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## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	1 April 2004
Subject:	MS 005/04

### **RULINGS**

From Kevin Rayment in Group 3.

*"...a simple rule issue became an issue of fairly hot debate recently amongst our Members. Does a player have to tell you, once you have given him the mark for a penalty kick, what he intends to do. I believe that the only time he commits an offence is if he deliberately kicks it elsewhere once he elects to kick for goal. If a player is awarded a penalty in front of the posts, says nothing about his intentions and then drop kicks the ball between the sticks, does he score two points. I believe he does despite the fact you haven't sent your touchies around. Some very experienced referees disagree with me and tell me that it says in the Laws that he must tell you of his intention before taking the kick. I certainly cannot find this reference despite assurances it is there. I have always believed that a player is under no obligation to tell you his intention. Most players do and it has never been an issue but I would appreciate a clarification from you and look forward to discussion from other coaches."*

Give the team two points. In the notes to Law 11, Section 6, it says:-

*"It shall be misconduct for a player to pretend to kick at goal from a penalty kick and then deliberately kick it elsewhere. Such misconduct shall incur a penalty. Having informed the Referee of his intention to kick at goal from an awarded penalty kick the kicker shall not do otherwise."*

Nowhere does it say, nor infer, that the player MUST tell the referee of his intentions. Thus, if you advise the player of the mark and he simply walks in and drop kicks the ball between the uprights and over the cross bar, award the goal.

Then Paul Mossman wrote:-

*“But doesn't the Laws also say that only TJs have responsibility for conversions and that a Ref can only make a decision if the TJ's disagree? So the Ref could only give 2 points if the TJ's raise their flags.”*

The answer there is no, it doesn't say that. It does say “ The Referee shall accept the decision of a neutral Touch Judge relating to ... kicks at goal.” Section 16. Section 6, Law 10, says in relation to a kick for goal, “If there is no disagreement between the Touch Judges their decision shall be accepted.” It doesn't say that the referee **cannot** rule on a goal.

Then Gavin West had a problem.

*“I had Roosters who had won the toss and elected to Kick off. I then asked Magpies which way they wanted to run. From the law I understand this to be right.*

*Now had Roosters elected to Receive the ball, they are in fact electing to choose which end they wish to defend. Therefore the Magpies would then kick off. By the Roosters choosing to Receive, the loser of the toss doesn't get the chose of direction?*

*Basically the only difference in the change is if the team elects to kick off the other team elect which way they run. If the team wishes to receive it will be exactly the same as the old rule and will choose which way they wish to run.”*

Yes Gavin, you are correct. The winner of the toss elects to either kick off, **or choose which end they will defend**. They do not choose to receive! If the winner of the toss chooses to kick off, the other team will have the choice of ends. If the winner of the toss chooses which end to defend, the other team kicks off. It can't be that hard!

## **THE OFFSIDE LAW**

Ignorance of the Law is no excuse in the general community, however sadly, it isn't the same for the media. Here is the text of a media release by Robert Finch this week.

*“NRL Referees Coach Robert Finch has sought to clarify media reports regarding the first try in Sunday's match between the Wests Tigers and the Brisbane Broncos.*

*Some commentators have declared that the video referee missed an “off-side play” in relation to that try. After examining the video Mr Finch backs the decision and offers the following explanation:*

*“Video referee Mick Stone was asked to determine whether a Broncos player who eventually scored the try was offside.*

*“Law 1 of Section 14 of the Laws of the Game says: ‘A player is offside...if the ball touches, is touched, held or kicked, by one of his own team **behind** him.’*

*“The emphasis therefore is on the kicker, who must be behind the runner for the runner to be offside.*

*“The term “behind” in relation to a player, means: ‘...that both feet are behind the position in question.’ (in other words to be off side both of Kelly’s feet had to be behind Hunt).*

*“When Stuart Kelly kicks the ball, the ball on his foot is over the 10 metre line. Hunt, the eventual try scorer, has one foot on the 10 metre line and the other foot in the air. Kelly does not have “both feet ... behind” Hunt and therefore Hunt is clearly onside.*

*“Furthermore, Kelly continues to run forward after the kick and runs to a position past Hunt, meaning that even if Hunt had been in an offside position, Kelly ran him onside in accordance with the Laws of the Game.*

*“Accordingly, the try scored by Hunt is legitimate.*

*“Where the refs have got things wrong I’ve been the first to put my hand up but it is important to acknowledge when they are being incorrectly criticised.”*

It is tragic that we all know the Law but the people reporting on the game have little idea. Chris Ward was also charged with the responsibility of a couple of match shaping decisions in North Queensland last weekend. Clean bill of health to him too.

## **LEVEL 2 COURSE**

Those who completed their Level 2 course in Wollongong recently have all submitted their business plans. Could you all submit your notes on your allocated games please? (Some have already of course.)

That’s all for now. Things have been very quiet in our game lately haven’t they!

MICHAEL STONE  
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NRL REFEREES’ CO-ORDINATOR