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## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
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Subject:	MS 008/04

### **COACH THE COACHES REVIEW**

A review of the Referee Coaches courses is underway and a meeting next Thursday 20 May in Sydney will largely dictate the direction in which we travel in the future. If you have some ideas which you want floated or discussed at the meeting, then get in touch with either Nick Euclid, Richard Johnston, David Jay or myself. It is important that we continue to scrutinise our own performance and content of the courses to retain their relevancy.

### **SOME RULINGS**

From Mario Cafarelli.

*"In the Laws Of The Game Glossary the definition of REBOUND refers us to ACCIDENTAL STRIKE. But is it fair to say that all rebounds are accidental?"*

*Two scenarios.*

- 1. A red winger is running close to the touch line after the third tackle. As he approaches a blue opponent he attempts a chip kick over the opponent's head. The opponent MAKES NO ATTEMPT to play at the ball. The ball rebounds off the opponent in the head, then rolls into touch. The result is that play restarts with a scrum 20M in from where the ball crossed the touch line with the blue opponent's team getting the loose and feed.*
- 2. Same situation with the red winger and the chip kick over the opponent's head. This time the blue opponent MAKES A DELIBERATE play at the ball but completely misses it with his hands and arms. The*

*ball rebounds off his head and rolls into touch. Is this contact with the ball considered accidental or deliberate, hence who gets the loose and feed from the resulting scrum.?*

*If the answer to the question is accidental then this seems to contradict the case where a player attempts to "shadow" the ball over the touch line, but the ball bounces back and hits his leg before going out. This player has played at the ball, but the leg contact was accidental."*

The answer to question 2 is that he has played at the ball. Red feed and loose.

Then he said:-

*"A 14<sup>th</sup> player illegally enters the field of play after disobeying a touch judge's instruction (completely hypothetical of course). The touch judge immediately comes on and reports him to the referee. Where is the penalty awarded.?"*

Citing personal experience, I said "where he comes into play." However, Alex Mangovsky suggests otherwise. He said:-

*"An alternate argument would be that the player in question committed misconduct the moment he crossed the touchline making 14 players on the field. As he was spotted at this point in time by the touch judge then I believe you should penalize him where he crossed the line (or 10 metres in from that point)."*

Fair point. However, you wouldn't penalize him ten metres in. That is reserved for a breach actually occurring **in touch**. Therefore, as close to the touch line as possible would be the position if he doesn't enter play but the touch judge sees him enter the field of play illegally. Well done Alex.

From Gerry Hinds.

*"A question asked by some Board members of the Newcastle Rugby League, when does the time clock start on a kick at goal? Am I right in assuming from the time the try is scored."*

In the case of a conversion, when the whistle is blown for the try. In the case of a penalty, when the whistle is blown for the penalty.

### **LOST HIS LEGS???**

Mark Edwards is somewhat bemused (not surprisingly so) by NRL Referees suggestions that some of our players were legless. Drunk maybe? He writes:-

*“...some of our guys have asked the meaning of the term used recently by NRL referees, HE'S LOST HIS LEGS.”*

What they are referring to is one of the definitions of a “dominant” tackle. When a player hits the defence and immediately attempts to drop down to his knees to effect a quick play the ball instead of contesting the tackle he is said to have “lost his legs”, or succumbed to the tackle in such a manner as to warrant the referee allowing extra time for the defence to clear the tackled player. The players know exactly what it means.

## **BENCH INDISCRETION**

Craig Diebert wanted to know:-

*“Sect 16 - Duties of Referee and touch judges Law 6. In the event of misconduct by a player, the referee shall, at his discretion, caution, temp. suspend for ten minutes, or dismiss the offender. Notes on dismissed player: A dismissed player can take no further part in the match, nor shall he be permitted to take up a position near the playing area where his presence is likely to provoke further incident.*

*For example our discussion was based on a player involved in a fight and has been sent from the field of play. Now this player has entered the playing field from the bench to become involved in the fight. Is the team disadvantaged on the field ( reduced to 12 men ) or is the Bench disadvantaged ( reduced replacements ).”*

My response is that you dismiss the player if you like, but the team continues to play with 13. No-one who was involved on the field can be dismissed to compensate. I **will** enter into any contrary correspondence as this isn't a rule as such, just common sense coupled with the Laws of the Game.

