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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	23 February 2006
Subject:	MS002/06

ANSWERS TO QUIZ #1

- Q1 Scrum, loose head and feed to Blue.
- Q2 Penalty to Red, centre of 20m line.
- Q3 Play on.
- Q4 Goal line drop out.
- Q5 Goal line drop out.
- Q6 20m restart.
- Q7 Goal line drop out.
- Q8 Free kick 10m in.
- Q9 Penalty in front against Blue.
- Q10 Penalty to Red where the ball was caught.
- Q11 Scrum, loose head and feed to Red.
- Q12 Feed the scrum again.
- Q13 Penalty against Red where he threw the ball from.
- Q14 Play on.
- Q15 20 metre restart.

Before you go to print and tell me I'm wrong, check your Laws book. Be assured that, unlike some quizzes, ALL correspondence will be entered into. Now test yourself on Quiz #2 attached. Answers next issue.

PSYCHOLOGICAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL

Richard Johnston has submitted this very thought provoking article for publication. As usual, his observations are clear and on point. Feel free to cut and paste but make sure you credit the author please.

"Good officiating facilitates the event, ensuring the outcome is dependent upon the skills and tactics of the players. There are four major responsibilities for match officials to be committed to.

- See the event proceeds within the context of the rules of the game.
- Interfere as little as possible, never seeking to becoming the focus of attention.
- Set and maintain an atmosphere for the enjoyment of the contest.
- Show concern for the players.

Mental/ Physical Demands of Officiating

A strong relationship exists between the psychological skills and the physical performance of match officials. Match Officials often reflect upon the importance of the mental skills rather than the physical skills in performing difficult tasks eg making the unpopular calls, being in control of players and self. Therefore for preparation for matches more time must be given to developing and practising psychological skills. Just as physical skills can be honed so to can psychological skills such as the ability to concentrate, relax under pressure, maintain confidence and work as a team. And because these qualities are indeed skills they will dissipate just a physical skills do if not nurtured.

Thus it is important that a certain combination of physical and mental skills is necessary to become a successful match official.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL

The characteristics top match officials have in common are as follows:-

- Consistency
- Rapport
- Decisiveness
- Poise
- Integrity
- Judgment
- Confidence
- Enjoyment/ Motivation

Consistency. Players as well as coaches expect officials to be consistent. Their decisions should be the same in similar circumstances and rules should be applied equally to both teams.

Problems of Inconsistency.

- Players are always second guessing
- Coaches become frustrated
- It can be seen that match officials 'even up' calls.

Achieving Consistency. True consistency results from applying uniform rule interpretation to each separate competitive action. Proper judgment

and interpretation are the main sources of consistency. Achieving the consistency required to officiate at a high level requires two capacities. Firstly the ability to demonstrate good technique and have a thorough knowledge of the rules. Many referees are inconsistent simply because they have not sufficiently mastered rule interpretations, basic positioning and sport specific officiating techniques.

The second requirement for achieving a high level of officiating consistency involves mental and emotional skills. A stable mental state is a basic requirement for consistent officiating. Spiking in officiating (peaks and valleys) are often directly related to psychological inconsistencies.

Rapport. Is the ability to relate effectively to others. The key to establishing a good rapport is effective communication. Be approachable and prepared to listen to questions and complaints but don't allow players to interrupt the flow of the game with continued questioning.

Decisiveness. Where possible referees' decisions should occur simultaneously with the action observed or as soon as possible thereafter. This doesn't mean all calls are made without hesitation. You may need to take a slight pause to comprehend what you have just seen. However, too long a pause gives an impression of uncertainty and then decisions are likely to be questioned.

Poise. Referees need to remain calm and poised regardless of what is happening. Referees need to be in control of their emotions to ensure performance is maximized. Part of being relaxed is not being afraid to make mistakes. When the mind is not preoccupied with the negative consequences of failure, it can focus on the task at hand. Finally, a certain amount of excitement is normal when you referee but it is important to keep your emotions and actions under control, never allowing them to jeopardize your effectiveness as a match official.

Integrity. The best safeguard for maintaining your integrity is to 'Call them as you see them.' It is extremely important to protect your integrity on and off the field. Most referees are aware of their responsibilities while officiating but they should never forget to maintain their off field integrity.

Judgment. Good judgment begins with a complete and thorough understanding of law combined with experience to arrive at an acceptable competency level. To achieve the skill of making good judgments referees need to be –

- *Totally focused on the game*
- *Able to block out peripheral distractions*
- *Refereeing what is in front of them,*

Confidence. *Competent match officials have confidence in themselves and their abilities. Every referee has games they would rather forget but confident match officials don't let that undermine their genuine belief they are good at what they do. Remember if you go into a game expecting to perform poorly and not believing in yourself you are in for a long game.*

Enjoyment/Motivation.

Successful match officials enjoy their job immensely. This sense of enjoyment and fun is strongly tied to a positive mental attitude and feelings of energy. Good officiating requires a lot of hard work, dedication and practice. All stem from a high level of motivation which is closely linked with enjoyment. If enjoyment wanes, match officials will lack the motivation to practise and put in the hard yards."

