



# Cricket Australia Umpire Technique Guidelines March 2020



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# Technique Guidelines Introduction

Sound and consistently applied fundamental techniques are essential for effective umpiring. With this in mind, in 2016, it was deemed necessary to develop a brief CA Technique Manual to provide guidance to CA pathway umpires preparing for various National Championships where CA assessment protocols were to be utilised. It was seen as essential that consistency of approach was demonstrated whilst not attempting to impinge on an individual umpire's composure, "style" and character that they may bring to the role. Since then, the technique guidelines have been expanded and, hopefully, continue to provide National direction and consistency of approach for umpires preparing for CA elite competitions, Underage National Championships and other game development events. The adoption of the guidelines by State and Territory organisations to be employed at Premier Cricket and subdistrict level has also been encouraged.

The guidelines have been deliberately kept simple and relatively brief and have continued to evolve following input from various Cricket Australia and State based personnel.

We hope that you will find value in this resource and continue to thoroughly enjoy your involvement in umpiring.

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# Bowler's End Stance

- At the bowler's end, umpires are encouraged to adopt a relaxed stance with hands by their sides. Some prefer hands clasped in front or behind their back (this is the least preferred posture of the 3).
- Head must be kept still with eyes fixed on a point at the striker's end before dropping the eyes without moving the head to check for no-ball.





# Positioning at Bowler's End

- Umpires should stand where they feel most comfortable in line with the stumps (behind middle). As a guide, a distance of about 3 - 4 metres from the stumps will allow the eyes to watch the bowler's feet placement without the need for any head movement.

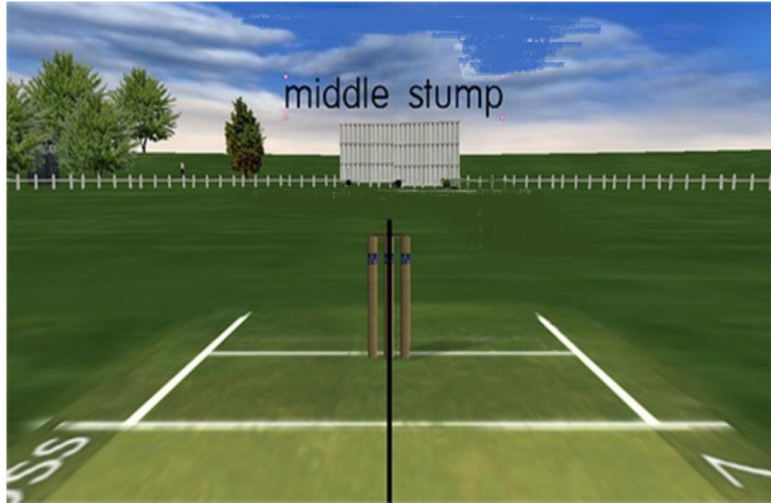


# Giving Guard

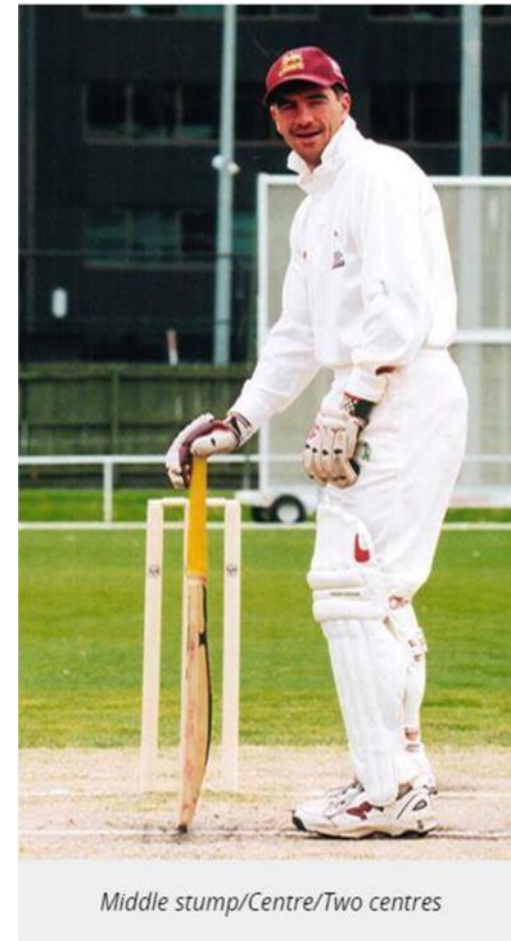
- Always give guard from up at the stumps
- Respond to the striker using the same terminology e.g. that is centre
- Can be helpful to also point to the stump requested i.e. middle or leg

