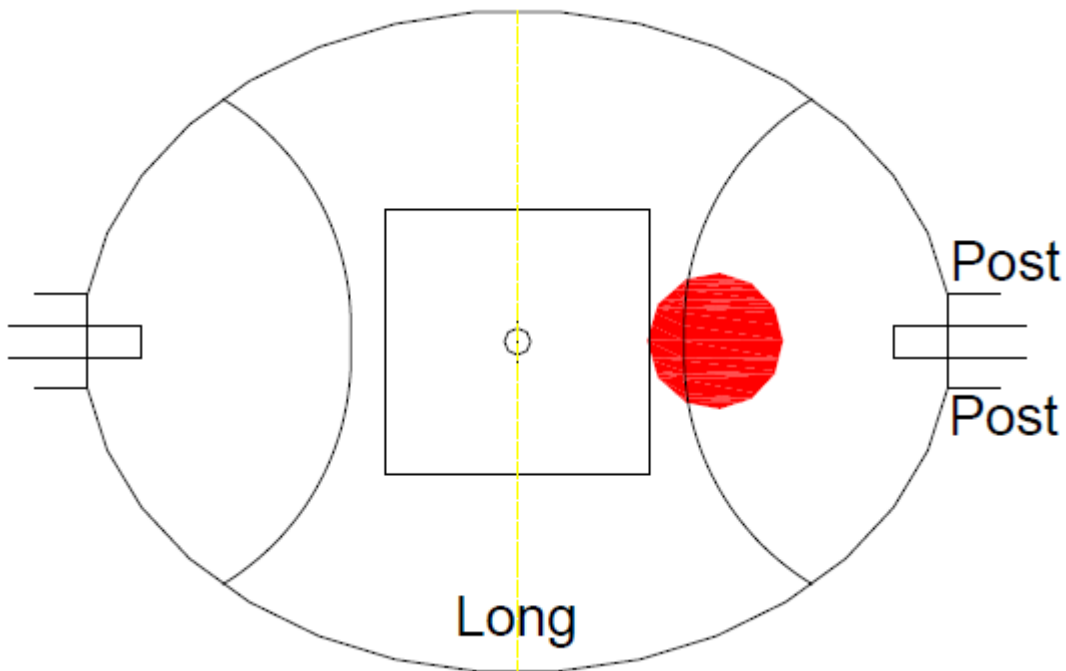
As play crosses the halfway mark of the ground the SINGLE SIDE umpire should adjust position at stoppages to remain on the „long side“ of play.



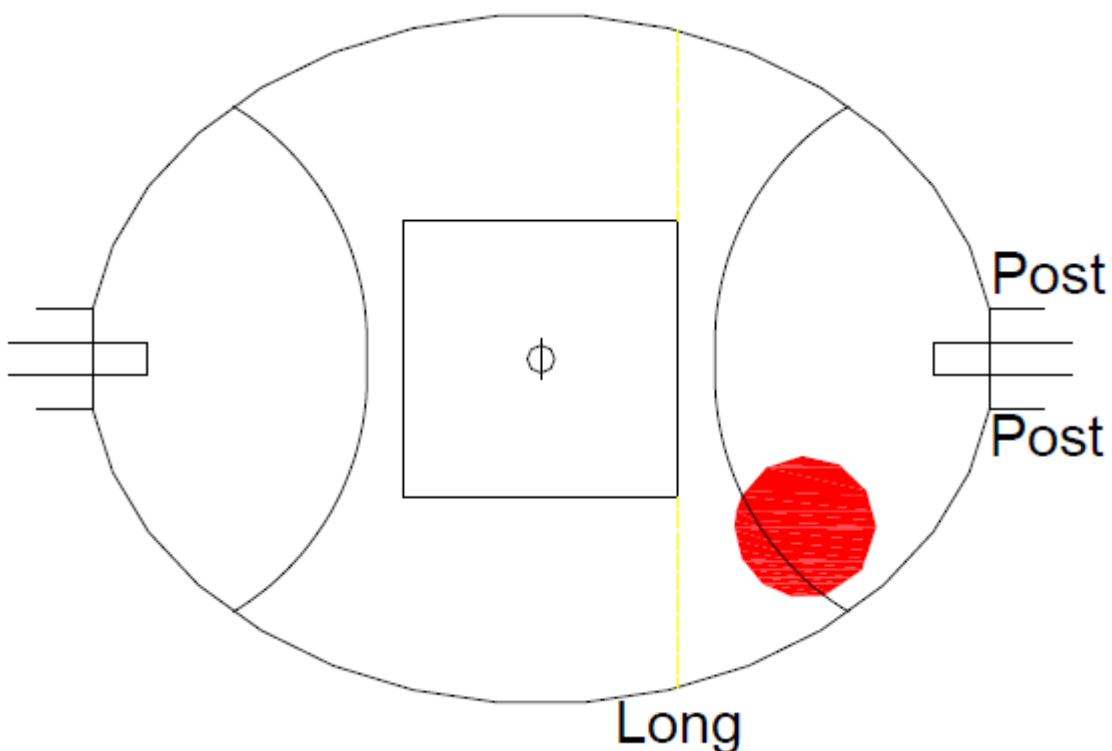
The DOUBLE SIDE umpires will be spread inside the 50m arcs to ensure coverage of the goals. Both DOUBLE SIDE umpires should be ready to quickly adjust should play be switched to the other side of the ground.

AROUND THE GROUND – Set Shot on Goals

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



For a kick near 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.