## **STOLEN BALL**

Frank Samyia writes:-

*“A player in possession close to the line, is stripped of the ball in a two man tackle. The referee believes that a try would have been scored. What does he rule?”*

*This occurred in a game that I was a touch judge on last weekend. The referee penalized the offending player and sent him to the sin bin. I was assessing this referee and when I quizzed him about it he said that he believed that a try would have been scored.”*

As a question of policy in the NRL, we will not award a penalty try. The change was made this year. However, that is **not** an International

interpretation. He could have awarded a penalty try if he was certain that a try would have been scored.

### **ANOTHER OFFSIDE PROBLEM**

Bob Long writes:-

*“Player A for the red team is tackled in mid field. He plays the ball back and his acting half passes the ball to the fullback standing some 12m behind the play-the-ball. The fullback kicks the ball down field. It lands only 8m in front of player A, who hasn’t moved from his position when he played the ball (big head wind). As the lock in the blue team attempts to catch the ball he drops it. Player A now moves in and falls on the ball. Decision? As he is the ball player and hasn’t moved from this position until after the ball was dropped, does he have the same status as he would if, say, the acting half had used him to avoid being tackled by a marker instead of passing the ball back to the fullback. We have taught our referees that, so long as the ball player doesn’t move, he is ‘out of play’ and ‘doesn’t exist’. If this is so then he ‘didn’t exist’ when the ball was dropped by the blue team lock and only came ‘into existence’ after all offside was negated by the playing at the ball by the blue team. But he was still inside 10m.”*

There are a couple of problems here. Firstly, if Player A is within ten metres of an opponent who is waiting for the ball, he is offside and no one can put him onside. The fact that it is he who secures possession of the ball merely adds emphasis to this fact.

Secondly, the reason why you tell your referees that a ball carrier can dodge behind the man playing the ball is because of the wording of the Laws of the Game and not because of any unwritten law saying that he doesn’t exist. See Section 15, Law 1 (j) notes on page 40. “The player in possession of the ball...can...dodge behind a ruck of his own players...”.

Once the ball has been dropped, I think there is no alternative but to penalize the offending player. If the Lock catches the ball, and the offside player “...immediately retire(s) ten metres from (him)”, the referee is certainly entitled to play on. See Section 14, Law 2.

If another on side player runs through to pick up the dropped ball, Player A is still offside. If the kicker runs through to pick up the lost ball, Player A is still offside. Let me know what you think.

### **NRL/HAS REFEREES’ ACADEMY**

We are approximately half way through the inaugural Academy programme. First graders Paul Simpkins, Tony Archer and Steve Lyons have made presentations and in the coming weeks, Steve Clark,

Tim Mander, Shayne Hayne, Matt Cecchin, Sean Hampstead and others will be cranking up the tempo.

The techniques which these young people have been exposed to aren't revolutionary. They are tried and tested and work under the pressure of the elite game. It stands to reason that, given an opportunity to practice these techniques, the members of the squad will become better referees for it. I am firmly of the view that the game in the bush will be better for it as well. Those of you who are exposed to these young men, listen to what they are learning. Is it different from what you are teaching? If so, perhaps you need to look at yourself and revise the skills that you are teaching. The game has changed dramatically over recent times and if you don't change with it, you will certainly be left in its wake. The bush is no longer a backwater of Rugby League for referees thanks to the introduction of our new career path and initiatives such as the Academy. You no longer operate in a vacuum where you were once able to say "that's the TV game". Watch the TV, that's OUR game, and any of you can be a part of it. When one of your protégés makes it to the top, take pride in the fact that you assisted in his promotion, not hindered it.

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