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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	8 July 2004
Subject:	MS 012/04

CURRENT ISSUES

Paul Plate is concerned about players playing the ball and diving forward taking markers out of play. If this is happening, the offenders should be penalised.

Frank Samyia had this query from a referee.

“A Green player kicks the ball from inside his own in-goal area attempting to send it back into the field of play. He kicks the ball but it hits the goal posts and goes back into the in-goal area. Another Green player standing inside his own in-goal but in front of the kicker takes the ball and runs into the field of play.

The rule states that you can't be offside in your own in-goal area. You can kick the ball forward but you can't pass it forward otherwise the penalty is given for the forward pass 10metres out from the line directly in line from where the pass was thrown.

If the Goal-Posts are regarded as part of the field-of-play (remembering they are not part of the try line because you can't put a ball on the base of the goal posts and claim a try), If the catcher of the ball in the original scenario takes the ball in his own in-goal , technically he is taking a ball in an offside position because he was in front of the kicker because technically ,by the ball hitting the posts, it has returned from the field of play.”

Wow. What a deeply involved and interesting question. What a simple and uninvolved answer. The goal posts are not in the field of play. They don't exist. They are an imaginary object, except of course if you run into them like Mal Meninga did. Play on is the correct ruling.

An interesting one for Junior football. Greg Nolan writes:-

“Only one touch judge in junior international game. Is it possible for the referee to over rule a touch judge on a conversion attempt at goal which clearly missed, and the touch judge put his flag up. The touch judge had the sun in his eyes at the time. Is the touch judge the sole judge or could have the referee gone up and ask him was the sun in your eyes and let him know it had missed and disallowed the goal.”

Section 16, Law 10 says “The Referee shall accept the decision of an official Touch Judge relating to...kicks at goal.” The Touch Judge is NOT the sole judge. However, he may not be over ruled on a question of judging a kick at goal. For practical purposes, however, I think that Greg’s suggestion to call time out, approach the Touch Judge and ask if he had a good sight of the kick at goal because from your view, the kick missed, is for all intents and purposes, the smart alternative. If the Touchie still says it is a goal, it’s a goal. And we better do an intelligence check on the Touch Judge.....

NEWS FROM NRL

About this time of the season, interesting things begin to happen with both football teams and referees. The NRL squad has been reviewing all of their standards and some of the findings are as follows.

- Our core competency is our knowledge of the rules and to err in this area is not acceptable
- If the ball is unintentionally played forward in the play the ball officials will allow the ruck to continue if the ball-carrier then heels the ball backwards.

The referee will halt play if the following indicators are identified:

1. The ball hits the marker
 2. The ball is not heeled backwards
 3. The ball moves out of the ruck area.
- When identifying an obstruction there is a need to take into account the impact of the obstruction on the structure of the defence. Eg, if a runner stops in the defence line, preventing the defenders to continue to “slide”, he has interfered with the structure of the defence.
 - Reaction by a player who has been infringed against should not be disproportionate to the original transgression, ie if a player takes matters into his own hands by throwing a flurry of punches when all he got was a push in the face initially, he should be the one penalised.

- If the player is looking to offload the ball the following indicators need to be considered when the ball is either lost or stolen.
 1. In the process of making the tackle the defender intentionally strips or knocks the ball out of the ball carrier's grip (who is trying to offload) then a penalty is warranted.
 2. In the process of making the tackle a defender knocks the ball-carriers arm (who is trying to offload the ball) and the ball comes loose then the interpretation to be applied is a loose carry. No penalty will ensue.

INDICATORS FOR PLAYED AT AND NOT PLAYED AT

Whenever a Referee is called upon to use discretion, there is the possibility of a lack of consistency. As a result, the NRL Squad has compiled the following list of indicators to assist in the decision making process.

PLAYED AT – PASS	NOT PLAYED AT - PASS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance of Pass • Head Movement of Defender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tackle & the Pass are simultaneous
PLAYED AT – KICK	NOT PLAYED AT - KICK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defenders actions are outside his normal Body Movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defenders action is within his normal body movement.
PLAYED AT – SHADOWING	NOT PLAYED AT - SHADOWING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball bounces back and contacts player shadowing. • The ball is contested and contacts the player shadowing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shadowing player is pushed into the ball and the ball goes dead.
PLAYED AT – CHARGE DOWN	NOT PLAYED AT – CHARGE DOWN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arm/s extended above the head • Leaves ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arm/s protecting head.

Clearly, these are indicators only to be used to assist the Referee.

COMMUNICATION REVIEW

The communication process during on field meetings were reviewed not only with the NRL Squad but also with the Development Squad.

“POSTURE:

- Stand Tall shoulders back, hands by side. Show Authority
- Face to face when communicating
- Eye contact when communicating
- Facial expressions to match the message being conveyed.
- Create Space by moving to a position that allows for closure.

“TONE:

- Breathing assists in controlling the tone of your message. A strategy used to control breathing is to pause when interrupted.
- Vary your tone to deal with specific concerns.
- To Lower Tone
 1. Breathe
 2. Control speed
 3. Gestures
 4. Listening – allows to breathe & compose
 5. Position
 6. Objective

“GESTURES:

- Lower Tone
- Controls speed
- Confirms a point
- Used to position
- If used incorrectly creates false impressions.

“POSITIONING:

- Verbal – Use of the captains position in your vocab:

‘As captain of your side you need to hear this!’ or
‘As captain you need to go back and tell your player’

- And Gestures

- When closing a meeting always ensure you have initially moved to a position that allows for an authoritative ending to the meeting.
 1. Turning your back
 2. Turning your back and walking away.

3. The player is required to move in a different direction than yourself to re-commence the game.

OBJECTIVE:

- Be aware of what you wish to communicate.
- Do not be derailed by interruptions
- Use the words 'yes and' to reconfirm your message.
- Use interruptions to your advantage: Composure & Breathing

If you believe you need to deal with the problem of being derailed work on strategies that will deal with this. It is important to your development that you are authoritative, composed and fluent in your delivery.”

Communication is one of the most important assets in a Referee’s kit bag. You need to ensure that your Referees’ skills in this vital area are up to scratch.

THE MAN IN THE GLASS

Last Thursday, Bill Harrigan addressed our Academy squad in Newcastle. One of the things that he emphasised was that you need to satisfy yourself that you have done everything that you could possibly do in order to get the best out of yourself. Don’t concern yourself with matters of which you have no control, such as appointments to matches.

On Monday night, the NRL and Development Squads had the privilege of listening to Olympic swimming coach Bill Nelson speak on similar matters. Bill coached, inter alia, Daniel Kowolski at the Atlanta Olympic games. Daniel was fastest qualifier for the 1500 metre final and a bloke named Perkins was slowest in lane 1. Of course I won’t tell the story for Bill is the only one entitled to do that, but the aftermath of the race and a confrontation with a journalist reminded me very much of a poem which Robert Finch has in the office. It is particularly pertinent to Referees. It is called “The Man in the Glass”.

When you get what you want in this struggle of self
And the world makes you King for a day
Then you go to your mirror and look at yourself
And see what **that** man has to say.
For it isn’t your father, your mother, or wife
Whose judgement of you you must pass.
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life
Is the guy staring back in the glass.

He is the man you must please – never mind all the rest,

For he's with you clear up to the end.
And you have passed your most difficult and dangerous test
When the man in the glass is your friend.

You can be like another and chisel a plum,
And think you're a wonderful guy,
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum,
If you can't look him straight in the eye.

You can fool the whole world down the pathway of years,
And get pats on the back as you pass,
But your final reward will be heartache and tears,
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

MICHAEL STONE
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NRL REFEREE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER