

Line Assistant Manual

Introduction

Line assistants are used in WFDF events primarily to assist the players with the technical aspects of the game. Their duties include:

- using hand signals to indicate calls made by the players
- repeating time warnings verbally to players
- indicating off-sides on the pull
- advising players on perspective, if requested
- advising players on the rules, if requested
- disc retrieval

The aims of line assistants are:

1. to make the game more comprehensible to new spectators (by providing hand signals to spectators and commentators),
2. to speed up the game (by retrieving discs, helping communicate time warnings and signalling calls to players away from the disc)
3. to improve spirit of the game (by helping resolve disputes through perspective, rules advice and indicating off-sides)

Line assistants are passive. Line assistants only act to help the players and never actively make a call, they only repeat the call that a player has made. They never advise what call to make, only provide evidence of what they observed happening, if asked.

The responsibility for making calls and resolving disputes remains solely with the players and their captains.

Line assistants are bound by Spirit of the Game and must always act in accordance with it; with honesty, integrity and respect.

Uniform

Line assistants will wear a coloured shirt supplied by WFDF at the start of the event. The shirt must distinguish them from both teams. In addition, the line assistants are expected to supply:

- black shorts
- black socks or socks no more than 5cm above the ankle
- running shoes, turf shoes or football boots

Line assistants may also wear a cap or hat, and sunglasses.

Hand Signals

The WFDF Ultimate Rules Committee has defined a set of standard hand signals to indicate calls that the players may make during the game.

It is the primary role of the line assistants to repeat those calls using the hand signals so that other players, officials, commentators and spectators are aware of what each call is and the resolution of those calls.

For example, if a call is made, a player at the other end of the field can work out who will have possession and what the stall count will restart at by observing the hand signals.

Time warnings

The line assistants should also verbally repeat all relevant time warnings from the timekeeper to the players.

A line assistant may also indicate when a time restriction has not been met, but it is up to the opposition players to decide whether a penalty is to be assessed.

Off-sides

Line assistants may indicate off-sides on the pull. This is only advice, it is up to the opposition players to actually call the violation based on the evidence of the line assistant's signal. Off-sides should only be indicated where a significant advantage has been gained by the team, at least 1 metre. The line assistant should advise the captain of a team if their team is close to having off-sides indicated against them.

Formation

Line assistants can be used in a two person or four person formation.

If there are two line assistants, they will operate on opposite sidelines, and their right-hand end line, thereby covering the full perimeter of the field.

If there are four line assistants, then each sideline will have a left-hand and right-hand line assistant. The left-hand line assistant will patrol the full length of the sideline. The right-hand line assistant will patrol from the left-hand goal line to the full width of the right-hand end line. The left-hand line assistant should always stay to the left of the right-hand line assistant, with preferably at least 15 metres separating them.

Positioning

Line assistants may roam between the restraining line and the perimeter line in order to perform their duties.

They should be prepared to run along the perimeter line in order to be close to live play.

In positioning themselves, the primary job of the line assistant is to not interfere with play. A background in elite ultimate is highly desirable to allow them to anticipate play.

Line assistants may only enter the playing field upon invitation from both captains or from a player involved in a call in order to communicate better with that player. The line assistant acts under the instruction of the players at all times.

Preparation for the pull:

Right hand line assistants should stand at the goal line and:

- If relevant, signal the choice of 4 men or 4 women in a mixed game
- Repeat time warnings verbally to the team
- Indicate off-sides on the pull

Left-hand line assistants (if any) should be at half way prior to the pull.

During play:

Line assistants should remain at least 3 metres from the perimeter line if the disc is on their side of the field. If the disc is on the far side of the field, they may stand on the perimeter line.

Line assistants should aim to be as close to the point of reception as possible. They should aim to be at least 3 metres behind the thrower, or 15 metres in front of the thrower.

Line assistants on the same sideline should aim to remain at least 15 metres apart.

Disc Retrieval

When a disc goes out of bounds, it can be returned by a third party to within 3m of the perimeter line nearest to the point where the disc is to be checked in. The line assistant may retrieve out-of-bounds discs to that point, or may have spare discs in their possession that can be placed at that point.

The disc is to be placed on the ground at that point, not handed or thrown to a player.

Perspective Advice

It is within each player's rights to ask a non-player (for example, a line assistant) for advice on whether a disc was in or out or whether it was up or down. This is non-binding advice, it is still up to the players to make the call, so they may disagree with that advice.

In anticipating a disc reception, the nearest line assistant should position themselves to have a clear view of the any lines in the vicinity, so that they may provide sound advice if required.

If the line assistant did not have good perspective on a call, or did not see all aspects of a play, they should restrict their advice to what they did see (for example, they might have seen that the player's foot was in, but couldn't see whether the foot was still on the ground when the disc was caught).

In providing advice, line assistants cannot advise what call to make (for example "foul"), only what they saw happen (for example, that they saw player A's hand hit player B's hand prior to the disc being blocked).

Prior to the start of the game, the captains may agree that line assistants can provide advice automatically, without being asked in each instance.

Rules Advice

Line assistants are expected to be experts on the rules. If a player does not know the rules in a particular situation, they may ask a line assistant for advice. The line assistant must also carry a copy of the rules for reference if necessary, but the line assistant must be very familiar with the rules so that they can look up a reference without delaying the game.