To ensure that the umpire on the SINGLE side does not get overly fatigued the umpires should switch sides from time to time, generally in accordance with the following:

INTERCHANGE:

The interchange should generally be completed at every goal. **All umpires should ensure that they stay aware to ensure that they do not miss an interchange opportunity.**

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 umpire (DOUBLE SIDE) will adjust position (jog) 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 or to the centre square as required.

The signal when standing behind the post will be arms crossed in front of the waist/stomach. The second DOUBLE SIDE umpire **must** also signal to acknowledge the upcoming interchange. The interchange should not occur if the second DOUBLE SIDE umpire does not acknowledge. The interchange signal whilst on the run heading to goals will be similar to the indication given by the Field Umpires to switch, being tapping the backside.

There may need to be alterations to the rotation in an attempt to ensure that any umpire does not spend too much longer than 5-8 minutes on the SINGLE SIDE. This may mean altering the order or completing an Interchange after a Behind. The signal that designates that an interchange is required, no matter what the score, is arms crossed across the chest, with hands touching the shoulders.

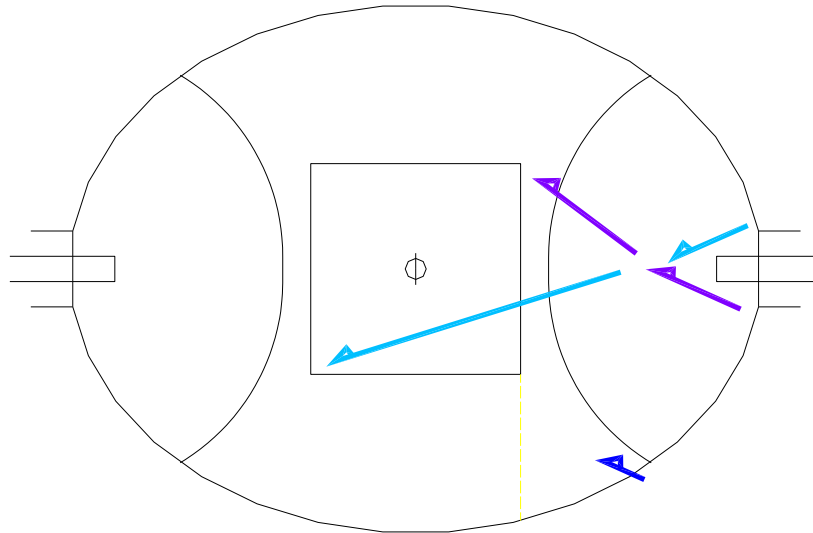
After the interchange, the umpires should interchange back to resume the order at the next available score.

Should there be two goals right after each other it is generally not appropriate for a second interchange to occur. The umpires should signal to each other that an interchange will not occur by an open palm held at the waist.

The following demonstrates the acceptable situations to conduct the interchange.

AFTER A GOAL (Maintain DOUBLE SIDE)

After a goal has been scored the two participating umpires switch sides prior to the hand over of the ball. That is, the umpire running to the short corner will run behind the 'Long Run Thru' umpire prior to the hand over. The umpire who will end up on the DOUBLE SIDE will complete the long run through.

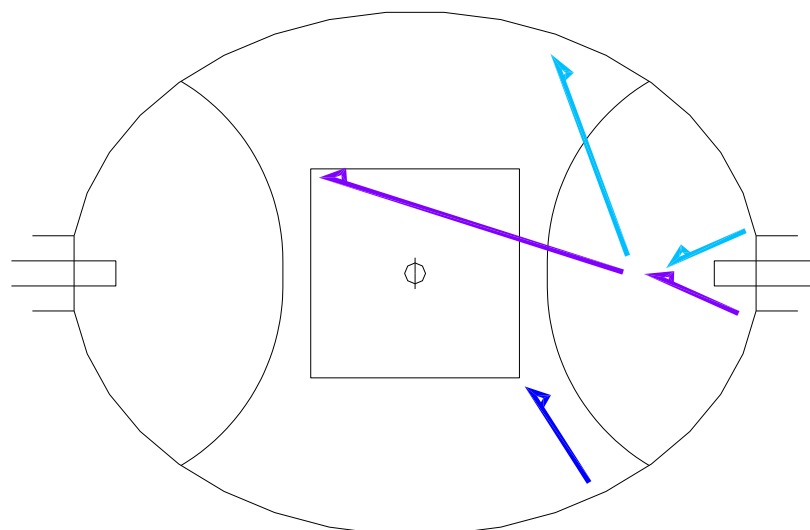


To ensure that the rotation is maintained there will often be the need to switch the DOUBLE SIDE to the other side of the ground.

AFTER A GOAL (Switch DOUBLE SIDE)

After signalling an interchange when standing behind the post, if a goal is scored the run through will involve both umpires running to the same side of the ground. With the umpire doing the short run through heading out towards the position that is just inside the field of play between an extension of the edge of the square and the intersection of the 50m arc and the boundary line.

