



National Rugby League Limited  
Fox Studios Development  
Lang Road, Moore Park NSW 1363  
Postal Address:  
GPO Box 3498 Sydney NSW 2001  
ABN 23 082 088 962  
Internet: www.nrl.com  
Telephone: (02) 9339 8500  
Facsimile: (02) 9339 8508

## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	31 March 2005
Subject:	MS 005/05

It was a long memo last week and more things need to be said this week so let's get on with it.

### **OBSTRUCTION**

Correspondence from a new source.

*"My name is Matthew Hall and I am a referee in the Canberra District. I am wondering if you can give some clarification on the obstruction rulings.*

*I have noticed that decoys/sleepers and blockers are making a massive impact on local park footy and hoping to get some more insight into the rulings.*

*I am aware that the NRL do have a 5 page document with the examples of what is obstruction and what isn't. Also is there a video available to explain in detail this?"*

*I am hoping to get more of an insight as I noticed something similar to what Penrith had done on the weekend with Frank Pritchard hitting the line and taking the 5/8 from STI out. Is it possible to explain for me?"*

I said:-

*"In the NRL we have "Key Indicators" which help us with our decision making in vital areas of the game.*

- There is to be no advantage to the attacking team.*
- Defensive decisions committing defenders to decoy runners will not be considered obstruction.*
- It is the responsibility of the decoy runner not to interfere with the defending team.*

- *Attacking players who loiter next to the play the ball can be interpreted as obstructing the defending team.*
- *In the process of scoring a try an attacking player dives through or into the legs of the player who has played the ball a penalty will be awarded to the defending team. This action will be interpreted as an obstruction.*
- *A defending player shielding a catcher from attacking chasers must position himself early. It will be interpreted as obstruction if the defender:*
  1. *Arrives at the same time as the attacking chasers and deliberately obstructs the catching of the high ball.*
  2. *Deliberately runs the attacking chasers off the football.*

*A more in depth discussion occurs each Monday afternoon and evening with the video referees with the benefit of video footage. It can be very difficult and repeated replays don't necessarily make it easier, in fact, it can sometimes muddy the waters."*

*An old correspondent. Frank Samyia.*

*"Two questions relating to Round 3.*

1. *I am aware that the video referee cannot call a forward pass when he looks at the replay. What is the situation as the game is proceeding? I am of course referring to that Roosters pass from Friday night – can the video referee tip to the centre man during the action?*
2. *The disallowed try to the Tigers on Sunday – I am just interested to know the reasoning behind the decision. I thought it was a try – to me his momentum carried him into the in goal and he didn't promote the ball – only what I think – I don't support either team."*

*My response.*

*"1. Yes, the video ref can "tip" in the same manner as the touch judge but he is generally in a far inferior position to do so than the on field officials. And further, he waits until they make the decision and then has to press to talk..... No, unless it is blatantly obvious the video ref will remain quiet.*

*2. A contentious and difficult decision indeed. Certainly our Key Indicators say that the attacking player must not promote the football from the position that the ball or the arm carrying the ball has been grounded. They also say that if momentum carries the 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 arm carrying the ball. I guess you are saying that the second element applies. There is a fair argument*

*that it does. This decision, though, was one where whichever way it went someone would have a grievance.”*

### **TOUCH JUDGES AND THE VIDEO REF**

From Michael Reid.

*“Watching the Panthers v Dragons match tonight brought up the question of whether the touch judge is still the sole judge of touch and touch in-goal. The reason for this the referee referring a decision to the video referee in spite of the touch judge having raised his flag to indicate that a Penrith player had entered touch prior to the St George Illawarra player grounding the ball in-goal.*

*My understanding would have been that the referee should have immediately deferred to the touch judge's ruling and restarted play with a scrum. (The eventual result after Wardy gave the no-try ruling).*

*On the other hand, the matter might have been a bit simpler had the touch judge not lowered his flag when the Dragons player claimed a try.”*

From me.

