



Dear Umpires,

Thank you for the warm welcome at training last week. It was great to meet so many umpires (particularly new umpires in 2019) and to be offered so much support in my new role. It's clear to see the BFUA has a real inclusive culture which will undoubtedly help us in everything we do, both on and off the field.

I am currently writing this from Darwin NT where I'm located for the next week. Every year I fly up to support the NTFLUA who umpire over the Summer/wet season. Two weekends of footy in 32-degree heat is great for my own preseason (talk to me if you're ever interested in flying up) but it's also enabled me to assist the local umpires by running some training sessions. Consequently, I am looking forward to being back on deck next week, and hope to meet more of you then.

A few items from me:

Practice Matches

Preseason games have already begun, and I need as many field umpires available as possible over the coming weeks. If you are available, please send me an email with your general availability and I will appoint you. These games won't go through Schedula so please be proactive to ensure you don't miss out. I think practice matches are the absolute best way to get fit (far easier than going out for a 10k run) so please use them to prepare for the season proper. For Senior umpires, it is an expectation that you run at least one practice match, preferably more. For boundary and goal umpires, please contact your respective coaches to advise your availability.

Rule Changes – Compulsory Training/Coaching Session – Wednesday 27th February

You may be aware AFL Victoria Country leagues are adopting several rule changes in 2019. These changes will affect all field umpires across AFL Goldfields competitions, so I am running a training/coaching session on Wednesday 27th February to go through those and answer any questions. New rules have been sent to members via TeamApp for you to read prior to the session. **Please note Wednesday 27th Feb is a compulsory session for all field umpires. If you cannot attend, you must send me an email to advise. Please RSVP via TeamApp with invitations sent out via email earlier this week.**

Training Expectations

Throughout preseason, training is important to build your base of fitness, and to ensure you don't miss announcements, skill drills and the opportunity to train with the group. As per previous years, it will be an expectation that you attend Wednesday night sessions every week, with Monday nights to be optional (but strongly recommended). Training attendance will also be recorded throughout the year.

WestVic Athlete Education Program 2019

As part of our relationship with FedUni WestVic Academy of Sport, ten BFUA umpires will have the opportunity to attend an Athlete Education Program throughout the year. This program is designed to provide knowledge, skills and strategies to prepare yourself for elite sport i.e. umpiring at higher levels. Discipline coaches will nominate our ten umpires; however, we are currently calling for expressions of interest from umpires male and female, aged between 14-18 to be submitted. If you would like to be involved, please email Scott Carey ASAP – scott@aflgoldfields.com.au

SportsTG & Schedula Registration

If you have not completed your registration via SportsTG and Schedula for the 2019 season, please do so asap. Registration not only allows us as coaches to consider you for upcoming practice and home & away matches, but also ensures you are covered through our insurance for any possible injuries. Head to <http://www.bfua.org.au/about/become-a-member> for more information.

BFUA TeamApp

The BFUA recently launched its smartphone app to all members via the TeamApp platform. This will be a great way for the association to communicate directly to all members throughout the season. Download TeamApp to your mobile phone from your app store, sign up and search for the BFUA!

Thanks again for your support. We've had a great start to training with good numbers, so let's keep it up. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Billy Mitchell

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