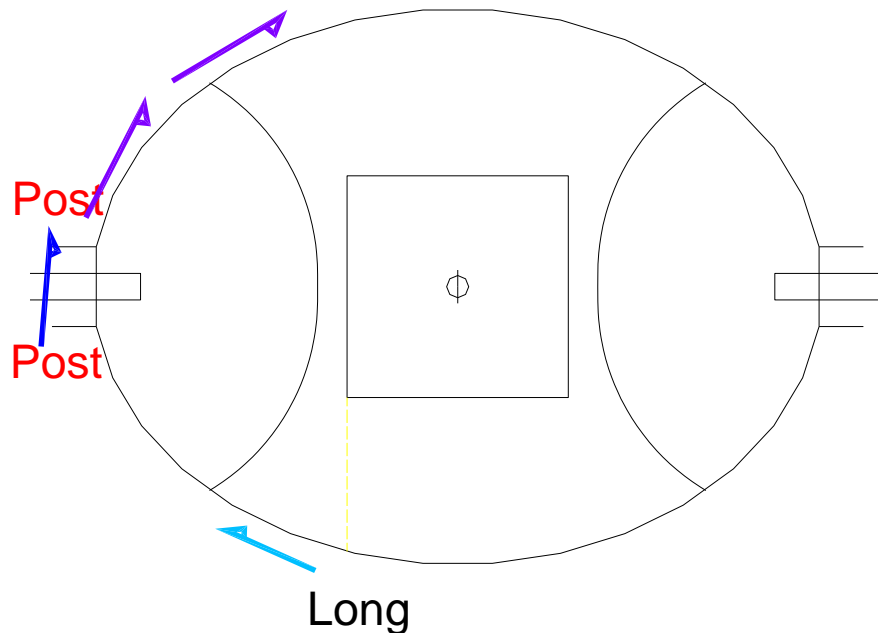
The umpire undertaking the long run should indicate that they will be finishing on the other side of ground. The umpire that is now on the SINGLE SIDE will move quickly to be positioned on the centre square.



AFTER A BEHIND (Switch DOUBLE SIDE)

After signalling an interchange when standing behind the post, if a behind has been scored instead of a goal, the SINGLE SIDE umpire backs off the post as normal, with the other umpire waiting until the ball has been kicked back into play and then running **behind** the goal umpire and any player(s), so that the DOUBLE SIDE will now be on the other side of the ground.

The other non-participating umpire (now on the SINGLE SIDE), who will need to stay aware of the game time and watch the umpires at the posts, will upon seeing the interchange, adjust position to be about 50-60m from the goals.



Should an interchange be required and a free kick be awarded to a defender in the goal square, the above can be used to affect the interchange. The umpire preparing to run behind the goal umpire should wait until the defender has played on or kicked the ball to a team mate.

All umpires, particularly the DOUBLE SIDE umpire not directly involved in the interchange, should ensure that they do not miss an interchange opportunity and move to the correct position during the interchange.

Should an interchange not be required the run through will be performed as normally by the two umpires stationed at the behind posts. The participating DOUBLE SIDE umpire should run the long run-through.

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

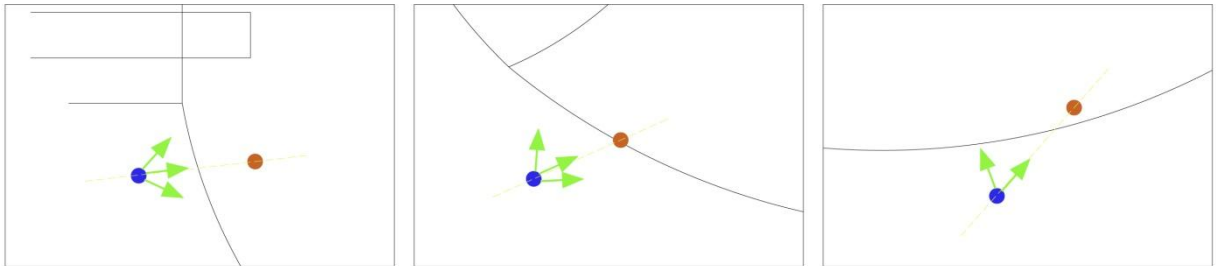
Where a player marks the ball inside the boundary line but after marking the ball ends up outside the boundary, if there after a brief delay there is no whistle from the field umpire, the boundary umpire should indicate OOB (touched) and then go to the field umpire and confirm that the ball was marked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

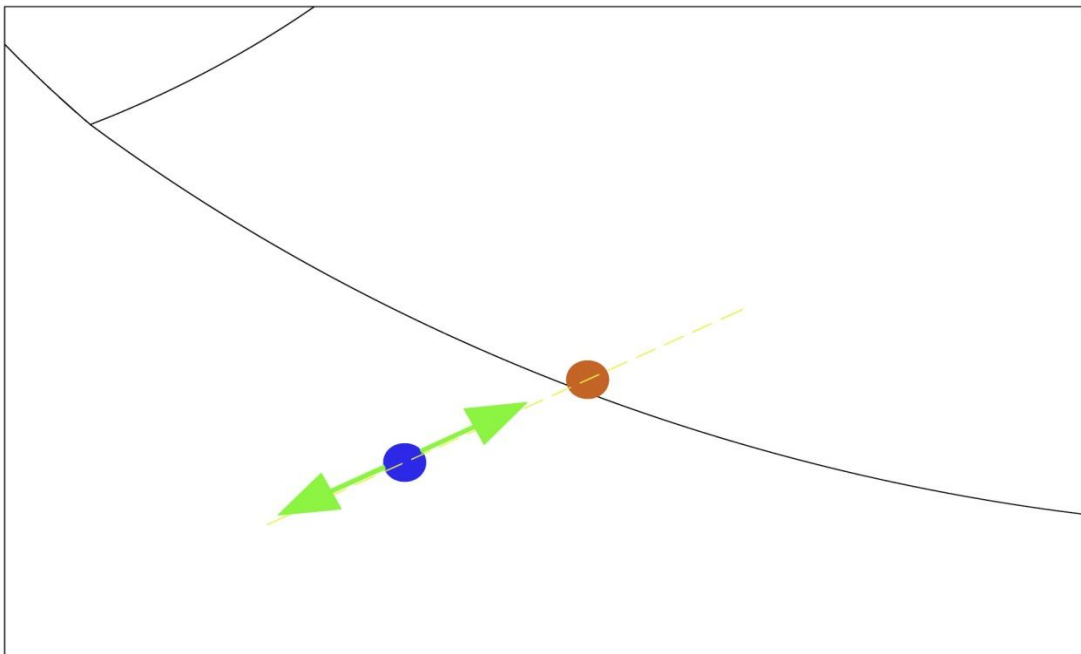
Where a player, attempting to mark the ball, first touches the ball inside the boundary line but does not control the ball and then juggles it over the line, ending up outside the boundary, the boundary umpire should indicate OOB (touched).