*“I certainly do have thoughts. The touch judge concerned is officiating this week in Premier League. You cannot refer a matter such as that to the video referee simply because the defenders could well have been influenced to stop defending when they saw the flag go up. If the Touch judge had not raised his flag, it is a different matter altogether. He may then seek a review of the decision. And the touch judge is still sole judge of touch and touch in goal.”*

### **AND ONE FROM THE BUSH RE TOUCH JUDGES**

*“After watching last night's game between Sydney and the Broncos, I feel compelled to write re the positioning of touch judges. The try scored by Sydney City shortly after half-time was the result of a very obvious accidental forward pass. The Touch Judge on the open side was standing with the defending side, as per NRL instructions. This was why he missed the forward pass thrown near half-way.*

*If this was a one-off incident, I would not be voicing my concerns. However, there have been several of these incidents over the past twelve months. One of the most blatant was during the Finals series last year when Penrith, near the end of the game, scored a try which was at least one metre forward. Actually, in my opinion, it was a deliberate forward pass which should have resulted in a penalty. Penrith won the game convincingly so this error did not make a difference.*

*These missed forward passes have been also occurring fairly regularly in Junior rep games I have seen.*

*Last year at the Australian Schoolboys' Under 18's Championships, I saw a back-play incident missed by the Touch Judge, again because he was standing with the defending team. This error resulted in a quarter way optional kick instead of a penalty. Western Australia, the recipient*

*of the error, scored the winning try against Northern Territory in the ensuing six tackles.*

*I realize Robert's rationale is that the Touch Judges are helping the referee get defenders back the required 10 metres. However, in a Junior rep game I watched a few week's ago between Cronulla and Penrith, the defenders did not even look at the Touch Judges, but were only interested in the referee and the play-the -ball. Where the Touch Judges were standing was incidental. I have even spoken to some Touch Judges regarding this and they have admitted that the players do not take any notice of them.*

*I have spoken to some NSWRA coaches and Advisory Board members who agree with me, but they say they are powerless, as they are instructed to ensure that the Touch Judges carry out their duties as per the NRL.*

*I have a belief that if the referee cannot control the 10 then maybe he either should not stand there, or not be there at all.*

*I find it hard to believe that Robert has not changed his ideas on this and returned Touch judges to the positions they had previously. I did not think he would be so intransigent.*

*Kevin Riolo”*

I replied in a very gracious manner.

*“I don't think that he is being intransigent (is that how you spell it?), just stubborn or single minded. We always knew that there would be trade offs in positioning the Sideline Officials where we do, and the forward pass from dummy half particularly is one of them. However, in both this case and the forward pass in the last Broncos try, the tackle count was fifth and last, so the Model which the Sideline Officials were using was in fact Model 3. Model 3 is the one where the SO closest to the ruck (short side) stands on the ruck and the long, or open side SO, stands back the 10 metres. So there **was** an official who was positioned to see the pass in both instances. Let's not forget the referee who, at the end of the day, is the one responsible for ruling on such issues.*

*There is another issue in the Roosters try. The far Sideline Official adopted the Blitz model, which necessitates him heading immediately down field to be closer to the kick. However, that model only comes into play inside the 40 metre lines, and the play the ball was on the half way line. So the far SO should have moved quickly off the 10 metres and been in line with the pass in order to call it. It amounted to poor positioning because of use of the wrong model and poor call by the referee.*

*Generally, the SO's will use Model 2 or Model 1 during the run of play, so you may have a better argument if that was the case. But it wasn't.*

*You may well know, Kevin, that I had reservations about the SO positioning at the outset but I can tell you that the 10 metres has become a total non issue on Monday mornings because of the impact of*

*the SO's. It isn't the players' response to the SO which is important but the referees' response to the SO's. As I indicated to you last November, team work has been the focus of the NRL squad this year and it certainly appears to be working. That is not to say that we will not have the odd poor week (like last week!) but I'm sure that will happen in other Leagues as well.*

