



National Rugby League Limited  
Fox Studios Development  
Lang Road, Moore Park NSW 1363  
Postal Address:  
GPO Box 3498 Sydney NSW 2001  
ABN 23 082 088 962  
Internet: www.nrl.com  
Telephone: (02) 9339 8500  
Facsimile: (02) 9339 8508

## Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
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Subject:	MS012/03

# “REFEREES CRISIS”

Thank goodness! It took 24 rounds but at last we see the ole favourite headline. The last time we saw it (as I recall) was when Tony Archer erred in a decision at Penrith Park last year. Isn't it amazing that it only takes one decision (wrong or otherwise) for there to be another “refereeing crisis”.

### **SHAYNE HAYNE**

The centre of the latest piece of overreaction is Shayne Hayne. I was in Townsville on Saturday night, so armed with hindsight, I watched the Parramatta v Cronulla match on Monday morning. Now you all know that I would have been looking very closely at his first half suspecting that any problems which showed themselves in the second half evolved from the first. Well, I was wrong.

Shayne controlled the first half pretty well. Cronulla were poor, evidenced by their 20 point deficit at half time. The blue just prior to half time demonstrated to me the total lack of discipline in the Cronulla team, a team conceding 172 penalties this year, the second highest in the NRL. The captain (Peachey) over reacted to a relatively minor situation involving Treacy from Parramatta, throwing a number of punches in retaliation to a back hander. Hayne correctly penalized Treacy, but in my view, failed to properly admonish Peachey for his petulance. **Shayne needed to position Peachey in such a way that he was reminded of his responsibility to the game** and that his action had the effect of taking the game out of the referee's hands. I suspect that Shayne thought that as half time was upon him, things would settle down.

Not so. In fact, in the first six minutes of the second half, the referee blew three penalties against Cronulla. Then came the confrontation and the lesson to be learnt.

Hayne called Peachey up to tell him that there were too many penalties being conceded. Peachey took the opportunity to complain about Shayne's interpretation of the "dominant" tackle. As referees, we are often subjected to rubbish complaints like this, but we should deal with them properly if possible. Shayne was clearly concerned that Peachey's body language indicated that he was controlling the meeting and asked Peachey to refrain from waving his arms around to which Peachey reasonably responded "I talk with my hands, Shayne".

Having reached this stage, **Shayne needed to buy himself some time and position Peachey so that some responsibility fell upon the Cronulla captain.** A proper response to the question was in order. Something like "We all know what a dominant tackle is David, and I'm applying my interpretation equally to both sides". If there is further objection/debate, whatever from Peachey, the response to position him might be "I can't explain it any better than that. Now let's get on with the game", or words to that effect. Having taken the question and given the answer, and read the fact that the situation was an explosive one, a soothing strategy was called for. **"Don't invite the blow up"**, I think we say in the Level 1 course. Instead, Shayne marched Peachey 10 metres; Peachey swore at him; Shayne sent him to the Sin Bin; Peachey had another hack; Shayne called him back; Peachey ignored him and the touch judge and walked off. Shayne was then left with no alternative but to dismiss Peachey. Voila! How a simple situation can boil over into WW 3!

After that things became worse because all the referee wanted to do was see the game out, and the players had the shits with the world. **Buy time. As a referee, you still have to referee the game. It is all right for players to act like 2 year olds and kick meaningless field goals or indulge in senseless acts of foul play. But not the Ref.**

Slow it down. There will be a penalty here and there that a referee can find. Keep the teams apart. The longer they are apart, the better chance there is of them not bashing each other. As it was we rushed to restart, there was a sin bin soon after, and a send off soon after that. **The players totally lost their cool** and the ref responded accordingly.

So the lesson. As referees, we hold the **high moral ground**. Clearly. All you need to do is read the stuff that filled the papers over the succeeding days to know that clubs and high moral ground are mutually exclusive terms. We contributed, we need to learn from the experience. Shayne has spent the last few days doing just that. Studying video tapes, talking to Robert and his peers about the

incidents, investigating different strategies that may be undertaken in similar circumstances.

As Referees, we should be proud of the manner in which Shayne conducted himself post match. He was extremely professional in attitude and manner. He will learn from the experience, as we all should from **his** experience this week. I know that if you take no responsibility you will learn nothing.

Now your turn. As coaches, you need to counsel your referees to handle such incidents. You will get no better opportunity than this to have some video tape of an explosive situation to discuss with your referees at great length. **Get a copy of the tape from somewhere.** It will prove invaluable for coaching purposes in the future.

### **INTERCHANGE REFEREES**

Two games this week, Campbelltown and Aussie Stadium, will have interchange referees aimed at easing new refs into first grade. I will let you know how things pan out.

### **RULINGS**

One from Dave Turvey.

*“Red team scores a try which makes the scores level the game is virtually on full time the regular kicker steps up to take the conversion but is bleeding profusely from the nose so both he and his jumper are covered in blood.*

*Would you allow him to take the conversion.”*

Yes. Then Blood Bin him. See above for comment on “Don’t invite the blow up”.

I know we had a newsletter last week. I thought that this was important. In the meantime, **buy time, position the player** and good ten in the future.

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