RUGBY
COACHING & DEVELOPMENT

A Selection of Papers from the Level 3 Coaching Program

AUSTRALIAN RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION LTD

RUGBY COACHING & DEVELOPMENT A Selection of Papers from the Level 3 Coaching Program

59/33

59/33 cont'd

FOREWORD

Should the game always be the same? This is the type of question that is put to those undertaking the Level 3 Coaching Program because they have been asked to analyse the way Rugby is being played and to question the accepted way of doing things. Some of their responses have been included in this second edition of selected papers submitted as part of the course requirements.

There is plenty of scope for coaches to be innovative, creative and just plain adventurous if they want to be. This is not only in relation to the way we play in competition but also the way we train, the way we prepare to train and the way we prepare to compete. It requires the coach to think laterally and to ask him/herself what are the implications of what researchers, specialist support staff and even other sports are saying and doing. For example, there have already been positive gains for some of our coaches who have seen what we can learn from other sports – we still have only touched the surface in this respect. From this publication I ask you to think about the ramifications of the comments, observations and findings of papers such as John Rockerick's Playing Sevens in the 15 Man Game and Tim Watson's Mid-line Strategy. From a training and preparation point of view what impact could Stuart Meade's findings have? Most importantly, the potential for coaches and referees to work more closely together as demonstrated by Mick Hall's paper is clearly evident. You won't agree with all that is being said, but it would be disappointing if we didn't take the time to think through the issues and assess what it may mean for the way in which we do things.

If we are to meet the challenges ahead from pay TV and those from other sports we have to ensure that we keep abreast of what the paying public, the entrepreneurs and the traditionalists want – not to mention the players! There is no doubt that we have the most exciting product – exciting, skilful, athletic, international. To be ahead of the challengers we need to keep looking at ways to improve our game. I hope that these papers contribute to that approach. In the end it all depends on those involved with Rugby to be active and be positive.

Bob Hitchcock
Level 3 Co-ordinator

CONTENTS

STRESS IN RUGBY REFEREES

ROSS NACEY

INTRODUCTION

There has been a lot of research completed over time concerning the physical stresses experienced by athletes during training and competition and the resultant information has been modified to assist rugby referees prepare for and cope with the demands on their bodies.

Conversely sports psychological studies have tended to focus on the demands of competition on athletes and while referees have gained assistance in learning preparation techniques, the mental stresses they experience have not been the subject of detailed research.

Recognition of the lack of information on this topic has prompted other sporting codes, such as basketball and soccer, to commission studies on their own officials and the stresses they experience.

While some of this has been useful to my research, most of the content of this paper will be based on anecdotal evidence and personal experience.

I have developed the topic by firstly defining the various stresses experienced by referees and then by using information from my research I have offered some solutions.

STRESSED OR STRESSFUL

There are two types of stress affecting referees and the game of rugby.

Pose this question:

Is the referee stressed or stressful? Is he affected by what is happening to him (stressed) or affecting what is happening around his (stressful)?

This is an important difference as a referee can be quite relaxed in himself, but can be putting considerable pressure on the players and events around him. Thus he is having an adverse effect on the players and the play; causing frustration, foul play, etc. That is a **stress maker.**

Conversely the referee that is stressed is one who is influenced by the events around him. He will be reacting to play, players, etc in a stressful way; a stress taker.

The stress taker is reacting to stress; the stress maker is causing it.

It is important to make the differentiation before deciding what remedial action should be taken; correct diagnosis to achieve appropriate action.

If we are wanting to develop effective stress management in Australian Referees, we must train both our Coaches and Referees alike to recognise this important difference.

For the purpose of this report each stress is treated as a separate topic.

STRESS TAKERS

Sources of Stress

Tests in other codes:

The first function in developing stress management programs is to define the major sources of stress in Rugby referees.

Following the recognition that stress was a significant factor in the performance of referees, some other codes have conducted studies involving their members to firstly identify the major sources.

Experience in these other codes can assist us to define major sources of stress in Rugby and possible assist in the development of a similar program for Rugby Union in Australia.

In 1993 **Basketball** officialdom in Australia conducted a survey of a cross section of their referees in order to learn the major sources of stress.

They defined the following as their major sources:

- Abuse by coaches
- Abuse by players
- Arguments with coaches/players
- Threats of physical abuse
- Abuse by spectators
- Working with a partner
- Making a wrong call
- Controversial call
- Mistake in mechanics
- Wrong location
- Presence of supervisor
- Presence of media
- Experiencing an injury
- Calling a technical foul

They also noted the age and experience of the referee and developed some conclusions from this information, namely:

- Younger referees were more likely to be intimidated.
- More experienced referees had a higher fear of failure; they were more stressed by referees of their own levels or slightly lower levels.
- Younger referees were more likely to drop out than older ones although those who adjudicate at a higher level tend to be under more stress than their junior counterparts.

There are slight variances between this survey and those conducted by other codes, for example:

Soccer (1988):

- Interpersonal conflicts
- Fear of physical harm
- Time pressures
- Peer conflicts
- Role-Culture conflict
- Fear of failure

American Football (1992):

- Fear of physical harm
- Verbal abuse
- Pressure game
- Time pressures
- Fear of failure

- Fear of physical harm was higher than in other codes
- The survey also noted that few referees had the skills required to deal with criticism, arguments and abuse.

By modification of these results here are some suggested area of stress that could form the basis of a questionnaire for **Rugby Referees:**

- Abuse
- Coaches
- Players
- Spectators
- Physical harm
- Foul play
- Fear of failure
- Pressure games
- Injury
- Physical fitness
- Making wrong or controversial decisions
- Positional errors
- Presence of CAB
- Presence of media
- Personal desire for perfection/success

The degree to which a referee will be affected by stress will vary depending on the personal profile of the individual.

REFEREE PROFILES

You will note that these surveys uncovered off-field sources of stress and indeed the individual profiles of the participants give reasons why particular stresses are more acute to some than others.

Similarly the reaction to a particular situation varies dramatically depending on the age and background of a referee.

The conclusion is that there is a value in compiling a profile on referees in each association/union when they commence their careers.

This is possibly the most effective means of commencing a preventative management program. If the results of other codes are true, people of similar age, work and social backgrounds will respond in a similar manner to each of the identified stresses.

Further experience of referees who have no trouble with a particular stress can be used to assist those who do.

So lets consider some of these additional factors.

AGE:

There has been a lot of discussion over time on the issue of age.

As the game of Rugby gets faster the need for younger, fitter referees increases.

At the top level the acceptable age range for test appointees has reduced by about five years in the recent past.

Presumably this trend will continue.

The aforementioned studies have found age to be a major influence on the decision making process. The concerns of younger referees are quite different from older ones.

The basketball survey found, for example, that a younger referee would find spectator abuse and fear of making mistakes major causes of stress. Older referees were more likely to be unaffected by abuse, many finding it a source of amusement and an opportunity to influence the players by making light of it. They found mistakes to be an acceptable part of their game and something to be quickly forgotten in order to avoid a recurrence; and an opportunity to improve their performances by learning by them.

The stresses of older referees in the same survey tended to revolve around the pressure put on them by younger developing participants who were potentially going to take their place in the hierarchy off them.

Thus fitness and fear of injury are more likely stress factors the older a referee becomes and these are trends that can be possibly easily identified.

Interestingly, the objective of referees are quite different depending on age. For the young there is the pressure of the desire to improve and 'get up the ladder', a factor less likely in the more mature.

On the whole stress was a greater factor the younger the referee in the surveys completed.

A good comparison in Australia is evidenced in the differences between Australian Rules Football Umpires and Rugby Union Referees.

On the whole at the top level in AFL, umpires are mainly aged between 22 and 32 as opposed to 35 and 45 in Rugby.

The need for youth in AFL relates to the physical requirements with umpires required to cover between 18 and 24 kilometres in a game. The work is more aerobic than that of the rugby referee who will only cover 8-12 kilometres in a more 'stop-start' sprint oriented regime.

The differences in stress reaction are quite noticeable with rugby in my opinion being a clear winner. The incidence of technical decisions and free kicks given to make up for an earlier umpiring error appear to be a lot higher in observing AFL performances. Certainly, in many games the outcome is influenced by the umpire's decision.

For example, in the Sheparton League in Victoria this year the grand final was decided on a free kick given just prior to the siren sounding in the last quarter. When the siren sounded one team was winning by four points. The free kick was given in front of the posts and the outcome was reversed as a result.

Adding 5 or 10 years to the umpire who made the decision in this instance may not have changed the result. However, all surveys completed recognize that the decision making process in older referees is much different than younger ones.

More mature referees tend to have strategies for coping with a stressful situation. They may, for example, have a mechanism for delaying the decision fractionally to give them time to evaluate rather than react.

The saving grace for AFL is the size of the support base for the code and the acceptance that the umpire does have a big effect on the game; so many umpiring decisions result in points. Three free kicks resulting from points being scored in the third quarter, for example, can be the turning point in a game.

I have had discussions with Metropolitan League Selectors in Melbourne as part of this project.

They are concerned about the stress factor, but more from the viewpoint of losing umpires due to abusive crowds, etc. than from the performance and outcome angles. They have a great deal of power on and off the field and use it to great effect to support their umpires whether they have good games or bad.

In Rugby Union our concerns are obviously quite different. When you are part of the marketing of a game that does not enjoy the support base of other codes as Rugby Referees are then the incidence of outcomes decided by the referee must be very low.

However, the comparison with AFL gives a good insight to the relationship between stress and age at the very top level.

Age is an accepted factor and certainly should form part of any stress research and management programs.

Vocation

I am certain that Rugby Referee Administrations have for a long time considered vocation as an important factor in deciding whether a referee can develop to the top level.

The importance of 'man management' in what we do is an indication that work history and experience will influence our on field performances.

Stress Management is something that probably starts for all of us long before we start refereeing.

Our duties at work will range between managing ourselves and our respective workloads to senior positions involving staff, customers and profitability of a business.

Whatever the vocation, we will have to cope with stress in various forms.

In my own case, I have found that refereeing and running a business are very similar. In both cases the whistle or enforcement is the easiest method of getting something done, but more often than not, but is largely a short term solution, having a number of negative results at the same time. In the longer term most of the stressful situations are best dealt with in a different way.

At work staff management is an area of constant concern as in a service industry your people are your only real asset. Without them you don't have a business.

Thus, in business we are constantly working on our relationships with staff, constantly training our junior managers and supervisors to manage their people better and always looking at ways of self improvement. At a senior level we have to be tolerant of staff who are at different stages of development. Many clients would rather deal with the boss, but this is obviously not possible. So we accept that things are not perfect, are less critical of junior staff and work hard to assist them improve their performances for our customers.

Refereeing both influences and is effected by this process. In my opinion, running a business is just another game of rugby.

So how important is vocation to stress management?

Of the test results I have viewed of other codes, this issue has not been discussed at length.

Its importance right now can therefore only be gauged by considering the vocational backgrounds of our referees.

For example in Victoria we have seven Group 1 Referees (by definition: those capable of refereeing at first grade level). All bar one are professional people of which three are senior managers one is a business owner one a consultant and one an anaesthetist.

I do not have similar information on the current Australian Panel, but would be surprised if the mix wasn't similar. Those I have seen in their professional environment, have tended to be very good stress managers.

So, there are two advantages in including vocation in stress testing.

1 to identify the effect the job background has and

2 to assist in finding effective training procedures to assist other referees overcome particular problems.

While many people are born with the ability to cope with the situations they find themselves in, most aren't; most either train themselves or are trained by their employers to develop effective stress management strategies.

Family

Of similar importance to that of vocation, is the family background of a referee.

This is one area that is discussed with most new referees usually in the form of "how does your wife respond to refereeing".

Whatever the answer, family matters will have an effect on a referees ability to handle the situations he comes across on the rugby field.

For this reason we are all encouraged to maintain a balance at home and to look after the family. I am certain that most referees do their home improvements in the off season and at great speed to ensure they are finished by February.

Certainly, a referee that has everything right at home will be in better condition mentally when he arrives at the ground to do his match.

Of greater interest to this paper is how a referee copes with pressures at home. **Does the experience of having a family assist us to cope on the field?**

As with the question of vocational background, there is only anecdotal evidence in this case.

In any survey conducted, age would be closely related with the question of family and it would be important not to confuse the results.

However, questions of how we cope with family situations may be of assistance on the field.

In my experience, of the three disciplines (refereeing, work and family) the latter is the most challenging and hardest to get right.

The Next Step

Having considered the likely influences on stress, it is important to gather information by way of a survey to decide the specific stress factors influencing referees in our code.

To do this I have devised a survey which I would recommend be further developed and possibly issued around Australia between seasons to enable us to have some meaningful information on the types of stress experienced at various levels of refereeing and the contributing factors.

Once this information is received and evaluated a meaningful stress management program could be developed nationally.

It was my intention when starting my research of this topic to conduct a survey myself.

However, to be meaningful, it needs to be officially sanctioned and conducted in a controlled environment.

All other codes have made them like a test; i.e. at a referees meeting, with a time limit and probably anonymous. It is important that the contributors do not feel that the information will be used against them and complete the exercise honestly.

The enclosed document is my completed article. I have also included a copy of the Basketball Survey by way of comparison.

Summary

This section of my report has concentrated on the things that stress referees and the factors that assist us cope with our stresses.

The conclusions I have made are largely as a result of information gathered from other codes and anecdotal evidence.

The main recommendation I have made is to conduct a test within the ranks of Rugby Union Referees at all levels in Australia to draw our own set of conclusions idiosyncratic of our code of football.

Following this analysis I further recommend that we develop management strategies to improve our overall ability to cope on the field.

STRESS MAKERS

Preamble

In my introduction to this topic I sought to distinguish between the cause and effect stresses occuring during a game of rugby.

Section I dealt with a referee's ability to cope with the stressful things that effect him on the paddock. Conversely this section deals with stresses that develop as a result of the things a referee himself does.

The importance of this distinction is that the remedies are quite different.

In many respects, provided the profile of a referee is right the remedy in this instance is quite simple.

The alarming fact is that many referees are not aware of the stresses they are causing. I am sure that some never discover in a career spanning several years.

The best anecdotal evidence I have of this is my own case history and came when discussing my performances with CAB at a weeklong carnival.

The discussion went this way:

> *"...your law interpretation is good, your fitness is excellent, but there is something there that I can't quite put my finger on ... I Can't help wondering if, you contributed to or could have prevented some of the things that happened on the field..."*

Funnily, I discussed this situation with some other referees who said that they had similar discussions in the past, but had still not been able to work out what the *something* is and I guess this has a lot to do with our individual natures and why it is important to always consider the profile of a referee in conjunction with his reaction to stress.

So what are some of the contributing factors?

The Soccer referees' Leo Wilson, in his 1990 study describes it succinctly as part of the referee's makeup, i.e.: **Mental Inclination, Body Language and Tone of Voice.**

Each has its own input to the stresses a referee can cause in Rugby and therefore an expanded discussion goes a long way to explaining the stress making side of the officiating process.

Mental Inclination

The inclination or attitude of a referee can be either part of his makeup or something that is trained into him.

It basically begs the question of a referee; **"why are you here and what are you here to do"**. Is a referee' role to dictate or to facilitate, constructive or destructive?

We often talk about **mental strength** on the field and it is obviously a very important attribute, but too often it is confused or used to define a particular mental attitude. Mental toughness does not for example mean inflexibility or even strictness and very often I am sure that this is what a lot of referees interpret as strength when strength is in fact our ability to be unaffected by the pressures we and our environments place on ourselves.

It is probable that for every new referee that is introduced to the game there is a different interpretation of what he is there to do. Similarly, before the advent of a national CAB Policy, I am sure that the differences in opinion on this question between coaches were quite diverse.

Whatever your opinion on this issue, the fact remains that mental attitude has a great deal to do with whether a referee is causing stress on the field or diffusing it.

Body Language

In business the issue of body language has long been the topic of in-depth discussions, especially among sales people or those involved in marketing and many of us who face current and potential clients each day are very keen to read their thoughts by their involuntary actions. The famous ones are "arms crossed and sitting upright" means your going to have a real battle convincing me of anything, "eyes to the ceiling" unlikely to be telling the truth, "hands behind head and leaning back" very confident, and so on.

It is recognized that most people read body language and react to it subconsciously and so the truly gifted person can control a conversation with its skillful use. People can be made to relax, made to pay attention or made to feel ill at ease merely by the way the person they are with presents himself to them.

This is very much the case with refereeing. A "laid back" referee for example immediately has the players feeling comfortable because he looks relaxed. Conversely, the referee who looks a bit tight will make the players feel a little strained dealing with him. Standing erect as opposed to having a slouched appearance will have the effect of conveying these opposites. Because of the speed of the game and the type of job refereeing is, the body language of the man in the middle will come across a lot "louder" than in everyday life. A simple wag of the finger looks much larger from the players perspective than the referee's.

In the aforementioned Soccer Study, reference was made to the use of space. Soccer referees consider that the distance between referee and player during an on field discussion is of significant importance. They refer to four zones,

The intimate Zone:	0–18 inches
The Personal Zone:	1.5–4 feet
The Social Zone:	4–12 feet and
The Public Zone:	20 feet or more

The use of these "zones" gives a completely different message to the player being spoken to, the rest of the players on the field and the spectators on the sideline according to the soccer example. Up close generally means trouble to any of the people present.

There is little doubt that the way we look or "come across" to players causes a reaction. The more stressed we appear the more stressful we become and the harder it is for us to communicate with players.

The key to the body language question is in finding out what causes it as often it is not the result of an undesirable mental attitude to the game.

The sheer concentration of a referee could make him frown, for example and that frowning could have a negative effect on the players; certainly more detrimental than smiling or relaxing the face. However, the cause of the body language, concentration is not negative; it is a positive sign.

So, body language is a matter of training and can be perfected in a relatively short period.

Voice Tone

In conjunction with good use of the body is effective use of the voice.

A voice under strain implies a person under strain and therefore of importance to the stress management process on the field.

Rugby referees use their voices to good effect whether short and sharp, loud or very quiet.

Without further qualification the reader can approximate the impression that each different use will give to the players. While they can all have positive results, misuse can indicate stress, panic or loss of control.

The variance is most important and like body language is a practiced art.

Verbals

An unresearched topic (to my knowledge) is the use of spoken language by a referee and its relationship to stress.

I refer to the type and number of words used by a referee to convey his message to players.

Sports psychologists talk about left and right side of the brain in terms of player reaction on a rugby field. The theory is that at a time of high emotion, players will react differently to what they do in a relaxed training atmosphere, often doing the opposite of what the coach has instructed. In elite players this reactionary process is invariably what makes them so good.

The point of this analogy is to ask how a player will respond to what we referees say when he is at a high level of mental pressure and emotion.

Will he react differently to "get your hand off the ball, get your hand off, aren't you listening I told you to get your hand off" as opposed to "hands off!!"

The answer of course is yes, but does the stress level change with the language we use?

My opinion is that it does although my evidence is only anecdotal.

Remedies

The experiences of testing amongst Soccer Referees that I have mentioned have emphasized the importance of appropriate interaction with players on the field.

The Soccer People say that **"making quick and correct decisions is basic, but good judgment and self control are crucial to coping with the diversity of human reactions to those decisions."**

In plain English: by his demeanour a referee has a direct influence on the level of stress occurring in a game of rugby.

Of the various characteristics I have suggested make up the refereeing character, mental attitude is the most important; if attitude is right the rest will follow.

Like Stress Reaction Solutions, the first step in improvement is to identify the characteristics of individuals and the problems they experience.

Profiles of referees at the top level will give us the benchmarks of stress performance; early identification in more junior ranks will provide the areas that need work.

I mentioned that stress induced by a referee is far more easily remedied than is his reaction to difficult situations. It is simply a matter of raising the awareness of what we look like and instructing in the areas of body language, voice, etc.

Most referees respond to this type of advice quite quickly.

What remains therefore is the mental approach required to affect the right refereeing result in terms of player relationships. This requires a longer remedial process, as attitude is normally developed over a long period. If we are confident that referees want to improve their performances then I am sure that the necessary mental adjustments will occur over time.

The right mental approach is a subject on its own; but briefly, it has to do with defining what we are on the field to do. It is about what people play Rugby for and what spectators go to a game to see, about penalizing things that are important and managing where a penalty can be avoided. These are only examples of a larger mindset that our game now requires of referees and while it involves greater risk, the result is much more rewarding to us as it removes the stresses we place on ourselves and the game we are adjudicating. More importantly it results in a better game for all the other people attending, players and spectators alike.

Summary

In my introduction, I referred to the apparent lack of research into the topic of stress in referees.

This is not to say that we don't have a consciousness amongst our instructors that recognizes the problem. Certainly, having now written about it, I can recall many times during my career when I have been given guidance on an aspect of the game or my performance that was stress related.

I have advocated a stress research program for referees at all levels.

This serves two purposes:

1 to gain a wide ranging knowledge of the things that cause us stress on and off the field and

2 to raise the awareness of stress as a topic for training as important as for example physical fitness.

I conclude by recommending the study and trust that my input has proved beneficial.

STRESS TESTING

Age:..... Years Refereeing:..... Current Level:.....

Married/Single:..... Children: Yes/No

Occupation:.....

SOURCES OF STRESS

On a scale of 1-10 define your personal reaction to the situations listed below. (Note: score of 1 means that you do not experience any emotion, a score of 10 means you get very stressed or threatened and scores in between test your level of anxiety.)

