



## **MEMORANDUM MS009/06 TO ARLRA REFEREES' COACHES**

**15 JUNE 2006**

Nice new letterhead? OK, so what?

### **ACCIDENTAL BREACH – ZERO TACKLE**

Jared Maxwell raised this issue in a Laws discussion. His view was that the accidental breach which resulted in a zero tackle count can only be a forward pass or knock on and he referred to Section 11, Law7 (b) on page 25 which reads

*“Where an accidental breach occurs (knock-on, forward pass) and possession changes hands, the following tackle will be a zero tackle, notwithstanding that the team gaining possession may have gained a territorial advantage”*

Imagine my shock at seeing the words “knock-on, forward pass” in the Law. Being at a loss to explain how these words materialized into the Law, I contacted Richard Johnston who informed me that the change came about for some unexplained reason in 2002. The previous Law read –

*“Where a player subsequently commits an accidental breach and an opponent gathers the ball and he or a member of his team is tackled, the play-the-ball following that tackle shall not count for the purposes of the tackle count referred to in the proceeding paragraph.”*

There has been no consultation to my recollection that resulted in a change in the implementation of the law. In that event, I can only surmise that the words in parenthesis are simply to be used as examples of an accidental breach and therefore the substance of the original law is unchanged, ie that for any accidental breach where possession changes hands, that tackle will be a zero tackle.

So, Team A plays the ball, the acting half back kicks the ball and it strikes one of his own players who is in front of him and therefore accidentally offside. A player from Team B falls on the ball and is tackled. **THAT TACKLE WILL BE A ZERO TACKLE.**



## **INFLUENCES ON THE MATCH OFFICIAL PART 2**

For our leadership and teachings to be successful we must first create the environment where the referee is willing to accept our experience. At Norford Park where the premier Squad trains, we have a sign which we plagiarized from one which hung in a famous swim coach's office. Ours reads "**We don't create great referees – we create an environment where great referees become inevitable**". With this fact in mind we must educate the referee to be open to certain concepts and rules for this education.

Bill Nelson writes

*"The basis of success in any teaching situation is to avail the student of your knowledge your experience and your teachings. But the end result of this association must be that the student becomes independent of the teacher. The satisfaction for the teacher in this is to watch the maturation of the student and enjoy the situation of the independent student operate in the world's environment using the lessons of life they have been taught by their teachers. Not because they have to but because these teachings have now become the blue print for the development of another person's philosophy of life. This is the reward for the teacher."*

So it is for the referee's coach. The referee must become independent of the coach. The strength of a coach is not to create a referee in his own likeness, but to assist the referee to promote his strengths and recognize and work on any perceived weaknesses. These will involve skills used on the football field but may also involve life skills. The referee will need to "operate in the world's environment" using those skills and lessons which you as a coach have given him.

*"To be effective teachers we coaches must have the trust of the athletes in our care. In normal life the child is familiar with the people who are educating them. In sport it is a little different because from a very early age an athlete's education and development is coming from someone they barely know, from their point of view, our decision making, our judgments, our philosophies and standards are totally new territory."*

As we all know only too well, referees are extremely sensitive to issues of trust. If they work hard, adhere to the rules, listen intently and produce results, then the rewards will come. Anything that threatens that process such as conflict with the coach will result in a lack of trust. We all know of the constant conflict between the referee's desire to trust and the fear of getting a rough deal.



The demands of modern society are heading in a direction that is opposite to the direction which we, as coaches, require our referees to be heading. Because of this, the job of a coach is becoming harder. When I took over the NSWRL Premier Squad, I met with resistance that seems to accord with current societal standards. For society seems to be looking at the future with the following in mind.

Work – less time, more money, less accountability.  
Work – has to be fun regardless of the task at hand.  
Less emphasis on long term commitment.  
More emphasis on short term results.  
How do we make our lives easier?  
Rather than follow rules, how do we get away with things?  
Individuals have rights, therefore we must have a reduction in discipline.

We have addressed these issues in molding the NSWRL Premier Squad. Instead of concerning themselves with appointments, (short term results), they are concerned primarily with education (long term commitment). Their lives have become much harder, moving from one night a week to three longer ones. There is more accountability brought about by a more structured and intense evaluation process which identifies deficiencies and strengths alike. Peer pressure and a simple fining system encourages discipline and an ethos which dictates that one must follow the rules or perish. Does all of this improve them as referees and people? That is for others to decide.