PREMIER LEAGUE LAWS QUIZ

In the latest quiz, 18 of the Premier squad incorrectly answered the same question. The question is this. *"After the fifth play-the-ball Red kicks. The ball rebounds off a Blue player on the full and goes forward into touch on the full."* A rebound has the same characteristics as a kick, so the touch judge will wave the ball back to where the ball struck the Blue player. The effect of it hitting the player is the same as if the ball had touched the ground (current ARL interpretation of the Law). However, because Blue cannot be disadvantaged by the ball striking him, the feed to the resulting scrum will go to Blue.

So the correct answer is "Scrum at the point where the ball struck Blue, feed and loose to Blue". Go on, argue with that one!

NRL REFEREES' DEVELOPMENT CD

The NRL Referees' Division has developed a CD with a huge amount of information on it. There are the Key Indicators which are used to evaluate a referee's performance, the roles and responsibilities of referees and touch judges, vocabulary and communication issues as well as details of a number of drills. Incorporated into the CD is vision from matches and animated examples to assist in understanding what it is that we are trying to achieve. Within a couple of weeks there will be added generic gym sessions and weight programs together with nutritional information from NRL Athletic Performance Manager, Klinton Hoare.

Copies of the CD will be provided to State Associations as well as the ARLRA. From next Monday, the entire CD will appear on the website, www.arlra.org.au. I certainly encourage you to have a look at it because the information together with the quality of the product is well worth the look. Once again, an outstanding resource has been made available through the efforts of the NRL squad.

NATIONAL OFFICIALS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME



Warrick Bowden and James Brown are 3rd and 5th from the right in the second row. Their mentor is standing at the back on the right. Warrick has provided the following as an insight into the weekend and perhaps an incentive to others to apply for the scholarship next year.

“The National Officiating Scholarship Program (NOSP) has been developed by the Australian Sports Commission to assist in the development of potential high performance officials. The 2006 program saw 20 officials from 16 sports including AFL, Rugby Union, Football (apparently you can’t call it soccer now), Netball, Basketball, Ice Hockey, Volleyball, Athletics, Cycling, Gymnastics, Water Polo, Taekwondo and Inline Hockey. Rugby League was lucky to have 2 officials offered a scholarship and it is quite an honor to be given the opportunity.

The NOSP induction seminar which was held in Sydney on Saturday and Sunday 18th and 19th February was held to develop good mentor/official relationships, a framework for mentor/official communications and to set the sports specific programs for each official. It gave us a chance to understand each of our roles in the program and how to get the most out of program.

It was also a tremendous opportunity to interact and network with the array of officials from the various sports. It was interesting to learn about the preparation, strategies and feedback processes of the different officials. After talking to many of the officials and their mentors, it is surprising to hear how similar many of the key elements of officiating are in the different sports, especially in regards to communication and player management.

By the end of our scholarship program we will have been exposed to the best referees in the world utilising their techniques, practices, facilities as well as learning from their own experiences and expertise to develop our refereeing standard to a more advanced level. Not only will it allow our own refereeing skills to develop but we will be able to pass on our new-found knowledge the other referees in country NSW.”

Warrick will deal with characteristics of a good mentor/official and how to give/receive feedback in the next memo.

In the meantime, if you won't change, don't stop others doing it.

MICHAEL STONE
NRL REFEREES' CO-ORDINATOR
ARLRA PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE CONSULTANT
ARL LAWS COMMITTEE MEMBER
NSWRL PREMIER LEAGUE HEAD COACH
ARL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS MENTOR
ARLRA MEMORANDUM EDITOR

NRL QUIZ #2 2006

- Q1 Red kicks in general play from his own in-goal. The ball rebounds off the Red goal posts and another Red player also in goal but in front of the Red kicker catches the ball.
- Q2 Red passes the ball backwards and it ricochets off a Blue player and goes forward. Another Red player who was in front of the Red player who passed the ball picks up the loose ball.
- Q3 After the fifth and last play-the-ball, the ball carrier runs into the referee and play is irregularly affected.
- Q4 As a player is being tackled, the full time siren sounds. The referee calls out "held". After he calls out "held" and before he blows his whistle, a defender strips the ball.
- Q5 An attacking player grubber kicks the ball into the defending team's in-goal. The defending player shadows the ball over the dead ball line. Before the ball goes dead it hits the defending player in the chest.
- Q6 Player from Red team kicks the ball through in an attacking position. The Blue fullback panics and deliberately bats the ball forward, runs around the Red player, regathers the ball and runs up field.
- Q7 On tackle 3 Red player passes the ball to a team mate who knocks the ball forward. He attempts to kick the ball before it hits the ground but the ball strikes the point of the knee and goes forward. He picks the ball up and is tackled.
- Q8 Red player passes the ball to a team mate who knocks the ball forward. He tries to regather the ball but knocks it backward to a team mate who is on side.
- Q9 Red player knocks the ball forward, it strikes the crossbar before rebounding into the player's arms and he goes over to claim a try.
- Q10 Whose duty is it to ensure that a corner post is correctly positioned at all times?
- Q11 Define General play.

- Q12 At a 20 metre optional kick, a Red player runs up to the 20 metre line and plays the ball back to a team mate.
- Q13 What options does the winner of the toss have?
- Q14 Red player in possession sees an opponent off side but retiring the ten metres. He runs behind him and pushes him, obstructing a defender from getting to him. He places the ball over the line and claims a try.
- Q15 An attacking player is felled by an encroaching spectator in his opponent's in goal and loses the ball.