Abuse:

- Coaches ☐
- Players ☐
- Spectators ☐

Physical Harm ☐

Foul Play ☐

Fear of Failure ☐

Injury ☐

Physical Fitness ☐

Making Wrong or Controversial Decision ☐

Positional Errors ☐

Presence of CAB ☐

Presence of Media ☐

Personal Desire for Perfection/Success ☐

Basketball Survey Results — Sources of Stress

Examples	Adults %	Youth %	Total %	Responses	Adults %	Youth %	Total %	Thoughts	Adults %	Youth %	Total %
1. ABUSE BY COACH											
insults/harrassment	32	12	24	Tech. foul/warning	47	46	47	anger/upset/tense	41	42	41
call disputes	27	65	43	ignore/continue	24	19	22	reviewed actions/doubted	16	31	22
cheating accusations	14	4	10	calm/talk to coach	13	15	14	criticised coach's behaviour	19	0	11
threats of physical abuse	5	4	5	get hot/irate/discomfort	11	8	9	next play/ignore/forget	11	4	8
other	22	15	19	other/deep breath/calm	3	12	6	other/relax/stop game	14	23	17
2. ABUSE BY PLAYERS											
overcall/5th foul/questions	76	58	58	tech. foul/warning	51	52	52	critcised player behaviour	35	4	23
player attitude/swearing	12	27	18	ignore	12	24	17	reviewed actions/doubted	22	25	23
other	12	15	13	calm player	20	8	15	part of job/next play	27	17	23
				tension/withdrawal	14	12	13	uneasy	8	38	20
				other	9	4	3	other	8	17	11
3. ARGUING WITH COACHES											
about call/rules	52	53	52	answer politely/discuss	34	12	27	annoyed/anger/frustration	27	50	35
coach's behavious/argues	19	29	23	stay calm	20	12	17	reviewed actions	15	25	18
other	29	18	25	upset/argue	25	6	20	next play/concentrate	15	13	14
				tech. foul/warning	10	31	17	calmed coach	15	0	10
				calm coach	9	18	12	other	27	13	22
4. ARGUING WITH PLAYERS											
about calls/rules	50	47	49	answer polietly/reasons	35	19	30	annoyed/upset	24	33	27
player behaviour/argues	20	26	22	avoid arguing/walk away	29	32	30	concentrate/next play	28	20	25
other	30	26	29	tech. foul/warning	10	31	17	reviewed actions	7	27	14
				keep calm	6	13	9	other	41	20	34
				argue	10	0	6				
				other	10	6	9				
5. TREATS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE											
threaten intimidate	32	33	33	Tech. foul/disqualify/stop	26	50	31	criticized player behaviour	27	50	32
meet outside	29	13	24	upset/annoyed	23	13	21	fear/anger/upset	27	25	26
none	10	40	20	keep calm	19	13	18	disliked refereeing	7	13	8
threat to hit	19	7	15	left quickly	6	25	10	left/worring for safety	10	0	8
other	10	7	9	calm player	10	0	8	other	30	13	26
				other	16	0	13				
6. ABUSE BY SPECTATORS											
comments/abuse/bias	66	36	54	ignore/laugh/act deaf	74	55	67	spectator ignorance	32	10	24
overcalls	6	36	19	upset	9	10	9	upset/doubt/humiliated	12	40	22
others	28	27	28	focus attention elsewhere	9	10	9	part of game	9	5	7
				other	6	25	13	concentrate on game	12	0	7
								other	39	13	26
7. WORKING WITH PARTNER											
inexperienced partner	31	25	29	support/cover extra	38	17	30	worry/embarrassment	37	22	31
uncooperative partner	28	25	27	talk with partner	13	50	26	confidence/not happy with	23	28	25
bad call/positioning	19	25	21	get on with own job	19	6	14	help partner learn	7	11	8
other	22	25	23	other	31	28	30	concentrate harder	7	6	6
								other	27	34	29
8. MAKING A WRONG CALL											
no foul call	13	40	25	carried on/sell call	37	65	48	concentrate harder	32	39	35
costs points or game	26	4	16	worried/tense/nervous	26	9	19	annoyed/responsible	15	48	28
block vs. charge	13	12	13	reviewed actions	20	4	14	refs are allowed mistakes	15	0	9
possession/out of bounds	13	0	7	tried to forget	9	0	5	concentrate harder	7	6	6
other	35	44	32	other	9	22	14	other	29	13	23
9. CONTROVERSIAL CALL											
charge vs. block	48	47	48	continue/sell/positive	62	69	64	reviewed actions/doubted	42	58	47
out of bounds	6	5	6	nervous/hesitant	9	19	12	keep on with game	19	21	20
others	45	4	46	other	29	13	24	can affect concentration	13	0	8
								other	28	21	25
10. MISTAKE IN MECHANICS											
wrong position	50	36	46	made correction	38	42	39	do it right next time	35	17	30
incorrect position	13	0	9	annoyance/embarrassment	25	17	23	make correction	6	0	5
violation/foul error	6	14	9	get on with game	13	25	16	continue game	10	17	12
other	31	50	37	concentrate/try harder	16	8	14	other	48	58	51
				other	9	8	9				
11. WRONG LOCATION											
blind/too far away	62	42	54	sell call	50	38	46	annoyed/stressed	23	42	31
anticipating play wrong	7	21	13	correct/run closer	20	13	17	try harder/get it next time	37	11	27
fast break	3	11	6	lack confidence/nervous	13	13	13	low confidence/bad call	10	26	16
other	28	26	27	other	17	38	24	other	30	21	27
12. PRESENCE OF SUPERVISOR											
13. PRESENCE OF MEDIA											
14. EXPERIENCING AN INJURY											
15. CALLING A TECHNICAL FOUL											

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Richard Evans

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Sports Coach

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Interview

Mr Terence O'Donnell

Director of Coaching

Footscray District Football League

FORM

JOHN McCARTHY

What is it and how do referees maintain it?

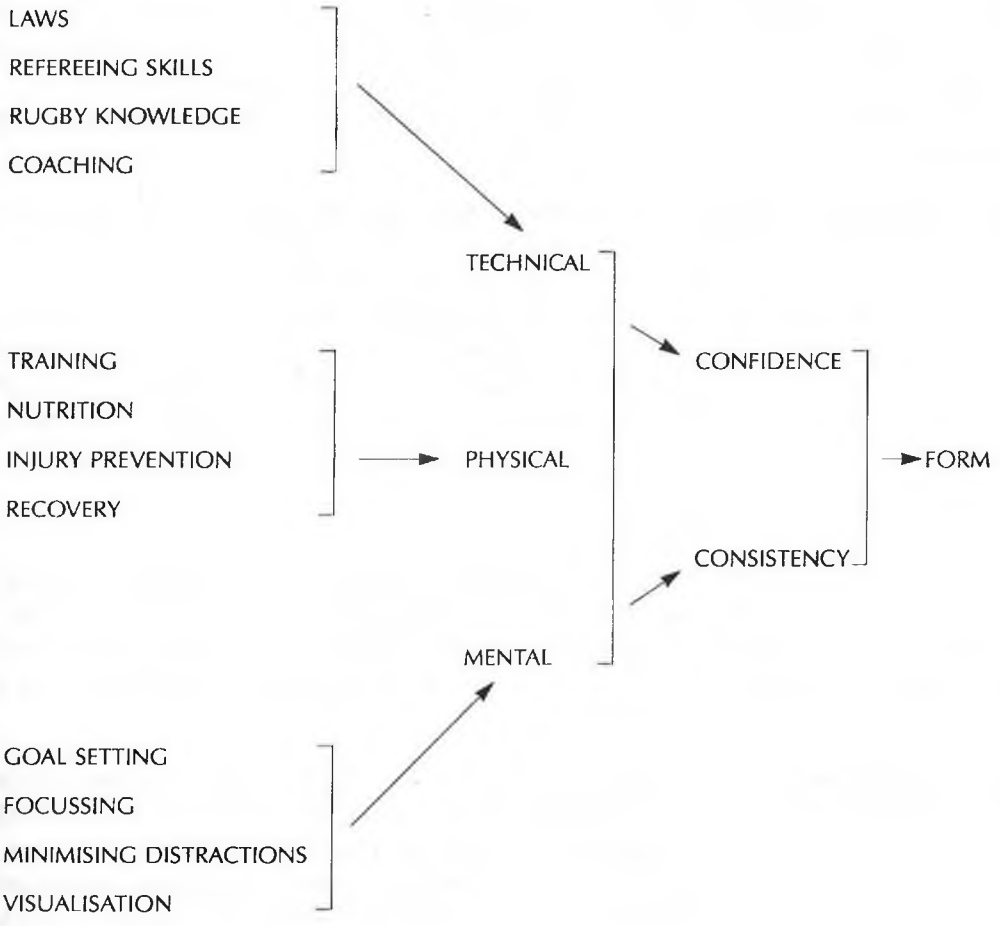
The Oxford Dictionary defines form as "...condition of health and training (in, out of~, fit or not for racing etc, of horses or athletes; lose one's~), good spirits (was in great~)

From the dictionary definition come three key words: "health", "training" and "spirits" which may be translated to physical, technical and mental. These three components must be honed if performance at a high level is to be achieved. Conversely, if either of these components are deficient, form lapses can be anticipated.

Form, or being in form means that the individual is performing to an adequate or above average standard. It is generally accepted that athletes undergo form cycles. In team sports, the team can be thought of as a unit, with the aim of the coach being to overcome individuals' form lapses and to guide the team into a synchronised unit when peak performance is required.

Referees, particularly those performing at, or aspiring to perform at a high level are expected to maintain that level. Since high standards are required for every match, steps must be taken to ensure that these are met. As distinct from team sports, referees are obliged to maintain form and minimise cycles throughout the entire season.

For a referee to be considered in form, he must demonstrate competence in physical, mental and technical skills which leads to confidence and consistency, both during a game, and week to week. The pathway to form can be summarised in the following diagram:



1. TECHNICAL SKILLS

The technical skills required for consistently sound refereeing encompass several factors:

(a) knowledge of the laws

This aspect is probably the first to be achieved by new referees but is an area for constant review. As referees become more experienced, they need to refer to the law book regularly, to update new laws, reinforce all areas of law, and perhaps most importantly, appreciate the intent of laws and match them with an ever-increasing knowledge of the game. This enables the referee to be more than a technician or "slave to the laws", but instead judiciously apply the laws of the game as they are intended. This by no means suggests that referees "pick and choose" or ignore certain laws, but to know where and when the laws can be used to advantage, thereby using them as a tool for the betterment of a match.

(b) Refereeing skills

There are many skills unique to refereeing which need to be honed if sound performance is to be achieved. Areas at which senior referees are expected to excel revolve primarily around positions at set pieces and subsequent phases, and the running lines between. Deficiencies in a referee's game are sometimes able to be traced to these causes, since failure to referee phases from the correct angles of arrival and departure may lead to vision obstructions and therefore, critical elements of play may go unnoticed. This is where the presence of astute referee's coaches or reliable observers is paramount, since in the same way that golfers go through putting or swing problems, referees may not be able to identify the emergence of bad habits.

Self-analysis and self-criticism are other important skills which referees need to develop in an attempt to discover any such bad habits. This can be achieved both during a match, which is closely related to reading a game, and after a match, where analysis of problems and positive aspects are addressed. During a game, the referee should attempt to identify any facet of the game which requires particular attention and work to rectify any problem and prevent its recurrence. Common examples of this are problems in set pieces, that is, lineouts and scrums which in themselves can lead to problems in other areas such as control. Thus, if the source is eliminated, that flow-on effect will not occur. Post-match analysis is vital since it is here that an overall picture can be seen without the "heat of battle". Video assistance and/or input from learned colleagues are excellent resources since deficiencies in a referee's game can be analysed and means implemented for correction. Of course, positive reinforcement of a referee's strengths is also welcomed at this time.

Management skills and control contribute greatly to a referee's performance and should be developed. This area forms an integral part of overall demeanour from which come indirect signals to all involved. If players are well managed and controlled, fewer infringements can be anticipated, therefore fewer stoppages and a more attractive game. Input from players and coaches in a positive manner may be obtained after matches which may also help to identify strengths and weaknesses, and develop knowledge of the game. Contact with these people also assists in developing control skills, as it permits a "reasoning" rather than a punitive approach which comes from a greater rapport with players, without resorting to having to become "mates".

(c) Coaching

This area of referee development is one which has recently come under scrutiny. However, coaching of referees in the true sense remains largely underutilised. Referees, like players, are constantly seeking guidance, performance analysis and methods to improve standards. Currently, this is achieved by use of personal mentors, self-analysis, peer support and assessment reports, but formalised coaching is not yet in place.

Perhaps the best and most appropriate model is right in front of us, namely, the rugby club itself. To bring refereeing into the 90's to a standard required by all must be the objective of associations and individuals, and this can only occur if a solid commitment is given by referees and coaches. To this end, the time is nigh for regular and probably compulsory training for "grade" referees. Since the advent of referee gradings and head coaches, the structure is already in place to introduce referee training sessions held in the same

way that clubs train collectively, and in individual teams where appropriate. This would lead to a change in emphasis from an assessing role at present to one of genuine coaching. If coaches attended training with their "team" and discussed common and individual strengths, faults or areas to improve, even if based on reports from other coaches, there would be more intimacy and therefore a more constructive approach.

The idea of compulsory training has put off many people in the past who either did not wish to make such a commitment or thought that such an approach would scare people away and therefore reduce numbers. It is now apparent that there would be found an appropriate number of active referees who would be competent at "grade" level and be prepared to train on a regular basis. For those unable or unwilling to make such a commitment, their participation and enjoyment could still continue in other competitions. In addition, such a commitment would become known to the rugby community and referee's numbers could quite easily increase if a more positive image be projected.

(d) Acquire knowledge of Rugby

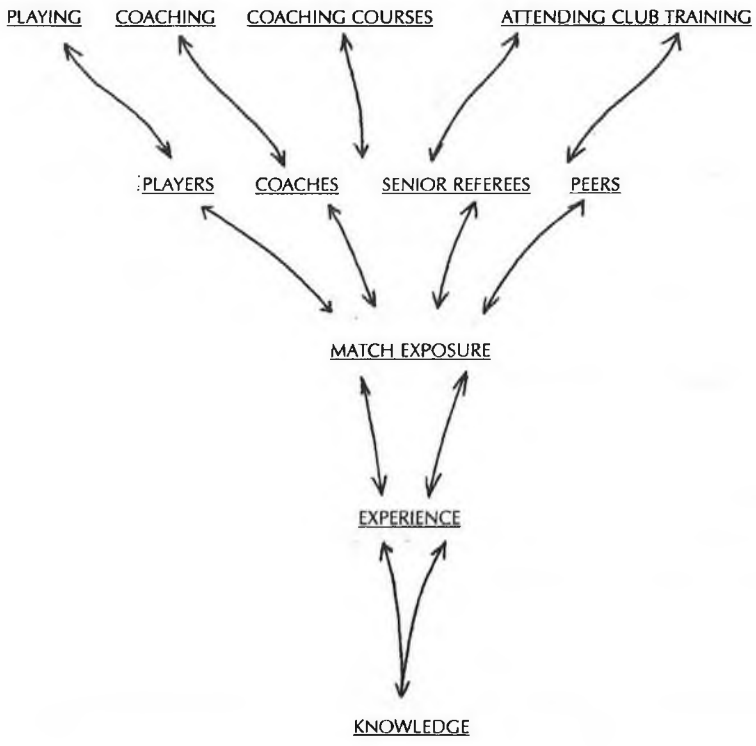
It is often discussed - who makes the better referee - the one who has had a long, distinguished playing career and takes up refereeing on retirement, or another who has little or no playing experience but embarks onto a refereeing career at a younger age? The answer probably lies somewhere in between, since a long playing career may not allow sufficient time to acquire refereeing-specific skills whilst maintaining the physical capabilities required. However, there is often a void in the knowledge of the game in someone who does not have much playing experience. With the game becoming quicker and more demanding physically, the accent is probably tending more towards the latter, since a greater degree of athleticism is required by referees. Therefore, the "ideal" background is probably one of a reasonable exposure to senior playing levels, but commencing refereeing with enough time to acquire and hone refereeing skills.

Therefore, referees need to be able to acquire knowledge of the game in ways other than only through playing. Fortunately, such means exist in many forms, all of which revolve around "picking the brains" of those who already possess a greater knowledge, and whose opinions one values.

Such areas to pursue include playing and/or coaching, attending coaching courses (eg. Level II), club training sessions, formal or informal discussions with players and former players, coaches, senior and past referees, peers and astute judges of the game, and of course, match exposure and experience.

The rationale for acquiring knowledge of the game is to understand it and appreciate the aims of, and obtain empathy with, players.

The "Knowledge Tree"



2. PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

To consistently perform at a high level, all athletes need to have the body in prime condition in order to minimise the chances of injuries and the part they play in mental preparation. However, sometimes athletes in their peak physical condition still fail to perform at the required level. Therefore, there are individual components that comprise overall fitness which contribute to form.

(a) Sound fitness base:

This is achieved in off-season and pre-season fitness programmes. Throughout the season, training is of course still a primary means of maintaining fitness and form but is focussed more on the maintenance and development of a sound aerobic and anaerobic base, and on injury prevention and recovery. In other words, the season proper is not the time to decide to get fit!

Finding and keeping consistent form assumes a proper level of:

* speed

* endurance

* strength

* power

* flexibility

Once this is obtained, the emphasis must be on the referee being able to physically cope with the demands week-in, week-out and overcoming niggling injuries. This is especially pertinent for top level referees who face increasing demands through a growing representative programme and club rounds.

Training regimes should include variety, not only in the physical fitness areas but also incorporated exercises to optimise peripheral vision and other sports vision areas, which are of paramount importance to referees and touch judges.

(b) Nutrition:

Sports scientists have recently stressed the importance of diet and nutrition on the premise that quality of output is only as good as quality of input. Proper diet is not only important long term, but can also greatly affect short term performance and recovery. Therefore, nutrition needs to be a continuing commitment on top of a sound base, in order to maintain form. For example, an athlete may heavily restrict alcohol consumption through the season in order to control weight, but if he "relaxes" the night before competition with a few schooners, he will obviously impair the next day's performance.

The diet through the season revolves around high energy requirements, with high carbohydrate, low fat and moderate protein intake required to optimise training benefits. Great emphasis should also be placed on correct hydration, since a lack of fluid may lead to fatigue, muscle cramps, headaches and nausea. Therefore, the body should be supplied with water before, during and after exercise. Obviously, in the case of referees, judgement and mobility would be impaired if any or all the above symptoms were present.

An excellent guide to in-season nutrition has been suggested by sports nutritionist, Holly Frail:

Seven Day Dietary Programme (Assume match day is Saturday)

Day 1: Training – moderate workload

(Thursday)

Aim: To begin carbohydrate (CHO) and fluid loading for the match.

Meals: High CHO with low protein, fat, salt, and caffeine.
High fluid intake, NO alcohol.

Day 2: Rest – Low workload

(Friday)

Aim: CHO and fluid load.

Meals: Small frequent meals similar to Day 1.
Extra fluid.

Day 3: Match Day

(Saturday)

Aim: Maximise glycogen and fluid stores. Start replacement immediately after game.

Meals: 3-4 hours before kick-off.
Replace fluids and CHO after game.

Day 4: Post-match recovery (light workload).

(Sunday)

Aim: Complete recovery of glycogen stores, blood glucose levels, fluids, injury recovery.

Meals: Larger, frequent (5-6) meals to compensate for low intake match day.
Large fluid intake.
Small, regular protein intake (helps injury recovery).

Day 5: Training - moderate workload

(Monday)

Aim: Provide energy sources for training.
Fluids and protein for muscle tissue maintenance and growth.

Meals: Before training.

Day 6: Training - moderate to heavy workload

(Tuesday)

Aim: Provide for increased energy required for increased workload.

Meals: Increase CHO and afternoon tea.

Day 7: Training - heavy workload

(Wednesday)

Aim: High energy and fluids.

Meals: More CHO and slightly less protein.

This programme covers all requirements concerning energy, preparation, performance and recovery.

(c) Injury prevention

Prevention of injury is an extremely important objective. Serious injuries may mean missing weeks of football which of course reduces match fitness, mental acuity and a loss of overall fitness, not to mention the financial cost of therapy. Minor injuries may also result in lost fitness, but there is often temptation to

keep running, which will affect a referee physically and mentally, as the injury is always in the back of the mind. Form loss, in this instance, is inevitable.

Injury prevention is closely related to proper training. The factors involved in proper training include:

(i) Specificity

(ii) Progressive loading: - intensity
- duration
- frequency

(iii) Regularity

(iv) Continuity

(v) Individuality

(vi) Motivation

(vii) Fitness assessment

The fitness requirements of power, speed, agility, flexibility, strength and endurance remain, but with referees, injury prevention is particularly concerned with strength and flexibility of the legs. This is achieved by putting muscle groups under repetitive load, either increasing the number of repetitions or the speed of muscle contractions. Stretching and proper warm-up and warm-down measures are also critical.

Referees' training should vary to keep motivation up. If training becomes monotonous, desire drops and mental acuity falls, followed by concentration and form.

Consequently, injury prevention revolves around training in a manner which is relevant to refereeing, on a regular basis and at a level and frequency needed to maintain the desired fitness level.

(d) Recovery

The body's ability to withstand repetitive load by virtue of weekly matches and training greatly influences individual form. Proper recovery means that there is less chance of long term fatigue. Consequently, there is a greater ability by the body to perform consistently at a high level, which in turn assists in maintaining form. Recovery techniques, which are relatively recent arrivals in the field of sports science, refer to ways which restore physiological and psychological parameters to normal levels. Although it is unlikely that a referee has ever suffered from overtraining, the increasing emphasis on athleticism and fitness means that this is now a possibility, and as individuals have different limits, overtraining should be recognisable.

Essentially, recovery techniques fall into four areas:

(i) Work/rest ratios and light active recovery. This is the requirement to include rest days in the training schedule. This allows the body to adapt to, and recuperate from, training workloads and become accustomed to them.

(ii) Nutrition. Attention to correct food intake pre and post training, and during competition and post match is essential to provide the body with the right fuels to train, perform and allow for tissue regeneration. It is essential to reload the body's carbohydrate stores post-match to replenish glycogen stores.

(iii) Physical Therapy. The most common form of this is through massage. It is regarded as an effective means of recovery, and can give the individual feedback on the state of specific muscle groups and other body systems.

(iv) Psycho-Regulatory Training. This refers to various methods which assist in returning the mind to normal emotional and psychological levels. Relaxation techniques, breathing exercises and "meditation" are means to achieve this.

These four general categories allow the referee to explore many ways to "come down" from a game and set the mind's focus into early preparation for the next match.

3. MENTAL SKILLS:

Maintaining form consistently throughout a season requires greater emphasis on mental skills, since reaching a particular level assumes that certain standards in the physical and technical elements have been met. Much of the mental aspect of preparation revolves around confidence in knowing that physical and technical areas have been taken care of. Joe Frazier once stated that he could accept losing if he knew he had done everything possible to prepare. It has been stated that the top 100 tennis players all hit the ball with similar precision, but the quality that sets the players apart is their ability to perform under pressure and to keep concentration levels high. Similar sentiments were expressed by Australian swimmers Kieran Perkins, Matthew Dunn and Samatha Riley who, in a interview after their 1994 Commonwealth Games success, stated that mental fine tuning accounted for 80% of their success.

Refereeing is extremely demanding mentally, so its is important to maintain mental acuity throughout a season. Several factors can contribute to achieving this.

(a) Goal Setting

Refereeing goals cannot be specifically aimed at certain matches, since this is in the control of others. Instead, a referee should attempt to be *considered* for a particular level and do all things in his control to achieve it. Obviously, goals have to be achievable, yet challenging, and assistance in goal setting can be provided by referee coaches and others who may be more objective and aware of an individual's capabilities. By setting goals and having the resolve to pursue them referees may become the top tennis players in the above analogy, by concentrating on the task at hand, knowing that it is contributing to the ultimate reaching of goals. Therefore, one needs to focus clearly on short and long term achievements, the latter being the sum of numerous steps along the way.