Bill writes

*“In recent times world records have become fewer and farther between or those that have been broken have a cloud of drug tainted suspicion. With all of the sports science support, advancement in sporting technology, coach education programs, financial support for both athletes and coaches we still cannot come up to the standards of the past as far as an athletic performance is concerned.*

*Sporting success and the word sportsmanship were founded on some of the following principles:*

- *Long term development ( It takes 10 years to become an overnight success)*
- *There are no short cuts to success*
- *Taking responsibility for your own actions*
- *Respect for the people around you.*



- *Dedication and commitment*
- *Personal sacrifices and individual character based focus to achieve a desired result.*
- ***Do not achieve an outcome by denigrating the performance of another competitor.***
- *The journey of success is not always a smooth one.*
- ***Working as part of a team so that all attain individual success.***
- ***It's not always imperative to do the things we like to do, it is important to do the things we have to do in order to achieve what we want.***

*Which is right and which is wrong is a decision that each individual will eventually have to make for them. From a coaching point of view however, this is what we are up against in the development of athletic talent.”*

To be continued later.

*Based on the paper “Is society complimenting what we ask of our Sports People” written by Bill Nelson.*

## **A RULING ENQUIRY**

From Frank, God bless his cotton socks.

*“I’m wondering however if he might not have contravened Section 10 Paragraph 1 – ‘A player shall be penalised if he deliberately knocks on or passes forward’.*

*I don’t think he juggled it, I think he deliberately knocked it forward.*

*Don’t mean to be a party pooper but I’d be interested in your thoughts. It might invoke a bit of discussion around the traps.”*



Mighty brave decision to knock back that try. I think that he was merely bringing the ball under control to gather it and score one of the more spectacular tries of the 2006 season. **I** certainly wouldn't look for a reason to disallow it.

### **NRL QUIZ #6**

See attached. Answers next time.

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

MICHAEL STONE  
NRL REFEREES' CO-ORDINATOR  
ARLRA PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE CONSULTANT  
ARL LAWS COMMITTEE MEMBER  
NSWRL PREMIER LEAGUE HEAD COACH  
ARL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS MENTOR  
ARLRA MEMORANDUM EDITOR  
NRL CD PUBLICITY OFFICER  
RLIF REFEREE SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBER



## NRL QUIZ #6

1. Red player attempts a drop goal. The shot misses and goes dead. Red kicker is fouled after taking the shot.
  
2. Same as above but the shot is successful.
  
3. Red player attempts a drop goal. The kick is unsuccessful and one of his teammates who is in front of the kicker is obstructed.
  
4. Same as above, but his teammate is behind the kicker.
  
5. Same as above but the kick is successful.
  
6. Same as 3 above but the kick comes off the side of the boot and lands on the corner post on the full.
  
7. Red in his own in goal knocks on. The ball rolls into the field of play. A Red team mate, also in goal but in front of the first Red player, runs into the field of play and picks up the ball.
  
8. Red in his own in goal knocks on and the ball rolls into the field of play. A Red teammate in the field of play retreats to the goal line then advances to pick the ball up, at all times remaining in front of the first Red player.



REFEREES' ASSOCIATION

9. Red is awarded a penalty kick 5 metres out from the Blue goal line. Red captain informs the referee that he wishes to take the ball back to the 30 metre line. The blue team advances to the 20 metre line for the tap kick.
  
10. Red is awarded a penalty kick and finds touch 1 metre from the Blue goal line. The Red captain takes the ball back 15 metres along the 10 metre line in from touch and punts the ball towards the goal post. Red catch the ball and score.
  
11. Red is awarded a penalty kick. A Blue player disputes the ruling using foul language and knocks the ball from the hands of the Red player.
  
12. Red is awarded a penalty kick. They elect to take a quick tap and an offside Blue player effects a tackle.
  
13. Red score a try. While still on the ground, the try scorer is fouled by a Blue player. List the steps you would take in chronological order.
  
14. Red is awarded a penalty. He informs the referee that he will kick for goal and places the ball on the ground. He then notices that the defence has relaxed and he kicks the ball to his winger who scores in the corner.
  
15. The referee orders a scrum to be packed. The Red half back feeds the scrum and the ball comes out the same tunnel. The referee orders the scrum to be re-fed but before it can, the full time siren sounds.