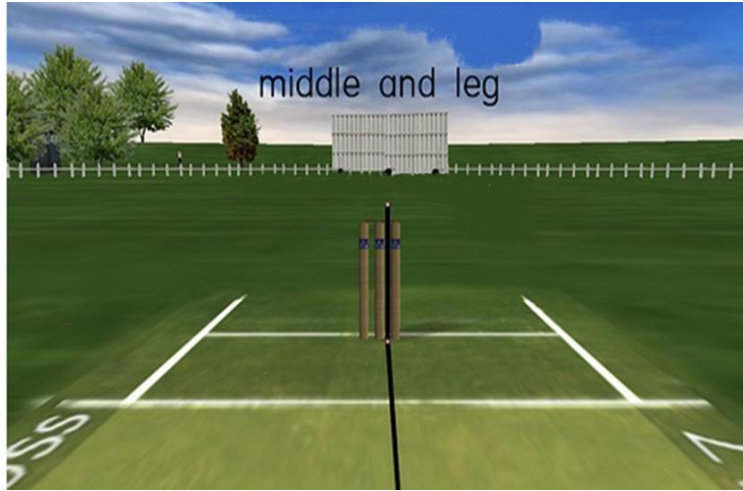






## Giving Guard Middle, Centre or Two Centres

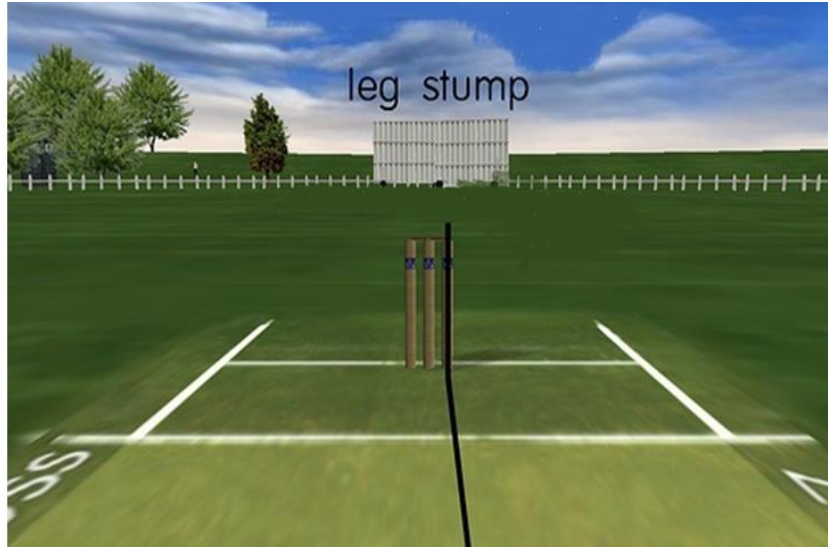




*Middle and leg/Centre and leg/Two legs*

Giving Guard  
Centre & Leg, Middle & Leg, Two Legs





## Giving Guard Leg, Leg Stump, One Leg



# Foot fault No Balls

- ▶ Keep your head **completely still** and only move your eyes.
- ▶ **Focus on the striker** as the bowler runs in, to establish the correct depth perception in readiness for when the ball is received.
- ▶ As the bowler is about to land in their delivery stride, flick the eyes down to check the bowler's foot for a legal delivery and immediately back up to observe the flight of the ball.
- ▶ Hard focus on the striker
- ▶ Having too hard a focus on the bowler's popping crease as you wait for the bowler to arrive, will result in insufficient time for your eyes to refocus on the striker before the ball is received. Establish a consistent routine and maintain it. This will take a little time to get right; attending net sessions will assist.



# Front Foot No Balls - Summary

- “.....the human eyes have time to make 2 focus points in the time it takes an average delivery to go from the bowlers hand to the batsman”
- Pat Gerry - “Eyeman” (Optometrist and Sports Vision Specialist)
- 1<sup>st</sup> - Batter’s Pads (pre-delivery)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Bowler’s Feet
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Enable ball to come into view
- 4<sup>th</sup> - Batter’s Pads (hard focus - post delivery)





# Positioning at Bowler's End

## Movement to Square

- Once the ball is played, the umpire must position themselves where to best observe all action required for potential run outs at the bowler's end.
- The notion of a right or wrong side has been replaced with guidance that the preferred side will depend on the area to which the ball has been played by the striker (further information will follow).