*Thanks for the input but I'm also sure that Robert is more than comfortable with the technical aspects of Sideline Official's positional play, something which you know I have a paucity of knowledge about.”*

## **DOUBLE MOVEMENTS**

They say don't they, that at last resort you should apply the Law. The Law in relation to Second movements after a tackle is as follows. The notes to Law 2, Section 11 of the International Laws of the Game state, as far as is relevant, that in relation to a second movement after a tackle,

*“When an attacking player is tackled within easy reach of the goal line he should be penalized if he makes a second movement to place the ball over the line for a try.”*

The NRL Key Indicators say, *inter alia*,

*“...an attacking player must **not promote the football from the position that the ball or arm carrying the ball has been grounded**, in the process of scoring a try.”*

If you apply the Law, you cannot go wrong.

Another Drill follows. And don't take your eye off the ball.

MICHAEL STONE

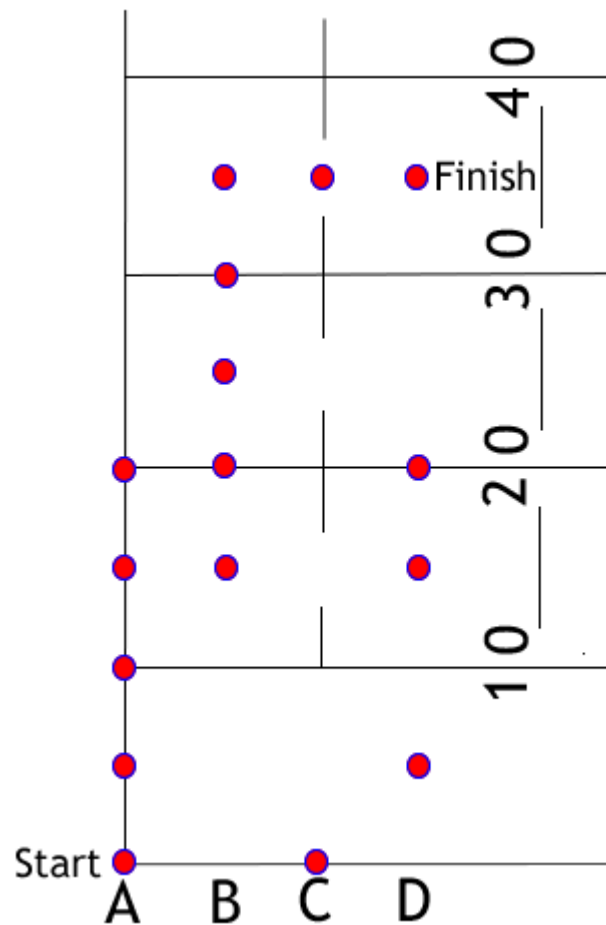
NRL REFEREES' CO-ORDINATOR

ARLRA PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE CONSULTANT