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.



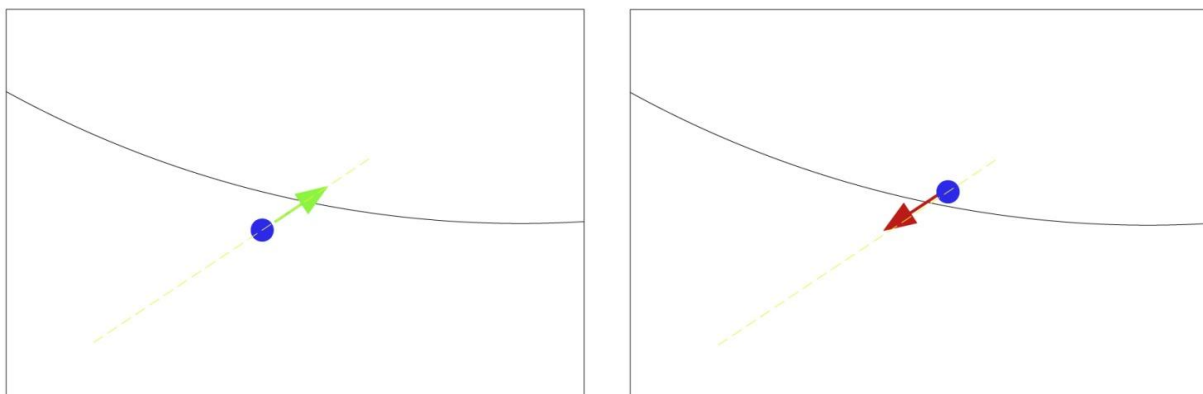
A player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark.



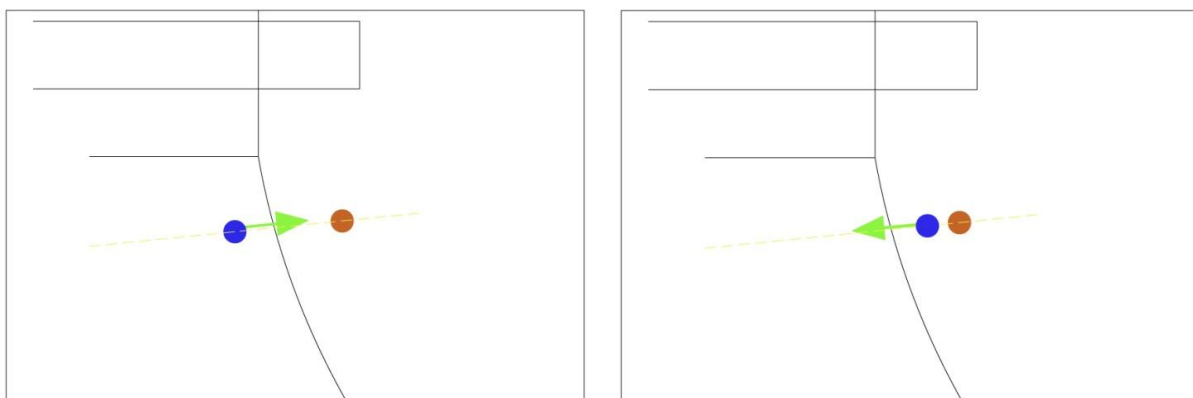
Where a player who has possession of the ball after an opposition **OOF** and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark, provided that the player does not enter the field of play (ball crossing the line) **along the line of the 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.

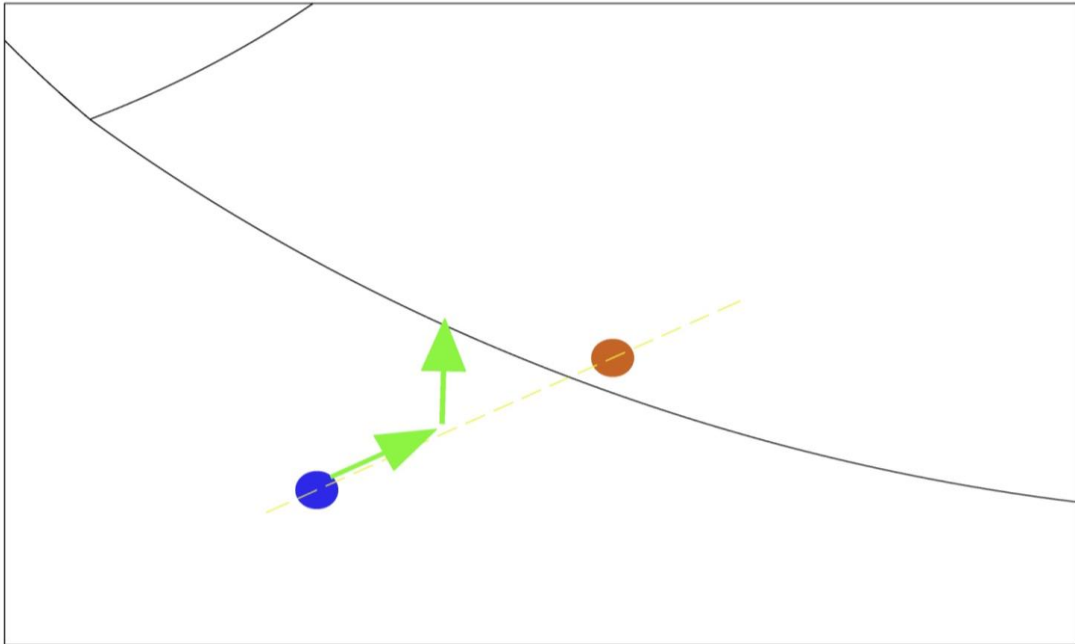
Usually the field umpire will call play-on when the player steps into play.



