



Buddying

How you buddy an umpire depends on the level of expertise of the umpire you are buddying.

There are, however, certain procedures that must be followed when buddying an umpire and they are:



- Do not run up and down the sideline and across goal line with the umpires.
- Do not overload them with things they are missing every quarter.
- Do not call out “that was stepping”, “that’s obstruction” “that’s offside” or “blow your whistle” etc. Remember you are there to teach and encourage no negative comments during the game. Also you are not the umpire on this game.

- By all means talk to them (quietly) when they are standing at the transverse line when play is in the other umpire’s end, but they should never be distracted from the game by your comments. The best time to offer advice to an umpire is at the intervals when you have their full attention.
- Yes call out “run” or ‘Stay” “Hold” “go” but not so loudly that the entire sideline can hear.
- Yes call out “sideline” when they have awarded a throw in along the goal line to the defence team and they are standing still on goal line.
- Yes call out “hurry back to the centre” (bearing in mind you only call out loud enough for them to hear you).
- Yes call out – very loudly – good decision when they make one.



Every junior and new umpire must have a buddy. A good idea is to give the umpire a small notebook that they carry with them every time they umpire. The buddy writes in the notebook and has an ongoing reference of what has been told to him/her previously and can see whether the umpire they are coaching has improved, and whether or not they are making an effort to put into practice the suggestions you have made. It’s a good idea to put the grade of the game, the date the buddy is coaching and the buddy’s name. The umpire’s attitude to umpiring at this level is almost as important as their skills. The umpire being buddied has, on hand, a note of what he/she has been asked to work on and can refer to the book for help.



Brand New Umpire:

Like umpiring buddying is using common sense. Brand new umpires are normally very nervous so your main role is to encourage and support them. Don't expect them to know everything, praise them when they make a correct decision and if they miss something and realise they have missed it just something like "never mind you will get it next time".

Encourage them to work on one or two things per quarter not every rule in the book. For instance, loud whistle, centre passes and throw-ins. Get them to signal these as they go and to use a 'Good Umpires Voice'.

At the end of the first quarter tell them something they did well, then something they need to look for and end by telling them something else they did well; and what you want them to work on this quarter, for instance stepping – or better still get them to concentrate on which is the grounded foot. Don't start getting heavy on obstruction if they pick up some obstruction and contact praise them.

Naturally how much detail you go into when coaching your umpire depends on how well they are umpiring. You must, however, let them make the decisions. Sometimes if the umpire is having a lot of trouble making decisions then saying something like "when you play you know what you are allowed to do and what you can't do well it's the same for these players" or "as a player wouldn't you want the umpire to pick up that, yes OK well so do these players"

Answer all their questions write in their notebook clearly so they understand what you mean and if they have improved tell them. We all like praise.

It is important to make at least as many positive comments as suggestions for improvement. As mentioned before, confidence is a really important part of a junior umpire's development.

Umpire close to and Capable of being awarded a Low D

You can tell this umpire a little more they should be correct with their centre passes and throw-ins and their whistle should be loud and confident.



They should be picking up some stepping, offside and throw ins. Start to get them using hand signals for stepping and offside I think if they start using them straight away it will be easier for them as they become more confident and skilful.





Once again don't overload them with too much. Keep it simple. Start with what they do well and finish with what they do well.

Now you can start talking about positioning more. (Staying with play and slightly ahead of player with the ball, working toward the post, some adjustment when required)



If they are picking up more contact and obstruction then they are doing very well and tell them that. Also get two sheets and a request form (**FULLY COMPLETED**, and signed by your umpires convenor) in for badging.

Low to Mid D

Voice should be loud and clear and whistle loud and sharp.

Your umpire should be well conversed with centres, throw-ins, stepping and offside. No they will not get all of them (no one does!!). They will probably not be getting all the offsides around the circle and behind play (ie when the ball has just left the area). Also the sneaky steps such as shooters and goal attacks, who like to have their feet at certain angles to shoot, will be beyond them.

They should be up with play and slightly ahead of the player with the ball most of the time and getting around the goal line for a wide view of all players. (Staying with play looking into the circle, timing from the top of the circle, to make the move into the circle)

More time again can be spent on positioning. Remember if the umpire is in the right spot they will see a lot more. Umpire should be trying to keep all their players in view, but remember this is not, at present, a High D Candidate and certainly not a National a C badge candidate.

Don't get bogged down on "you missed a step" "you missed offside" these comments are negative and we need to be positive with our umpires. Remember no negatives. Instead say "be aware of the grounded foot – that's the first foot player who catches the ball lands on maybe you are not keeping the player in view as she lands". Also the grounded foot gives you obstruction. "you seem to be having a problem with offside, but but I believe it comes down to your position at the time because when you are in the right position you see it. So next quarter list work on positioning. Noone can draw and X on the ground and say this is where you should be at any given time during the game. You need to work out where you see all your players and that is where you should be.

