



NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY SCHOOLS NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

6 – 9 October 2009
Timaru

UMPIRE EVENT PANEL REPORT

Twelve umpires were appointed to the Championships along with two panel members, Kirsten Lloyd (convenor) and David Pala'amo. The final day, David was unavailable and Anne Marie Leech joined the panel.

Umpires attending the event were (in alphabetical order);

Anna Sheen	Catherine Lapwood	Ceri Hills	Debbie Vincent
Gareth Fowler	Lisa Paterson	Liz Cairns	Moira Willox
Paul Smith	Tracey Hamilton	Seli Scutts	Wendy Speck

Two umpire liaison officers (Karen King and Donna Hardie) looked after the umpires and the panel wonderfully. The Panel would like to extend its thanks to them for the marvellous job they did.

Congratulations are extended to Paul Smith and Anna Sheen, who were upgraded to B Grade during the event, and to Tracey Hamilton who received her NZ endorsement.

Areas of Competency Evident During the Week

- Fitness and preparation for tournament - no reserves were required to take the court during the Championships.
- Receptive openness of umpires to feedback with a clear desire to learn and progress.
- Protocols were generally well understood and stoppages handled effectively, especially later in the tournament.
- A developing awareness and willingness to implement techniques (position, vision and timing) appropriate to each game.
- Minor infringements (excluding stepping) were mostly correctly applied.
- Growth with understanding of the importance of game management at this level of netball and its ability to positively contribute to the game; ie what to call, how to call, when to call and why the umpire has chosen to call is critical to progress to the next level of umpiring.

Areas Identified for Further Development

- During injury breaks, umpires must maintain a position that enables them to see the players on court, observe the treatment of the injury and the team bench. Most umpires competently coped with the first two, but the umpire must angle to the court in order to monitor the team bench.
- On court communication was usually effective – however penalties required sharpening up – encouraging the players to take responsibility.
- Focussing on real understanding wrt to advantage. At this level most players are becoming frustrated by the ball being “brought back” as the umpire has not been able to read play effectively enough / or quick enough to apply advantage well.
- Increased understanding of interference/non-interference and distinguishing between contest and interference by pushing, riding leaning etc. A number of umpires were calling contact that did not interfere with the player; even some brushes were being called as well.

- Developing ability to stay with play on sideline to support forward vision towards Goal Circle and the right timing to Goal Line appropriate to play.
- At all times vision needs to stay wide and sweeping. Keep vision wide behind Goal Circle to include play off the ball.
- Astute vision regarding player with ball and first grounded foot – footwork infringements were called when none had occurred while some footwork infringements were missed (upper body movement does not necessarily indicate breach of footwork rule).
- Keep working on accurate assessment of 0.9m distance in Goal Circle. A mixture of incorrect decisions was seen – close defence not penalised, correct distance penalised. Timing of whistle is important (avoid when player in air). Positioning – avoid straight line with Goalpost when players are in line with top of circle.

Coach's Feedback

As part of the continual focus on improving relationships with umpires and coaches it was decided to include a 'coach's feedback' component to this tournament.

On specific games, both coaches were asked to provide considered feedback on both umpires. This enabled the feedback on the umpires' performance to be viewed from both the winning and losing teams' perspective.

This request was only asked during the first two days of the tournament, recognising that it is a very busy tournament for teams and the end of the week does become more stressful for them. As a result most teams were only asked to provide one feedback report on the first day, but a couple of teams were asked on 2 games to ensure all the umpires had an opportunity to receive the feedback.

The feedback report template was provided to the teams which gives prompters for "areas of competency" to comment on – but is basically a free text section for each umpire.

The output of their work will be included in the umpire's individual reports from the week. Any further discussions that are generated as a result of this feedback will be coordinated thru the panel convenor.

The Panel wishes to extend their thanks to the coaches – all of which took the task very seriously and provided very considered feedback. Additionally it appeared to facilitate some very open and honest verbal feedback with the Panel which was fantastic to see this trust being formed.

Conclusion

The panel would like to thank the NZSS 2009 umpires for their openness to feedback and insightful discussion around improvements to the game. We look forward to continuing this growth next year.

Kirsten Lloyd (Convenor), David Palaamo, Anne Marie Leech

Umpire Event Panel

New Zealand Secondary Schools Netball Championships 2009