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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	21 August 2003
Subject:	MS011/03

To those who have gained the perception that I am on death's door, I'm not. Or else no closer than before. Apparently there was mention in the popular press that I was recovering from illness or something. It's true that I had a bit of a scare but let's get on with life. I appreciate the wishes of those who contacted me however. Not the bloke that said that he hopes that I die, but everyone else.

NEWS FROM NRL

Robert Finch has implemented a system which could be lovingly described as "reporting in the negative". As you know, we don't advocate such detailed appraisal in the matches involving emerging referees. However, this practice details everything that the observer (in this case, me) sees, and questions. The appraisal is done via video tape and Emailed to the referee. He then edits his tape of the game and presents himself and edited tape to Telstra Stadium on Monday morning to debrief with the coach. We deal with all incidents. Quite often, the incident will be discussed and nothing more said because the referee's action is correct. This indeed turns the negative report into a positive.

You may not be familiar with some of the vocab. Key indicators quite simply are the areas of a referee's game which need to be addressed in order for a match to flourish. Ten, rucks, scrums etc. When you see Yardage, Guts or Urgency Zone, these are areas of the field where the referee gives greater or less emphasis to individual key indicators. For example, in the yardage set (coming off one's own line, probably from the corner post) emphasis is placed on the markers and the A, B, C defenders because all the side in possession are trying to do is gain yards from their own line and kick for position. Outside backs defending will play little part in this area of the field.

Anyway, this is a typical report on a typical match. I hope it makes some sense although it truly only makes total sense at the debrief.

Key Indicators	Time	Event	Outcome
Ruck	0.12	Sleeper	No pen warranted but watch
	0.48	Markers	Yardage set KI
	2.15	Sleeper	No pen warranted but watch
	2.21	Holding down	Penalty
	3.33	Poor ptb	not square
	4.51	slow ptb	Yardage set KI
	6.19	Int in ptb	Good pen leads to try
	9.37	Int in ptb	Tough?
	12.22	Markers	Good pen but look at this
	12.42	slow ptb	yardage set for slow ptb's
	14.15	Markers	Good pen could have been 2 secs earlier discuss
	15.55	Holding down	Never onside makes tackle Knock on ensues Advant???
	28.2	Hand on ball	Yard set no movement
	36.56	Markers	Set starts at 10m ends 38
	39.1	Holding down	8 offside makes tackle
	43.23	Holding down	Penalty
	44.2	WOG	1st tackle second half
	50.41	Sleeper	
	51	Holding down	Little tough?
	59.2	Yardage set	Why not address/comm. markers KI? Discuss
	61.4	Too quick ptb	Agree
	69.08	Holding down	Agree
	72.44	Holding down	Caution timely
81.1	Lost ball	Mistake to play on. Player loses ball.	
84.52	Markers	Yardage set Need to alter communication to suit KI Zone. Discuss.	
10 Metres	34.17	Delayed pen after break	Leads to try
	38.27	20 gets a jump	Look at position. Wider perhaps
	40.03	P.... blind defence offside	B.... score on other side but no notice taken. Attention needed here.
		Blind defence close to line attention needed	
Scrum	10.45	Good first scrum	
		Scrum well set kept concentration up well	
Points of Discussion	10.09	Dangerous position?	Discuss
	22.28	Pen for play on after tackle	Poor early call Discuss
	24.4	Lost ball	Good decision
	29.5	TJ call looks a try	Discuss
	57.13	High tackle	Penalty

	65.1 Head shot	Good pen & caution.
	66.42 Good quick call off P	
	75.45 Knock on?	Discuss
	77.59 Tackle w/o ball	Very good vision Agree
	82.38 Double ko	Disagree maybe even offside B
Communication	0.59 "off 12 not marker" 2 Too much comms	Good advice early yard set Garbled & little use - takes concentration from referee
	Invest possibility of altering to suit KI zones. Otherwise Pretty effective. Emits confidence and control.	
Positioning	32.32 Good urgency	Adds credibility to decision
	Good throughout when visible	
Dissent	N/A	
Touch Judges	15.19 Ball was touched 37.2 In front of kicker 66.45 Good touch work 's call??? TJ call

ARLRA TO THE RESCUE

Could you believe that a Grand Final was in danger of not going ahead due to the lack of a referee? So it was in Alice Springs last weekend until your Association agreed to send leading Queensland Cup referee, Adam Neale over to control the game. Both refs were to leave town on the big weekend leaving the small community with very junior people who haven't the experience at this stage, to control such a big match.

I'm delighted to report that the entire day was an outstanding success with Vikings getting up for their third successive premiership over the luckless Magpies, who lost only their second match of the season. I know that we all have our own cross to bear, but when you start feeling left out and alone, have a look on the map and see how far Alice is from anywhere else. Now that is isolated. Congratulations to all concerned.

RULINGS

I'm not sure that I'm game to do this, but here goes.

