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Memorandum

To:	ARLRA Referees' Coaches
From:	Michael Stone
Date:	14 October 2004
Subject:	MS 016/04

Over for another season. You all must be glad because I haven't heard much from anyone recently. In the last memo, I said that we were looking to run CPD workshops in November in country NSW. It all became a bit hard and, speaking with Kevin Riolo, we feel that it would be far better to run the workshop in conjunction with the annual seminar at Wollongong. The cost to attend will still be pegged at \$20, a steal given the materials that you take away.

GRAND FINAL RULINGS

I haven't spoken to Tim but there have been a number of people ask me about a couple of rulings that Tim made in his (very impressive) Grand Final debut.

The first was the El Masri try. Wasn't it a double movement. "He made a second movement" was the plaintive cry! As always, I implore you to NOT MAKE UP YOUR OWN LAWS, as some are apt to do, but look at the notes to Law 2 of Section 11 on page 24, where it says:-

"When an attacking player is tackled within easy reach of the goal line he should be penalised if he makes a second movement to place the ball over the line for a try."

El Masri was actually **in** the in goal area. The only decision that Tim had to make is whether he had been held up for sufficient time to constitute a tackle under the Laws (see Law 2 of Section 11). Tim was satisfied that he had not and I agree.

The other one was a little different. The ball was kicked to Utai's wing. He tried to catch the ball on the full in his own in goal area. He failed to catch the ball cleanly and it bobbed out of his hands. He then regathered it safely. Tim awarded a goal line drop out because he hadn't caught the ball cleanly. That was a mistake. Section 8, Law 2(c) says:-

“The game is restarted with an optional kick from the centre of the 20m line if:

....

....

(c) a defending player, in his own in goal, takes a kick in general play from an opponent on the full.”

Nowhere is there mention of the word “cleanly”.

ADVANTAGE

And here we go again. People want to make their own Laws up and what that does is cause referees to be inconsistent as against each other.

Once again, the Law relating to what constitutes advantage may be found in the notes to Law 8 of Section 16, the most relevant passage being:-

“The opponent must have adequate opportunity to take advantage and endeavour to do so before play is allowed to proceed.”

It also says that the Referee is the sole judge of what constitutes an advantage but there must be some guidelines **along the lines indicated by the Laws of the Game**, and not just some fruity thought that “two yards isn’t enough, maybe ten is better”. If a player gathers the ball after a breach by an opponent, has **adequate opportunity** to take advantage, and actually **endeavours** to take it, he **has** taken his advantage! That is what the Law says. If you don’t like it, canvass the ARL to have the wording changed. Don’t make up your own.

I’m off to NZ for the Test. See you next season.

MICHAEL STONE
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