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## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	24 June 2004
Subject:	MS 011/04

### **GLOVES AGAIN**

Far be it for me to upset a Junior League with the information in the last memo, however... The ARL has a firm ruling on gloves. It has its genesis in a survey conducted with the leading coaches who said that gloves were not of any great benefit to a player. It was thought that if a player in the NRL was allowed to wear gloves, "little Johnny" would not be far behind and the Board believed that the additional cost imposed on parents was unwarranted.

Clearly, there is scope for local rules to allow certain equipment under certain conditions. Referees should be aware of any local rules under which their competitions are being played.

### **STOLEN BALL?**

Dave Turvey threw this curly one in.

*"Q - Ball carrier is tackled by 2 defenders but is still making forward progress , manages to free his hand carrying the ball & holds it out for a team mate to gather , but a third defender runs through lifts the ball off his hand & takes off down field."*

You will get arguments either way I'm sure. The defender is entitled to prevent the passage of the football but he is not entitled to steal it. Your description certainly sounds like the ball was stolen to me.

### **OBSTRUCTION**

From Tony Kingsford comes this.

*"Watching (last night's) S.O.O. I am wondering if my observation of a section of play is the correct interpretation. N.S.W. played the ball on the right edge of the field, the ball carrier ran across the field. A*

*straight running forward came straight down field attracting the attention of two Qld defenders. The ball carrier successfully deceived the defenders convincing them that the straight running player was in possession of the ball and were committed to tackle him.*

*Meanwhile, the ball carrier continued left across the field. He sighted another team mate dummed to him running around him with another Qld defender in pursuit. The ball carrier straightened up and the ball was carried in goal. The try was disallowed for an obstruction. Penalty to Qld.*

*Am I right to assume that the penalty arose from the second part of this movement and not the well executed deception attracting attention of the two Qld defenders.”*

If Tony means that when Minichiello took the space behind the straight running forward, the answer is “yes”. Let’s have a look at my attempt to explain the obstruction interpretation earlier this year. In 007/04, I said:-

*“(Minichiello) is running across field looking to pick up a straight runner. (A Queenslander) is shadowing him. (A NSW forward) runs straight to the line. He needs to be defended because if (he gets) the ball **at the line**, he is through and probably under the posts. So (the Queenslander) moves in to defend him. Two things to be remembered. **It is not a bad read in defence by (the Queenslander) as (the NSW forward) needed to be defended. Secondly, (he) is not a decoy runner UNTIL HE DOESN’T GET THE BALL.***

*(He) doesn’t get the ball, (the Queenslander) is committed to him, .... (Minichiello) takes the space behind (the NSW forward) and makes the break. (Queensland) suffer(s) an obstruction **if (Minichiello) takes the space**. If (Minichiello) passes behind (the runner) to another straight runner, or a sweep runner, play on because there is no obstruction.”*

I have used the same wording because you need to see that the Gasnier ruling was not a flash in the pan. It should also be noted that it was the referee who made the ruling and not the video ref.

## **POSITIONING CLOSE TO THE LINE**

NRL Referees have encountered some difficulty in gaining a clear view of the play the ball in situations very close to the goal line. Some preferred to stand in the in-goal area, but this position meant that the view of the ruck area was severely impeded.

Some preferred to dash to the blind side but problems arose when the ball is quickly shifted to the other side of the field. If the Referee elects to stay on the open, he needs to be wide enough to avoid possible contact with defenders and present a target for attackers. Defenders

either side of the player playing the ball were avoiding notice whilst standing in an offside position.

So NRL Referees are experimenting with a position where they stay on the open side but face into the ruck with their back effectively to the open side. Of course, this position is only possible when the touch judges are wired up and looking after offside players in the back line. The vocab used by match officials will be “tight right (or left)” which should bring the Referee’s attention to potential drama in the ruck area close to the line. When watching NRL matches this weekend, look out for it and let me know what you think.

## **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

NRL Referees have this week revisited communication strategies which were put in place earlier this year with outstanding success. Remember MS002/04 where I detailed the strategies for on field meetings.

The NRL Development Squad will meet next Monday night and address the very same issues as well as looking at their own “incidents of interest”. Any member of the NSWRL Referees’ Advisory Board is quite welcome to attend to see and hear the types of things that the boys are talking about.

The first draft of the “Communication Skills for Referees” video has been completed and now needs to be evaluated and further edited. It is a long process but necessary as we want the final product to be perfect.

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