# Umpire's First Movement

- ▶ First movement at all times should be towards the popping crease
- ▶ The best technique is to head for the popping crease and then back out.
- ▶ The benefits of this are twofold:
  - ▶ It ensures as much of the action as possible is in front of the umpire who must observe the ball being fielded / caught
  - ▶ The umpire can check the batters touching down at the bowler's end without having to look back over their shoulder whilst positioning



**As a guide:**

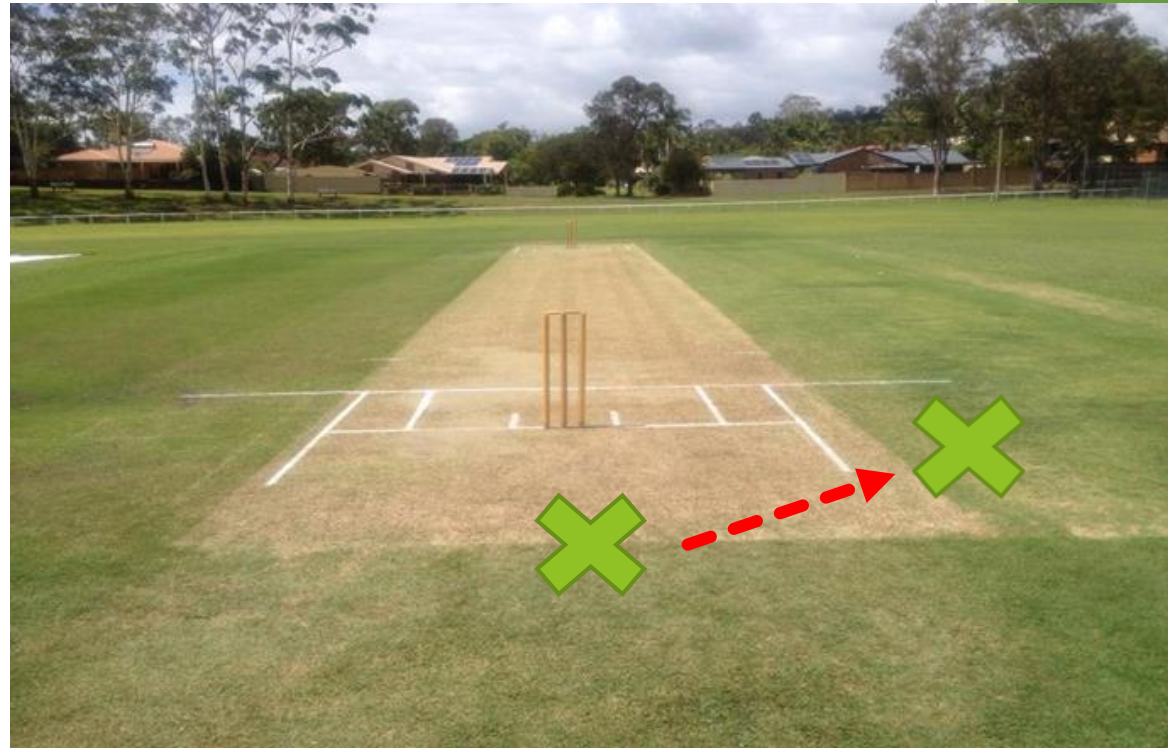
**The distance and speed of travel to the popping crease will be dependent on the number of runs in progress and upon how wide of the pitch the batters are running**



# Umpire's First Movement

## Exception:

- Occasionally it may not be possible to reach the popping crease in time to achieve a stationary position for a run out decision to be made. In this situation a  $45^{\circ}$  to  $60^{\circ}$  position can be adopted (see video on next slide)
- It is important when moving to position to be outside of the batters running lines. This will prevent any potential obstruction or collision from occurring as well as ensuring that a run out may be adjudicated upon