(b) Minimise Distractions

Preparation for matches is an important part of refereeing, with mental preparation vital. To do this properly, referees need to utilise time effectively so that there is a place and time for work, family and Rugby. That is, it is not fair to either of these if the others interfere.

Therefore, mental preparation, rehearsal and visualisation must occupy a percentage of time that the individual considers adequate. Performance suffers greatly if, on match day, the referee arrives at the ground and only then starts to concentrate on the job at hand, because up to that time, he had been concerning himself with other things.

(c) Visualisation

There is no doubt that mental rehearsal impregnates the mind and assists on focussing, increasing confidence, eliminating bad habits, and improving overall consistency. By creating mental images of being in the perfect place in-goal to see that try, positioning yourself as a touch judge to detect that subtle act of foul play, the referee subconsciously etches the desirable facets of his game into the memory banks so that when the time comes on the field, it is automatic. Most of us will admit to mentally participating in the British Open when trying to hole that ten-foot putt on the 18th to win a lottery ticket from a friend. Similarly, visualisation skills are intended to create not only positive images, but concentrating on the means to achieve positive results.

SUMMARY

Maintaining form as a referee requires proficiency in physical, technical and mental skills. By reaching appropriate levels of physical and technical abilities, a referee goes a long way to increasing self-confidence and therefore, performance. Consequently, a sound technical and physical base will provide a referee with the confidence that he *can* do the job, and if you think you can do it, you probably will.

Detailed programmes on all aspects of Sports Science relevant to refereeing are available, and outside the scope of this review.)

MID-LINE STRATEGY (Movement Before Direction)

TIMOTHY C WATSON

INTRODUCTION

On a recent visit to Brisbane I observed the work Terry Burkett was doing with the Combined States Under 21 Team, which involved a term he was using "MOVEMENT BEFORE DIRECTION". On my return to Darwin I sat down with the N.T. Coach Mr Doug MacDonald and we developed a Mid-Line Strategy based on using a "movement before direction" philosophy as an overall game plan.

This then is the paper I wish to tend as part of the Level III accreditation, credit for some of the drills must go to Mr T Burkett and Mr J Roderick and for their help I do thank them.

Team Principles

1. **Go Forward**
2. **Support**
3. **Continuity**
4. **Pressure**

1. If we use the term "movement before direction", is this not a contradiction of the principle of "Go Forward" I believe not if we look at two different packs one of which is bigger and both had the same skill level the bigger pack must be going forward at the ruck and maul situations. So if the smaller pack had the ball how can they achieve the principle of Go Forward. The Level II Manual states "Every time a player receives the ball he must perform an action which has the effect of taking the ball forward", I would like to change this to "Every time a player receives the ball he must perform an action which has the **end** effect of taking the ball forward." By going back to the example if the ball travelled across the face of the bigger pack until a weak spot (less numbers) was found then went forward "movement before direction" then the smaller pack is achieving the end result of the first Team Principle of GO FORWARD.

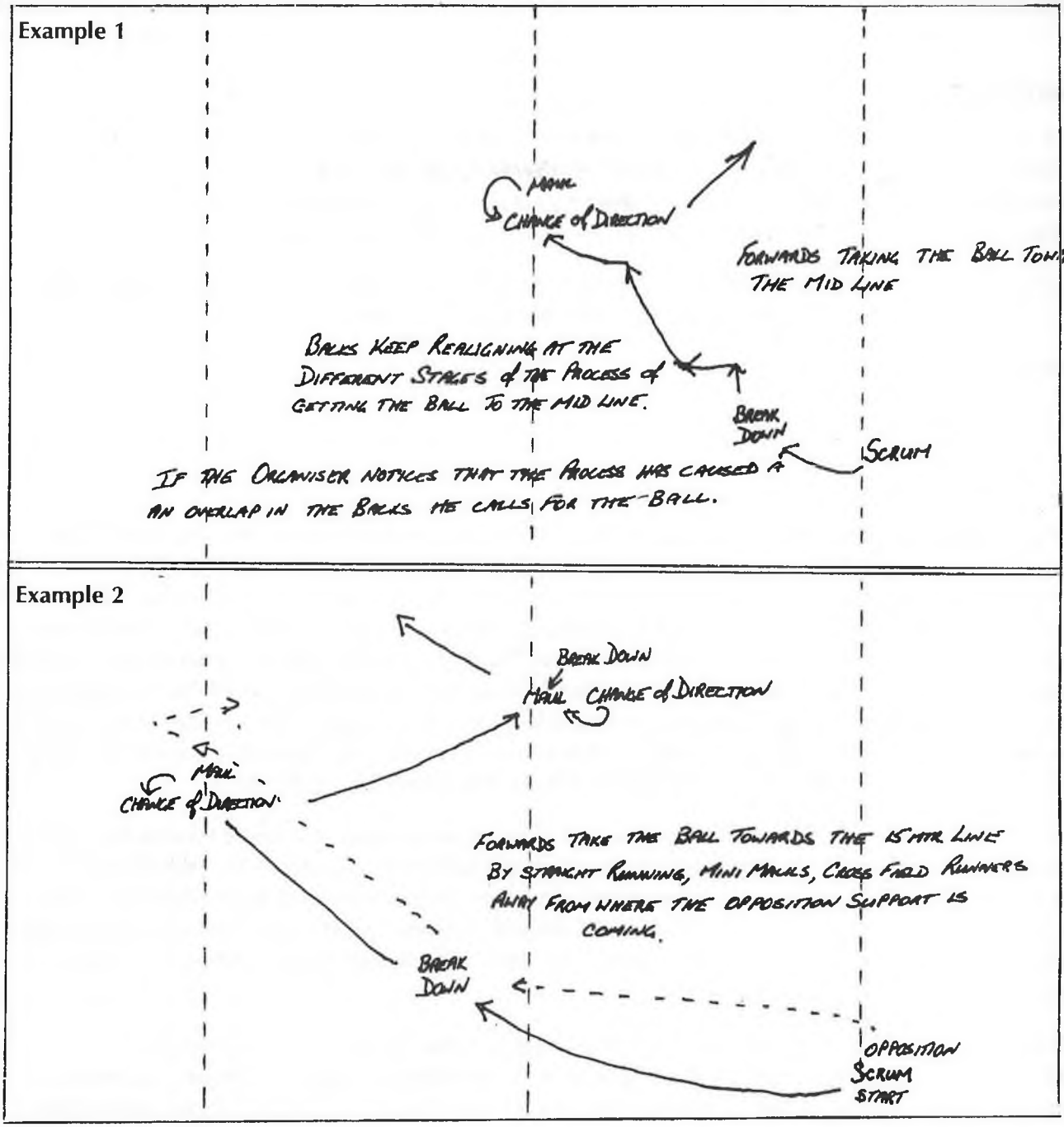
2. Using a game plan, knowing which way the ball is going after contact and where it came from before contact allows the player at the contact spot to present the ball to the majority of his supporting pack, this then enhances the support principle. When combining this with the movement before direction theory, one must once again make changes to the Level II manual. The line "good support presupposes attitude (wanting to be involved in the game) and fitness." To "good support presupposes attitude (wanting to be involved in the game), fitness **and speed**."

3. The movement before direction and mid-line strategy is aimed at the third team principle of CONTINUITY of keeping the ball alive and in control of a smaller pack against a larger one, moving it away from their strength, this then should stop the bigger team from tying up the ball and receiving the feed.

WHAT IS THIS MID-LINE STRATEGY?

It is very simple – if there is a break down before the mid-line of the field the forwards will take the ball towards the mid-line. If the break down occurs after the mid-line the forwards take the ball towards the 15mtr line, after the 15mtr line the **Organiser** can decide in which direction he wishes the ball to go. At these points there are changes in direction of the ball. The movement before direction comes into play at the contact point or break down points.

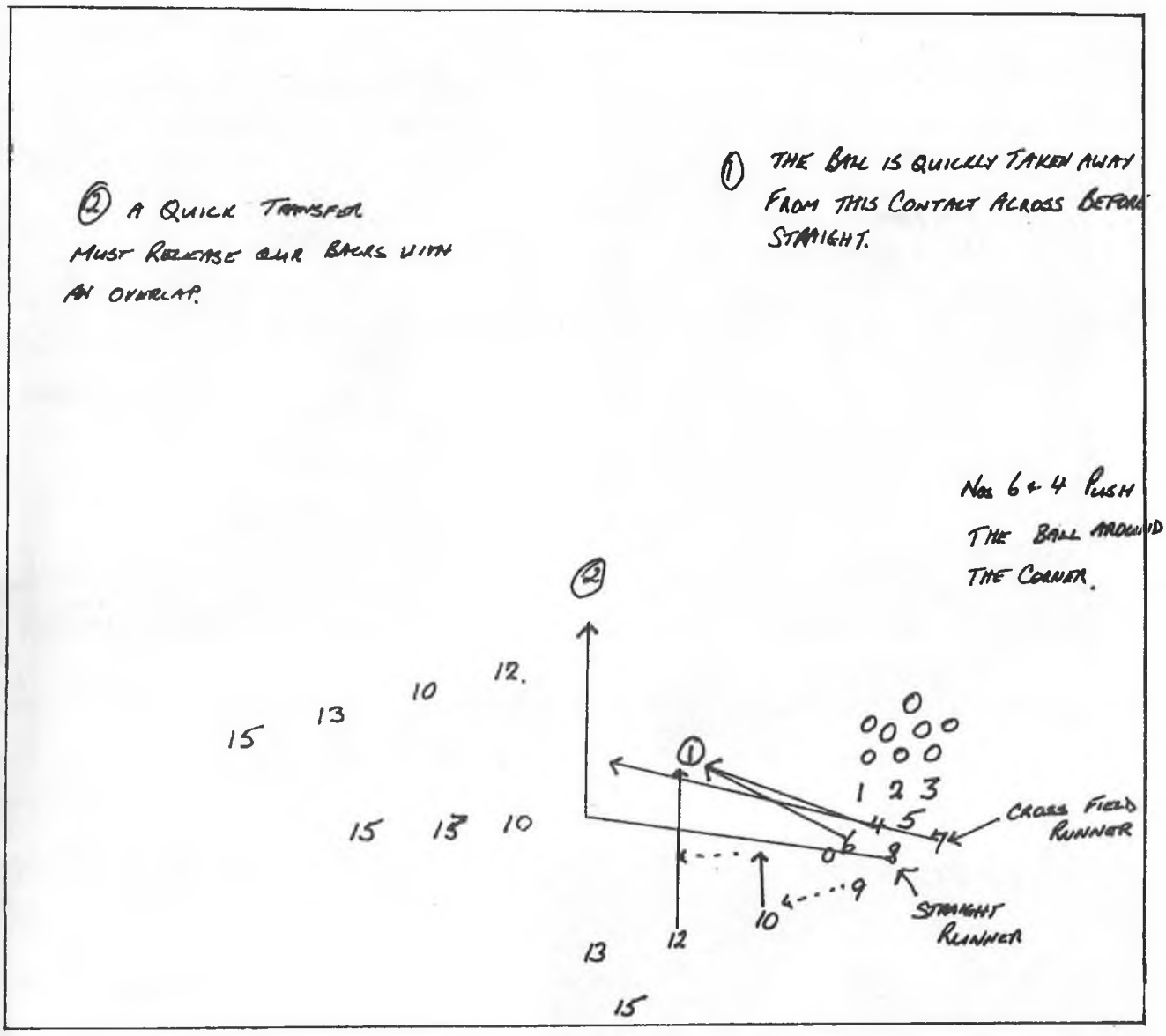
The Term **"Organiser"** is for the person in the team who is designated to tell the way and the method he wishes the ball to travel, of course this player should be the scrum half. He calls the cross field runner, the straight runner, when he wants the drive (found the weak spot), and when he wants the ball.



People will question the role of the backs and that we are taking freedom from their game, in fact it is completely the opposite. They will have fewer opposition to run against as the ball is moved across the oppositions' strength to a person running straight, this must make the opposition inside backs come in and if our backs maintain alignment the organiser when he notices this can call for the ball. Example 3.

At the next contact spot he will determine in which way the ball will be presented and the direction that ball will take. If the forwards do get the ball to the designated positions then there will be a change of direction by the backs. The backline can perform any move they wish at set plays because the forwards know which way to take the ball when they get to the contact spot that being away from where the oppositions strength is coming from and what will happen when they reach the mid-line or 15mtr line.

The other big question is why have designated lines for changing the point of attack and of course the answer is very simple, if we kept moving the ball away from the bigger pack we would hit the sideline and



defeat the purpose, so by having these lines every player in the team knows when the change will occur therefore keeping the ball in play (continuity).

The term "movement before direction" has been used regularly but what does it actually mean? The definition I will give is as follows: To move the ball away or across the strength of the opposition before we look at going in a forward direction.
This can be achieved in two basic methods.
1. Pop pass to a cross field runner who is running across the opposition strength, he then passes to a straight runner once the ball has passed the mine face.
2. The ball is rolled away from the opposition until a weak spot is found then driven straight. This may cause across field mauling or rolling but if done quickly and efficiently it may only take one or two rolls before finding a weak spot.

The onus of starting this process is on the ball carrier and the way he presents the ball at the contact point. A good general rule is "present the ball on the side to which you received it or in the case of a switch pass the side you are running."

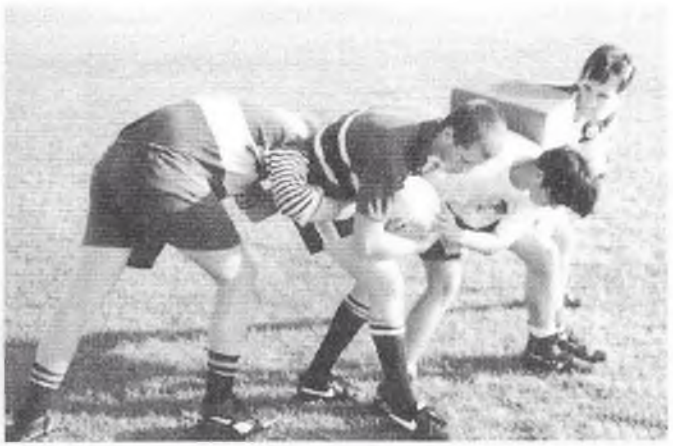
If one thinks about this, these are the sides to which the majority of the teams' support players are coming from to reach the contact point, why make that poor old flanker run around you to secure the ball by putting it on the other side.

The presentation is done on the inside we can begin the process of movement before direction as follows.

Low strong body height with the stance slightly open. Ball in two hands moving it back towards the hips.

Support player secures the ball and places his leg around the leg of the ball carrier. The support player must wait until the next player begins to push him around.

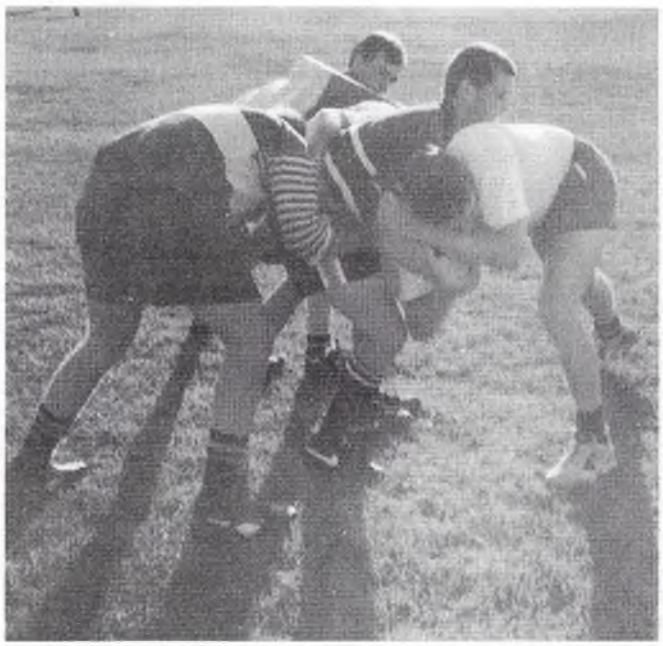
The pushing process begins.



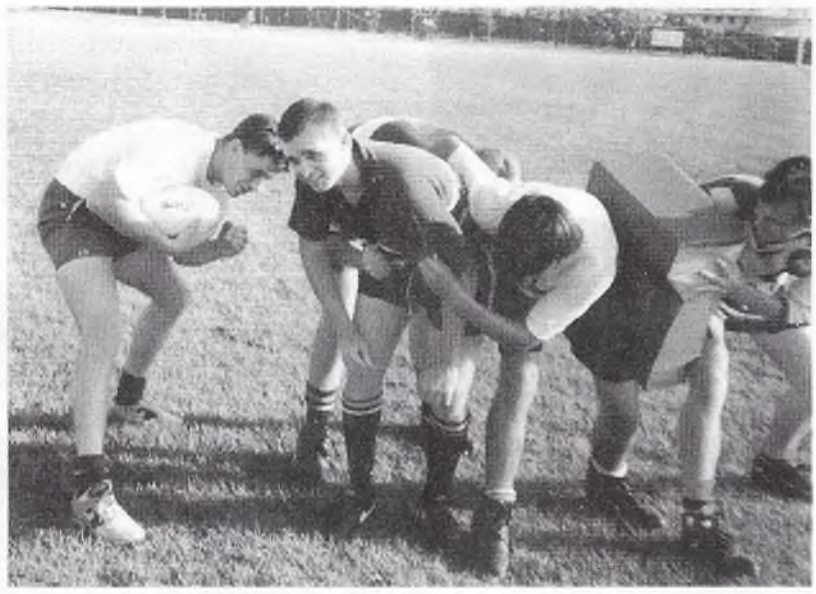
We are now moving the ball away from where the opposition is coming.

Option 1.

Option 2. Pass off to a player running across the field.



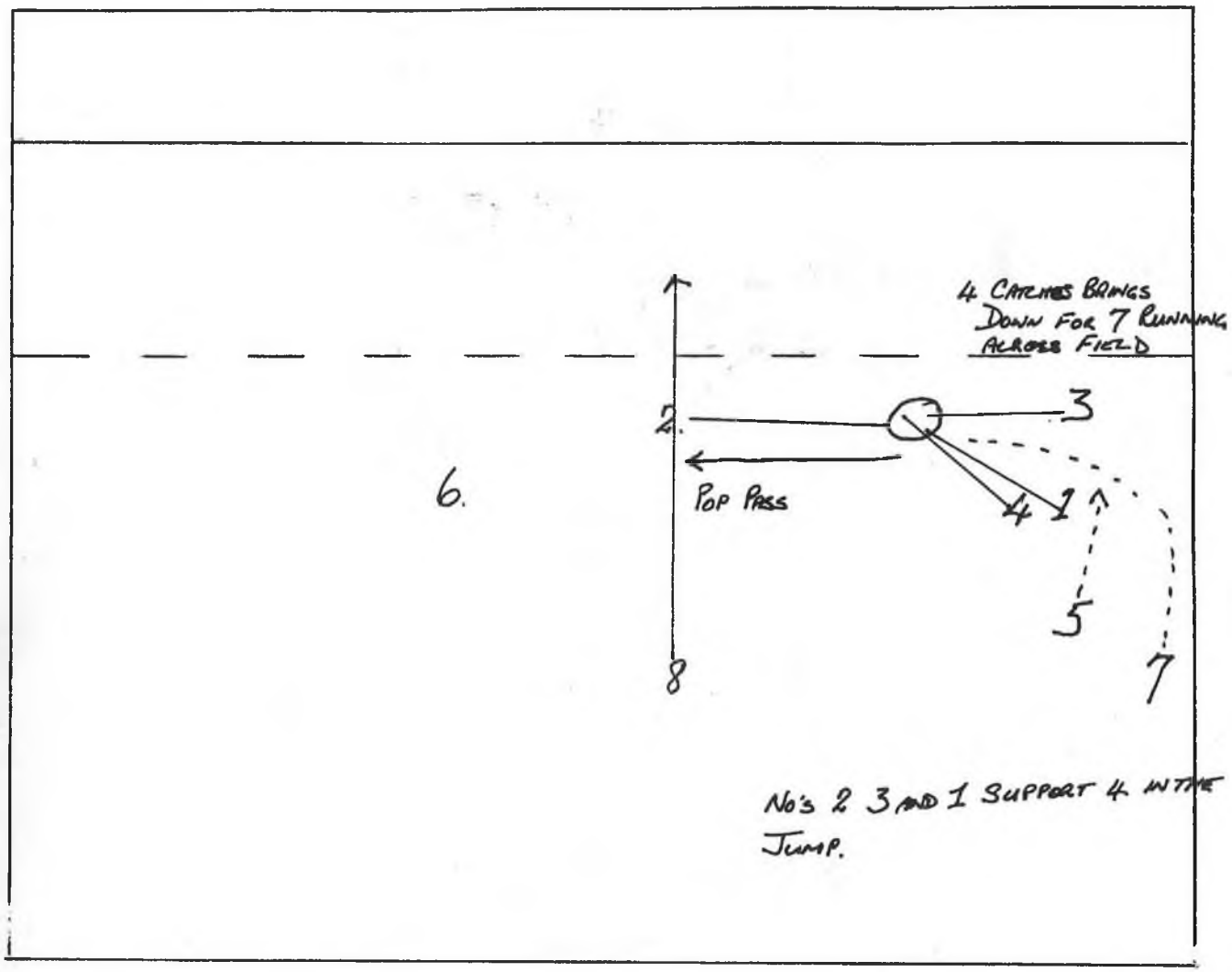
Continue the across field maul away from the opposition, to find a weak spot.



Restarts:
If we employ this policy then the best place to begin is at the receiving of the kick-off. By designating one player to receive the kick with the two props and hooker supporting the player, the other lock guarding the sideline we can move the ball quickly from the contact area by sending a flanker across the face linking up with the No 8 running straight down the field.

Change of direction point:
Everything has gone well and the team has reached the point at which it will change the direction of the attack, the methods of doing so are nearly unlimited, however, still using our theory of movement before direction let us look at the following method.

The Organiser calls for the ball, he picks up and takes two to three steps in the direction to which the ball has been travelling, (it is hoped by doing this that the opposition will continue their running in defence the same way). The organiser will then pick up a player maybe a winger or a flanker who has put himself in a position to make a run across field, (premeditated support) knowing where and when this change is to occur. This player runs across field linking up with a straight running backline, it is hoped that the only opposition left will be either slow forwards trying to get to the break-down or backs that have been wrong footed created by the small couple of steps taken by the organiser.



