



# Ground Marshal Policy

V1.1 June 20

A Ground Marshal from Burnside must be present at each game. The opposition team must also provide a Ground Marshal for each game. The two ground marshals will work together for the duration of the match.

## Ground Marshal role description

The role of the Ground Marshal is to:

- Ensure the grounds are set-up according to requirements.
- Manage the 'off-field' match day environment.
- Support the referees and any other Match Officials in attendance at the ground.

## How to be a Ground Marshal

The appointed Ground Marshal:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- Must arrive at least 15 minutes before every kick-off.
- Can be anyone from your team who isn't the Coach, Team Manager or player on the team sheet (including substitutes).
- Must wear the "Ground Marshal" fluorescent vest as an outer garment for the duration of your appointment in the role.
- Be visible from the field of play at all times during the match.
- Is not to act as a touch judge during any game.
- Is encouraged to have completed the Rugby Australia Ground Marshal Program.
- Must be registered on Rugby Xplorer game day app as a volunteer.
- Must not consume alcohol while performing Ground Marshall duties.

## Specific Match Duties

### Set up

The Ground Marshal for the first match of the day for a Burnside home game must ensure that the BRUFC '[sportsground checklist](#)' form is completed and signed off before the commencement of the first match.

- Before the start of each game, the Ground Marshal must ensure that:
- Crowd Control rope is in place.
- Team Zones are marked out.
- The ground is suitably set up and marked, goal post pads, corner posts, in goal markers, half way and 22 metre markers.



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## Pre Match

Introduce yourself to the referee, touch judges and other Match Officials and the other club's Ground Marshal prior to the game. For the duration of the allocated game your sole responsibility is to complete the role of the Ground Marshal.

## Spectator management

The Ground Marshal should conduct surveillance of the venue for the duration of the match. As a guide you should meet the other club's Ground Marshal and complete two laps of the playing enclosure at the following intervals:

- 10 Minutes into the 1st half
- 10 Minutes into the 2nd half

The Ground Marshal is required to manage the behaviour of spectators and team officials to ensure it complies with the Rugby Australia "[Code of Conduct](#)" guidelines by identifying and dealing with any breaches. This includes:

- Only team captains may address the referee to seek clarity on rulings or misunderstandings. No coach or team manager can approach the referee at half time.
- Half time entry to field by coach, team manager and 2 x water carriers only. – **NO PARENTS** allowed on field during breaks in junior games.
- Keep everyone except the Match Officials, Players and any authorised additional persons (water carriers, team managers) behind the crowd control ropes.
- Manage the behaviour of players and coaches within the team zone.

## **Where disrespectful / negative behaviour should occur toward a Referee/Assistant Referee the following process should be followed:**

1. Ask the offending person or group, respectfully, to stop the conduct whilst reminding the person or group that criticism or strong questioning of referees is not allowed.
2. If the disrespectful / negative behaviour continues, instruct the person or group to cease the behaviour immediately. If possible at this point, an important step would be to try and get another parent to start videoing the bad behaviour on their phone.
3. At this point if the person conducting themselves in disrespectful / negative fashion is not the team coach then you should involve the team coach to assist in ending this scenario. If it is the coach, then ask their TM or the visiting Ground Marshal to assist if not already assisting.
4. If the disrespectful / negative behaviour continues, expel the offending person or group from the ground immediately. The carpark is the closest they are allowed to be.



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5. Where the offending person or group refuses to heed the reasonable instruction, respectfully inform the Referee that the game is to be immediately abandoned. Do not engage further, collect playing equipment such as match balls and exit the space accompanying the Referee at the same time.

6. Report misconduct - including disputes, foul and abusive language by any persons at the ground. Report should be captured in the Incident Book located within the Clubroom

## Player management red/yellow cards

A Ground Marshal may need to assist the Referee and Assistant Referee in dealing with yellow and red card incidents related to players from your team, in particular you will:

- Confirm player leaves the field appropriately, goes to the correct place for the duration of the penalty and is not heckled by the crowd or other players.
- Ensure players remain seated on or near half way line for the duration of the penalty, as per competition guidelines.
- In event of a Yellow Card being issued, note the time the player leaves the field so you can assist the Match Officials in managing their return to play after the appropriate time has passed.

## Working with Match Officials

Following a significant incident off the field of play, the referee may stop the game. Should this occur the Ground Marshal(s) should enter the field of play and speak to the Referee to determine what action needs to be taken.

The Referees should not be abused at any time before, during or after the game. The Ground Marshal should endeavour to prevent this through their management of the crowd. If there are Ground Marshals from both teams in attendance they should work together to try and ensure the spectators enjoy the game and do not become involved in abusing Match Officials or opposing players.

Abuse in this instance includes questioning decisions made by Match Officials, displays of contempt or other unsportsmanlike behaviour. In the event that Match Officials are abused after a game, the Ground Marshal/Manager is to be advised and a report of abuse of officials submitted via the post-game report for disciplinary action against the offending team/club or individual.

Remember the potential for anger towards Match Officials to occur immediately after the game when they come together with Team Managers/Coaches to sign the team sheets. You should be present to remind Team Managers/Coaches of the [Rugby AU Code of Conduct](#), including the requirement to accept and respect the decisions of the Match Officials.



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## Post match

Shake hands with Match Officials and the other club's Ground Marshal at the conclusion of the game. Be aware of the potential for conflict at the end of the game when Match Officials come together with Team Managers to sign the team sheets.

In the event of a Serious Injury, Ground Marshals should offer on field assistance to ensure care and comfort of the injured player. If an ambulance is required, then the home team Ground Marshal should call for the ambulance and ensure free access to the injured player – they should arrange to meet the ambulance at ground entry and guide the vehicle to the injured player.

After the game the Ground Marshal should report any breaches of the "Expectations of Behaviour" via the incident reporting method for your competition, this may be as simple as ensuring the Ground Manager is aware of the incident. In other clubs and competitions, you may report it to a club official who will pass it on for you.

## Guide to Resolving Conflict

Ground marshals may at times deal with volatile situations that require strategies to redirect hostile people and defuse confrontational situations. The first minute of an interaction often determines its direction and outcome and how people react to an interaction is largely dependent on the cues they pick up from you. Try the following steps...



### 1. Stop

- Assess the risk and situation as I approach
- Decide whether to send for assistance
- Stay open-minded, intending to defuse the situation
- Remain calm
- Don't argue, accuse, or tell to 'calm down'



### 2. Look

- Are they drunk?
- Have I ever reacted like that?
- When I was that age...how did I behave?
- If I was brought up in that culture/environment would I act the same?
- Are their expectations of the ref, coach, players or club too high?
- Am I the focus of their anger?
- Has the person just displayed aggression towards an individual or group?



### 3. Listen

- Receive other people's comments without interruption
- Show empathy and use statements carefully.
- Validate and clarify.
- Recognise your own prejudices.
- Be quiet



### 4. Respond

- Remain calm and keep your language short and simple.
- Use non-threatening body language and tone of voice.
- Very rarely is using the word: 'NO' going to get you very far with the public.
- It is better to say: 'I need' or we need rather than 'you must' or you 'have to'
- Learn to feel comfortable with phrases such as: (a). 'I can help you better if.....' (b). 'I need you to help me by slowing down just a little...' (c). 'I really don't think your comments.....'

## In summary

- Listen to what the problem is for them
- Say what the problem is for you
- Focus on the problem, not the person
- Look for answers so everyone gets what they need.
- If the situation can't be resolved in a rationale manner, report the issue