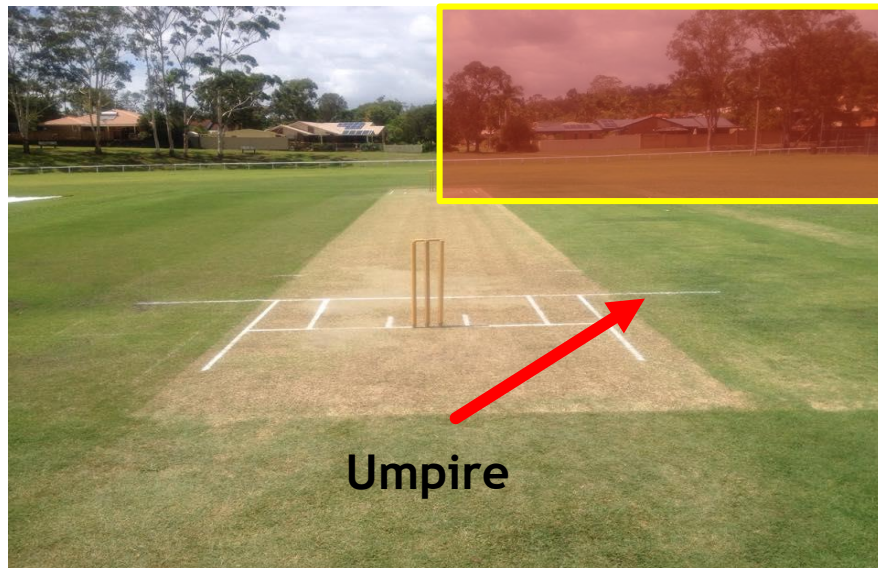




# Ball Hit Square or Behind the Wicket

## OPTION 1:

- If the umpire moves to the same side as the ball is travelling, they should have an uninterrupted view of proceedings
- The umpire should not be in a position where fielders may be impeded



Leg-side for RH batter. Off-side for LH batter

**Ball is struck towards this area**

**Umpire may move towards the same side**

# Ball Hit Square or Behind the Wicket

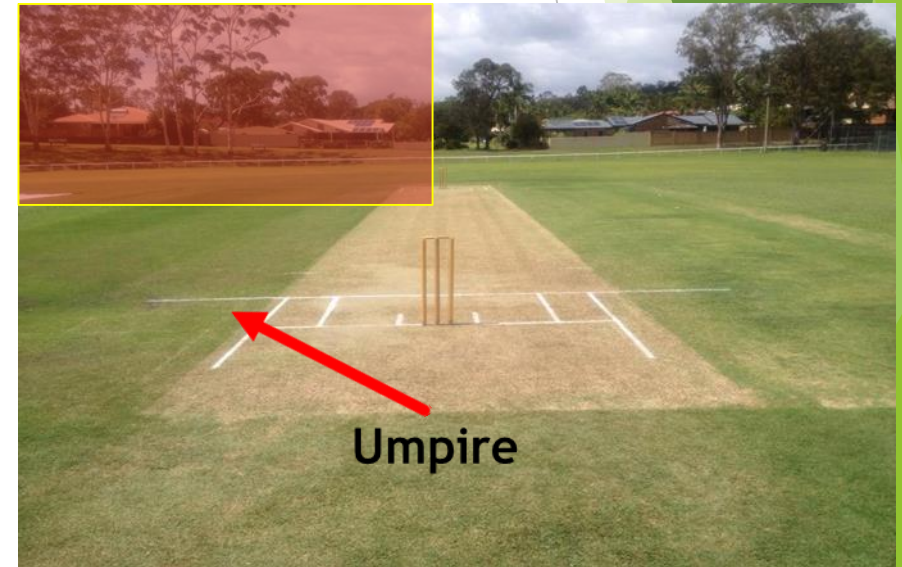
- Same technique depicted for situation where the ball has been struck to the opposite side of the pitch to that shown in the previous slide

