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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	24 March 2005
Subject:	MS004/05

RULINGS

One from Col White.

"Here's a ruling that came up last night. It generated from MINI FOOTY but the principals are the same as International Laws.

"From a penalty kick, a player from the non-kicking team knocks the ball forward, it lands in the field of play, and then rolls into touch".

It was argued that this constitute Section 13.4 (b), ball being 'touched from a penalty kick', and therefore a scrum would be formed 20 metres in from where the ball enters touch.

I disagree saying that the knock on has occurred and therefore we have a scrum where knock on occurs (providing 20 metre in field of course).

I also stated that the 'intention of the rule' must be considered.

The other slightly contentious wordings in the rule 13.4.(b) are:

1. "if the ball touches an opponent" - what if the opponent touches the ball? (to me and I believe a majority, this would mean the same but the wording is arguable)

2. "If the ball touches an opponent in flight and then enters touch, a scrum shall be formed 20 metres in field from where the ball crossed the touchline" - I believe that if the ball 'touches an opponent (or the opponent touches the ball), and it goes forward into touch ON THE FULL, then the scrum would be where the ball was last touched (providing 20 meters in of course)

For those who don't know Mini Rules, the difference in the above scenarios is that if a knock on is ruled, then a 'changeover' occurs at that point whereas if this is deemed to fall under 13.4.(b), then a scrum

would re-start play.

Not a bad one to start with before the season commences in the Juniors!!

Your thoughts please.”

I replied as follows.

“The answer to the first question is easy. There is a breach by the non kicking team and unless the kicking team gain an advantage, a scrum will be set at the point of the breach (but not nearer than 20 metres from touch and 10 metres from the goal line). All other considerations are irrelevant.

Your other scenarios reveal a deficiency in the Laws, I believe. There is a difference between "ball touching" a player and a "player touching the ball". See notes to Law 7 Section 11, page 25 where it says, *inter alia*,

" By "touching" the ball is meant intentionally playing it with any part of the person when it is not held by an opposing player."

Now Law 7 of Section 9 states:-

" In all aspects of GENERAL PLAY, a player who does not play at the ball.....will not be disadvantaged by a consequent restart of play when the ball has gone dead or into touch." (Emphasis added).

Law 4(b) of Section 13 says:-

*"(From a penalty kick) If the ball **touches an opponent** in flight and then enters touch, a scrum shall be formed twenty metres in field from where the ball crossed the touch line with the kicker's team having the loose head and put-in."* (Emphasis added).

The letter of the law would dictate that a scrum be formed and the kicker's team to have the feed and loose. Of course, if the ball **rebounced** (see Glossary) forward into touch on the full, that aspect of play is **general play and the ball has been propelled forward into touch on the full in general play**. Therefore, a scrum is set at the point of contact (but no closer than... etc) and feed and loose goes to the kicker's team.

Now on to your Email, Snow. You said that Law 4(b) said " ..ball being "touched from a penalty kick." It doesn't say that at all and in fact says nothing like it. See above. That is where we are likely to get our decisions wrong. It says (penalty kick) "...touches an opponent..." which is an entirely different thing. If I include anything in "...", it is a quotation and needs to be exact. My ATO training no doubt.

Can you see my unease with the wording of the Laws? I'll ask in next week's Newsletter for a response to the above. I must say though, Snow, it is an excellent and thought provoking Email that had me seeking the opinion of others. There aren't many people who can do that but you are certainly one. Keep up the good work at Wests."

"ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY" AS IT APPLIES TO ADVANTAGE

Neil Almond had a not so unusual query.

*"On page 43 under notes Apply Advantage is the sentence "The opponent must have **adequate opportunity** to take advantage and endeavor to do so before play is allowed to proceed."*

4 examples

Position on the field is 20 metres out from B's goal line.

1. A knocks on and B picks up the ball and passes it to B1, who is standing 1 metre away and drops the ball.

Decision: *Scrum, feed to B as B didn't have adequate opportunity.*

2. Same as question 1 but he passes a poor pass to B1 who is standing 10 metres away and knocks on.

Decision: *Same as question 1.*

3. A knocks on 10 metres from the touch line where B picks the ball runs 3 metres down the blind side and is tackled into touch.