From Tom Healy, Canterbury RA:-

*“Player **A** knocks the ball on.
Player **B** traps the ball with this foot and the ball subsequently rolls forward.
Another player from team **B** standing in front of player **B** picks the ball up and commences to run”*

As those of you on Email know, this quite simple event caused such anguish and gnashing of teeth that you wouldn't believe. The mail, return mail, double returns etc, etc was extraordinary. My response was, eventually:-

*“When there is a minor breach, i.e., a knock on, the non offending team has the **opportunity** to take an advantage. Upon a second breach being committed by the hitherto non offending side, all bets are off and play must cease. If a major breach is committed by the hitherto non offending team, **a penalty shall be awarded against them.** Although the first team committed a minor breach, they are allowed to force a scrum by gaining possession. If the hitherto non offending team belts a player, or tackles a player without the ball to prevent him gaining possession, or is adjudged offside or any other penalizable breach.....he is penalized because play is still proceeding. They are not entitled to carte blanche.”*

Hitherto is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as “up to this time”. You won't find it in the Laws of the Game. Clearly, it is a more controversial ruling than I thought, but I'm comfortable in the knowledge that there are many of you who question rulings by saying “why?” When attempting an answer, though, think it right through.

From Steve Toms, Group 1:-

“An attacking player plays the ball just short of the goal line 5th and last tackle and the ball is passed from the acting half back to a player standing approximately 15m in from touch and 10m from the goal line.

The time frame is 30 mins into the first half and his side is trailing 14-6. This player drop kicks the ball across field but unfortunately for him it strikes the far up right and rebounds between the posts and lands beyond the cross bar into the in goal area. The intent I believe of the kick was of a cross field nature and not a field goal attempt and the player was just unlucky the ball hit the posts and rebounded in between them.”

Steve, I trust that this one doesn't draw as much discussion when I say that the player just kicked a drop goal. Award it.

Mark Edwards from Group 10 says:-

“Attacking player grubber kicks the ball into the in goal. Defending player shepherds the ball over dead ball line. Before the ball goes dead it bounces up and hits defending player in the chest. Play is restarted how”

Goal line drop out as the defender is deemed to be “playing” at the ball by shadowing it over the dead ball line. Then he says:-

“Could you explain the three scenarios in section 7 rule 5a, b, c it seems to contradict itself in places.”

As indicated at the (very fine) CRLRA Seminar at the beginning of the year, there is certainly at the very least, an anomaly. (a) is Ok as it deals with an injured player being endangered. Once play restarts, the player then in possession gets to play the ball. If no one was in possession at the time of the stoppage, a scrum is formed and the team last in possession gets the put in. (b) is Ok as it deals with a player unable to continue and his mate plays the ball for him. The first part of (c) is Ok as it deals with the ball being played by a colleague while his mate receives attention. The last sentence in (c) however, is the one which creates the problem. It does say, however, “...at (the referee's) discretion...” My advice is to use your discretion to implement Law 5(b) in such circumstances. Certainly action should be taken to eliminate that confusing sentence from the Laws.

What you now hear, Mark is the sound of rustling as 207 referee's coaches across Australia are turning to page 17 of their Laws book. Well done.

MINI/MOD VIDEO

With finals now well underway, so is the process of collecting data for the video. Contact David Jay on david_jay@amp.com.au to become involved.

COACHING REFEREES 2003 #2

Four hundred of these videos currently sit in storage in the NRL awaiting distribution. Alongside those are 100 copies of “The Anatomy of a Forward Pass” which the ARLRA ordered to be distributed to each Association. When the script to #2 is finalized, we will distribute them all through your State Associations.

OTHER ISSUES

Just when you think you understand about the game.... See Dennis Spagarino's memo to Premier League coaches. It will certainly happen at some stage in a game near you.

"It has been reported to me, and I have subsequently viewed on video, a tactic adopted by some players when tackling a player, which is contrary to the laws and spirit of the game of rugby league.

The tactic involves the second tackler getting the ball carrier in a headlock and twisting the ball carrier's head/neck in a manner to cause the ball carrier to subdue to the tackle in a quicker manner. I understand the tactic is known as "bull rider or steer riding".

The tactic is both dangerous and against the Laws of the Game. The purpose of this correspondence is to seek your assistance in eliminating this tactic by addressing your players at your next training session."

One NRL club recently adopted a tactic of rushing up behind their own player in possession and pushing him so that he falls forward and often on top of the tackler(s). This has the effect of negating the possibility of a dominant tackle and also, the player in possession gets a distinct advantage in the speed of the play the ball. The club in question has been informed that the tactic is contrary to the Laws of the Game and should be stopped. Keep tuned.

In the meantime, good luck, clear rucks and good ten in the future.

MICHAEL STONE
NRL REFEREES' CO-ORDINATOR
ARLRA PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE CONSULTANT