Off-side for RH batter. Leg-side for LH batter

**Ball is struck towards this area**

**Umpire may move to the same side**

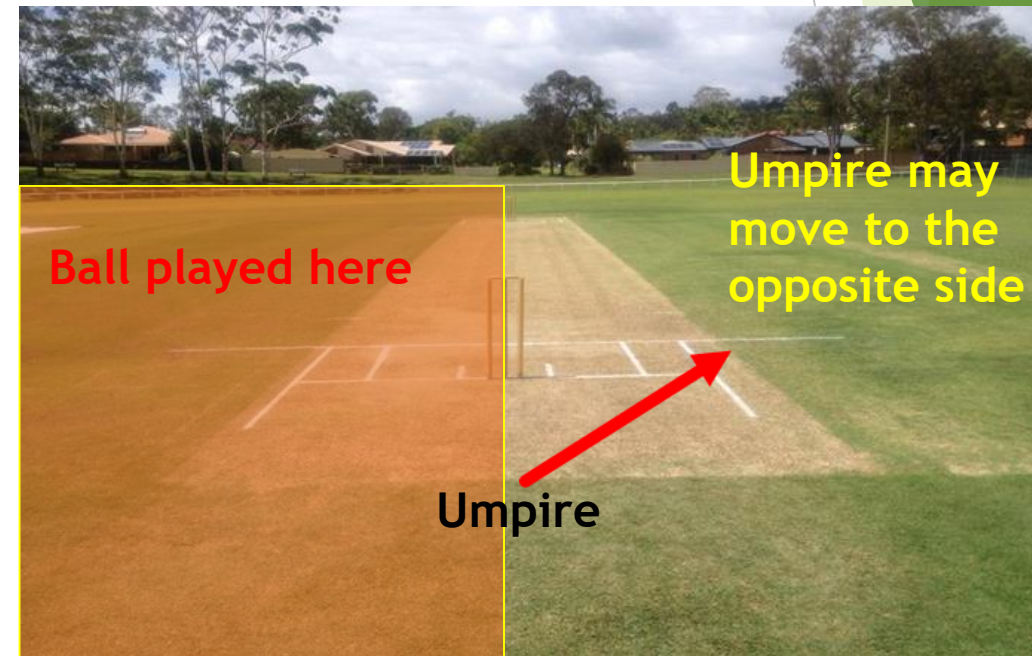
- **Benefit:** Moving to the same side as the ball for shots played into the outfield square of the wicket enables the umpire to check on the legitimacy of fielding / catches near the boundary since they will be closer to the action



# Ball Hit Square or Behind the Wicket

## OPTION 2:

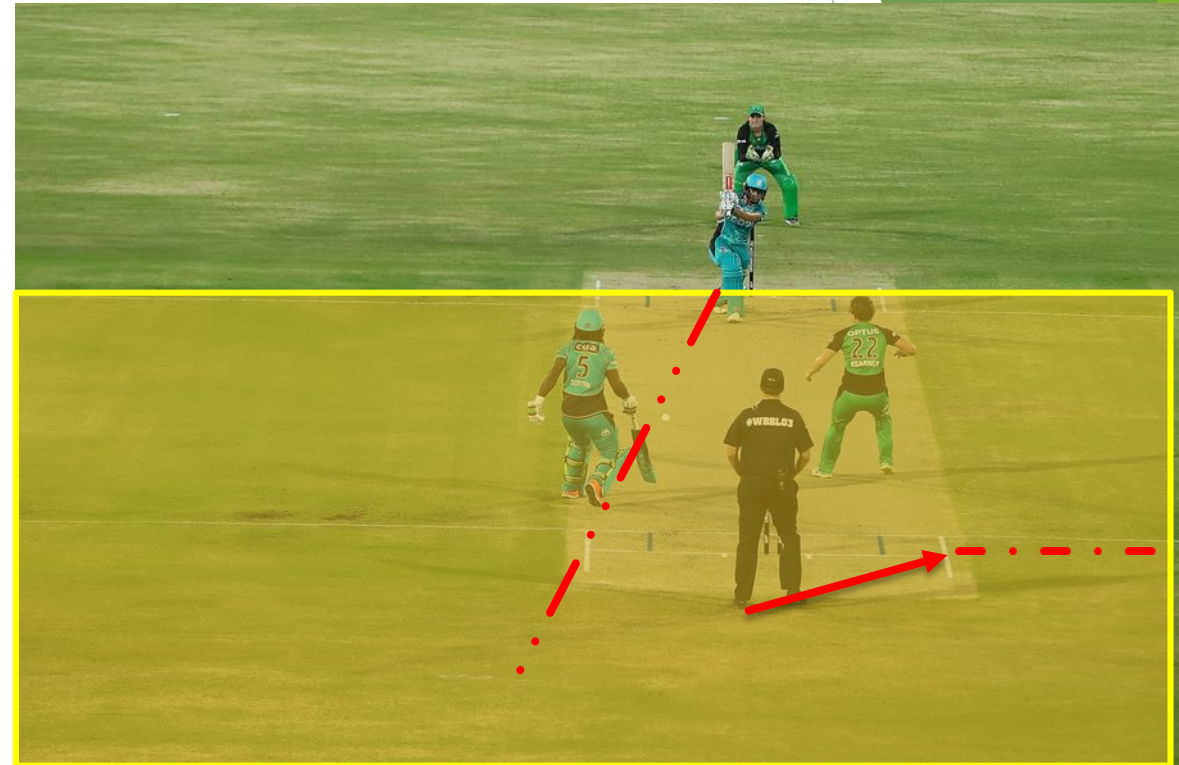
- If the umpire moves to the opposite side as the ball is travelling, they should still have an uninterrupted view of proceedings with minimal risk of coming into contact with fielders
- **Benefit:** Umpire has an open view of all action including batter touching down
- **Drawback:** For close boundary/catch decisions they will be positioned further away from the action