DRILLS

1.A

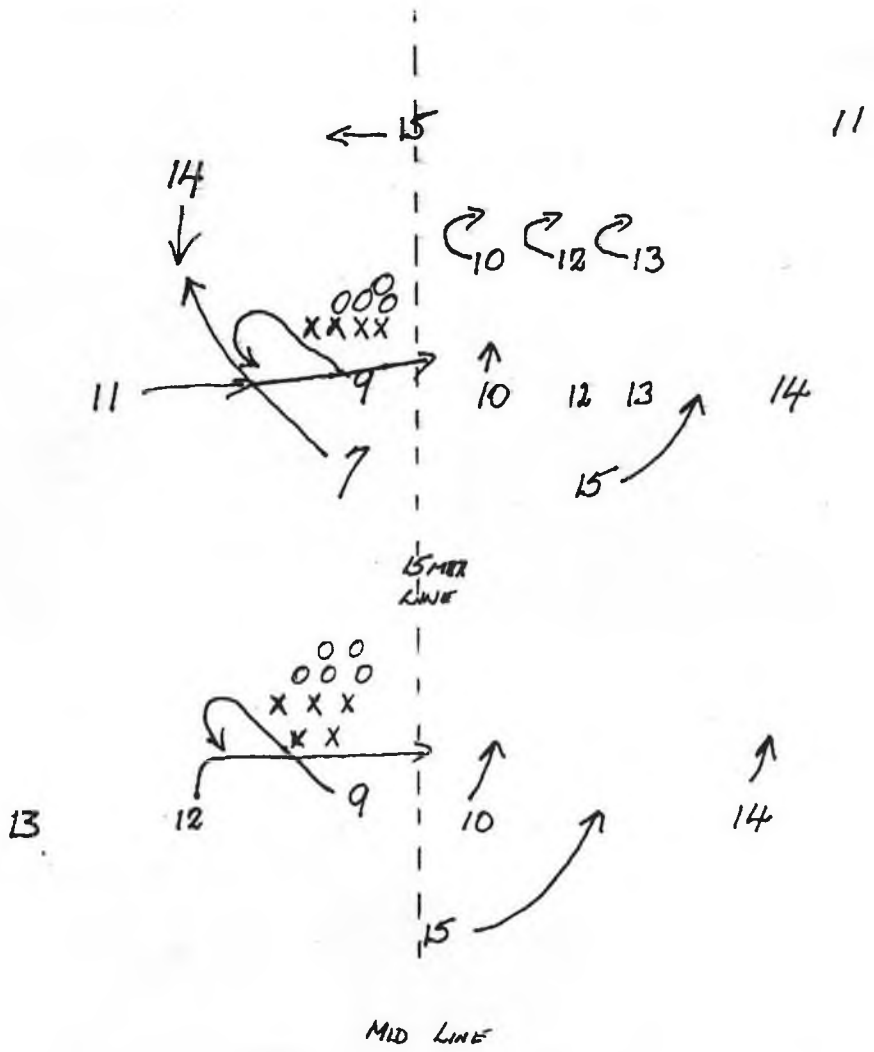
a player stands in front
points to the direction the ball has come

Line of Shields	shield	shield	shield	shield
	↑	↑	↑	↑
Line of Players with footballs	player	player	player	player

The players contact the shields presenting the ball to the side which has been pointed to, this is to get players comfortable at contact. Take particular notice of body height, strong stance in the contact, feet positions and ball presentation.

1.B

Add another line of players beside the ones with the ball, the second line come in to secure the ball. Watch for body height and foot position.



MID LINE

1.C

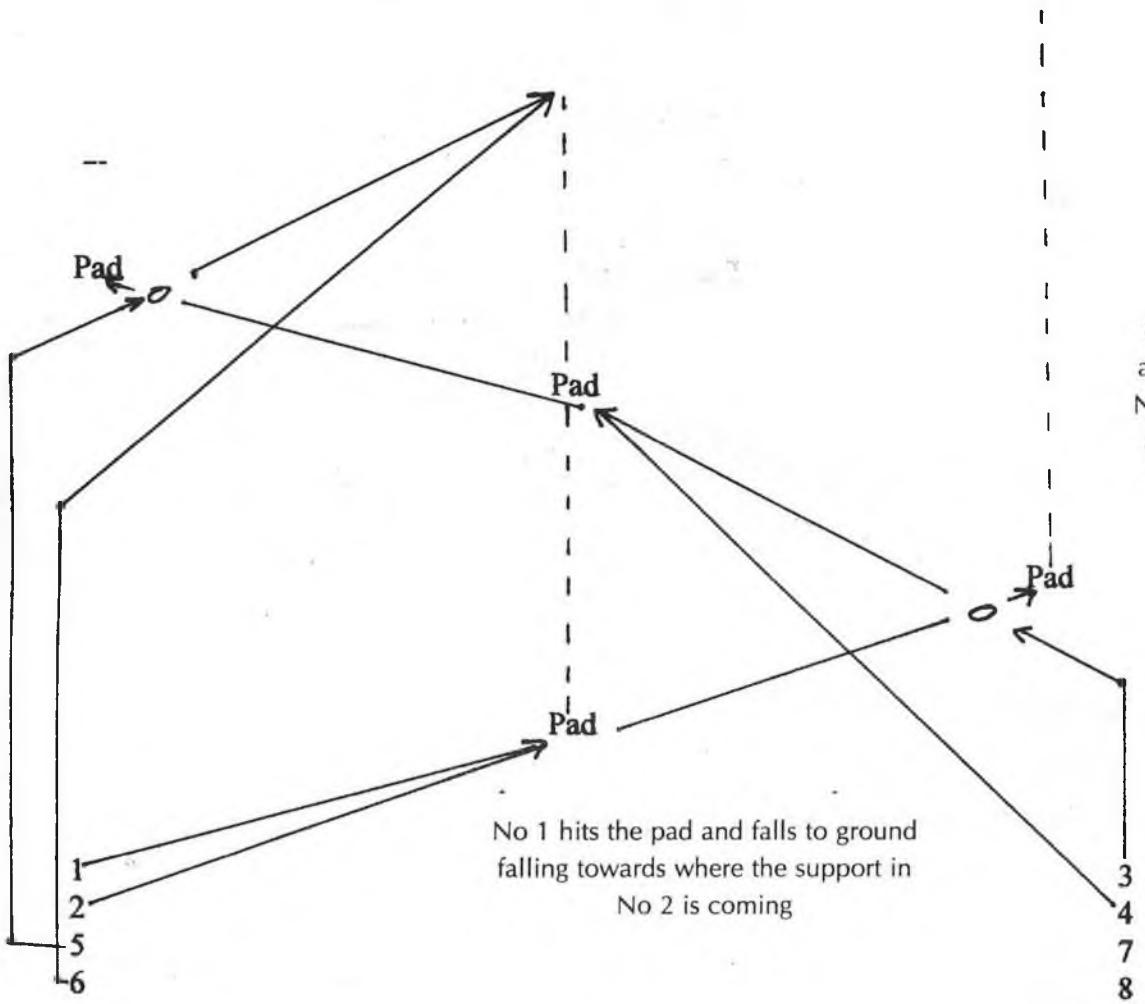
Add a third line, these players will be the pushers, they come in to push the second player around the corner. Watch for the angle of approach and that the second player is actually pushed, this then keeps the players in close contact, if the second player moves around himself (pre-empts the third players push) the three players tend to become loose.

Remember that the likelihood of the players coming directly from behind the player with the ball in a match situation except in a "Forward Rush" is remote. One is more likely to come from a position of the side, which is exactly what movement before direction is aimed at, because if the support is coming from the side then so is the opposition and we are trying to move the ball away from them.

By using this drill build up we are showing the players and getting them comfortable in the concept.

Players laying back the ball
where the support is coming

2



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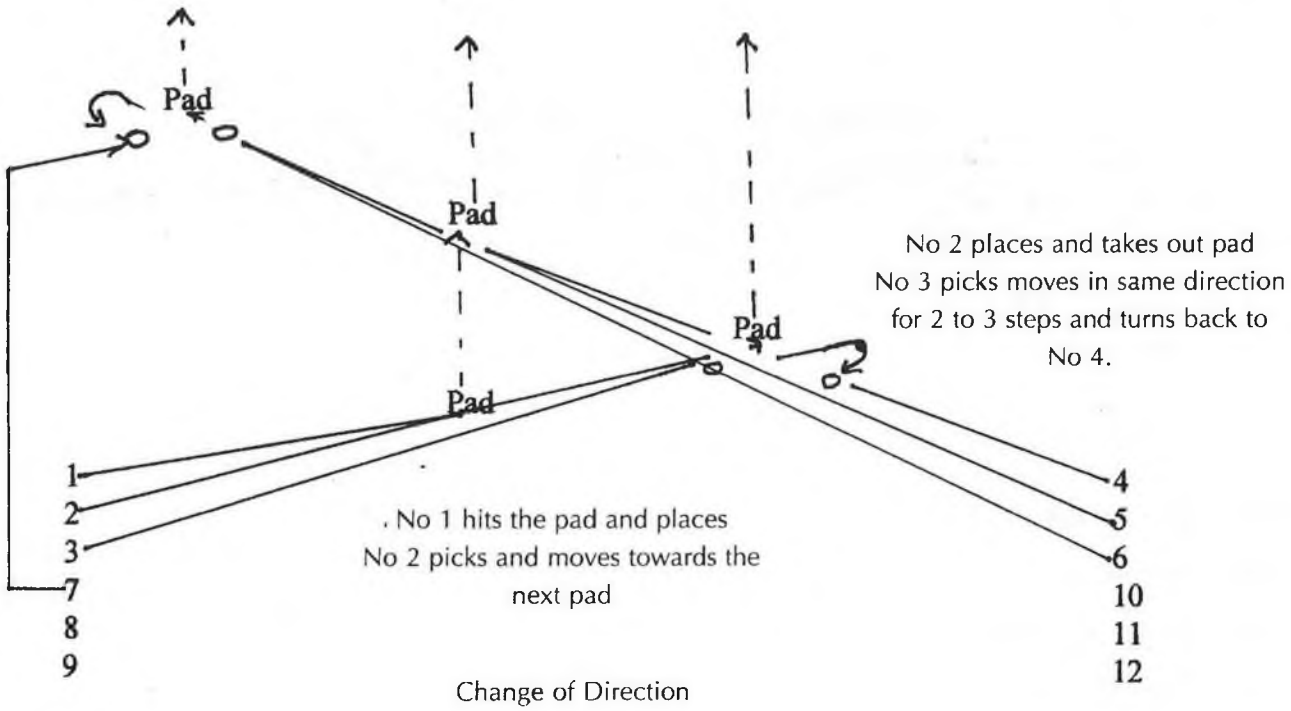
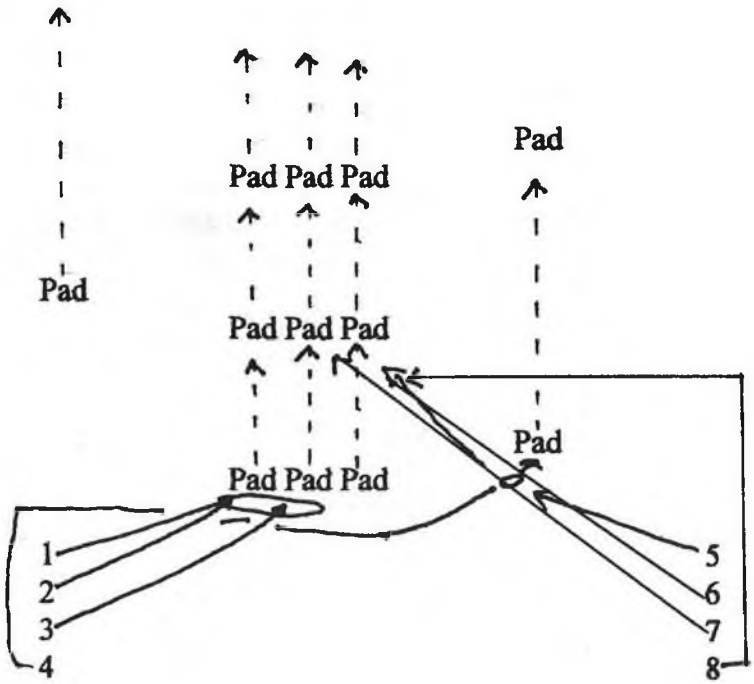


Change of Direction

4



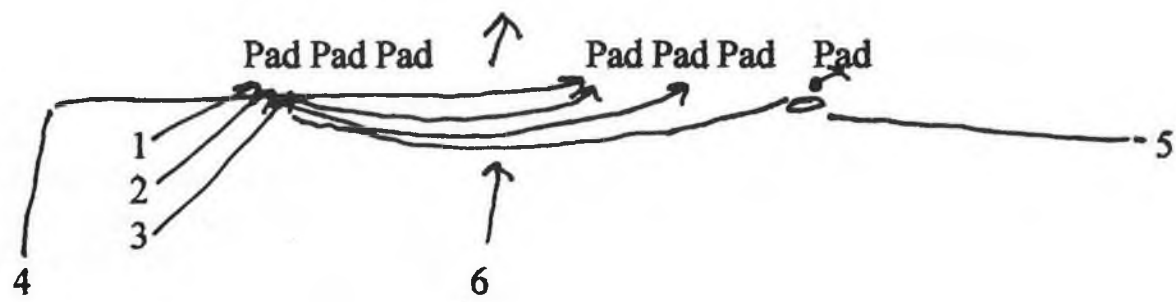
No 1 Presents ball

No 2 Secures ball

No 3 Pushes the ball around the corner

No 4 Takes the ball, pops to 5 before taking out the pad

5



No 1 Presents ball

No 2 Secures

No 3 Pushes around the corner

No 4 Takes the ball to the next pads

1,2,3, Secures pushes and takes ball to next pad passing to 5 just before taking out pad

No 5 Runs across field passing to 6 running straight up

CONCLUSION

The concept of "movement before direction" is very hard to get through to senior players. The basic reason is that they have been taught to go forward at all times. Have we as coaches over the years neglected to show players other methods of having the end product of the ball going forward, or have we been so narrow minded in our own attitudes that we have passed this on to our players so that they have become pure followers and do not use their own minds in broadening their own experiences. Over the past years we have seen some great examples of this theory, Phil Kearns try against New Zealand this year was quick movement away from the opposition forwards to the extent that Jones became agitated with his fellow forwards. David Campese is a great exponent of running across the mine face picking up a straight runner or slightly straightening to score himself, the World Cup try against N.Z., and as far as an organiser we have probably seen none better then Nick Farr-Jones.

Michael Lynagh has used change of direction to set his backs into try scoring movements many times over his long career. So combining this with the knowledge of where and how must make for a more powerful team combination. It must be remembered that we are bringing this game plan into action at the original break down and that the organiser may call his own tune after that break down, so that the team has the freedom of choice if they so wish. To defend against this there is really only one method and that is to be the first to the break down to stop the other side moving the ball away from where the majority of your team mates are coming.

The NT side tried to put this game plan into action during its tour to Singapore and Hong Kong. We found that against the weaker side we could do it, in other words when the team had time to think about what they were doing. It has yet to become second nature to the team. Against the bigger and harder side of Hong Kong the players reverted and played into the opposition hands, once again when they had time to organise themselves eg. tap moves, they performed it well with good results. Restarts were particularly well done and the results gained have encouraged the players to learn more about the concept of "Movement Before Direction".

I hope in presenting this paper fellow coaches can discuss, refine or just throw it out the window, but I believe there are definite positives in the paper whether as a whole game plan or just parts of interest.

CAN WE PLAY SEVENS IN THE 15 MAN GAME

JOHN ALEXANDER RODERICK

Does the game of Sevens involve thoughts of undisciplined passing and players constantly running around the field?

If so, I consider my suggestions can refine these thoughts to be used productively in the 15 man game.

This paper considers the issues of maintaining possession away from the defence and will look at the following areas:-

(i) Set piece.] These two (2) areas consume a majority of our

] training for what direct result in a game for

(ii) Phase play.] tries to be scored.

Set Piece:

With set piece play, one of our aims is to make more opposition players be caught at the breakdown. This has created players in the majority thinking of running at a player and having good support for continuity.

My suggestion is to look at more training for players to move the ball as close to contact as possible without the ball stopping. This may involve from a scrum, the ball going to the centres and instead of a breakdown at play occurring there, the ball be passed to a support player such as the open side wing in depth running back to the blind and passing across to the fullback who passes to the blindside winger.

From this, has our objective been not for the 12 to get over the advantage line, but to bring as many inside backs and forwards to him with no intention of engaging them. His purpose was to have the defenders go to a spot but the ball go back to the direction they came from.

Phase Play:

In possession, the attacking policy usually is to maintain the ball for as many breakdowns as possible to result in no defenders so you have an overlap.

Can we have a policy on the second or third phase where our attack is based on ball movement? i.e. the more passes we string together, the more change we are to score through our individual skill of types of passes, fend, sidestep, swerve, pace. Will this put more pressure on a defence than waiting to get to fourth or fifth phase?

These two areas I have mentioned may require us to try to attack in midfield to bring as many defenders to this area without their stopping our ball movement in one phase. This requires us to have the following abilities -

(a) To run at a defender and not have him positioned how we want him to tackle us but how we want him standing in what area before we pass the ball;

(b) To be able to pass and catch one meter or 5 meters but not the same distance all the time;

(c) Not to be conscious of having to go forward at all costs which we will sacrifice to promote more ball movement;

(d) The ability of players to reposition in depth constantly. This may result in our creating a new gain line behind our set piece.

The issues I have outlined are of the romantic nature of thoughts without practical testing. Upon what basis of the idea of more ball movement does this idea stand on its own right?

(a) How do we attack?

Usually by going forward with quick support.

(b) How do we defend?

In backs with drift defence.

(c) What can we change?

The idea of passing the ball to the person next to us with the hope he will be fast enough to run around his man and if he does not, then we will have our continuity where he is tackled or by just dieing with the ball to make a breakdown to try and create extra men in our side. Are we allowing the defence to dictate how we attack?

(d) What risk is of condensing our players in one area when switching the point of attack, constant passing producing more errors and losing individual contact skills of continuity.

The benefit of ball movement -

(i) Increase individual skill;

(ii) Ball movement creating our attack and not trying to hit up over the advantage line only;

(iii) Better spectator sport.

(e) How do we implement it?

1. At first, from short arm penalties, as a pattern of play to use in this part of out game. When done competently then it can be used from set pieces and phase play.

2. For our halfback to have the ability to be always behind the man with the ball to be able to take a pass from him and trailers work off him to keep our ball movement going.

3. More drills on decision making and anticipation as to whether to make contact and end a phase or keep the ball moving.

4. Our players should try, when running at a tackler, to either get him to change his weight onto his heels, that way not being able to defend strongly, or to have a tackler turn his shoulders to where the ball is passed, when the ball will be passed back again, such as a circle ball to make that defender have gone the wrong way...

5. By explaining to our players that we have worked very hard on our continuity when we are tackled to the extent that we are very competent at the breakdown areas but we should try more work on our individual skills to stop being tackled.

6. Players supporting the ball carrier are to try and receive a pass not just to be there when the attacking player is stopped to secure possession at the breakdown.

I consider that we have put a lot of work into areas of our game except a players individual ability to be able to attack with the football in his hands to show more ball movement in a team.

This does not just involve a lot of passing of the football but also how a player with the ball considers how he will pass to his support player and/or try to position the defender to be as less effective as a defender in relation to where the ball will be with a team mate.

If we are to have law changes in the future, is this area of ball movement I have considered, one which cannot be weakened by any law alteration. Our work now at improving this aspect of our game may give us great benefits if laws are amended constantly before other sides decide to improve this area of their game.

RUGBY — BEYOND 2000

GARY HUTCHINSON

Although Rugby currently enjoys unprecedented global popularity at both spectator and player level, due in no small part to the advent of the past two World Cups and the impending 1995 World Cup in South Africa, many past players, current players, coaches and administrators are calling on the Rugby hierarchy to make wide sweeping changes to the laws to ensure that the paying public and the entertainers of the game obtain maximum enjoyment from their respective pastimes.

Top Scottish Referee Jim Fleming made some interesting observations on the laws of the game in an interview with Allan Lorimer of Rugby World Magazine. Fleming suggested that the time is fast approaching when Rugby administrators will need to re-write the laws of Rugby football and not mess around by tinkering with existing laws. He suggested by tinkering with existing laws is merely to negate the way players and coaches have devised getting around previous law changes. He suggested a more fundamental approach is needed from now on. He further suggests that a body of knowledge Rugby people drawn from coaches, players and referees, needs to be established. He goes so far as to say that experimental situations should be invoked. Fleming claims that one of the great detractions from the game, and I tend to agree with him, is the length of time the ball is actually in play. Statistics show that the ball remains in play for approximately one-quarter of the game. He also talks about "player space", that is, how much space players should be accorded and how quickly forwards may detach from scrums and mauls. He also made an interesting observation on the rolling maul, which, in my view (in 95% of cases) is clearly a breach of the law pertaining to obstruction. He is an advocate of playing the game "off the ground", maintaining that when players stay on their feet you tend to get a much more fluid game. Given the current maul law coaches tend to prefer to play the ball on the ground to develop continuity and to maintain possession.

The great Phil Bennett, ex Llanelli, Wales and British Lions Captain is quoted as having said "now that Rugby League has been simplified as a game, it is far easier for Joe Public to follow. Whereas in Rugby Union, with the rules and different interpretations every season, it is becoming increasingly difficult to follow. I get a great deal of enjoyment from watching Rugby League because there is more space and room in which to run in that game now. The people in League have worked hard at their game - the law makers in Union have got to get their act together."

Our own David Campese has often expressed his frustrations publicly as to the number of times he touches the ball in a game of Rugby. To a great extent this is the fault of the coaches and the way in which they utilise laws to take the risk and flair out of Rugby. Fear of losing is the coach's worst nightmare. Safety first, percentage or no risk football takes precedence.

The attitudes of our administrators, coaches and selectors need to be looked at closely. Rugby jealously protects what is theirs, as they have the right to do, but refuse to acknowledge the innovations and thought processes of other codes as having a beneficial input to their game. I refer specially to Rugby League which, since invoking the five metre rule, has become an immeasurably better spectacle and even to American football where the point scoring system rewards the "touchdown" and considers conversion and penalty goals as playing an incidental part in the game.

The object of the game as stated in the preamble to the laws is *"that two teams of fifteen players each, observing fair play according to the Laws and a sporting spirit, should by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible, the team scoring the greater number of points to be the winner of the match."*

Having regard to the object of the game (which needs no amendment), here are some of the changes which I consider would ensure its longevity and popularity:

LAW 1 - GROUND

The existing law refers to a Plan. I have made two simple amendments to that plan, which are:

1. The elimination of the five metre line from the respective goal lines replaced by a ten metre line from the respective goal lines.

2. The addition of a "centre line" which is a line running parallel to the touch lines equidistant between those touch lines.

The full effect of these two subtle changes to the ground plan will become evident as I discuss other law changes.