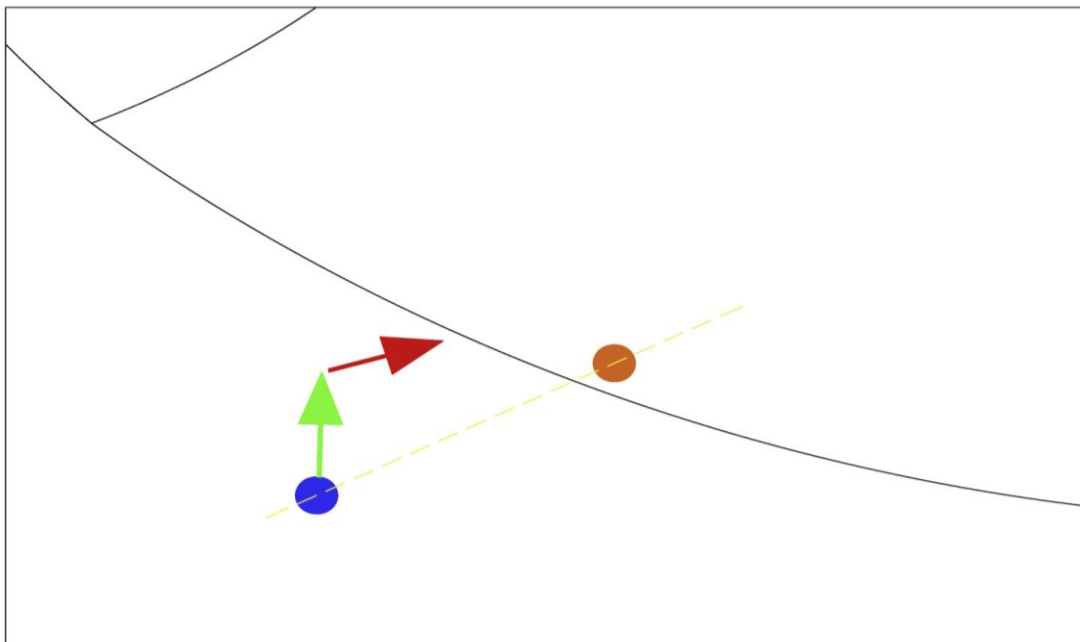
With regards to the above where the OOF has occurred in the back pocket, the field umpire will move the mark back 5 metres. In this circumstance the player may cross the boundary line if maintaining the line of the mark.



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".

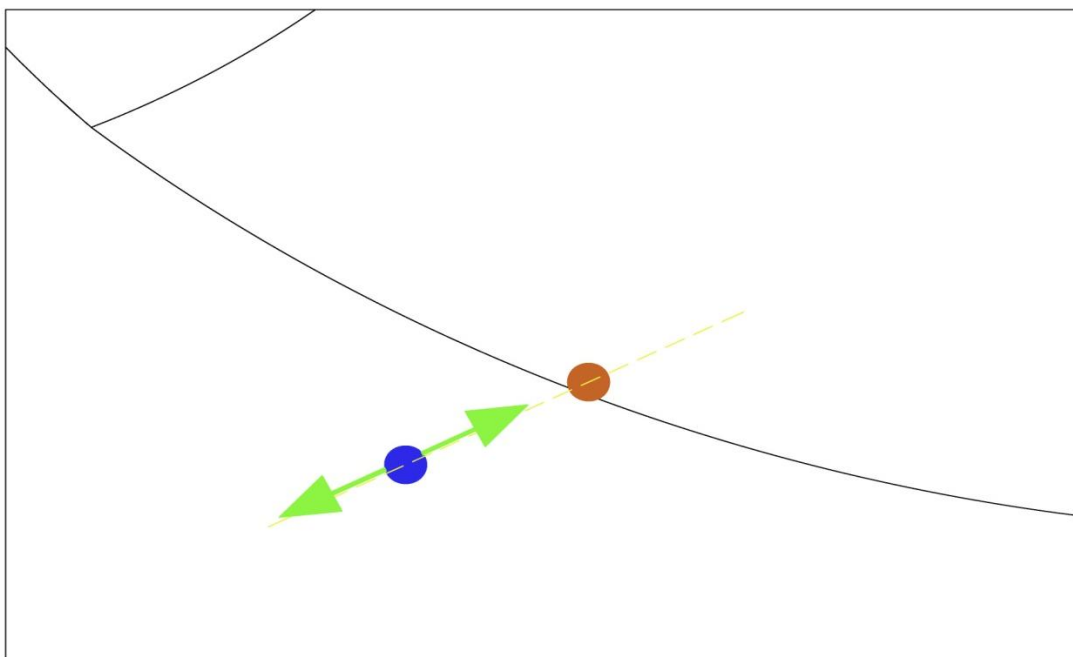


CHANGE IN DIRECTION (AFTER 'PLAY-ON' CALL)

