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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	16 September 2004
Subject:	MS 015/04

It is a great time of the year when the best referees get to officiate in the best games.

LEVEL 2 WORKSHOP

The workshop was a great success. Evaluations were very good and hopefully, referees all over Australia will soon reap the benefit. There were three sessions. The first was an Introduction to Presentation Skills led by Richard Johnston in his own unique fashion. The second was Quality Decision Making and how we want the video presented to an audience. This was developed from a video tape sent from Stuart Cummings in England and was well received by the coaches present.

The last session was the introduction to the Communication Skills for Referees video presented by David Jay. This will be a fine education tool for all referees no matter where they are situated.

As I intimated previously, these videos will not be handed out as they were previously. They are part of a workshop situation. I have spoken to Pat Walsh and Harold Sutton to co-ordinate a number of workshops throughout country NSW in November to cover as many Level 2 coaches as possible. At the same time, Richard will be going through a similar process in Queensland. We hope to have everyone covered so that these new tools will be in place ready for use by the start of next season. Attendees will get a copy of both video tapes, copy of hand outs, work sheets, presenters instruction sheets, and a certificate of attendance. The cost of this is \$20 to defray ARLRA costs a bit. Your attendance will be noted on the ARLRA Coaches Database and counts towards your re-registration. It is well worth the trouble.

ROB PEARD'S TROUBLES

Rob wrote the following. Would anyone like to help with an answer other than it is just common sense?

"I'd like to pursue the issue that was touched on briefly last night in relation to the ball going dead at the other end of the field from a goal line (or 20m) drop out. I'm not trying to be a smart arse, but I think there is a real anomaly in the laws that the incident has highlighted and needs to be addressed.

My argument is based on what I regard as the PRINCIPLES behind the previous changes relating to when the ball is kicked dead or touch in goal from a kick off from the centre of half way (Law 8.2.(a)) and the loose head and scrum feed going to the kicking team when the ball goes into touch (other than on the full) from the start or a restart of play (Law 12.5.(c)) and the 40/20 Law (12.5.(d)). It is reasonable to assume that the basis of these changes was to discourage teams from taking the 'soft option' of allowing the ball to go dead or out, knowing that they will more than likely get the ball from the ensuing restart. It is my belief that the same principle should therefore apply to goal line and 20m drop outs. Without beating around the bush, if a team is so inept as to be unable to field the ball from a kick off from the centre of half way before it goes dead, they should be equally disadvantaged from their inability to field the ball from a goal line or 20m drop out, given that the time available to field the ball is greater. It is for this reason that I argue that Law 8.4.(a) should apply, as it does not state that the ball has to go dead or touch in goal in their own in goal. The Glossary clearly defines attacking and defending teams in terms of their field position, not possession or last possession of the ball. I would also argue that, in the circumstances that raised this issue, ie gale force winds, it is highly unlikely that any player from the team dropping out, particularly from a goal line drop out, would cross the half way line before the ball went dead, therefore deeming them as attacking players.

To rule that a 20m restart should apply to the non-kicking team is also inconsistent with the law relating to the ball going into touch from starts and restarts of play, as outlined above.

In the interests of maintaining the consistency in the principles of the changes, I would suggest a couple of options:

- 1. Alter Law 8.2.(a) to read...."or from the start or restart of play (see 4(g) below)", (which incidentally should be Law 4(h)), to make it consistent with Law 12.5.(c) and alter Law 12.4.(h) to read "...from the start or restart of play."*

Or 2, if one does want to have the non kicking team restart with a 20m optional kick after a goal line or 20m drop out goes dead at the other end of the field, change the definition of attacking team to "the team in possession or last in possession of the ball". This would also overcome

the anomaly of a player who, say attempts a 40/20 but it goes dead or touch in goal, as technically, under the current definition, he is not an attacking player.

I raise these issues, as I said at the start, not to try to be a smart arse, but in the interests of rational debate aimed at removing any confusion for referees, particularly those in the local districts, who, as we all know, face constant criticism from the "sideline experts" week in and week out. I'd be interested in your thoughts."

Well, before today I wouldn't have thought any confusion existed. Then again.... Let me know what you think.

HAS ACADEMY

Last week I attended the graduation of our first Referees' Academy. I've got to say it was a proud moment for Keith Onslow, Wayne Wilson and myself. The members have come a long way and it is their commitment and dedication which has given us the confidence to expand the programme next year. They deserve every congratulations for their wholehearted efforts.

FROM THE OL' DART

Stuart wrote about a number of issues however one which we are apparently at odds over is the 40/20 kick. He said:-

"One area that we do have some discrepancy on is the 40 – 20 kick. You rule that the foot must not be in contact with the 40 metre line for it to count where as we say that if any part of the foot is in contact with the line then the kick will count! Our theory behind our ruling is that the line covers the area that it marks. The goal line is in goal, the touch line is in touch so the forty metre line is in the forty metre area. I think we need to clarify the ruling and make it uniform."

I said:-

*Re the 40/20, the reason why the 40 metre line is not "inside" the 40 is because of the wording of the Law. It states "Where a player kicks the ball in general play from any point in the area **bounded by** his own dead ball line, 40 metre line and the touch lines...". The words "bounded by" **apply equally to the dead ball line and touch lines as well as the 40 metre line**. Clearly, if a player steps on the touch line or dead ball line prior to kicking the ball, he is out! Therefore, the lines are not part of the area "bounded by" those lines. It follows, then, that if a player steps on the 40 metre line prior to kicking the ball, he is not in the area bounded by those lines.*

Our view follows accepted principles of Statutory interpretation. It also follows that if the ball, having been kicked from inside the 40, finds

touch at the junction of the 20 metre line and touch line, it hasn't found touch "...between the opponent's 20 metre line and goal line..." and therefore the kicking team do not get the loose head and feed. Similarly to the rationale above, the word "between" applies equally to the 20 metre line and goal line. If the ball crosses the touch line at the junction of the goal line, it will hit the corner post and be dead in goal."

Obviously we need to get some consistency in our interpretations and it is great that Stuart and I are working so closely together.

BUDGETS

The NRL has asked for State associations to forward their budgets asap in order that they be presented to the NRL Board to hopefully get an increase in funding. Let's just hope.

ARLRA WEBSITE

You should go into this website on a regular basis because there is a fans forum site in there. It is interesting to say the least.

MICHAEL STONE
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NRL REFEREE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER