

CHELSEA ROFFEY – AFL Goal Umpire

Diversity/Inclusion/Overcoming Adversity/Self Belief



Chelsea Roffey is a speaker, author, Churchill Fellow and the first and only woman to have officiated in an Australian Football League Grand Final.

Born in Wallaroo on South Australia's Yorke Peninsula, the self-confessed Aussie rules tragic moved to Queensland as a girl with her parents and two younger brothers. She learnt the skills of goal umpiring while studying under full academic scholarship for a Bachelor of Music (clarinet) at the Queensland Conservatorium, and later biomedical science at Griffith University. A switch to journalism coincided with her appointment to the AFL panel in 2004, after five years umpiring locally in Brisbane.



In her youth, goal umpires donning white overcoats and moustaches were cherished pillars of Australian football, alongside meat pies and yelling "Ball!" for holding decisions.

No moustache? No problem.

Chelsea's journey in football has been fuelled by a tenacious desire to reach the top of her game in a highly scrutinised, starkly male domain.

Thriving on the challenges of training and competing while breaking the mould, she reached the heights of her craft eight years later, when she was selected to umpire the 2012 AFL Grand Final.

Chelsea has umpired more than 250 AFL games, 16 finals and sat the bench as the emergency umpire at five AFL Grand Finals. Her highlights reel includes games in London and Shanghai, Anzac Days being enveloped by the post-anthem roar of a packed MCG, goosebumps at Adelaide Oval during the unofficial Port Adelaide anthem, INXS's 'Never Tear Us Apart' and executing a textbook hip-and-shoulder on Melbourne's Oscar McDonald.

Chelsea holds Bachelor degree's in music and journalism, is a published author and Winston Churchill Fellow who has travelled the globe examining diversity, gender equality and storytelling. She has been named Sports Official of the Year in Victoria and Queensland and listed among *The Age* newspaper's top 100 most influential people. Chelsea has been an invited guest of APEC's Women's Leadership Forum in Beijing and attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

A former school captain, recipient of the Queen's Trust Award and Pierre de Coubertin Award for Sportsmanship, her leadership and advocacy has extended to elected roles on the AFL umpires' leadership group and Umpires' Association Executive. She has sat on the AFL Diversity Council and been an ambassador for Breast Cancer Network Australia, the Liptember Foundation, the AFL Victoria Umpiring Academy and Change Our Game (Victorian Office for Women in Sport).

Combining her unique narrative with compelling science and literature, Chelsea captures themes of diversity as drivers of high performance, from the boardroom to the basketball court. Her story is a living example of self-belief, attitude and application, of using strengths to overcome obstacles and turn barriers into opportunities.

When not waving the flags at the 'G, she consults organisations to create environments where people from all backgrounds thrive.

As a speaker, Chelsea inspires through her positive energy, warmth and humour, bringing passion and lived wisdom to audiences from all walks of life.

Testimonials

"I was blown away by Chelsea when she presented on the topic 'Maximising Performance through Diversity' at our staff conference recently. She is one of those very few people in the world that can challenge people's views without offending them and shutting them off, right to the point where the real magic happens and critical thinking begins. The language Chelsea used and the way she addressed challenging topics in depth really helped everyone at our organisation to fully understand and appreciate the strengths that come with diversity. She is a truly rare speaker and would offer current and valuable insight and learnings to any industry. Thank-you Chelsea!"

Brooke Farrugia, Senior Educator, Design and Quality, AFL SportsReady

"Just wanted to say a huge thank-you for your attendance at our Women's Network dinner last night. We have had nothing but positive comments today with everyone enjoying your talk and your focus! Quite inspiring for us and something we really needed."

Shell Refinery Women's Network

"We were absolutely stoked with Chelsea's presentation. She was able to cut to the chase, credibly speaking the language of her audience. She was also a breeze to work with, astoundingly generous with her time following the event, and utterly down to earth."

Batyr

"Chelsea Roffey was an inspiring speaker and the conversation generated was fantastic."

Cube Group