# Ball Hit into the “V”

- When the ball is hit into “the V” (area between cover and mid-wicket) the umpire **must move** to the opposite side to where the ball is travelling
- An awareness of where fielders are (and the non-striker), will determine how quickly / deep you need to move





## When to move - How Fast?

- A good “trigger” for the umpire at the bowler’s end is to move whenever the ball hits the bat (except for edges to keeper / slips)

As a guide - the pace of movement will be dictated by the call of the batter on strike:

- Batter calls **NO** = Umpire takes a pace or 2 before returning to their normal position
- Batter calls **WAIT** = Umpire moves at walking pace to preferred position on appropriate side of the wicket
- Batter calls **YES** = Umpire moves at a suitable pace to their preferred position on the appropriate side of the wicket
- Avoid hesitation and late decisions to move which may result in poor positioning

# When to move - How Fast?

## Key message:

- Umpires should move at a suitable pace, consistent with the situation in front of them
- Once a shot has been played, movement at all times is preferable so as to be prepared for possible run out attempts





# Where to move - How Deep?



- An awareness of where fielders and batters are, will determine how fast/deep you need to move
- Notice how the umpire has moved back far enough to allow the batter plenty of room to make good their ground
- It also creates a wider field of vision to take in the bat, batter and stumps using their peripheral vision whilst focussing on the popping crease

# Umpire Movement

## Key Message:

- It is important to view the ball into the fielder's hands, so an early turn or swivel may be required.
- E.g. Ball hit firmly to mid off or mid on
- The video shows the umpire “swivelling” toward the popping crease as the ball had been hit firmly to mid off



# Match Awareness

- ▶ The bowler's end umpire must be familiar with all field placements around them so as to avoid interference with play.
- ▶ They will be required to make a quick decision on where to position themselves to best judge the outcome of any situation

**Note that a higher percentage of Run-Out attempts are made by direct throws at the stumps**



# Poor Positioning

- ▶ Should an umpire be poorly positioned they may find themselves in a compromised situation
- ▶ Be aware, the fielder may decide to throw the ball to the wicketkeeper, rather than to your end, thus leaving open the potential to be struck by the fielder's throw
- ▶ Always watch the ball in the outfield including the incoming throw from the fielder



# Pitch Handover Technique

- Call of “over” may be accompanied by a signal e.g.- both hands up in front with palms facing out
- Hat handed back to bowler confidently
- Stay “on watch” at your end (somewhere to the side of the pitch) until your colleague collects the bowler’s hat at their end. A nod may be given to your partner to signify “all good to go”
- Think of the bowler’s hat as a baton in a relay race. Changeover is not completed until your partner has the hat in their hand and accompanied by eyes and head up





# Pitch Handover Technique

- ▶ Several paces may be taken towards square leg before turning to walk backwards keeping eyes on your partner & the pitch as fielders change over
- ▶ This movement should be unhurried and natural without appearing “military”
- ▶ An alternative is to walk forward to square leg and turn to walk backwards for the final 6 to 10 paces
- ▶ Avoid heading out to square leg with your head down &/or taking notes
- ▶ Head down = thought process in past
- ▶ Head up = alert / confident / looking forward





# Pitch Handover Technique



## Note Taking:

- Note taking should be avoided during the handover process
- Note taking should be done (discretely) once at square leg and field placements have been checked prior to the next over commencing
- Have a routine e.g. it is good practice to note the bowler's over number after the 1<sup>st</sup> delivery is dead
- Writing copious notes is to be avoided as is keeping score - these become unnecessary distractions

## Batters on Strike:

- During the pitch handover both umpires are to ensure that the correct batter takes strike at the start of the over
- Umpires should also ensure the correct batter is on strike after the fall of a wicket or after an interval.

# Square Leg Positioning

## Where to stand in relation to the popping crease?

- For non-televised matches the preferred options are:
  - Straddle the popping crease
  - Stand between the batting and popping creases
- For televised matches the striker's end umpire should position themselves so as not to block the view of any side on cameras. This could be best achieved by standing forward of the popping crease rather than between the popping and batting creases OR behind the popping crease in line with the stumps. The final position will be determined in conjunction with the TV Umpire and broadcast director



# Square Leg Positioning

- Look to position yourself at square leg, approximately a pitch length out. This is particularly important for T20 format to avoid injury from standing too close
- Crossing for left / right hand batters is expected providing the umpire does not hold up play
  - For example spin bowlers operating. Inform your partner if you are remaining on one side when a left/right hand batting combination are in play
- When the ball is played forward or behind square of the wicket open up your stance to enable you to watch the ball being fielded and turn your head back to see batter touching down.