Decision: *Same as question 1 and 2.*

4. Same as question 3 but he runs 20 metres then tackled into touch.

Decision: *Scrum, feed to A as he had adequate opportunity.*

I was told as a young referee if a player runs, kicks or passes the ball he has played his advantage. Is this policy still relevant today?

The main words to me are adequate opportunity. I would like some feedback, please."

I replied this way.

"Adequate opportunity" does not equal "absolute actual advantage". If B is under no pressure to pass the ball, the pass is the advantage, because B has had adequate opportunity to take advantage by being able to pass the ball and endeavours to take the advantage by actually passing the ball. Because his team mate in question 1 and himself in question 2 lack the appropriate skills to take ACTUAL advantage, is of no consequence. In both cases, IF B IS NOT UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE, A gets the feed and loose to the subsequent scrum.

Again, in question 3, if B had no alternative but to try to stay in field on the touch line, perhaps he didn't have adequate opportunity. However, if he merely ran into touch, he has taken his advantage. In Round 1 Parramatta knocked the ball on 10 metres from the Tigers goal line and 5 metres from touch. Tigers player picked the ball up and with nowhere else to go, tried to run down the touch line frantically fending off a Parramatta player. Five metres later he lost the ball into touch. Scrum feed and loose to Tigers because in that case there was no adequate opportunity to take advantage. HE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO DO WHAT HE DID. The answer to question 3 depends largely upon what choice was available to B.

In question 4 B clearly has taken his advantage.

In relation to your last query, we have mellowed our hard line stance from the "old days" a little, but "adequate opportunity to take advantage" still does not mean "actual advantage".

VIDEO ON MOVEMENT, URGENCY AND POSITIONAL PLAY

The latest level 2 Coaching class have undertaken to produce the above coaching video. A reminder to all the Wollongong and Narrabeen classes that the five clips from each of you need to be with David Jay or myself by end of April please.

NEWS FROM NRL

A little confusion about a mid air tackle. In a game at the weekend, a player tackled another in mid air following a kickoff. He was not penalized, the referee believing that the mid air tackle referred only to kicks in general play. This is not correct. It applies to all kicks and is a safety issue. See Section 11, Notes to Law 1.

*“It is illegal to tackle an opposing player attempting to field a **kick** whilst the player is in mid air. The catcher must have returned to the ground before being tackled. ... Applies only when a player on the non-kicking team catches the ball on the full.”*

A simple error but one that should never occur.