LAW 3 - NUMBER OF PLAYERS

I do not agree with the suggestion that we should decrease the number of players. More space can be created by making other law changes particularly in relation to offside.

However, I am of the view that if more than four players are injured during a match, then those injured players should be able to be replaced. As the law currently stands only four injured players from each team may be replaced at any time throughout a match. Perhaps this should be increased to say six.

LAW 4 PLAYERS' DRESS

The prohibition against shoulder pads should be reconsidered. Whilst there has been a relaxation of the laws so far as allowing the wearing of soft material sewn into the jersey, shoulder pads, particularly as junior level would encourage confidence in contact and avoid many injuries.

LAW 5 - TOSS, TIME

The one minute period of time allowed for treatment of an injury to a player is insufficient. The referee should be given a greater discretion. However, play is often delayed for minor injuries. Sports trainers should be encouraged to take the field immediately an injury occurs and the referee should only delay play if the injured player is in the path of the play, or is, in the opinion of the referee, so seriously injured that medical assistance is required to remove the player from the playing area. Whilst this is the basic thrust of Law 5 and the stated intention of many home unions, it is not being enforced by referees who seem to enjoy the break every time a player receives the most trivial injury. Spectators and other players derive no joy from those constant stoppages.

LAW 11 - METHOD OF SCORING

Scoring values should be as follows:

A try	6 points
A goal scored after a try	1 point
A goal from a penalty kick	2 points
A dropped goal other than from a free kick	2 points

Although the value of a try has increased significantly over the past twenty years, our game is dominated by negativity of losing instead of playing to win. Kicking for territory and waiting for the opposition to make a mistake is the order of the day while spectators nod off into their programmes. Where is the reward for flair and spontaneity?

A try should be valued at three times a penalty goal to encourage teams to run the ball with the aim of scoring tries rather than playing for territory in the hope of having a shot for a penalty goal. By diminishing

the value of the penalty goal, the dropped goal and the conversion, coaches will be forced to coach their players to "have a go". I feel that our American Football and Australian Rule friends have put the value of their touchdown and goal in perspective and we should follow suit.

LAW 13 - KICK AT GOAL AFTER A TRY

Sub-Rule (2)(e) reads "The opposing team must be behind the goal line until a kicker begins his run or offers to kick when they *may charge or jump with a view to preventing a goal."* Charging of a kick is a primitive notion which should be eliminated from our game entirely. Realistically, the chances of a player charging down a kick at goal are at best remote and do not offer any spectator or player enjoyment.

LAW 14 - IN - GOAL

The heading pertaining to "five meters scrummage" should be replaced with a heading "ten meters scrummage". Whilst the rules pertaining to the current five metre scrummage need some amendment, the major change should be to move the scrum to the ten metre line nearest the goal line opposite the place where the ball became dead In-goal or the infringement occurred.

LAW 18 - TACKLE, LYING WITH, ON OR NEAR THE BALL

Our current law requires a player, having been tackled, to immediately, pass the ball or release the ball *and* get up or move away from the ball. I perceive no problems with passing or releasing the ball but in my view it can be extremely dangerous for a tackled player to get up or move away from the ball, especially when a ruck has formed around him. The law also makes it illegal for a player to pull the ball from a tackled player's possession or attempt to pick up the ball before the tackled player has released it. This rule has caused more problems than it is worth. If it is fair play for either side to play the ball immediately a player is tackled - the rule can be done away with.

LAW 20 - SCRUMMAGE

The law should be amended to make it illegal for any side to advance the scrummage more than five meters towards the opposition try-line and no scrummage may be set closer than ten meters to any goal line. Before the Rhinos of the Rugby World condemn this initiative, they should consider the player and spectator value of a dominant scrum decimating its opposition. I am not suggesting that we de-power the scrum, far from it. What I am suggesting is that once any given team dominates its opposition to the extent of shunting them five meters in a scrum, they should use the ball to advantage and not trap it at No. 8's feet with a view to scoring the unspectacular "push-over try" or marching their opposition towards the goal-line.

The attacking team by using the power of their scrum will have numerous backrow options and will be encouraged to use the quality ball gained through their forward power.

LAW 21 - RUCK and LAW 22 - MAUL

Both laws have been changed with a view to encouraging teams to "use it or lose it". Frankly, the experiment has not worked. It stifles continuity. Both laws should revert to the former rule that the team proceeding in a forward direction towards the opposition try line at the time the ruck or maul becomes inconclusive has the right to feed the ball into the ensuing scrummage. I prefer to revert to the old laws with the provisos that:

1. The referee is given the latitude to penalise any player for deliberately impending an opponent from playing the ball, i.e. all players should be encouraged to play the ball and not the man.

2. In the event that neither team is progressing forwarding towards the opposition's goal line, then the attacking team should be given the scrum feed.

LAW 23 - TOUCH AND LINE OUT

With thoughtful amendment to this law, the game of Rugby could profit immeasurably. Consider this:

1. The lineout may stretch from five meters from the touch line from where the ball is being thrown into a position not beyond the centre line of the playing area. Remember that the centre line of the playing area is the line which runs parallel to the touch lines and is located equidistant between those touch lines (see the attached plan). That simple amendment would allow players to spread a distance of thirty meters and would encourage many different tactics.

2. Our current law provides that when a ball goes into touch from a kick taken within 22 meters of the kicker's goal line, the linout shall take place where the ball touched or crossed the touch line. I would change that rule to the intent that a defending team may only kick to touch on the full within its own ten metre area. The 22 metre line would still be used for drop-kick restarts in accordance with the law as it currently exists. This new rule would encourage defending teams to keep the ball in play and to develop phases of play and would discourage the indiscriminate defensive kick.

LAW 24 - OFFSIDE

1. General Play

   The recent law change requiring a player in an offside position to "freeze" until he is put on side is a nonsense. Dare I say it but Rugby League has a much simpler and more effective offside rule. Whilst I am not suggesting that we adopt their rule, I am suggesting that all players should be entitled to move to the 10 metre perimeter until the opposition plays the ball by kicking, passing or advancing the obligatory 5 meters.

2. Offside Scrummage

   Debate will rage as to whether the opposing halfback should be allowed to follow the ball. I suggest not. The offside line for a halfback be the centre line of the scrum until the ball is cleared. Let's give the attacking team space!

3. Offside at Ruck or Maul

   Our game would benefit by making the "offside line" a line parallel to the goal lines 5 meters from the hindmost foot of the player's team in the ruck or maul. This effectively commits players to the ruck or maul or forces them to retire 5 meters from the play. Naturally the rule would allow one person from each side to assume the role of *halfback*.

   This law change would clean up the extra two or three forwards who don't commit themselves to the ruck or maul. If they want to stand out, let them - 5 meters back!

4. Offside at lineout

   Due to the introduction of the centreline concept, certain conceptual changes need to be made to the offside rule so far as it pertains to the lineout.

LAW 26 - FOUL PLAY

There are several sub-headings in this clause including obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, misconduct, dangerous play, player ordered off, and citing of players.

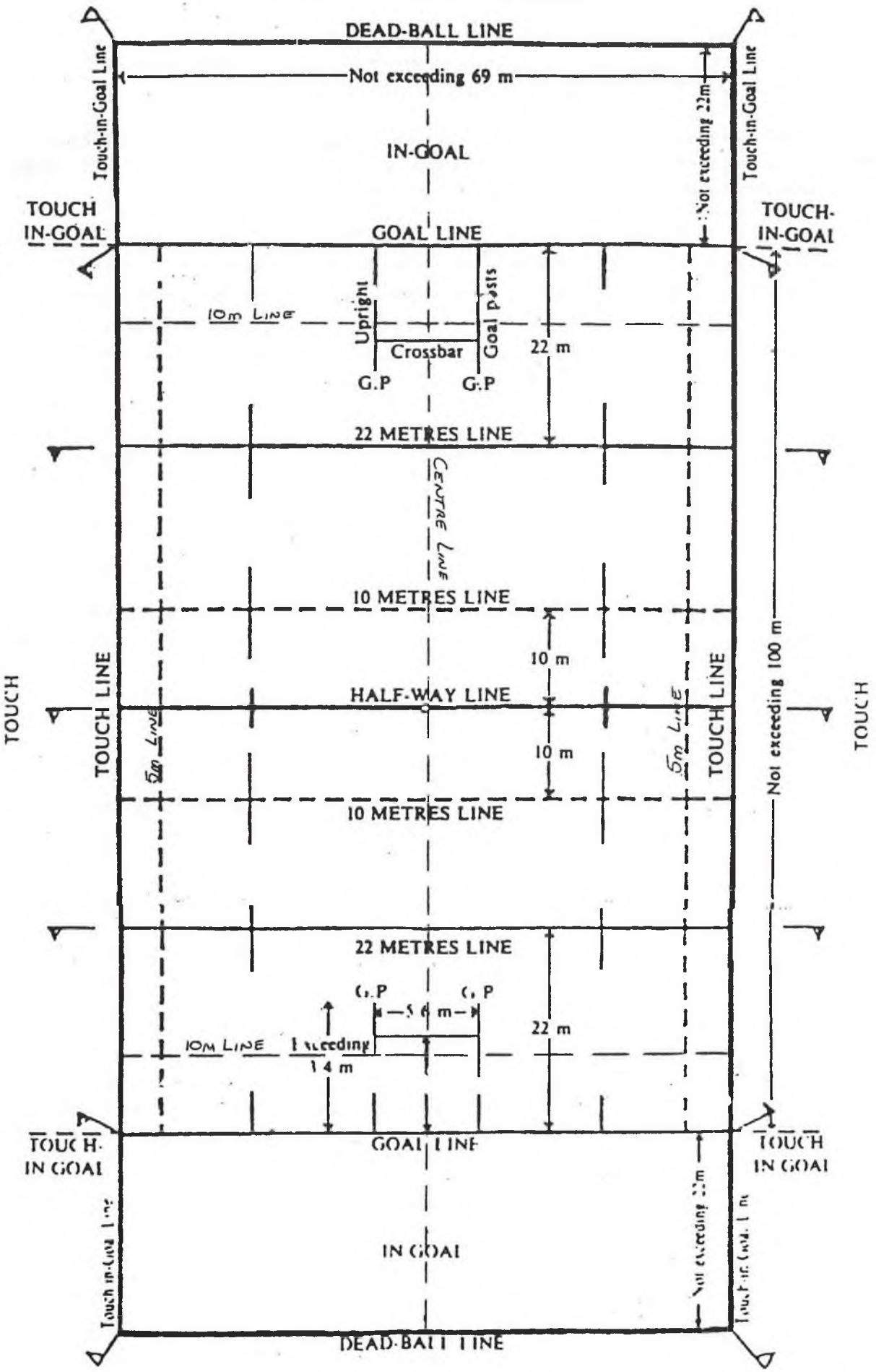
I view many "rolling mauls" as obstruction. I do not advocate that the rolling maul be outlawed but I do advocate that referees pay closer attention to its use to ensure its legitimacy.

In relation to a player being ordered off, is there any room in our game for a "sin bin and replacement" rule? Does the Soccer Colour Card System have any merit? Certainly the sin bin rule used at the Junior Rugby level has merit and should be considered by senior Rugby administrators.

It goes without saying that by amending the laws as I have suggested will not make Rugby a better game overnight. However, with a view to creating more space for all players, these amendments should ensure that our game retains its universal player and spectator appeal.

The Phil Bennett's of this world should be encouraged to express their views on improving our game, otherwise the global participation and support which our game currently enjoys will be lost to those sports who are prepared to make changes, not just for changes sake, but for the betterment of sport.

LAW 1 THE PLAN



DEVELOPMENT OF KICKING SKILLS

TIM WALLACE

KICKING

The following booklet is designed to assist both coaches and players understand kicking principles and techniques, and show them how to practice these techniques.

Each skill (kick) will be introduced and the correct techniques explained. Additionally, any relevant cues associated with the skill will be mentioned, to enhance the learning process.

It also briefly explains the learning processes involved in developing as a kicker.

The following are covered in this booklet:

1. Goal Kicking
2. Punt Kicking
3. Punt Bomb (Spiral Bomb)
4. Half Back Box Kicks
5. Drop Kick Restarts

The information presented in this booklet is substantially based on a system for improving kicking skills developed by Dave Alred, Bristol (Rugby Skills Development, 1993) and modified by Tim Wallace (A.I.S./N.S.W.R.U. 1994).

GOAL KICKING

Introduction

Becoming a proficient goal-kicker not only requires huge amounts of practice and the correct technique, but also an understanding of the learning processes involved.

There are four stages of the learning process.

1. Unconscious incompetence
2. Conscious incompetence
3. Conscious competence
4. Unconscious competence

The Conscious Incompetence phase sees the coach trying to make the kicker aware of what he is actually doing, and showing him the theory behind effective kicking, suggesting correct techniques.

The Conscious Competence phase will provide the kicker with a general understanding of the basic mechanics, then provide focuses that will change technique. It illustrates how the correct technique will begin to develop the basic mechanics of consistent kicking.

The final phase, Unconscious Competence is the stage where the kicker will perform without consciously thinking about what he is doing.

To kick successfully and consistently at Provincial or National level, you will have to operate at the Unconscious Competence level.

TECHNIQUE

As a starting point for Goal-kickers, three key words summarise the process and serve as basic focus points.

SPOT

Refers to precise point of contact on the ball. The spot (point of contact) is the top of the bottom 1/3rd of the ball.

Identifying the spot will allow the kicker to focus on the precise contact point on the ball.

LINE

The line is the imaginary line of travel which is used as a guide to track the foot as it accelerates towards the ball, drives through the ball on contact, and follows through after contact.

It is useful to use the seams of the ball, to aim for the spot and line towards the target (posts).

FOLLOW THROUGH

The follow through is the continuation of the line and the player follows-through to the target with head down, still focusing on point of contact.

GOAL KICKING – SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES

- Spot to be chosen on the seam (1/3 of the way up).
- Line the seam towards the target.
- Follow through toward the target (as in punt).
- Target/top of the uprights (trajectory of ball should be between 25-30 degrees from the ground).
- Plant (support) foot must travel down the line towards the target. Not rotate outwards (away from the target).
- The ankle bone of the plant foot should be opposite the ball approximately 25-30 cms away and toes pointing in the direction of the kick. If the plant foot is too far forward, the ball will go to the right – if the plant foot is too far behind the ball, it will go to the left (for a right foot kicker).
- Approach the ball approx. 45 degrees. Ensure approach to ball is measured and consistent. Your strike should be consistent for long/short range kicks.
- Shoulders should face ball for as long as possible. Opening the shoulders will trigger hip rotation and cause you to hook the ball.
- Make foot as hard as possible, by pointing toes and turning foot into ball, so that the bones under the bottom two lace holes in the boot are as hard as possible. "Hard Foot" gives a much better contact.

GOAL KICKING CUES

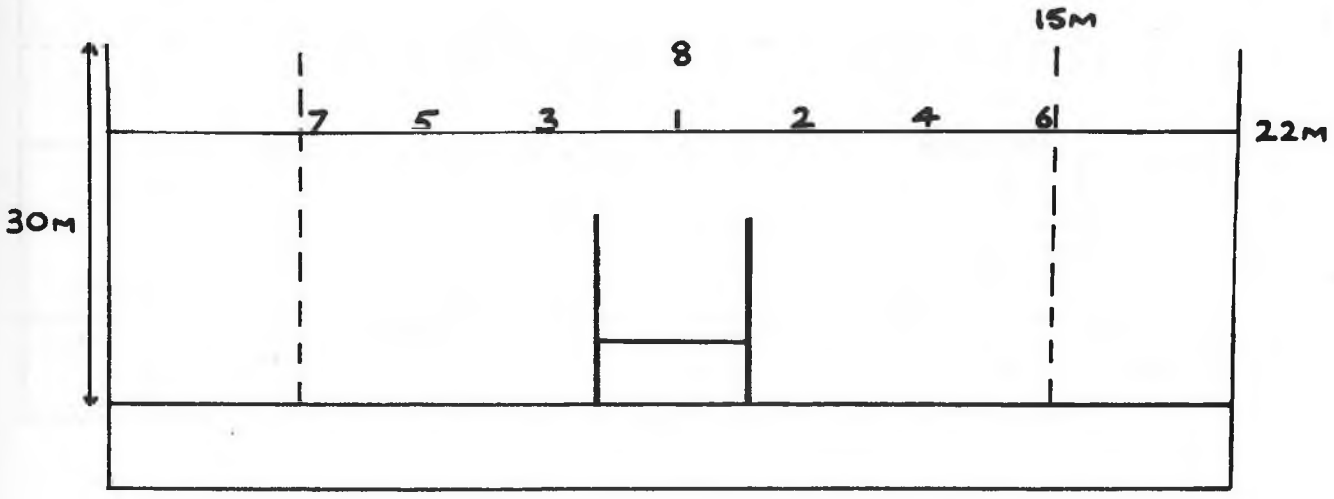
The following cues can be used individually, or collectively, to focus on specific techniques:–

- Spot, Line, Follow Through (mental rehearsal).
- Eye on top of head (head down and focused on ball during contact and initial follow through)
- Left hand, right foot (for right foot kickers).
- Sweet spot.
- Pop/Thump – not splat. (for contact)
- Steady, steady – wind, hit!! (for approach to ball)
- "Hard foot"

GOAL – KICKING DRILLS

A thorough stretching routine, consisting of running and stretching, to be performed prior to doing drills.

1) Place Kick – Goal Circuit (by T. Wallace)



Total Kicks = 50

Total Kicks = 50

A. From Spots 1 to 8 kicker has 5 attempts at goal (40 kicks) Kicker starts from 1 and progresses to 8.

B. One kick will be taken from points 1 to 7.
<u>N.B.</u> Right foot kicker would begin at 6 and progress across 22m to 7 (7 kicks).

C. Three kicks will be taken from 8 (3 kicks).

<u>NOTE:</u> A score out of 50 will be recorded.
Maximum score 50, Minimum score 0.

PLACE KICK-GOAL CIRCUIT

Name: _____ Club: _____

Date:	Eg/1						
Point 1	5/1						
2	5/1						
3	4/1						
4	5/1						
5	3/1						
6	4/-						
7	4/-						
8	4/2						
Total	41						

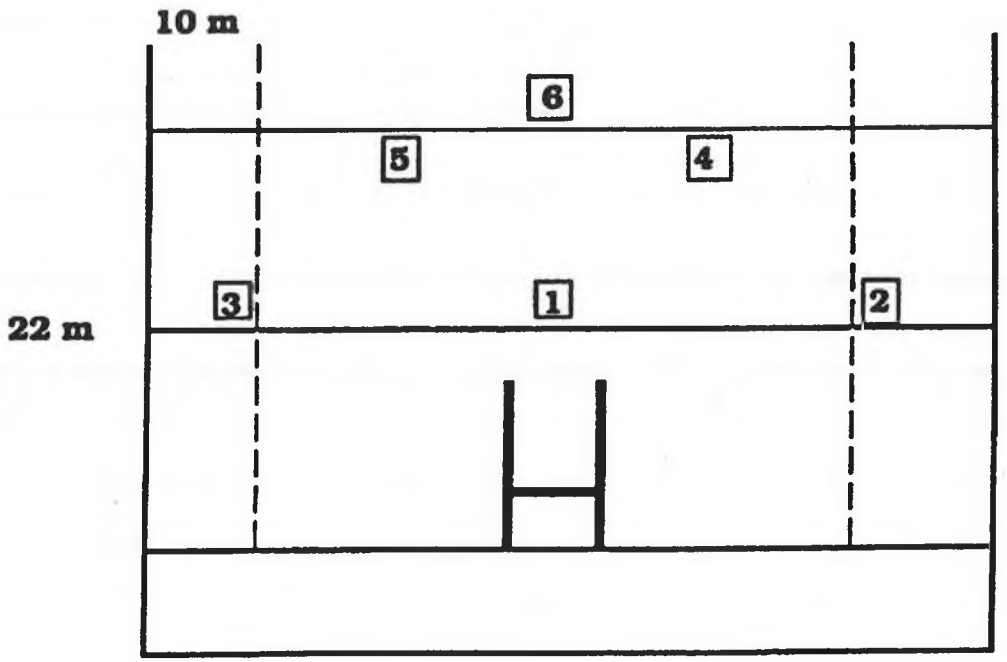
DAVE ALRED, RUGBY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

35 GROVE ROAD, COOMBE DINGLE,
BRISTOL BS 9 2RJ. ENGLAND.
TEL. 0272 687570

PLACE KICK-GOAL CIRCUIT

Name: _____ Club: _____

Date:							
22m C 10							
22m L 5							
22m R 5							
32m L 5							
32m R 5							
42m C 3							
Total 33							
% age							



UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL RFC

Kicking Circuit

Code – C – Centre – in front of posts
22/32/42 – distance from goal line
L – Left – to the left of the post on the 15m line
R – Right – to the right of the posts on the 15m line

Name _____ Season

Year of Study _____

The idea is that you mark each box with your successes only. Follow the circuit in the prescribed order, though you may start at any point.

