



MEMORANDUM MS05/07 TO ARLRA REFEREES' COACHES

19 June 2007

A CURLY ONE FROM THE OLD DART

Stuart Cummings wrote with the following query. As you will see, it is not a question that is entirely free from doubt. He wrote -

"For a goal line drop out to be awarded does a player have to intentionally ground the ball in his in goal area?"

Scenario!

A full back tries to bring the ball back in to the field of play from his own in goal area. As he tries to evade a tackle he slips and the ball is grounded in the in goal area. He then reaches forward and places the ball, whilst still in his hands, in the field of play."

I replied, after consultation with my colleagues -

"In general terms, we believe that if you would have awarded a try in the event that the action mentioned was at the other end of the field, then the ball has been grounded. We reviewed a couple of situations where players were under pressure last weekend and dived on the ball covering it beneath their body. Then they jumped to their feet having secured possession of the ball and tried to run. Inevitably our referees rule that the ball has been grounded in goal and rule a goal line drop out.

In your situation mentioned below, can you imagine the furore if the player "grounds" the ball then attempts to promote it to the field of play only to lose it and have a try scored against him? There is no doubt that they will, with some justification, claim to have forced the ball.

The situation where there is only, say, the defending fullback near the ball and he clearly falls on the ball to secure possession then jumps to his feet to run away, we would play on even though on the face of it, it seems to be in contradiction to what I have said above. IT REALLY DEPENDS IN THAT CASE ON THE PROXIMITY OF THE OPPOSING PLAYERS."



RICHARD JOHNSTON RETURNS

DECISIONS! DECISIONS!

In Real Estate parlance they say LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION!

In Refereeing we focus on DECISION! DECISION! DECISION!

How often do we see Questionable Decisions impact on games and take the CONTEST out of the GAME. It behoves all Match Officials to reflect on the QUALITY of DECISIONS in the CONTEXT of the GAME.

Michael Stone once asked, "Why do we referee?" The response is simple. "Because we have to make DECISIONS. "How do we lift the bar height in this VITAL ASPECT OF THE GAME? There is no SIMPLE ANSWER but PRE-MATCH PREPARATION can help to address this ASPECT. The following are some suggestions but undoubtedly this should produce further discussions and hopefully other IDEAS from ACTIVE and NON-ACTIVE MATCH OFFICIALS.

- ✿ PHYSICAL FITNESS COMENSURATE TO THE LEVEL OF THE GAME CONTROLLED.
- ✿ REGULAR SKILL RELATED DRILLS PRACTICES.
- ✿ REVIEW OF ON-FIELD PERFORMANCES (USE OF VIDEO,DVD)
- ✿ STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO ENFORCE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF SUCH AREAS AS TACKLE IDENTIFICATION, DELAYING TACTICS AND THE KEY INDICATORS.
- ✿ GROUP DISCUSSIONS IN RELATION TO ON-FIELD SCENARIOS USING PEER GROUP ASSESSMENT OF DECISIONS AND OUTCOMES.
- ✿ QUALITY MENTORING (COACH OF MATCHOFFICIALS)
- ✿ AN UNDERSTANDING OF PLAYER MOVEMENT PATTERNS IN RELATION TO (YARDAGE, GUTS, URGENCY.) TO ENHANCE LATERAL SHIFT, CONTROL AND VISION.

Associations should ensure their ACTION PLAN ENCOMPASSES the CORE BUSINESS OF OFFICIATING. IT IS THE BASIC RIGHT OF ALL MATCH OFFICIALS TO BE PROVIDED WITH AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH ENABLES THEM TO REACH THEIR "TRUE POTENTIAL"

REACTION AND STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE ON-FIELD PERFORMANCE ARE INVITED FROM ALL. I AWAIT THE RESPONSES.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

I was recently asked for some mentoring tips from a colleague in NSW country. Here are some tips for the mentor and official taken from “Advanced Level Officiating: General Principles Manual”.

- Establish good rapport between mentor and official
- Find a match between values and skills
- Build trust and confidentiality
- Cultivate demonstrated interest and enthusiasm by both parties
- Set clear objectives and goals
- Show mutual respect
- Use clear communication and feedback – the mentor is the “critical friend”
- Share experiences
- Ensure there is fun and enjoyment
- Acknowledge and celebrate achievements.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ELITE REFEREE

Sounds interesting? I recently conducted research into one of our elite NRL referees for a course I am doing and wrote a paper on the results. When it is marked, my intention is to publish it in this forum. I think that it would be an interesting exercise to undertake similar research into what makes all of us tick. Perhaps I could utilize my retirement doing that.

Although it is our 100th year, let’s still look young and enthusiastic!

MICHAEL STONE
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ARL LAWS COMMITTEE MEMBER