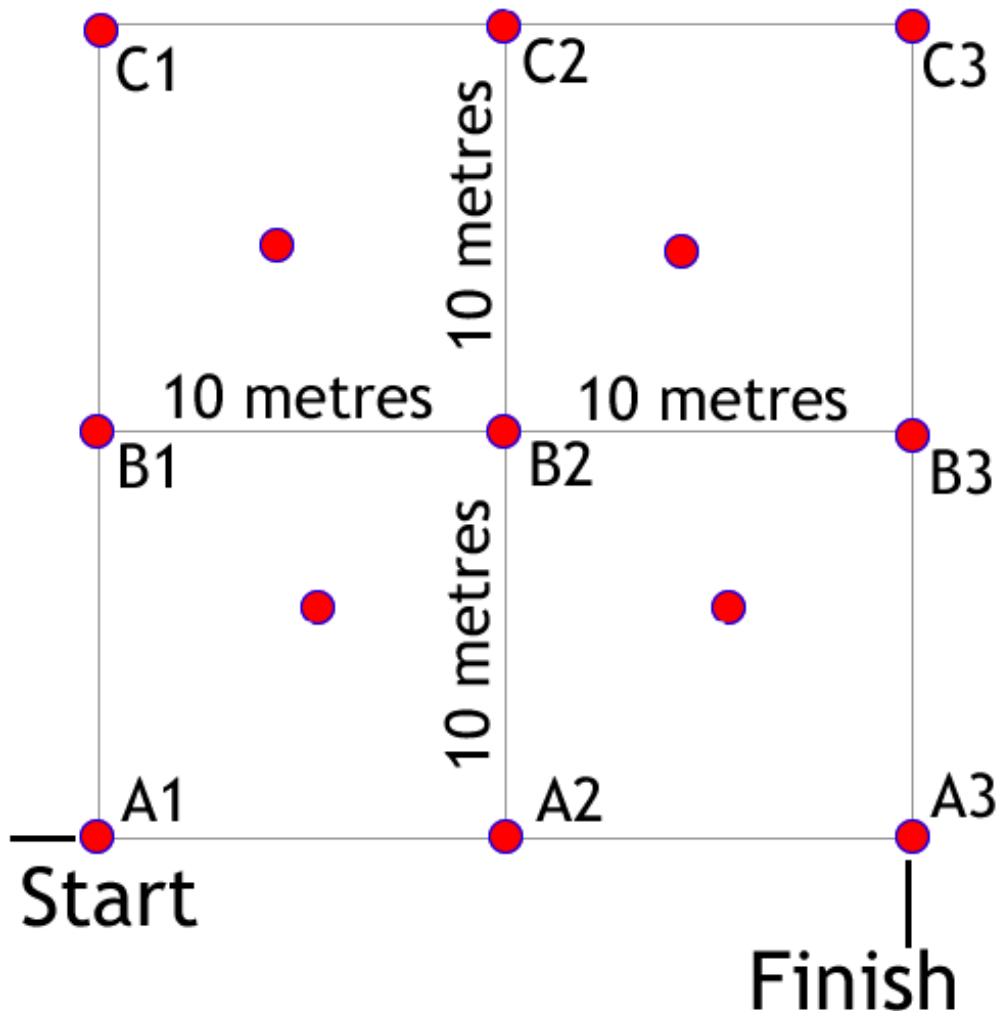
DROP GOAL – FOUL ON KICKER

At a recent Laws exam I was appalled at the lack of knowledge of this area of the Law. I would like one of the Level 2 Country South Coaches to write a short paragraph on the subject for inclusion in the next newsletter. The fullest and best explanation will be published.

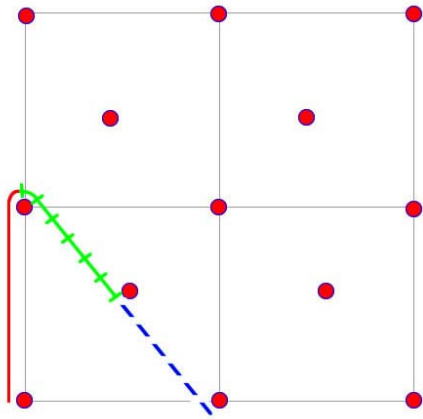
AGILITY DRILLS

NRL referees drill: Agility Run

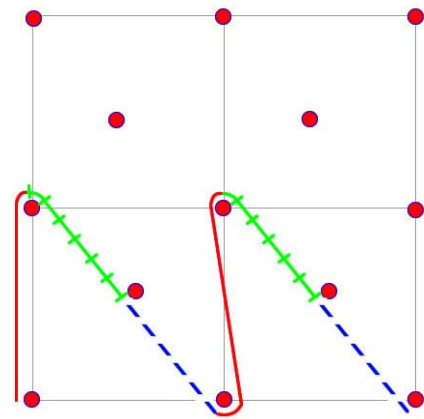
Set out a 20 metre grid as prescribed:



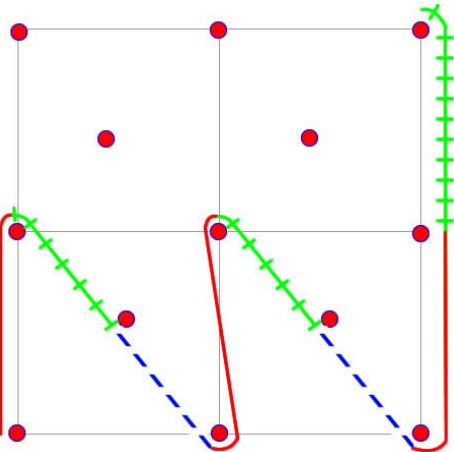
- The centre line (Line B) simulates the advantage line
- The referee should always face the centre line.
- All movements away from the centre line should initially be in a backwards direction.
- All movements towards the advantage line should be in a forward direction.
- The only exception to these guidelines is the final sprint to the finish.