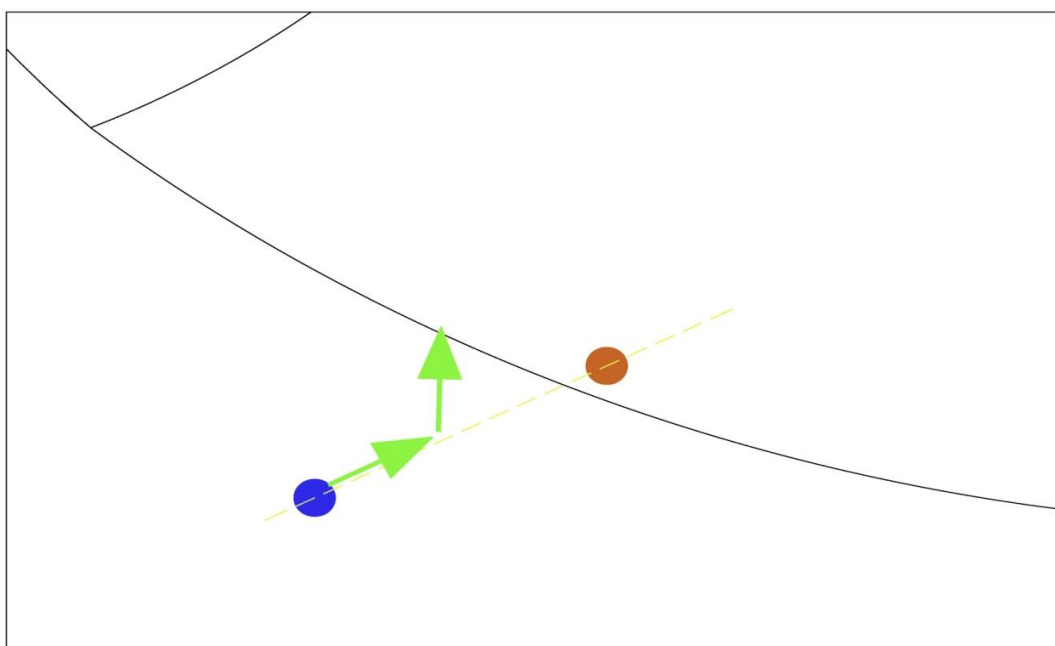
After the 'play-on' call the player outside the line may kick over the mark or directly into play.

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.

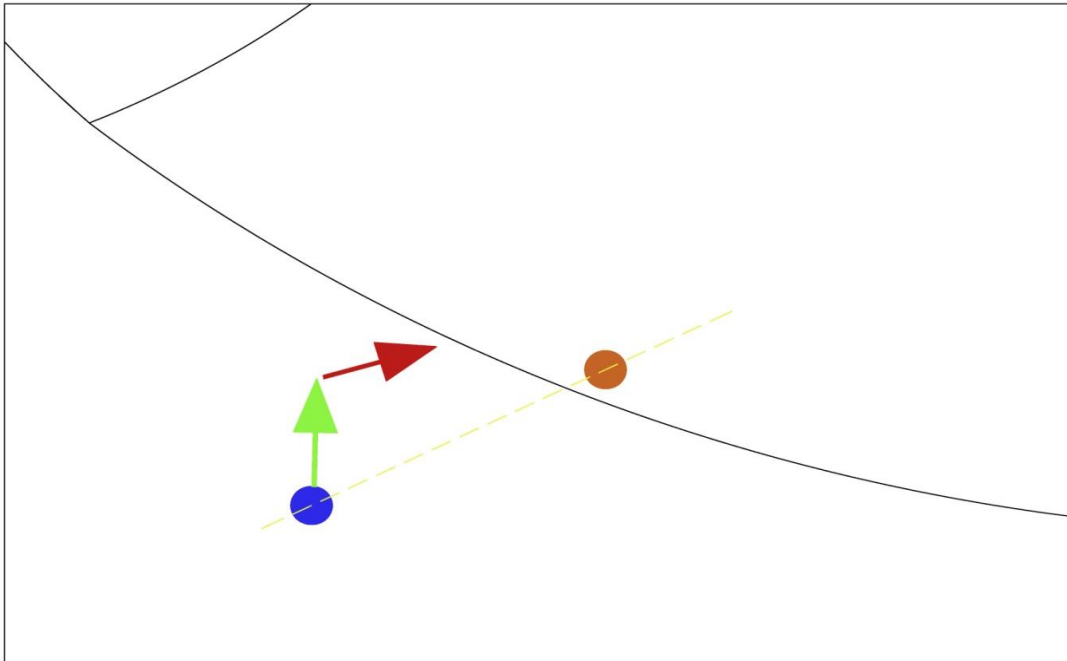
A player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing outside the boundary line, behind the mark, may move forwards and backwards along the line of the mark.



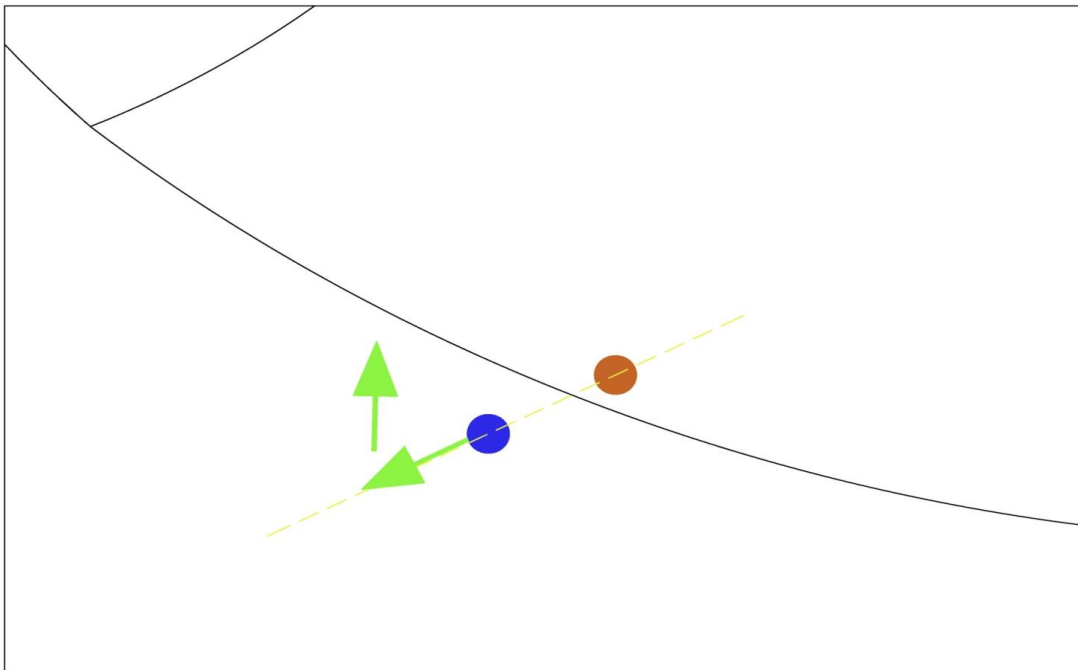
Should the player start to bring the ball into play, proceeding directly towards the mark, and then change direction, moving directly into the field of play, the boundary umpire shall **allow** play to continue.



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.



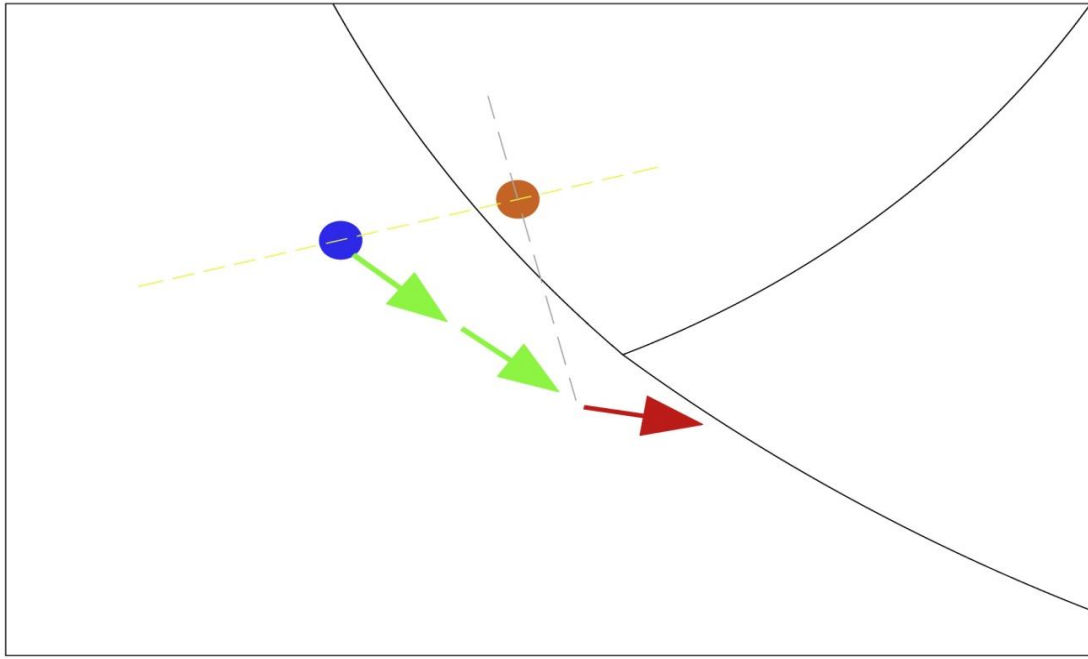
Should the player walk backwards away from the mark, not trying to avoid being tackled, the boundary umpire shall allow play to continue. The player may then bring the ball directly into play or over the mark.



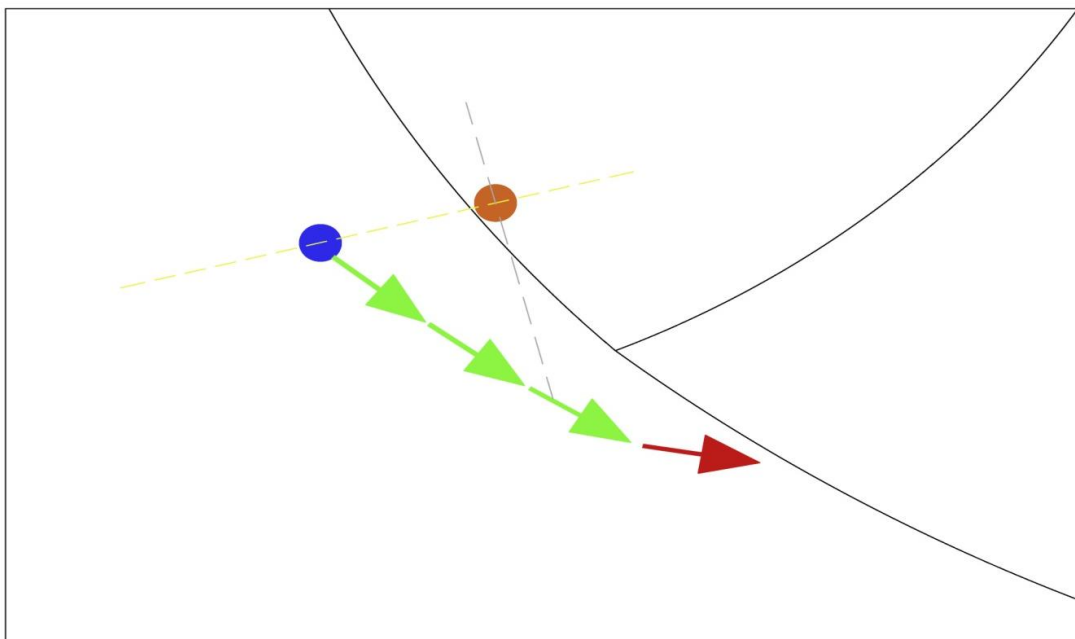
Should the player attempt to avoid a tackle or be tackled, the boundary umpire shall indicate OOB.