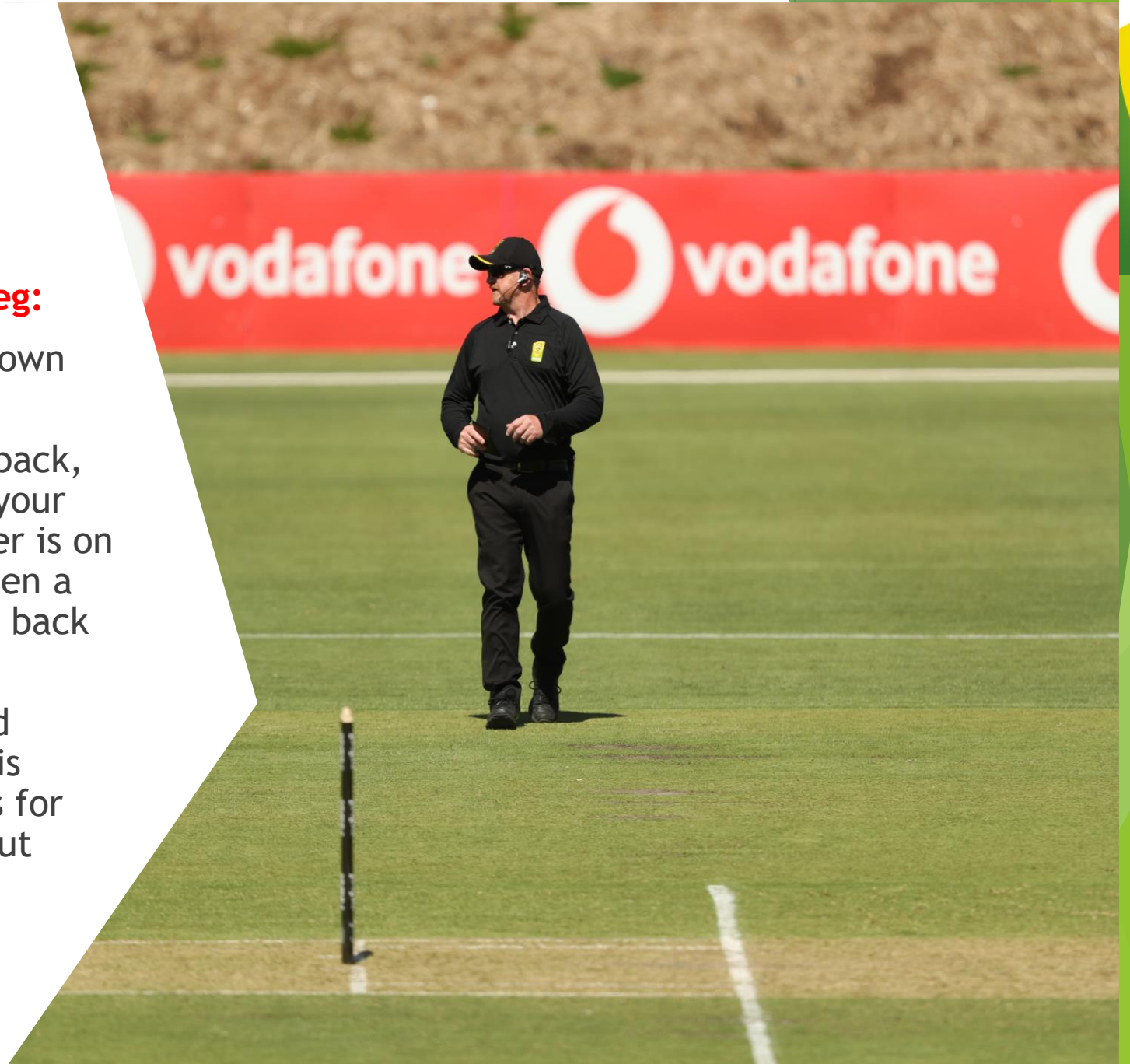




# Square Leg Positioning

## Have a focused routine at square leg:

- Switch up when the ball is live/down when the ball is dead
- If your routine is to kick one leg back, then ensure you remain open to your partner. When a right hand batter is on strike kick your left leg back. When a left hand batter is on strike, kick back your right leg
- When at square leg the suggested posture is hands by your side. This allows subtle movement of hands for non-verbal communication without potential confusion