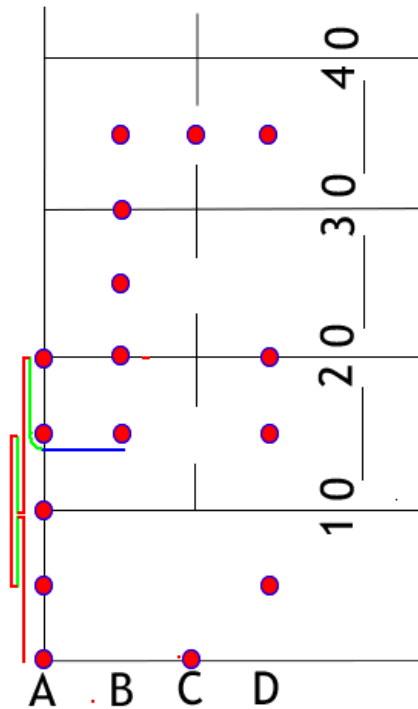
# NRL referees drill: Agility Run

---

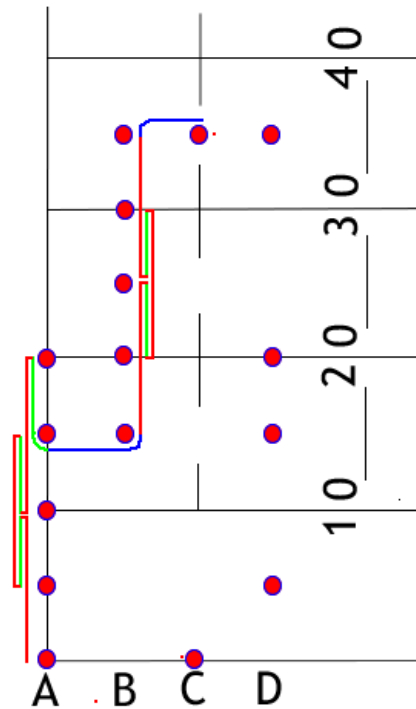
Set out a 35m x 15m grid as prescribed:



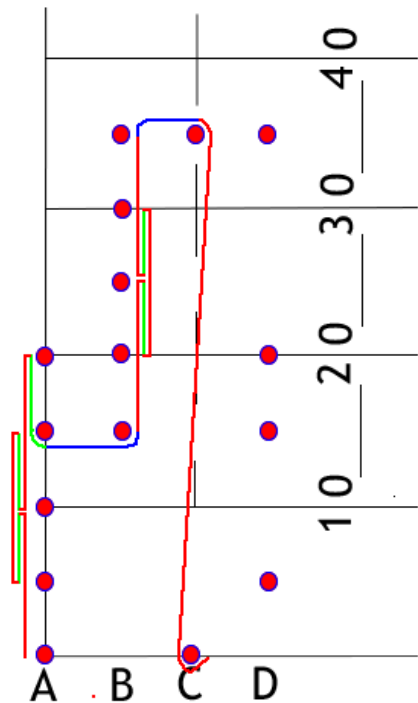
- All movements in Columns A, B and D are completed with the referee facing in the same direction (i.e. “up” the page) at all times.
- When a change of movement/direction is required, move in the required direction without changing the direction that the referee is facing.
- Column C is completed facing “down” the page.



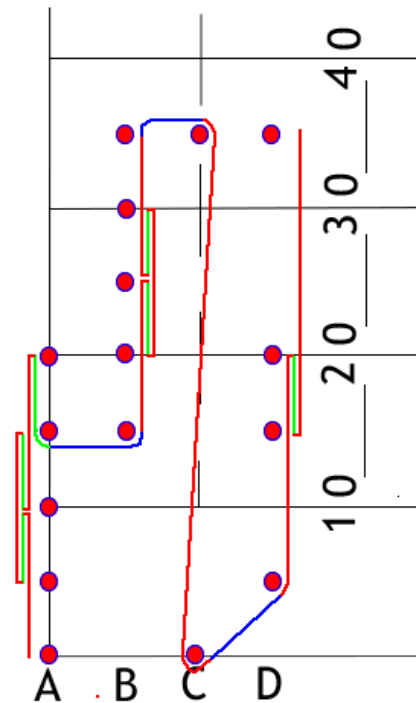
From the start cone, run forward 10m. Then backwards for 5m. Forwards 10m, backwards 5m. Forwards 10m, backwards 5 and slide right for 5m.



Commence column B by running forward for 10m, backwards for 5m. Then forwards again for 10m, back 5. Lastly forward for 10m then slide right for 5m.



When the referee passes the cone at the top of Column C, the referee is to turn and run 35m forwards around the cone at the bottom of Column C



Move in a sideways direction to the cone at the "Bottom" of column D. When the cone is passed, run forward 15m, then back 5m. Finish with a 20m sprint to the finish cone.