RUNNING AROUND THE MARK

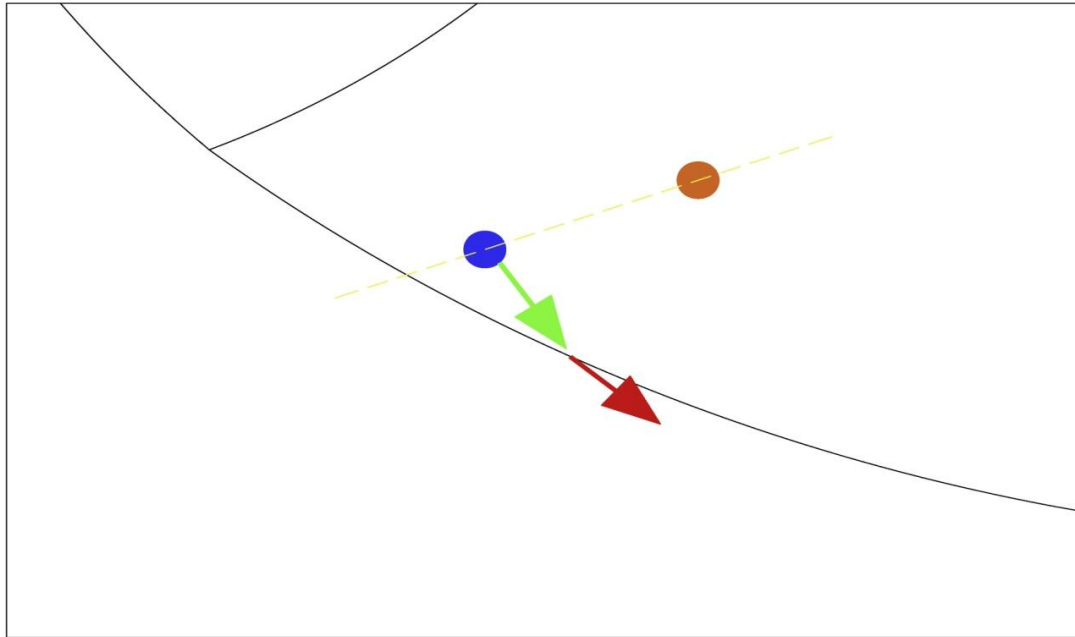
Where a player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing **outside** the boundary line, behind the mark, attempts to run around the outside of the player on the mark, the **field umpire** will determine whether the player has gained an advantage 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.

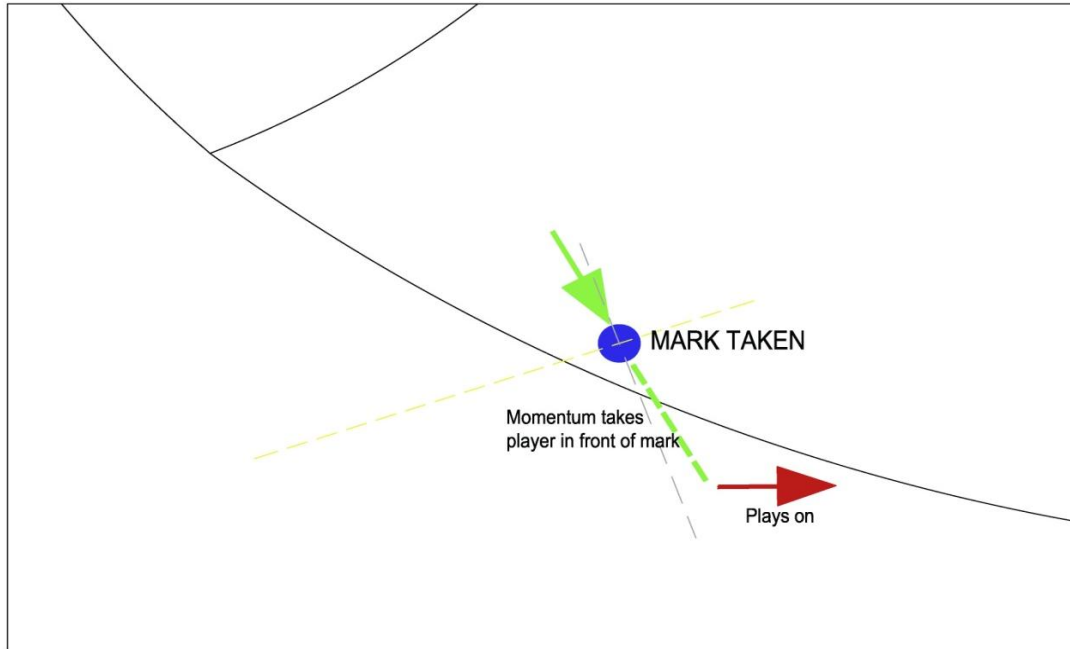


Where a player who has taken a mark inside play or has possession of the ball after an opposition OOF and is standing **inside** the boundary line, behind the mark, attempts to run around the outside of the player on the mark, and in doing so the ball crosses the boundary line (regardless of whether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