# Square Leg Technique



- ▶ Adopting a focused position for run outs helps to “sell your decision” to participants
- ▶ Regardless of the resulting decision, players should not accuse you of not concentrating



## Teamwork Signalling Balls to go

- Normal protocol is to give a clear “2 to go” signal to your partner (who acknowledges) each over following 4 legal deliveries
- A possible practice is to give a “1 ball remaining” signal (index finger pointing down towards ground) after 5 legal deliveries
- Umpires must also recheck the ball count (via hand signals) following an illegal delivery, dead ball or wicket remake. This minimises the risk of ball count errors.





# Teamwork Signalling - Balls to go



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- ▶ Umpires must also recheck the ball count (via hand signals) following an illegal delivery, dead ball or wicket remake. This minimises the risk of ball count errors.

# Teamwork Signalling

## Must do:

- ▶ It is a generally accepted principle that the striker's end umpire will offer assistance to their bowler's end colleague to signify off the bat or pad, as the case may be, for deliveries which go behind the wicket (leg side) when runs are taken





# Teamwork Signalling

## Must do:

- ▶ The “no contact” signal shown in the accompanying picture which is signalled by the striker’s end umpire to signify a bye is the only time an umpire should cross their arms at square leg.
- ▶ This signal should always be offered when byes are attempted from a ball missed by the keeper
- ▶ At all other times this posture or “hands in the pockets” should be avoided as they may be perceived as signs of disinterest by participants



# Teamwork Signalling



## May do:

- Some umpires believe that ball by ball non-verbal communication from square leg helps keep them engaged in the contest
- However, it should be performed unobtrusively and must not take away your focus from the primary tasks especially when a spinner is operating

## Must not do:

- Signal when your partner is appealed to or let it become a distraction?

# Teamwork Signalling

## Must do:

### Player warning/caution

### Supportive signalling

- The supportive signal shown in the picture is used when a bowler has delivered a short pitched delivery. Striker's end umpire signals to the bowler's end umpire that the ball is above shoulder height. The bowler's, end umpire then indicates to the bowler that this is a 1<sup>st</sup> (and possibly final) warning.
- If subsequent deliveries are deemed short then the striker's end umpire will repeat the supportive signal to the bowler's end umpire who will again warn the bowler, or call and signal "no ball" if more than the permitted number of short deliveries have been bowled.



# Teamwork Signalling

## Must do:

### Player warning/caution - Supportive signalling

- Similar protocols exist at the striker's end for the adjudication of above waist non-pitching deliveries
- An indication from the striker's end umpire is expected to signify a wide for an over the head short pitched delivery or an over the waist non pitching delivery
  - The call is to be adopted by the bowler's end umpire
- It is expected that the striker's end umpire will assist with non-verbal communication in the form of a "below" signal as required when judging an over the head short pitched delivery or over the waist non-pitching delivery





# Signalling

## Signalling play to scorers:

### Bowler's end Umpire:

- Required at the start of day's play
- Required when recommencing play after
  - Lunch or tea interval
  - Resumption of play after a rain interruption etc.
- Not required after a drinks break

# Pre Signal

- Pre signals are a courtesy extended to the scorers when a bye or leg bye is being taken.
- Using a pre signal for byes/leg byes alerts the scorers that any runs scored are not to be scored in favour of the batter
- Should an umpire need to move quickly (run or jog) to position at the bowler's end then the pre signal should not be given until they are stationery



# Signalling - Wides

## Wides:

- Signal at the correct time
  - (by the time the ball reaches the keeper standing back)
- Call and signal wide (for the players) and hold the signal if possible/appropriate
- Turn to signal to the scorers
- There is no need to drop your arms when signalling to scorers unless you have to make position at the bowler's end for a possible run.





# Wide Ball - No Runs



# Intervals

- It is the expectation of Cricket Australia that Umpires in CA competitions are to fully remove the bails from the top of the stumps and leave them on the ground at the base of the stumps
- Bails do not need to be removed at a drinks break



# Stop; Keep; Start

Finally, what aspects of your umpiring techniques and performances both on and off the field are you going to:

- ▶ **Stop doing?**
- ▶ **Keep doing?**
- ▶ **Start doing?**

To ensure that a consistently strong level of performance and continuous improvement is achieved.

