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## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	20 April 2006
Subject:	MS006/06

### DEALING WITH THE DIFFICULT CUSTOMER Part 2

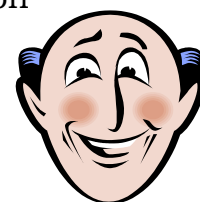
The next customer that I want to talk about is the really disagreeable, opinionated prat. How to deal with this character?



### LOUDLY DISAGREEABLE

Firstly we need to understand what we are doing and why we are doing it. We are there to coach the official and improve him as a referee. The strategy, as always, is to attempt to get the official to focus on the areas where we feel he needs to concentrate. This official is unlikely to listen to criticism so the only alternative is to direct him to look at/think about the areas that you have identified. However, you are not there to be abused or castigated. Sometimes the only reasonable tactic is total withdrawal. It should be remembered, though, that in those circumstances, it is highly unlikely that the official will eradicate his shortcomings and therefore, the ultimate sanction of demotion may be the only alternative. Don't be dismayed and don't feel that you have failed. This counselling (negotiation) session is a two way street.

Finally, even though we are always trying to recruit and retain officials, there are some people who we are better off without. Even the official with the prodigious talent is expendable if he is likely to cause more trouble than he is worth. Suggest another occupation maybe.



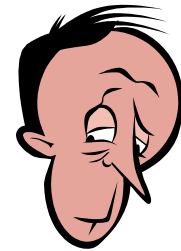
### TOTALLY AGREEABLE

This guy is terribly willing to please, lots of yes's to your

enquiries and is willing to admit to anything practically before being told. So how could this guy possibly be difficult to deal with?

Again we need to revisit why we are doing the job. Can we be sure that he is not just telling us what he thinks that we want to hear? If he is, he probably isn't going to learn anything from you. So what we do is set some tasks for the official to complete. If he is agreeing that his positional play is faulty, he may need to undertake some specially devised drills. If he is making ruling errors, he needs to perhaps complete some of the laws test to which everyone has access. In other words, the official must be made to put up or shut up.

## THE PERFECTIONIST



The perfectionist is always upset with himself. He is never satisfied and constantly wound up like a spring. The biggest danger with this guy is the fear of failure. Along with the fear of failure comes a reluctance to make the decision. "If I don't make the decision then I won't make a mistake". Self doubts permeate this character.

The coach needs to work with this fellow because there is a tendency for him to either be way up or way down. There is little in between. That means that he can certainly referee very well, but can also find himself in a gigantic hole. Confidence and consistent approach to preparation is your ultimate goal as a coach.

There are countless other types that you may be able to identify but I think that these are the main "difficult" customers.

## THE SIN BIN

Recently, Shayne Hayne sin binned a player following a high tackle. Whilst we do not ordinarily use the sin bin for foul play, Hayne had previously issued a caution to the Penrith captain about the number of high tackle penalties in the game. Having issued the "or else" caution, something had to give. This is what the NRL media release had to say.

"While maintaining that the sin bin is not to be used in cases of serious foul play, it has always had a role in disciplining players for repeated infringements, on field flare ups between players and for dissent.

If a player commits a high tackle the referee can look to a range of options from a penalty to a send off depending on the severity of the offence. The sin bin doesn't come into play on the basis of one tackle but if a player has been involved in a number of tackles that have concerned the referee or indeed if the team have been involved in a number of such tackles, then it comes into the area of repeated

infringements and that is where we have always had a role for the sin bin.

It is up to the referee to ensure on the field that wherever possible he controls the game in a manner that prevents problems escalating to the point where send offs are the only option.”

In Hayne’s view, the high tackle by itself did not warrant dismissal but the strong caution had to be followed by appropriate action. I think that it did.

## **NEWS FROM NRL**

An interesting observation from a perusal of the stats from matches this season. In the first six rounds of the NRL season, discretionary penalties awarded in the ruck have reduced by a whopping 12%. Can anyone possibly come up with a reason why this might be so?

The reason is a simple one we think. It involves communication and effective identification of the tackle as dominant, surrender, “legsy” etc and the players’ understanding of what it all entails. We have introduced this policy in the Premier League and Jim Beam Cup without too many dramas as yet although the referees are still learning the art of identification. But if we reduce the number of discretionary penalties at that level at the same rate as NRL, we are on a winner for sure.

## **ANSWERS TO QUIZ #5**

1. Penalty. Centre of the halfway line to B.
2. Scrum. At the point of the rebound but no closer than 20 metres to the touch line. Loose head and put into A.
3. Goal line drop out. Centre of the goal line.
4. Scrum. At the point from where the ball was kicked. Loose head and put into B.
5. Free kick to A. Where the ball first crossed the touch line.
6. 20 metre optional kick by B. Centre of B’s 20 metre line
7. Goal line drop out. Centre of the goal line.
8. Scrum. At the point of the knock on but not closer than 10 metres to the goal line. Loose head and put in to the defending team.
9. Penalty to B. At the point of the play the ball.
10.
  - a) at the mark
  - b) where the half back came in line with his last row of forwards
  - c) on the 5 metre line in line with where the breach occurred.
11. Penalty to A1. Where the ball lands or is caught on B’s 20 metre line.
12. Penalty to A1. 10 metres in from touch and 10 metres out from the goal line.

- 13.** Scrum. Where the ball was when the whistle was blown accidentally. Loose head and put into the team last in possession.
- 14.** Scrum. Loose head and put in to the attacking team.
- 15.** Differential penalty. At the scrum mark.

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

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