Dates	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....
C22x10					
L22x5					
R22x5					
L32x5					
R32x5					
C42x3					
Comments: Date 1					
Date 2					
Date 3					
Date 4					
Date 5					

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BRISTOL BS 9 2RJ. ENGLAND.
TEL. 0272 687570

PLACE KICK-GOAL CIRCUIT

Name: _____ Club: _____

	Date:						
m from goal line 21							
18							
15							
12							
9							
6							
3							
0							
A Total							
B Total							
C Total							

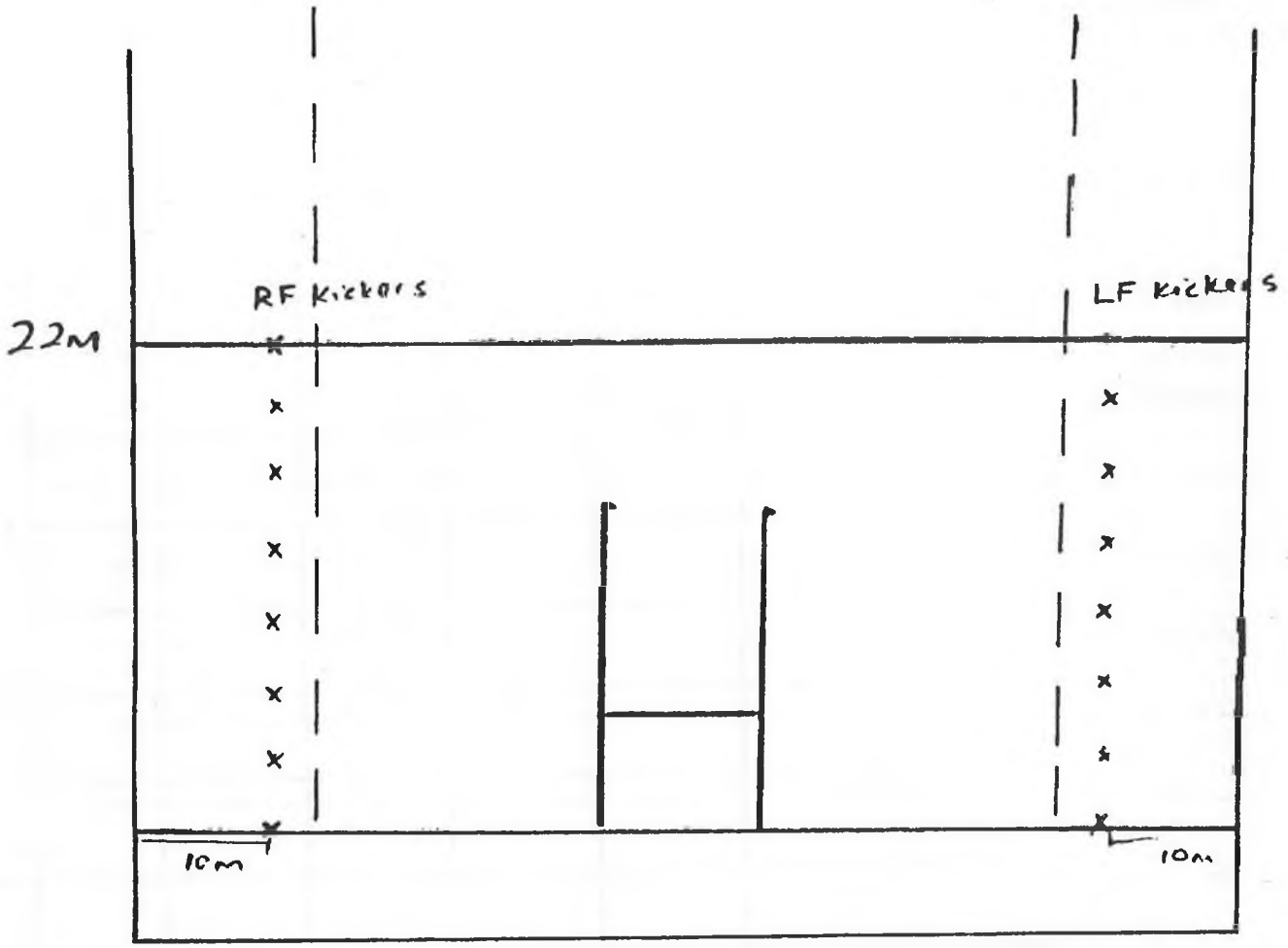
A. Three attempts at each point, starting at 21m from goal line and working closer with each successful kick. Maximum number of kicks 24; lowest possible score 8.

B. Stay on each station until the kick has been successful, starting from the 24m spot. The lowest possible score 8; Maximum score depends on how long you've got!

C. Three kicks from each spot, working in from 21ms. Maximum score 24, Lowest score 0.

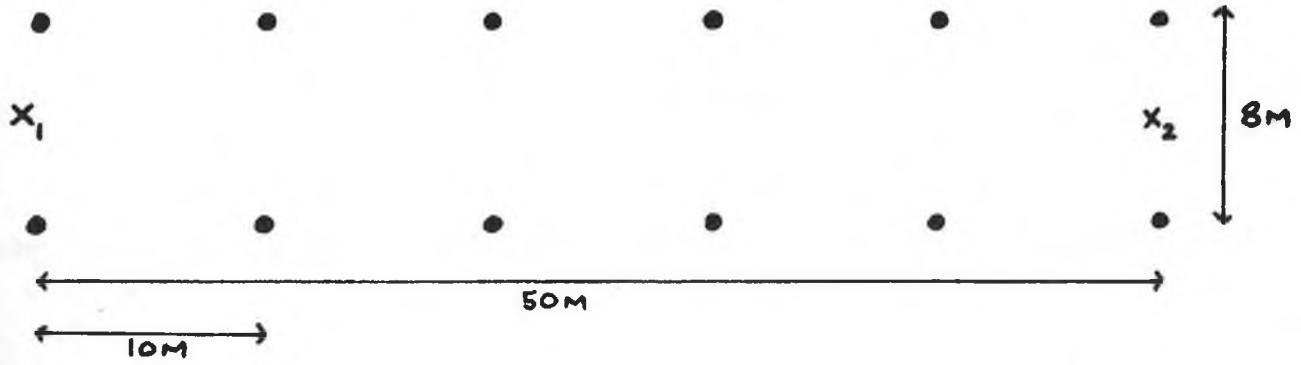
Note: All points measured 10m from the kicking foot touchline ie. right foot = right touchline.

X - KICKING SPOT



As Goal Kicking is a very result oriented skill, for beginner and intermediate level kickers, missing kicks at practice will have a negative effect and reduce confidence.

4) Place Kick – Lanes



● - Marker/Cone

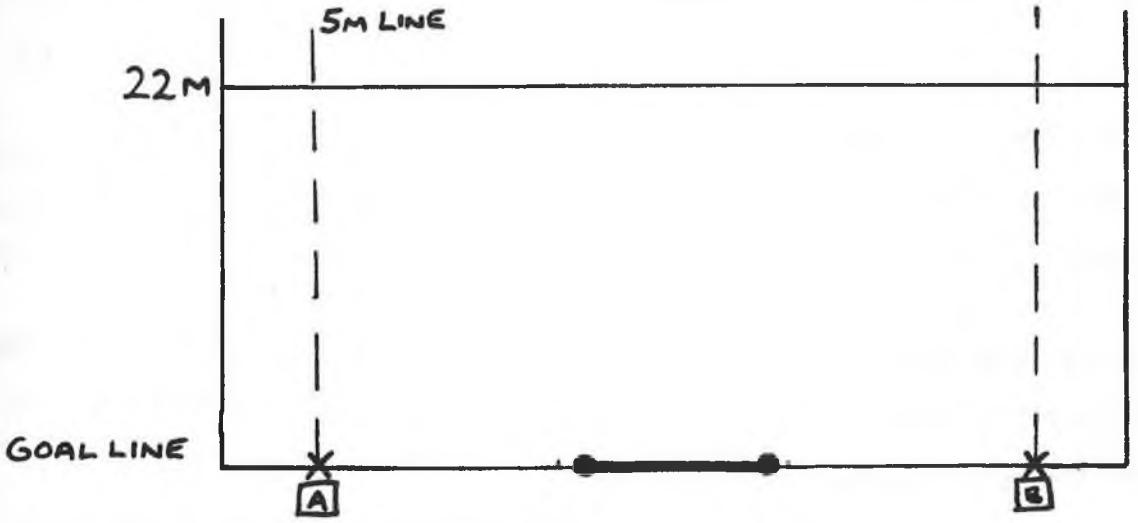
X - Place Kick taken from this point.

• – Marker/Cone

x – Place Kick taken from this point.

• Kicker will perform 25 kicks from (X) and then move to opposite end of Lane and perform another 25 kicks (X2)

5) Place – Kick – Pole/Post – Advanced



Kicker will attempt place kick from spot [A] (Marked X)

This spot is on the goal-line 5m in from touch.

The kicker will perform 20 kicks, then move to [B] on other side of field and attempt 20 kicks.

PUNT KICKING

Punt Kicking, like Goal Kicking involves unconscious learning, so a simple concept to begin the kicking process is **on the shelf, through the gate.** These two phrases simplify both the drop of the ball and the swing of the kicking leg.

On the Shelf

Create the mental image of placing the ball gently on an imaginary shelf, without it rolling off. (not pushing it down or slamming it onto the foot). The most effective way to achieve this is to have both hands underneath the ball. If it is uncomfortable, ensure the kicking side hand is underneath and nearest the body.

The longer both hands stay in contact with the ball, the better the chances of achieving a consistent strike.

Through the Gate

An imaginary gap between the hands that place the ball which guides the leg through once the ball has been released.

Contact – Sweet Spot

The 'perfect' kick can be achieved by driving the foot through the ball with the foot pointing in the same direction. If the ball is tuned slightly toward the non-kicking foot and held a little flatter, then the **'Sweet Spot'** is a wider target. Most players favour holding the ball slightly off centre, about 11.30 o'clock with the foot carrying through the gate at 12.30 o'clock.

The "hands of a clock" analogy can be used to assist in the correct contact point for varying kicks.

Normal Spiral Punt – Contact the ball with kicking leg at 7.00 to 7.30.
Follow through to at least 9.30.

Other Examples

Punt Bomb – Contact at 8.30 to 9.30

Long Punt – Contact at 7.00 to 7.30

Grubber – Contact at 6.30 to 7.00

PUNT KICKING – Specific Technique

- Place ball on imaginary shelf.
- Widen 'sweet spot' by holding ball at 11.00 or 11.30.
- Kicking leg travel through the gate at 12.00 to 12.30.
- Leave top hand (left for right-footed kickers) under the ball longer, to avoid squaring up the shoulders upon contact.
- During the punting action, the shoulders should be facing the ball.
- Ensure right leg after contact follows through in straight line, not rotate across left (non-kicking) foot. (Right foot, left hand).

- The non-kicking foot should have a tendency to move forward, not rotate outwards, so power generated is transferred through the kick.
- The further back the foot starts, the greater the leg speed before contacting the ball, resulting in greater distance.
- Promote **'Hard Foot'** concept. Make foot hard by pointing the toes, which makes the bones of the foot under the laces hard (last 2-3 lace eyelets on boot).
- Use the **Close Analogy** to picture where contact is to be made and also how far to follow through. (e.g. Contact at 7.00 to 7.30, follow through to 9.30.)
- Keep head down until after the follow through is completed.
- Boots should be tight fitting to allow firm contact to be made with the ball. A poor fitting boot will mean less feel for the kick on contact.

PUNT KICKING CUES

The following words and phrases work to increase our conscious awareness during **punt kicking** and can greatly accelerate our learing.

- On the shelf
- Through the gate
- Hard foot
- "Feel" the contact, "Sweet Spot"
- Left hand, right foot (imaginary pane of glass)
- Eye in the top of the head
- Target in the sky

PUNT – BOMB

The principles for the spiral bomb are the same as those for the spiral punt, however a few adjustments are required for its successful execution

STEPS TO FOLLOW

- Contact with ball at 8.30 to 9.30.
- Follow through to 11.00 to 11.30.
- When placing on shelf, tilt ball backwards slightly.

HALF BACK BOX KICK

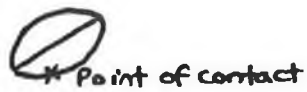
The skill of successfully executing a well placed box kick by the halfback is a very helpful addition to any teams armoury. Whether it be from the base of a ruck or maul or from set pieces, it is an important and necessary skill to acquire.

SPECIFIC TECHNIQUE

Note: All technique discussed is based on assumption that kicker is right-footed.

- Prepatory position sees Halfback with knees slightly bent and in strong, comfortable position. (i.e. feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart, lowering centre of gravity).
- Shoulders and head facing touchline. Left shoulder facing goal-line/target area.
- Ball held at 45 degrees (right end of ball higher than left) with seam on top of ball, facing the target.

- Contact made on bottom 1/3rd of ball, kicking up and through to target. **Do not** kick across the ball.



- Following contact, keep head down and follow through to point where you feel ball has reached top of trajectory.
- After contact, hips and shoulders will rotate naturally toward target. At end of follow through, the chest will almost face target.

ASSOCIATED CUES

The following cues to be introduced during skill learning and drills:-

- Eye in top of head
- Up and through
- Pop/Thump – "sweet spot"
- Head down.

Note: For both the Spiral Bomb and Half Back Box Kicks, refer to Punt Bomb recording sheet for the recommended hang time and ground coverage distances.
e.g. For a halfback who kicks ball on the opposition's 22m line and lands it on opponents goal-line, the ball will need to be in the air for approx. 3.0 sec. (coverage 20m). This should ensure that contesters/chasers arrive on goal-line as the ball arrives.

PUNT KICKING/PUNT BOMB/HALF BACK BOX KICK DRILLS

1 INTRODUCTORY DRILLS

In Pairs

Players start standing 15m apart and then progress out to 40m apart, and punt ball to one another.

Coach to highlight focuses during Introductory Drill.

- Contact with the ball (Sweet Spot).
- On the shelf.
- Through the gate.
- Left hand, right foot.
- Making contact with ball on last 2-3 lace eyelets of the boot.
- Hard foot.

Note: Before all punt kicking sessions, players should jog lightly and stretch thoroughly, then progress to above drill.

2 PUNT – LANES – Standing or Running

This drill is designed to assess the kickers accuracy and the distance obtained.

Inexperienced kickers will use 15m wide lanes. The more competent kickers will begin with 15m lanes and progress in time to 5m lanes. (Recording sheet attached).

Note: Five kicks to be taken into wind and five kicks to be taken with wind. Total of 10 kicks.

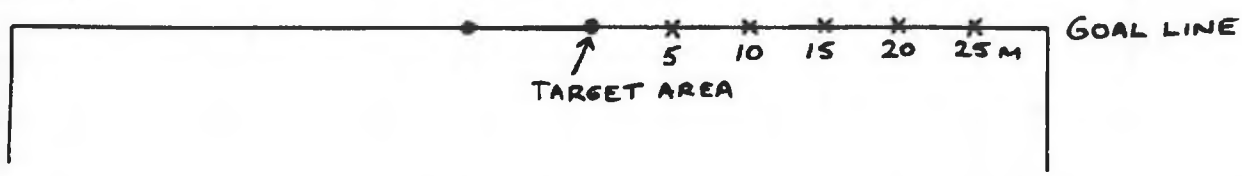
3 PUNT – BOMB – Standing

This drill, especially applicable to Half-backs, allows the kicker to practice high balls of various lengths and hang times. It assesses the kickers accuracy (in terms of distance and height) based on times. (Explanation of drill and recording sheet attached.)

4 HIGH BALL BOX KICKS (from Half-back)

Designed specifically for Half-backs. The drill allows the kicker to practice kicks to a chosen target area (up to 25m). The kicker can specifically practice kicking a certain length (e.g. 20m) or he can perform several kicks from each of the positions (5 through to 25m).

Drill is performed on goal-line, with the near side goalpost the target area.



X – KICKS TO BE TAKEN FROM THESE MARKS

Kicks are to be timed. Recommended coverage and hang times are show.

5m	1.5 secs
10m	2.0 secs
15m	2.5 secs
20m	3.0 secs
25m	3.5 secs
30m	4.0 secs

DAVE ALRED, RUGBY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

35 GROVE ROAD, COOMBE DINGLE,
BRISTOL BS 9 2RJ. ENGLAND.
TEL. 0272 687570

PUNT — LANES

Name: _____ Club: _____

Date:								
Width of Lanes, 15, 10 or 5 m.								
Standing or running								
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
AV.								
Score AV.								

Note: Ball lands out of lane, subtract 30m. Mark with X.

Work in either 5, 10 or 15m lanes.

Double red cones as indoor target on 20 yards, 1 yard wide.

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL RFC

KICKING – HIGH BOMB

Conditions

1 10 attempts. First 5 with the wind. Second 5 against the wind.

2 Kick from a set point to measure the EXACT distance of travel (metres).

3 On kick contact start the stop watch. Stop when the ball makes first contact with the ground.

4 Work out the average with the wind, then against the wind.

5 Code H = Hang time D = Distance

Name ..... Season .....

Year of Study .....

Dates	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....	..../....
	H I D	H I D	H I D	H I D	H I D	H I D	H I D	H I D
1	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
2	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
3	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
4	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
5	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
AVG	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
6	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
7	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
8	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
9	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
10	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Comments								

DAVE ALRED, RUGBY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

35 GROVE ROAD, COOMBE DINGLE,
BRISTOL BS 9 2RJ. ENGLAND.
TEL. 0272 687570

PUNT — BOMB

Name: _____ Club: _____

Date:

	H.T.	DIST.	H.T.	DIST.	H.T.	DIST.	H.T.	DIST.	H.T.	DIST.
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
AV										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
AV.										
TOTAL										

COVERAGE GRID:

NOTE: 1 to 5 wind advantage

6 to 10 against the wind

HANG TIME	COVERAGE
2.0	10
2.5	15
3.0	20
3.5	25
4.0	30
4.5	35
5.0	40

DROP KICK RESTARTS

Only Short 22m restarts and short Halfway restarts will be discussed.

With winning possession crucial to a teams chances of success, great importance must be placed upon securing the ball off your own restarts. Therefore, it is important that the kicks are well directed, and that they have enough hang time to enable contesters to reach target area as the ball arrives.

DROP KICKING – Specific Techniques

- Hold Ball Upright (not tilted backwards) hands comfortably placed either side of seam.
- Seam of ball aimed to target (approx. 15m for short halfway restart.)
  (approx. 5–10m for short 22m restart.)
- Shoulders square facing opponents goal-posts.
- On contact with ball, bend non-kicking leg, to assist kicking leg **scoop, up and through** for good hang time.
- **'Hard Foot'** at contact.
- Point of contact on ball is the middle of the bottom 1.3rd of ball.
- Swing leg through (approx. 45 degrees) contact and follow through to approx. 9.30 (clock analogy).

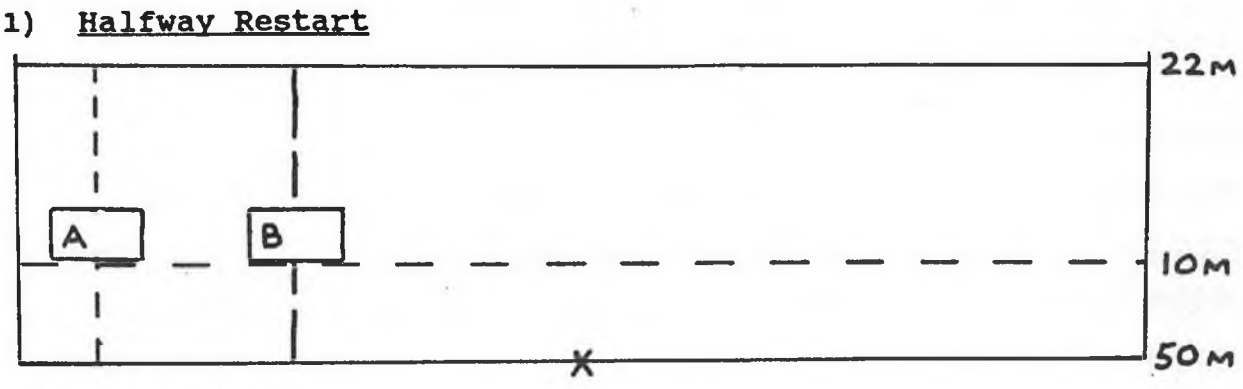
Note: Timing is crucial to obtaining best result – good height. Foot contact ball fractionally after ball has hit ground.

Approximate Hang Times for Restarts

Short Halfway Restarts to	5m	4.5 secs.
Short Halfway Restarts to	15m	3.0 secs.
22m Restart to	5m	3.5 secs.
22m Restart to	15m	2.5 secs.

DROP KICK DRILL

1. Halfway Restart



X — Kicks taken here

Targets: A Short on 5m

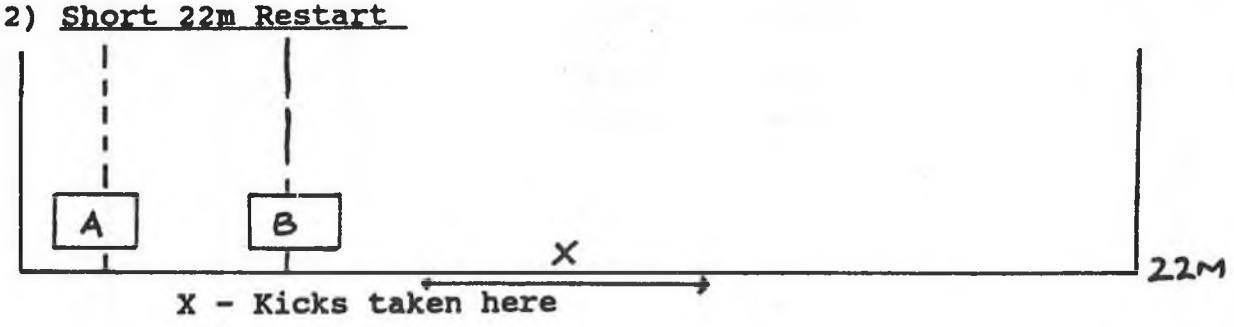
B Short on 15m

15 kicks taken to each target area.

Total Kicks 30

One point is scored for each kick successfully landing in target area.

2. Short 22m Restart



X — Kicks taken here

Targets: A Short on 5m

B Short on 15m

15 kicks taken to each target area.

Total Kicks 30

One point is scored for each kick successfully landing in target area.

THE EXPANSIVE GAME

ALAN GAFFNEY

Despite what I believe to be the best intentions of the administrators to "open up" our game of rugby, obviously it has not worked successfully. Certainly there are flaws in some of the recent law changes, but surely, they alone, cannot be held to be totally responsible for the stereotyped and negative play being introduced by a great number of coaches and players alike.

At a time when the profile of the game has reached new heights, we are running the risk of not taking advantage of this situation, due in part to the negative spectacle we witness on an all too consistent basis. Not only are coaches and players contributing to this negative play, but also the inconsistency of refereeing decisions/interpretations is a major factor. It is becoming all too clear that games are developing effectively into penalty goal "shootouts".

Whilst we constantly hear from coaches that the rules are dictating the style of play being adopted, surely if one has the desire to play a more expansive game, then it can be achieved successfully. Maybe the desire to take a risk does not exist in a lot of people. Maybe a low risk policy creates less chance of losing. Maybe it is the fear of not winning and the potential loss of any resultant benefits.

Obviously, an "open" game can create greater risk, but instead of the negative attitudes enunciated previously, why not adopt "a better chance of winning" philosophy. The risk factor may be higher, but a positive attitude, coupled with an understanding of how the game plan is to be achieved, are two important issues in reducing this risk to an acceptable level. If the game plan is accepted, then obviously both the backs and forwards have roles to play. I am not suggesting the ball be passed along the backline at every conceivable opportunity, since this can create problems under the present laws. I probably should add that this is possible, providing a clear superiority is demonstrated by one side, but should the game be highly competitive, then a structured game plan has to be implemented, which allows the expansive game to be played intelligently.

To successfully implement this plan, there are some basic factors which need to be addressed. These ingredients are common, irrespective of the style of game, but it is imperative they be given considerable attention if we are to implement a consistent running game. These basic factors are:-

- Positive Attitude
- Skill Levels
- Pace
- Strength
- Fitness

Each of these factors is critical in the overall strategy. There must be a desire and an understanding by both coaches and players alike to play this form of game, but there does need to be quality skill levels, coupled with an emphasis on pace, strength and fitness.