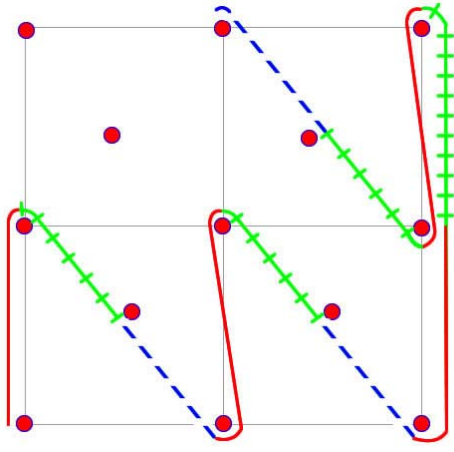
Start at cone A1 running forward 10 metres.
Go sideways around cone B1, running backward towards cone A2. As you pass the mid-point, you may change to a sideways run if desired.



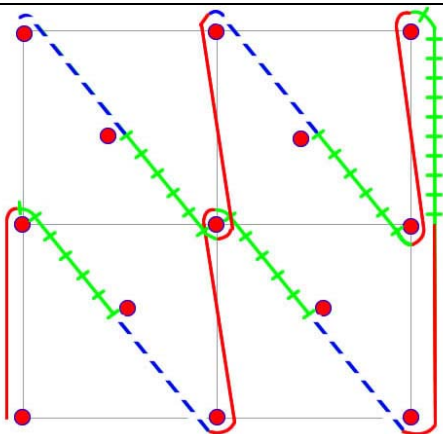
Passing sideways around cone A2, run forward to cone B2. Go sideways around B2 then repeat movement as previous – backwards run towards A3, changing to sideways midway if desired.



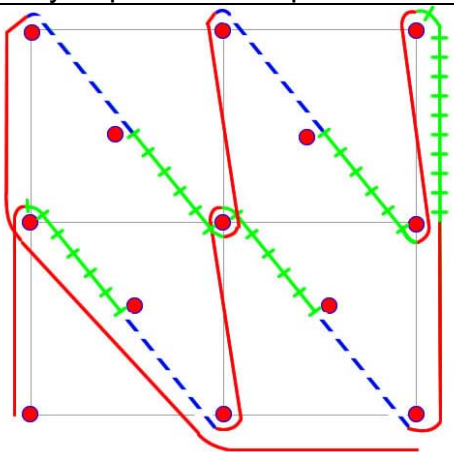
Pass sideways around cone A3, changing to run forward towards cone C3. As you pass cone B3, spin into to a backward run without changing momentum.



Pass sideways around cone C3 then run forward towards cone B3. Pass sideways around cone B3 & return to cone C2 with a backwards run. Change to a sideways run as you pass the midpoint if desired.



Pass sideways around cone C2, converting to a forwards run towards cone B2. Pass this cone sideways and again convert to a backwards run towards cone C1, changing to a sideways run at the midpoint if desired.



Pass by cone C1 sideways and run forwards. At cone B1 turn left and head towards cone A2. Still running forward, finish the drill at cone A3.

FUTURE DISTRIBUTION

We now have 312 coaches, and about 110 of them receive snail mail delivery of the coaching newsletter. Given that we average 5 pages per edition, that is 550 @ 13 cents per page, a total of \$71.50. Postage of 45 cents equals \$49.50. Running total \$121.00. Last year we produced 16 copies. 16 x 121 equals \$1936.

For the 202 people who receive electronic mail or access the ARLRA website to extract the information, it costs the Association \$0. The costs could be better directed elsewhere and, lets face it, everyone has access to a computer and the internet these days. So this will be the last hard copy delivery. But don't take your eye off the ball.

MICHAEL STONE
ARLRA PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE CONSULTANT
NRL REFEREES' CO-ORDINATOR