

Positioning for Goal Umpires

To ensure the correct scoring decision is made, it is imperative that the Goal Umpire achieves correct positioning all of the time when the ball is within scoring distance of the goal.

The goal umpire should initially position themselves so that the ball, the centre of the goal line and the umpire form a straight line.

There are three types of positioning to be fully familiar with, and they are:

- On-line positioning
- Under/behind the flight positioning
- Distance from post positioning

On-Line Positioning

The Goal Umpire should make position straddling the line whenever there is to be a contest for the ball on the goal or behind line.

To avoid committing to on-line positioning far too early (and often totally unnecessarily) which creates problems for the Goal Umpire, they should take note of the following pointers:

- They must endeavour to be settled if possible in the straddle position prior to the ball reaching the on line contest
- For timing of movement to line – they should hold their position behind the flight of the ball until it is obvious that an on-line position is warranted and then get to the line quickly in time to make a correct judgement. Whilst holding the position behind the flight the Goal Umpire is also mentally preparing according to the play and is less likely to select an on-line position which puts them in danger of creating difficulties
- Unnecessary on-line positioning - a ball kicked at goal which is well above touching and contesting height needs the Goal Umpire to be under it, not on the line. Whilst it may not cause major problems there is always the risk of being online on one goal post with the ball high and near the opposite post. The potential danger is the ball grazing or going over the top of the opposite post or the other side of the post and the Goal Umpire not in a position to call the decision correctly
- On-line for a contestable low ball near the goal post – this is one of the Goal Umpire's most difficult situations. When the ball is low enough for players to contest, and the ball is going to be close to the goal post, the Goal Umpire has to be on-line to look for a mark, ball touched, ball hitting the goal post, or, even slipping past on the other side of the post. Goal Umpires are expected to attempt to be as near as possible to the contest to ensure good sight of all possibilities, whilst also avoiding players
If there are no players in the vicinity and no chance that the ball will be touched then the Goal Umpire must remain behind the ball.

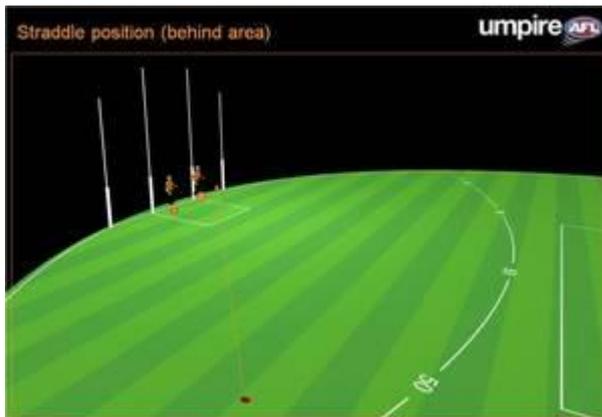


On-Line with Decision in Behind Area

When making adjudications from the goal area Goal Umpires should be positioned on the goal line some 2 to 4 metres from the goal post and they should be looking along the back of the goal post NOT in front of the post.

The following is a guide to required positioning in the behind area:

- When a defender (1 player) contests the ball on or near the behind line if there is sufficient room for the Goal Umpire to position themselves on the behind line (straddling) they should do so. If not sufficient room they should adjudicate from the goal area as referred to previously
- When an attacking player (1 player) contests the ball on or near the behind line the Goal Umpire should position himself on the goal line 2 to 4 metres from the goal post looking along the back of the goal post to adjudicate and being prepared (by reading and reacting) for the next act of play a possible shot at goal
- When a defender and an attacking player are contesting the ball on or near the behind line the Goal Umpire should position themselves on the goal line 2 to 4 metres from the goal post looking along the back of the goal post to adjudicate and once again being prepared for the next act of play, possibly a score
- When a pack of players is contesting the ball near the behind post the Goal Umpire should position themselves on the goal line 2 to 4 metres back from the goal post looking along the back of the goal post to adjudicate. HOWEVER, in this situation if the Goal Umpire is more comfortable making their adjudication from a straddle position on the behind line away from the contest, they can choose to do so. The onus in this situation is with the Goal Umpire – they must be away from the contest and avoid any contact with the players, and they must be prepared to read the play and react accordingly if it is possible for a shot to be made at the goal area



Distance from Post Positioning

Distance back from goal post – this position is important for the ball, which is kicked at goal and is above touching height but below post height, where it may just touch or graze the goal post.

The Goal Umpire must position themselves 2–3 metres back from the goal post, in these situations, so that they have a better view of the ball. If they stand any closer they limit their viewing ability in detecting the ball which may just graze the post, thereby increasing his chances of making a scoring error.

Distance from goal post for high ball over post – this relates to the shot at goal where the ball is well above post height. The position of the Goal Umpire should be about 1 metre back from the goal post – any closer and there is a danger of the post obscuring the Goal Umpire's sight of the ball for part of its flight.

Some circumstances that need to be considered with this are:

- The very high ball kicked from 30 metres or more, gives the Goal Umpire the time to make adjustment to the 1 metre position
- The high ball kicked from less than 30 metres means the Goal Umpire has little time to make position from initial deep position lined up with the kicker, however, some effort must be made to achieve best position
- With the ball going over top of post the Goal Umpire needs to attempt to stop by the time the ball actually passes over the top of the post. Moving at this point will distort view

Some other factors which the Goal Umpire should consider to assist with positioning during a match include:

- Checking which direction they will have trouble with the sun
- Checking wind direction – if side to side they can make a mental note that a dropping, slowing ball will possibly drift with the wind. Best if the Umpire has already thought this out before it happens in the pressure of the match
- Checking sun location – if the Umpire needs to stand up on the line for a dropping ball and they have the option as to which post they back up to (i.e. – ball is close to centre of goal posts), then they should avoid looking into the sun