If we are successful in achieving these aims, then specific issues such as communication, ball control (which includes ball security, ball retention etc), support, running angles and variety have to be looked at in detail. Obviously training drills need to be designed and the intent understood, so that the aims are achieved. These drills, and there are plenty of them, have to be performed in a quality manner, under pressure, on a consistent basis. This pressure can either be one of a physical nature, or one of time, but preferably a combination of both.

Under any circumstances, a strong scrum and quality lineout are desirable attributes of any team. Of course, these factors make the running game so much easier to play, providing the right balance is achieved in the involvement of both backs and forwards. Too often, as examples, we see the relentless march of the rolling maul, or persistent and aimless kicking by the backs. The justification by both coaches and players is that we must play territory and not give the opposition the chance of either tying up our possession, or else them receiving a penalty within kicking distance. I must admit I can sympathise to an extent with such a reaction, when these presumably are the dominant aims of the defending side. This attitude is no doubt heightened further by the inconsistency in refereeing interpretations.

However, as mentioned previously, we can lessen the chance of these events occurring if the team is totally committed to a controlled running game, and have the necessary attributes of skill, pace, strength and fitness to accomplish the task.

As has been said, simply there are only three things you can do with a football – kick, pass or run – though the selection of the best option consistently is a highly difficulty exercise. Even if the incorrect option is taken, the negative impact is lessened if a positive decision is taken. Any game is made easier, but particularly the expansive game, if there is a player involved who can read a game, and do it well. In all my years of involvement, there are few who could/can anticipate what is likely to occur, say two plays ahead, but it is not essential to have a "genius" for the style of game to be effective. Of course, it is highly beneficial if a halfback or five eight is the reader of the game, and more so if the forwards are confident in this player's abilities.

It is clear that the open side backrower, the halfback and the midfield are critical elements in this style of play. the open side backrower must have a keen sense of anticipation. The half back, besides having all of the qualities normally required, must be able to read a game efficiently, and be able to communicate effectively between backs and forwards, whilst the midfield must be strong, balanced and skillful.

The communication aspect is one that is too often not given the due attention it deserves. There is too much expectancy by a greater number of players that things will occur as a matter of course. This does not happen consistently, and too often opportunities go begging because of this inability to talk. Communication is a major factor in an expanded game, as it is critical in the link between the forwards and backs so that the balance being sought is achieved. It is in fact an integral part of all phases of the game, e.g. scrum, lineout, backline play, support etc.

There are philosophical differences between whether the ball should be played on the ground or else retained in the air. Undoubtedly a combination of both is required to be effective. The ball on the ground, with a quick shift, increases the tempo of the game, but it must be done intelligently. The constant quick ball to a player punching the ball up one off the ruck reminds me of six tackle rugby league, though there is no denying its effectiveness if done astutely. The ball in hand, with the resultant rolling maul, should be utilised, but it must be done in a controlled sense. Both are effective, though everybody must understand that the ultimate goal, once the initial advantage is obtained, is to spread the ball with the game played at pace.

We have simply stated that fitness, strength, pace and skill levels are critical factors. The open game cannot be implemented unless we are confident in our abilities in each of these areas. This game is played under substantial pressure, and it is not possible for a player to perform to the level required, unless he is highly capable in these areas.

Besides the obvious, the skill levels of each player have to be worked on at almost every training session, e.g. passing the ball under pressure, support play, running angles etc. Too often, we see highly regarded representative players performing menial tasks on a field, at a level commensurate with a schoolboy. This is not to say that the players do not necessarily have the ability to perform the skill competently, but it maybe that certain skills are accepted as being menial, with consequently little or no attention. All skills need to be fine tuned consistently, but not to the point of drudgery. This can be overcome by looking to achieve the same aim, but by implementing a different drill as a variation.

I am not suggesting that the ball be shifted wide under any circumstance. The running game must be controlled, but it must be done in a positive manner, with everybody concerned committed to that line of thought.

I accept there are risks, but providing we understand the individual's roles and responsibilities, and we possess the desire, coupled with the necessary attributes, both coaches, players, administrators and spectators will obtain a greater sense of satisfaction if the original concept of the game is re-activated.

SCRUM PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNIQUES FOR THE 90'S

JOHN GRIFFITHS

The following are my thoughts on the philosophy of the scrum along with the methods of scrummaging which I have found successful.

The Philosophy

The scrum should be considered by coaches as a means and not as an end because the scrum is not only a technical beast, but is a superb way to bond eight forwards together. Also, with the added advantage of disciplining them. These factors will then, we trust carry over into other parts of the game i.e. lineouts, rucks and mauls and loose play.

The scrum has certain peculiarities that make it quite different from other parts of the game. It is, for instance, the only part of the game that players are in physical contact before the ball is in play. This brief time before the ball is fed is the period the psychological battle starts before the technical and strength battle commences.

The scrum is a lot more than just getting possession of the ball, in other words, the scrum is not only just formed to get the ball into play after a minor infringement, nor is it true that the team putting the ball in should win it. If this were true you may as well give it to the opposition to take a tap to commence play (sound familiar). When you think about it the only advantages given to the feeding team is that the hooker is closer to the feed than the opposition and the communication between the hooker and the ball feeder. Therefore the non feeding side should believe that they can win the ball and should attack their opposition because the scrum is the very beginning of the battle between the two sets of forwards to get the ball. A battle which continues again in lineouts, rucks, mauls and loose play.

What all this means is that the scrum is not a fight for the ball. It is the winning of the scrum itself that is of great importance and winning of the ball is only part of the battle. Therefore, what is the real meaning of winning the scrum? The real meaning of winning the scrum is not only getting the ball but pushing back the gain line and the offside line and defeating the opposition physically and psychologically. This means that when we win the ball it is good ball and if we should lose the ball we still have won the scrum because the opposition will have bad ball that is unlikely to produce any benefit for them.

Once coaches understand that it is possible to win a scrum without gaining possession of the ball, the significance of the scrum as a symbol of team work becomes clearer, it is a concentration of effort by a group of nine players and not the action of just one player, the hooker, no matter how great his ability may be. The ninth player is the scrum half, who should be considered a member of the pack, he should have an understanding of the philosophy of the scrum as the act of putting the ball in, must be a combined effort of the nine players concerned.

Scrummaging Techniques

Here we are dealing with a tremendously broad subject but these are priorities which I feel have to be remembered when coaching scrum sessions.

As to the technical instruction of the scrum, lets divide it into two sub areas, namely the scrum as

1(a) Static formation

2(a) Dynamic formation

In each one we have to consider four major points:
Perfect binding, backs in a straight position and parallel to the ground, flexion of the legs in the correct manner and foot positioning.

Perfect Binding

This skill has to be acquired by practical and detailed teaching, seeking as a final objective the greatest co-ordination between all the forwards with the maximum concentration of strength on the hooker. Here we have one basic principal of the scrum, which is that before pushing forwards we must compress the scrum inwards, so as to obtain as compact a unit as possible.

I prefer my hooker to have his props shoulders inserted below his armpit and he must bind under the armpits of his props. This is necessary as to form a closely knit unit to provide the foundation of a first class scrum.

The same principle also applies to the locks. The lock must also have a perfect connection with the front row. To obtain this perfect connection the locks initial movement should be that his shoulder should be snug with the props buttocks then when this has been achieved the arm passes through the legs and the bind is secured on top of the props shorts with the hand placed as close as possible to his own ear, this gives a positive connection.

Flankers must remember that they form a part of the second row and while the scrum is taking place their job is exactly the same as that of the locks which is to support the front row positively and continually.

I believe that the flanker should pack as close as possible to his locks to transmit the greatest strength to the front row. This not only increases the power of the eight forwards but it will provide the best possible quality ball. Additional strength can be gained by the flanker placing his hand on the ground. This not only gives him additional balance, it also stops him from grabbing his prop which is uncomfortable for him.

As to the No 8, he is the helmsman of the scrum, he is charged with the responsibility to consolidate and bind his locks while supporting the rest of his forwards from behind.

Straight Back

I believe the only way to transmit power in the scrum is with a straight back with the head well up. The scrum as a system of transmission of force is more effective when the backs are kept straight.

I now divide the scrum into the front three and the back five, not the old concept of the tight five and back three. My reasoning for this is the front rows job is to transmit the power that is being generated by the back five. If the front row has not done their job at engagement all the power in the world will be worthless.

They must have a straight back and head up. If the head is down and the back is bent he not only loses body shape and power, he also has lost his arm strength. This over the course of the game will tire the player both physically and mentally as the pressure mounts throughout the game.

Leg Flexion

The most powerful parts of the human body are the thighs and legs, so if we can use the legs to their full capacity during the scrum, this will result in a better transmission of power.

Knees have to be flexed so that they can be straightened when the ball is fed into the scrum. This is the dynamic moment of the scrum. Straight legs are useful to avoid going backwards, but as a power generator they are useless. Again excessively bent knees can be a hindrance, the ideal position for the legs is that the thighs remain perpendicular to the ground whilst head and hips are more or less the same level. This is the ideal position for the pack before the ball is fed.

Foot Position

I have experimented over the years with many foot positions and I feel that the best foot position is the one that allows the forward behind him to be comfortable so he can transmit his power in the best possible way.

This method requires both feet of the hooker to be almost in the same line of the two inside feet of the props. This way the buttocks of the props and hooker are offered to the lock in a way that enables them to push harder. In the same way the outside foot of the prop is behind, in order to offer his buttock to the flanker. The lock places their inside feet slightly behind the outside ones so the No 8 can push on their inside buttocks.

The No 8's feet should be parallel to the hookers, whilst the flanker must be as close as possible to the lock using the same foot placement as the locks.

This system of scrummaging does not lend itself to use channel 1 ball, but a greater use of channel 2 ball. Remember that a quick ball is not everything. We must aim for a good ball and good ball means our scrum half must have room to play the ball without pressure. But more important than the use of the channels, is the positioning of the forwards feet to maximise the power that they can produce when packing properly.

Using the system, the aim is to get all the forward pressure exerted in one direction and that the power is applied subtly from the moment of impact, until the final power thrust is exploded. I call this loading the gun, cocking the trigger and firing the bullet. Also, with this method of scrummaging, the loose head has to use his head and body to protect the hooker from the opposing tight head.

On engagement of the scrum, we must apply forward pressure and maintain that with a combination of body height, leg flexion and the cocking of the hips. If this is done correctly you will have at your disposal, a powerful force.

Scrum Management

This is an area I feel which is neglected by coaches and players alike. By scrum management, I mean how many times do you see the hooker do possibly his quickest sprint of the game to get to the mark so he can pack down first. In his effort to get there first he has forgotten his troops. Maybe some one is injured, maybe there has been a torrid passage of play or we are going back to the mark to engage the opposition after a knock on by the backs behind the play. I feel the hooker is the scrum captain until engagement, so what if the opposition like to set quick or are on the mark before you. I believe if that the hooker marshals his forwards before reaching the mark to give them the time to get their composure, then sets off the mark and engages going forward he will be no worse off, than if they have rushed the scrum.

In fact, because they have come together as nine, communicating as you bind up, they will find that the pack is focused on the job at hand and not trying to catch the hooker or their breath.

After the engagement the flanker nearest the ball takes over, he calls for the forward pressure, we use (ready) calls on each call, the pack sinks slightly and applies forward pressure plus the back five are cocking the gun (hips).

The flanker watches the hookers finger waiting for it to move, when the finger starts to raise, then the gun is fired (we use a now call).

With this the hips drive through first, and then the leg flexion follows, thus maximum power is exerted and due to the foot placement, there is always forward pressure being exerted at all times.

On the opposition ball again, the scrum has to be managed, but the flanker watches the opposition call signal and again as the finger is lifted the gun is fired. The other exception of the opposition ball is that we try to sink lower than we would on our ball.

My final word is to remind you that in scrummaging you have a lot of possibilities. You must use your imagination and try different techniques. Don't spend time criticising other systems, use your own and remember your aim is to win the scrum encounter.

THE DECISION MAKING PROCESSES IN RUGBY UNION REFEREEING

MICHAEL TANZER

INTRODUCTION

This paper is primarily concerned with the way a Rugby Union referee responds to given situations in a variable environment. It does not propose to give the "correct" decision making process for specific situations, but rather draws upon sport psychology and sports vision to explain the general theory on motor responses to a given stimulus as it pertains to Rugby refereeing. It is by understanding why a referee makes a decision, that correct tuition and guidance can be given to gain the correct response by the referee. A general theory will be developed which can be applied to each specific situation.

Derek Bevan in the second test New Zealand Vs France in New Zealand last year played advantage on two French knock-ons, after which a maul formed behind New Zealand's advantage line. As a consequence of the ensuing maul collapsing, New Zealand were penalised. The question of how Derek Bevan arrived at his decision rather than whether it was correct or not, is the matter of interest. What were his decision making processes? To answer this, we need to consider that rugby refereeing is in fact a combination of cognitive and motor responses in particular the latter. Given that this is the case, the theories of motor learning and their different stages, along with classification of motor skills as applied to refereeing will be expanded. In keeping with the application of the theory, the learning processes a developing referee takes to go from a specific situation to his/her response will be examined. The variables that effect the response will be examined, those being, the ability of the referee to use his/her senses, the level of his/her motor skills development and of most interest to this paper the decision making process that occurs to deliver the response.

When considering decision making, there are three main tasks that must occur. Firstly, detection of the stimulus. In an ever changing environment their are a number of cues that are given which need to be detected for the process to even start. Consider a line out where there are at least fifteen to twenty different circumstances that can occur generally within 2 or 3 seconds. Jumpers, blockers, supporters, throwers, fringing, barging, backs and receivers from both sides all act independently to provide a myriad of information to the referee and often in considering the strict letter of the law there may be 2, 3, or 4 infringements at the one time. If the referee cannot detect the correct specific cue to stimulus amongst the background noise then her/she cannot even start to make the correct decision.

Once detection has occurred, the referee uses comparison skills to determine the appropriate response. It is important here that the referee has the ability to surmise the stimulus, to retrieve from memory the correct responses and to keep the options limited. It is more effective and efficient to have specific responses retrieved quickly for specific stimuli than to read or consider all options for each stimulus, thus increasing the chance of error and increasing the magnitude of the error.

Recognition is important where a standard is not present. This is more an ability to recognise a situation developing when only a part of the stimulus or cue is present. Clearly correct anticipation is important and is of more use to the referee, so he/she can act accordingly to part of the picture rather than requiring the whole picture. Pattern recognition is important so that a little information can indicate a lot more of the emerging pattern. It is possible to instruct the referee to correctly pick the cues to prevent the pattern being fully realised and this is essential to the skill of refereeing.

There are different factors that effects the decision making process. These include attention (alertness, selectivity), memory skills and individuality or differences. Further to these factors, there are the effects of practice and motivation and how these affect the referees judgment will be discussed. Finally, after establishing the theory and guidelines, the correct teaching technique as to how to improve decision making processes during a game will be expanded. This includes testing the developing referee and how the test result can predict future successes.

There is probably very little new knowledge to be gained by this paper. The theories are basic, well established psychological theories as they relate to motor learning. The tests are drawn from Sports Psychology and Sports Vision and are not new. A lot of what is read in this paper the reader will recognise and think "that's old news or been happening for years" or "that's common sense". This is an attempt to formalise "what we have known for years", explain why it works and by coming to an understanding of this increase the efficiency of the teacher and consequently the referee. With so many skills in refereeing being self-taught this can only aid the development of referees by adding to the individuals' armoury.

GENERAL APPLICATION & DISCUSSION

Is refereeing a game of Rugby Union a learned or learning activity within the motor domain? It is important to realise that within this sport a lot relies upon the student - teacher interaction. You cannot give anyone with no knowledge of Rugby Union a whistle and get them to referee without imparting some knowledge to them as to how to do it. Clearly then refereeing is a learned response. Psychologist classify any human behaviour into three categories (1). These are cognitive behaviour, affective behaviour and the motor domain. Cognitive behaviour involves intellectual activities. These include discovery and recognition, retention and memory, application and analysis and evaluation. Affective behaviour is learned behaviour that involves feelings and emotions. Motor behaviour is any behaviour that involves physical movement (2). Motor response behaviour also involves cognitive and effective behaviour as precursors to activities that require physical movement. Thus any theory that applies to the motor domain has application in cognitive and effective behaviour and vice-versa. It is important to understand that the answer to the above question is "yes" as otherwise the theories about to be discussed would be flawed. Clearly, refereeing involves physical motion and is a learned activity. It would be fair to say refereeing is a motor behaviour with significant cognitive input and hopefully less affective input.

Now that the initial premise has been established it is useful to consider the different stages of learning. The first stage is the cognitive stage. Here the inexperienced referee will tend to make a large number of errors, the errors will be gross in nature and his/her performances will tend to be more variable (3). The instructor needs to provide specific information on the basics if the referee is to develop. (e.g. "stand here for the lineout and watch the catcher alone"). The next step in learned behaviour is the associative stage (4). Here, the referee has the ability to detect that an error has been made. At this stage the nature of the errors are less as is their frequency, and the variability of the performance reduces. The coach should notice the change in performance and test the referee by checking if he/she detected their errors. The final stage of learning is the autonomous stage (5). This is known as the habitual or auto stage. Here the referee can not only detect the potential error but correct it thereby avoiding it. This allows the referee time to concentrate on the more critical phases of play and the variability of his/her performance should be very low. The speed of reply or action to a novel situation is a good indicator that the referee has reached this stage. A speed of recognition test as performed in a sports vision assessment may predict how quickly the referee will get to the autonomous stage. It would not be unreasonable to expect all representative or senior referees to be at this stage.

On examining the different classifications of motor skills. It would be fair to say that refereeing is a continuous and serial motor skill. To expand on this briefly, motor skills are categorised into gross or fine skills. Gross require large muscular movements, where precision is not of importance (6). Hand-eye co-ordination movements (e.g. playing a piano.) are examples of fine motor skills. Continuous motor skills have no distinct beginning and end points. The referee or the general play phase determines the beginning and end point rather than the skill itself (e.g. mauling Vs an attempt at conversion). Further to this, any skill that can be put together in a sequence is defined as serial (7). Some form of feedback is important to both skill development and learning. When the skill relates or is to some extent influenced by the environment, the feedback is termed 'open loop'. Here, once a decision of how and when to respond is made, the referee must react rapidly with virtually no opportunity for making an adjustment during the response (8). Bare in mind here the response may be not to do anything.

Having now examined the stages of motor learning and how motor skills are classified in relation to Rugby Union refereeing, it is important to consider how the referee learns to go from a specific situation or stimulus to an appropriate response. Understanding this will obviously help in the teaching the referee to get to the response. Again from what psychology tells us, specific components are required to get from the stimulus to the response. These are that there needs to be a stimuli from the environment. The sense organs and perception mechanisms need to detect it. Some form of central processing needs to occur. A response needs to be generated and happen and finally, feedback needs to occur for future reference (9).

There are an abundance of stimuli in the game of Rugby for the referee to detect. A stimulus may be the head position of a prop, the actions of a player at the tackle or the direction a jumper moves at the lineout. What ever it is the first thing the referee must process is the stimulus. Next the referee must decide which of the available stimuli deserves the most attention. Confronted by a myriad of stimuli many of which are deliberately presented to confuse or hide the pertinent, the referee has to decide what to watch and listen to. Here the referee must attend to the correct stimulus and concentrate on it. This is known as 'selective attention' (10). It is important for the referee to maintain alertness. The central processing of the information relies upon two elements, memory and strategy. The referee has stored in his/her memory, prior responses to a given stimulus and their outcome. It is vital that the referee practice responses in training/running, trial matches or watching matches for this very reason. Similarly the referee should practice responses to any novel or new circumstance prior to the stimulus popping up on the field (e.g. if a referee has never sent a player off, then he/she should 'act' out the technique before hand. This is fairly obvious, however, there are a number of other more novel incidents which bare considering - unusual kick-offs etc). Apart from memory what strategies have worked in the past and what have not, then use the process should allow for a rapid response. The ability to have the quicker response indicates the higher developed referee, given the response is correct. The response mechanism is then generated to organise the response into its most efficient and appropriate form and the response occurs. Feedback then occurs so that the effectiveness and correctness of the response can be assessed and stored for assistance next time.

Given the response has occurred what then are the factors that effect the response. These factors are the referee's senses and motor skills, and, decision making skills. Directing the referee to concentrate upon the correct stimulus through a specific sense mode is essential to the teaching process. Give very specific things for the referee to look for in a specific situation. At the engagement the referee should be told exactly what to look at and for. There are three main senses; vision, auditory and proprioception (the sense of the position of the body and body parts as well as the forces and pressures on the body or its parts) (12). Vision is the most important of these sense. A visual assessment pertinent to the task of refereeing needs to be based on the fact that this sense should detect all the specific cues and allow for rapid processing of these cues. This paper will not go into detail of the specific visual tests required as this is not central to the topic, however, it is important that distance visual fields and peripheral awareness, colour vision and speed of recognition (tachistoscopic vision) are all operating at a maximum to aid the referee.

Within the realm of the decision making process, is the ability to detect the stimulus, and, give comparison and recognition to the stimulus in regard of its familiarity. This may appear obvious, but detection of the stimulus is the most important variable effecting the decision. Detection is simply the task of determining whether or not a stimulus or cue is present or not. As discussed previously this is not so simple due to the background 'noise' which can mean the signal is not detected. How then does the referee ensure that the 'intensity' of the stimulus is great enough for detection? Evidence indicates we can train our ability to detect signals and not only to detect the signals more accurately but also to make decisions more rapidly in response to their presence. (e.g. the highly skilled and developed referee will detect more accurately and rapidly the cues than the beginner). Training and practice is the best way to improve these skills. Experience is of great value. The other way to improve detection is to reduce those factors which tend to cause a cue to go undetected. These are primarily stress and fatigue. Both of which are minimised by a high level of physical fitness. Interestingly, an over-excited referee will not miss the cues so much as misinterpret them thus creating false alarms and errors.

Comparison decisions are the decision made in comparison of the intensity of the signal to a standard. (when the standard is present.) These type of decisions are not really applicable to the performance of a Rugby referee.

Recognition in decision making is an important variable. Recognition involves deciding on whether a stimulus is familiar or not and clearly relies upon memory. An essential part of recognition as a perceptual process is pattern recognition. In Rugby, we can relate this pattern recognition to cue detection. For example, in an expansive game, if one attacking backline is continually forced back into cover defence, the referee may decide to adopt the defensive offside line to check on the outside defensive backs. Here the cue can be taken from the attack where the pattern may be an offside 'umbrella' defence. Another example where seeing part of the story can create recognition of a problem before the 'main event' involves potential foul play. Player moods at a lineout can certainly alert the referee to potential trouble and he/she should act to avoid further trouble. The advantages of pattern recognition in the decision making process then is obvious.