There is always a positive way of telling an umpire they are missing something without actually saying the words "you are missing".

If the umpire is starting to pick up more obstruction and contact that is a plus but would not expect the umpire to be great at seeing the difference between contact and contest. And this book is all about buddying not badging.



Having said that if the umpire is picking contact and obstruction up there is no reason not to help the umpire improve their knowledge. Standing behind the umpire on the transverse line and quietly pointing out contact and obstruction and asking the umpire to indicate whether they feel its obstruction etc. is one way of helping. You must, however, ask the umpire if this distracts him/her and if it does DON'T DO IT.

Keep up with the book writing down what you want them to work on during each quarter. Check that they are picking up on what you said last time you saw them and if they aren't find out why not. Could be they did not understand what you meant. As previously stated 'keep it simple' Sometimes drawing diagrams helps

Mid to High

If you are buddying/coaching a candidate towards his or her High D it is your responsibility to find out if the person you are coaching is buddying someone. If they are not then I suggest you tell them they have to buddy someone or you will not coach them. Tell them to get in touch with their Convenor who should be able to give them details of an umpire wanting to be coached. And then check that they have started to coach another umpire.



By now the umpire will be doing all of the above with reasonable confidence. If we have coached them right through to here correctly, their hand signals for the basic rules should be automatic. If not we must get them started and started quickly hand signals are a pre-requisite for any National badge the umpire may be working towards. Also positioning is getting more and more important. Umpire should be able to see all players.

Bear in mind you are not coaching a C badge candidate, although the umpire you are coaching is probably wanting to eventually go for their National C. So once again Common Sense anything that will help them on their way to this is good. It will again depend on the competence of the person you are coaching and their ability to put into practice what you are asking so we still keep it simple.

You will be asking them to look into their circle as they come up the sideline to see set-ups so they will see the action and not the reaction. This is not a prerequisite for a High D it is just getting them used to looking 'off the ball'.

You need to be coaching them to reposition if play changes direction.

Get them to read play especially drives into the circle.

If they are calling advantage encourage it. If not, get them started looking to see if letting a pass go would be an advantage to the non-offending team or not. (KPIs for a National 'C' is that the Candidate shows an awareness of 'Advantage' don't have to call it.



Buddying

From Mid to High can be a big jump or not so big. This depends on you as a coach and the candidate you are coaching. I would hope that by now you are encouraging the umpire to enjoy umpiring and show that they like it. We are all better at doing things we like. If the person you are coaching doesn't want to go any further but still wants to umpire and enjoys it do not push them. Let them decide how far they want to do.

If they want extra coaching encourage them to do a carnival. The umpiring committee is always looking for umpires to cover rep carnivals and your umpire could get extra coaching and come back with a High D if that is what they want. Also it is good to see how umpires from other association umpire.

National C Badge

Candidate must have done a Level 1 Umpire Accreditation Course and have a theory mark of 70% or higher within the last 6 years

This is goodbye buddy hello coach (you can of course be both). Keep the book going I believe that is a good idea.



Still keep it simple.

Still start with what the candidate has done well and finish with what they have done well.

Start covering the following:

- Fitness,
- Positioning for National C
- Protocols of the game
- Hand signals
- Scanning
- Looking at all players
- Looking into circle early and often
- Candidate should have a good knowledge of basic rules
- Candidate should allow for a certain amount of striving

Remember, however, this is for a National C not a National A or AA or even a B.

All Australia has set up KPIs for each level of National Badges and as a coach you must take the time to familiarise yourself with these.

This umpire will be looking for someone with the ability to take them from District to National Level. (C, B, A or AA). If your club does not have people with the ability to



Buddying

coach their umpires to this level its time for the Club Convenor and the Candidate to find a coach outside their club.

The coach of this umpire must also find out if the candidate is coaching/buddying another umpire. If not then once again if they are not willing to coach someone else don't waste your precious time on them I am sure there are other umpires out there willing to buddy/coach another so they can get coaching.

National B

Once an umpire gets to this standard I would suggest that they approach someone they relate to very well and ask them to help them take this step. Both Coach and Umpire should put a plan in place so that both are aware of what games are available and when the coach is available to help.

KNA will we hope shortly be starting up a training segment possibly once a month so that umpires can practice their interpretation of three seconds, obstruction, what is contact, what is striving etc. Umpires who want to work towards their B must make themselves available for these sessions.

They must have a current Level 1 Accreditation Course Certificate, a current Section 1 theory exam mark of 80% or higher. It will help at this level if the candidate available to umpire, Night ID, State League and/or training games for our State League Teams. These games help improve umpiring skill levels. It is preferable if their coach can go with them to these games.

Umpires wanting to improve to this level should submit their names to their Club Convenors who will pass on this information the KNA's Convenor.

NSW Netball have advised KNA that we can panel at both National C and B Level as long as we can provide the correct panels and appropriate game.

Good luck to all Buddies out there and thank you for agreeing to help your fellow umpires improve.

