



# NRL CIRCULAR

**TO: ALL CLUB CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S**

**FROM: Graham Annesley**

**DATE: 1 August 2002**

**SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION OF RULE  
INTERPRETATIONS (2 pages)**

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Following a number of issues arising from recent incidents in the Telstra Premiership, the following clarification of rule interpretations is forwarded for the information of all Coaches and players:

## **Formation at Scrums**

The international Laws of the Game state that *"The scrum half of the team not having the put-in shall retire **immediately** behind his last row of forwards"*.

Obviously there is a chance that any scrum could be won against the feed, therefore it is essential that a half-back is present at the scrum base to retrieve the ball should this occur. While the player taking up this position does not necessarily have to be the regular half-back, it is mandatory that a player acts in this position at all scrums.

Referees will generally endeavour to ensure the requirement is met before the ball is fed into the scrum, however non compliance by the non feeding team may result in a differential penalty being awarded by the referee for actions contrary to the true spirit of the game.

## **Double Movement**

Before the commencement of the 2001 season, the NRL Board approved the following policy guideline in relation to 'double movements':

*DOUBLE MOVEMENT – will only apply if a player's momentum has stopped short of the goal line, the ball or the arm carrying the ball has been grounded, and the ball is then advanced to place it over the goal line. If momentum carries a player in possession into the in-goal area, it will not be a double movement if the ball would have finished over the goal line regardless of any subsequent movement of the ball or the arm carrying the ball.*

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In relation to considering the ‘*momentum*’ element referred to above, the following test is to be applied by referees and video referees in reaching a decision:

*After the ball carrier’s momentum stops, would the ball have finished on or over the goal line if it was still being carried in the position it was in when the ball or the arm carrying the ball first made contact with the ground?*

If the answer to the above question is yes, then a try should be awarded. If not, a double movement penalty should result.

Hopefully, in most instances the assessment of these decisions will be clear cut. However, even allowing for the above clarification, there will still be some cases involving very close calls where the referee or video referee will have to use their judgement to reach a decision or, in cases of extreme doubt, give the benefit of the doubt to the attacking team. On occasions this may result in controversial rulings, but such controversies are no different to any other aspect of the game where judgement calls are often vigorously debated.

Could you please ensure copies of this Circular are distributed to all relevant football staff in your Club.

Kind Regards,

**Graham Annesley**  
Chief Operating Officer