Having established the way a referee detects a stimulus and accordingly makes a response and how his/her senses and decision making skills effect the response, it is now timely to examine the factors that effect just decision making. These factors are attention, memory, individuality, practice and motivation.

When considering attention it is important to realise that some preparation is required in order to gain attention, and variability or novelty is required to maintain it. For simplicity, consider the terms concentration, alertness and attention as interchangeable even though they imply different levels of cognitive activity. To be able to detect and make a decision some preparation is required to get the level of alertness at a satisfactory level. Psychological studies indicate that most sports have enough novelty, variation or cues which are sufficient to arouse the participants sufficiently during the contest. It is however, much more difficult to get the attention of the participant so that they absorb what the coach is trying to get across. The best way to get this attention is to present something that has not been seen or considered recently, present something in a new or unfamiliar way or present something completely new. This is invaluable to the referee who tends to let his/her concentration or attention drop during a game. All that is required is a cue or trigger and with practice (while doing individual training etc.) the referee can detect the drop in their concentration and cue themselves to heighten attention. For example, any time the referee looks at their watch, sets a scrum or lineout, use these events to perform a check on their concentration. This should be done regularly and varied at different times of the season to maintain the novelty.

Memory can be considered to be either short-term or long-term. This paper does not propose to investigate how or why there exists these stages other than to note the important role that memory or more so memory retrieval plays in decision making. Briefly, the structure of memory is considered to be a functional ongoing phenomenon which is characterised by the duration and the amount of information stored by it. Short-term and long-term memory are considered different stages of the same process. The short-term stage is characterised by limited duration, 20-30 seconds, and limited capacity, 5-9 'chunks' of information. Long-term memory is characterised by unlimited duration and capacity (13). The important aspect of this is the ability to retrieve the information stored in memory and this relies upon how effectively it was stored. In other words learn your responses as well as possible especially the laws!

There are some basic components of practice that also need to be considered to aid the decision making process. Firstly, as much practise as possible should be used to achieve a required skill. Once this has been attained, maintain the practice intensity to reinforce the learning, then focus the practice on a new skill reviewing the original occasionally. This can be applied to different aspects of refereeing. (E.g. laws, lineout positioning, scrum engagements etc. especially important during early development stages) (14) Secondly, it is interesting to note that the spacing of practice sessions tends to effect the performance abilities of the referee rather than the learning abilities. Be wary however, of over practising as fatigue has a considerably detrimental effect. Also as stated earlier, visualisation, as a mental practice is most valuable in improving motor skills.

Motivation is important in the learning curve. The ability of an individual to learn is greatly increased by the individuals motivation to be taught. The best way to improve motivation is through reinforcement of desired behaviour. The reinforcer can be either positive or negative, in any case the result is to strengthen the desired response. Specific goal setting or level of aspiration is also an important way of motivating an individual. Here, set objective goals, ones that are meaningful and obtainable. Set them according to the individual's personality and drawing from past rewarding experiences. (15)

Finally, it's now been established the concepts and theories of why and how a Rugby referee makes a decision to a given situation and the different factors that influence it. How then teach referees to improve these skills for better results during the game?

The first step is to understand at what stage the referee is at, the coach has to realise how much and what type of information the student can understand. It is of little use concentrating on offside lines if the referee has no knowledge of set play positioning and running lines to the breakdown. Secondly, recognise the limited processing capacity of the developing referee – be methodical and selective. This leads onto the next factor in tuition, recognise that the referee requires to use the skill of selective attention and instruction should be given on what specific cues to detect in different situations. The coach needs to consider the memory capacity of the referee. To increase this, familiarity through practice and understanding specific applications is required. The role of visualisation in preparation should be emphasised to aid decision making.

The coach needs to act as a motivator and teach the referee self motivation techniques. Also techniques to gain and maintain attention and how to reduce anxiety to aid learning and performance. Coupled with this is the effective use of goal setting and reinforcement. It is also important for the coach to act as an evaluator of performance so as to be able to establish some form of predicting to what extent the referee can develop. It is important to note that testing has indicated it is very difficult to predict future success in learning a motor skill when the prediction is based on an early performance alone. However, the ability of the developing referee to quickly learn along with a high score in visual recognition tests indicates some potential for rapid development. (16)

SUMMARY

It is evident from the research, that for effective decision making to occur by the Rugby referee, a number of conditions need to be satisfied. Firstly, a stimulus is present and detected. For this to occur the referee must be alert, have his/her visual function operating at a maximum and be selective in his/her attention. Secondly, the referee processes the information limiting the options available for a rapid, efficient response. The response is based on memory retrieval and strategy making drawn from past experiences. The accuracy of the response (errors and variability) depends upon the stage of development of the referee. The more developed referee will have less errors and variability than the less developed referee. In order to teach the referee how to improve their decision making the teacher or coach must instruct the referee to maintain attention or concentration. They must instruct the referee on the effects of stress, fatigue and over-excitement. The referee should practice memory retrieval during practice and initially practice or concentrate on one aspect at a time with occasional reviews. Finally, some work needs to be done with referee's motivation so that learning can occur.

By following through these steps and methods and by watching the rate of development and the speed of recognition of the referee, it is possible to predict how he/she will become a more effective and efficient decision maker.

SUGGESTED FURTHER STUDIES

1 Development of a specific and practical testing routine for Rugby referee's to measure the decision making process

2 Speed, accuracy and errors in decision making in Rugby under physical duress.

3 Teaching self motivation and attention maintenance for Rugby referees

FOOTNOTES

1 Magill, RA (1982), page 4.
2 Magill, RA (1982), page 6.
3 Magill, RA (1982), page 38.
4 Magill, RA (1982), page 51.
5 Magill, RA (1982), page 51.
6 Schmidt, RA (1988), page 45.
7 Schmidt, RA (1988), page 46.
8 Magill, RA (1982), page 59,
Schmidt, RA (1988), page 45.
9 Magill, RA (1982), page 82.
10 Schmidt, RA (1988), page 106,
Magill, RA (1982), page 114.
11 Magill, RA (1982), page 141.
12 Proteau, L (1992), page 71,
Magill, RA (1982), page 68.
13 Schmidt, RA (1988), page 494.
14 Magill, RA (1982), page 268.
15 Schmidt, RA (1988), page 378.
16 Magill, RA (1982), page 317.

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1 Magill, RA (1982), *Motor Learning Concepts and Applications* (3rd Ed. WCB, Iowa).

BACKS: A DIFFERENT APPROACH

DOUG MACDONALD

Notes:

1. Handling/Subtleties
2. Creating space
3. Variety
4. Support
5. Anticipation
6. Flexibility
7. Vectors

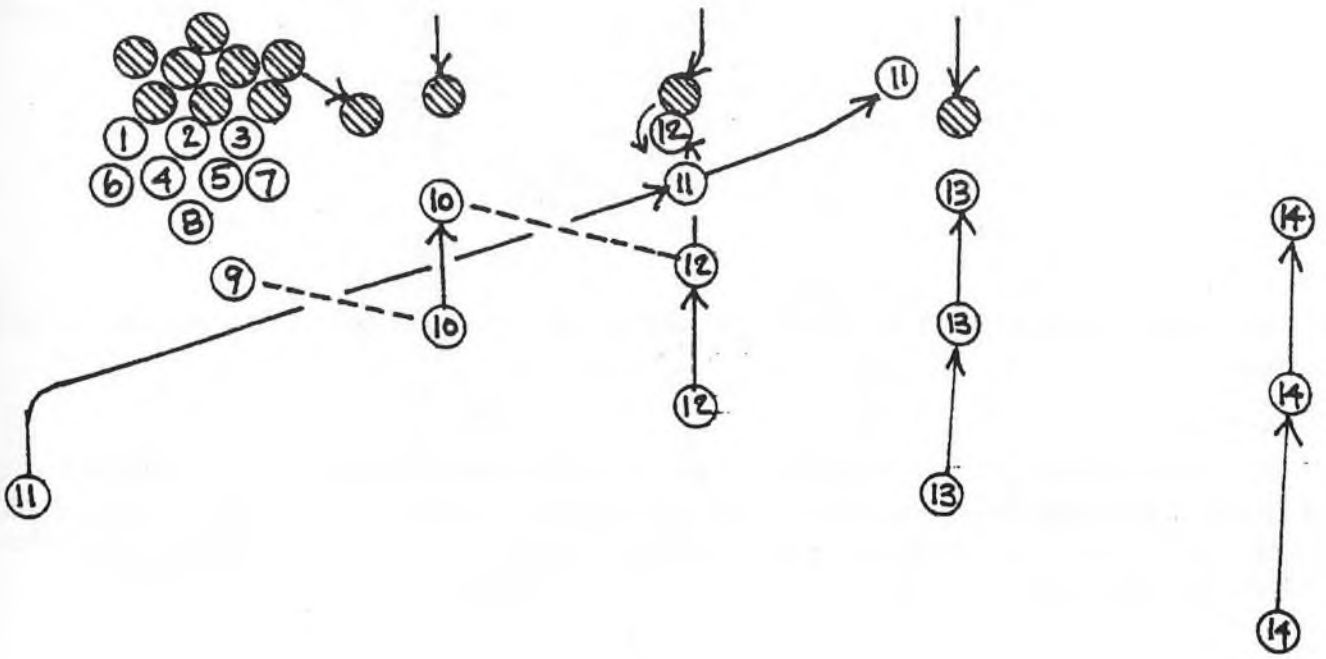
At a rugby clinic Terry Burkett spoke for a short time inside about the various headings shown above... and the objective of what he was about to show us would;

(1) ...get a player in behind the defence

(2) ...with supporting players continuing the attack by using different running angles.

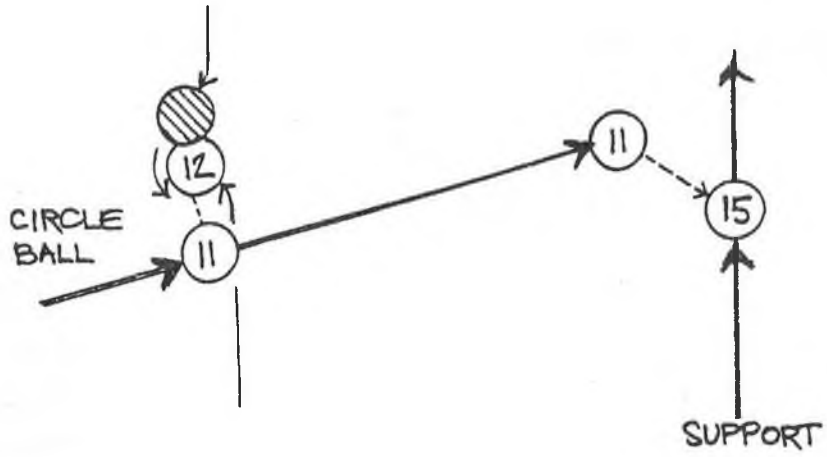
The system he advocated was "circle ball", a series of manoeuvres (he hesitated to call it a "move") where the defence was locked into a "head-on defence" (man on man) as opposed to "drift" ... and the line breaker was the blind winger sliding through on an acute angle as shown below. There are certain subtleties that need to be pointed out to contain the defence and stop it from drifting before the ball is transferred...but that will be dealt with later.

DIAGRAM 1: CIRCLE BALL OFF INSIDE CENTRE



Once the wing three quarter has penetrated on the angle ...another support player is required to complete the movement by receiving the ball running parallel to the side line...

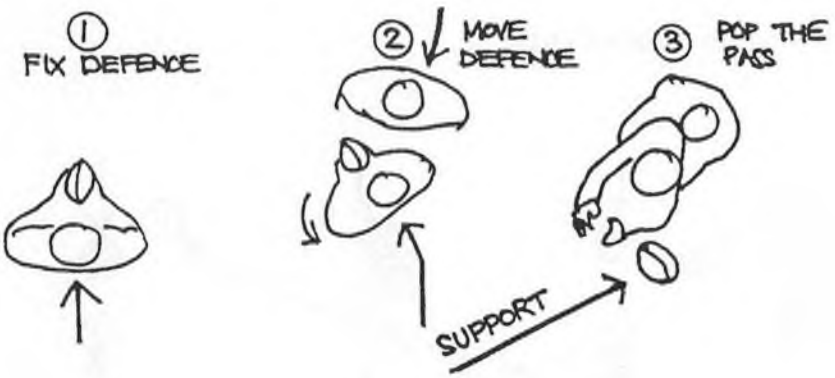
DIAGRAM 2: STRAIGHTENING THE ANGLE



HANDLING/SUBTLETIES

The corner stone of the "circle ball" strategy is the ball carrier. He must fix his opposite by running at him. The term used was... "keeping him on a string." Initially the 5/8 must run straight and not go to far otherwise he reduces the space (which is time) that the inside centre needs. The inside centre receives the ball running straight, lines up his man ...fixes him and just before contact turns his hips slightly inwards, swivelling towards the winger running an angle behind him...

DIAGRAM 3: TURNING HIPS PRIOR TO PASSING



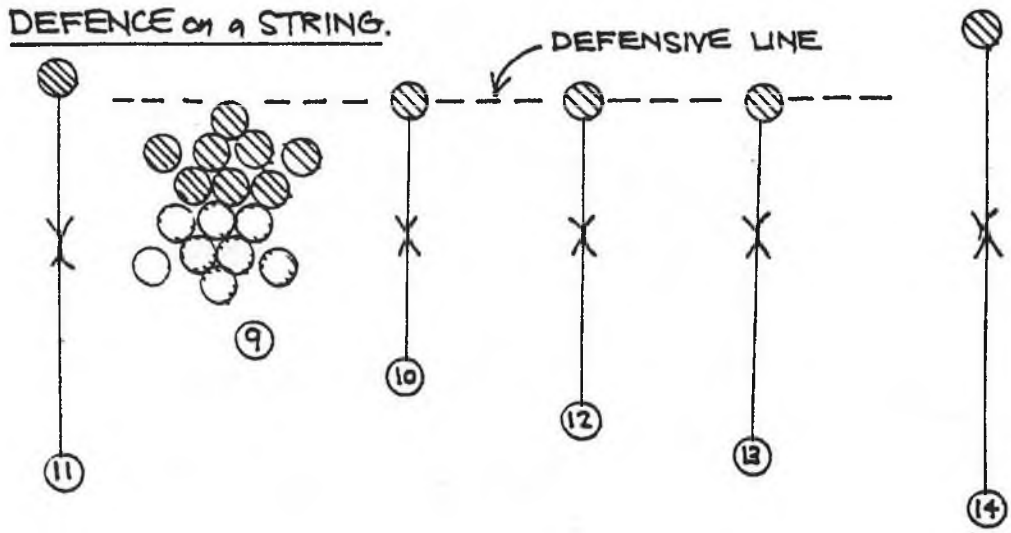
this will cause the defender to "turn in" and thus prevent him from sliding off the tackle onto the next ball receiver.

CREATING SPACE

"Space" is that portion of the playing field unoccupied by a defender. It may be the channel between defenders, or a position behind the defenders and it is even that unoccupied territory beside an attacking player. "CIRCLE BALL" is a strategy in putting a player into space behind the defence using a runner who receives the ball in unoccupied space behind the ball carrier, entering the line at an acute angle.

However to achieve results the attack must work the opposition. Each member of the back line must run at his man, fix them on that line (keep them on a string) and shut down their drift defence mechanism.

DIAGRAM 4: DEFENCE ON A STRING



VARIETY

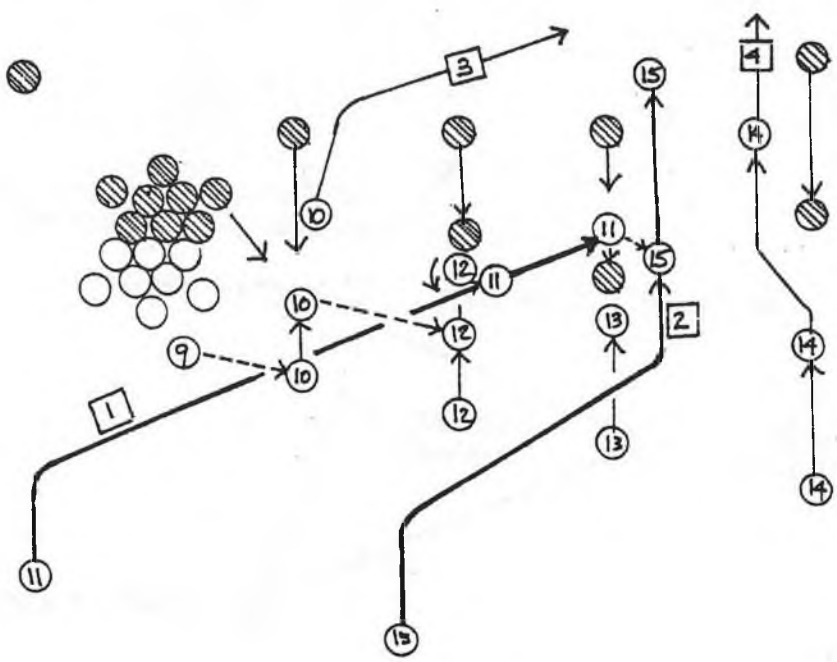
The initial pass in the "circle ball" routine will put the player behind the "defensive line" (refer to Diagram 4), but still susceptible to a tackle from the cover defence. Therefore it is vital that player receiving the ball off a "circle ball" move have support and it is important that the supporting player is running straight (parallel to the side line). By doing this the "attack" has put enormous pressure on the "defence". They will have;

(1) "Fixed" the defence and stopped the drift defence

(2) Put a player through the line on an acute angle

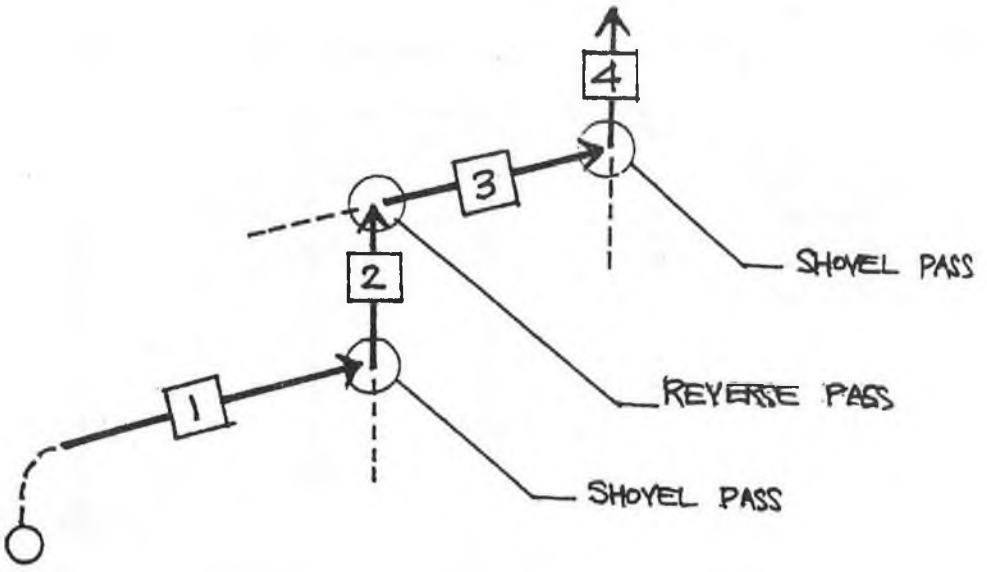
(3) Supporting player changes the line of attack.

DIAGRAM 5: ANGLES RUN ON "CIRCLE BALL"



The angles that need to be run are as shown in the above diagram and numbered [1], [2], [3], [4]

DIAGRAM 6: ANGLES, DIAGRAMMATIC FORM AND TYPES OF PASSES

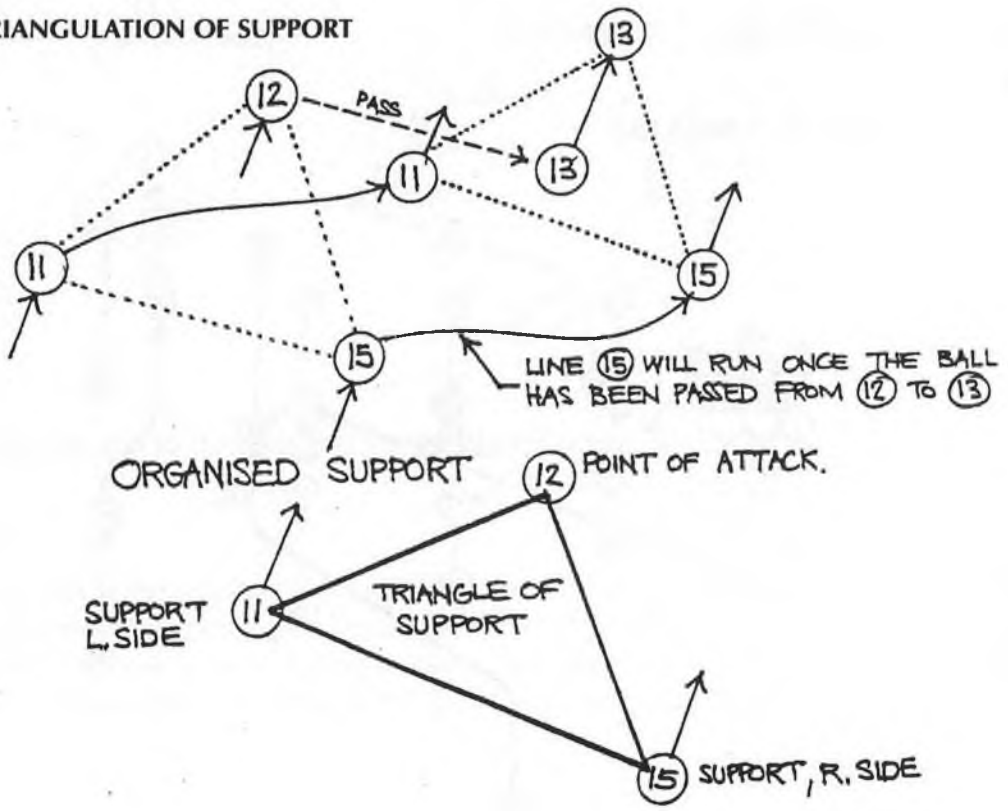


SUPPORT.

Backline attack is easily contained if the defence is organised, communicating and especially if the attack has no support.

One of our priorities if we are serious about adapting the "circle ball" strategy is the utilisation of the "blind" side wing, full back and on occasions the half back to provide the support. Everytime the backs have ball in hand the "2nd line of attack should be prepared". Ideally the support should be in triangular form thereby increasing the options of the ball carrier.

DIAGRAM 7: TRIANGULATION OF SUPPORT



ANTICIPATION

The major differences between "circle ball" and normal back line movement is;

(1) Lack of eye contact

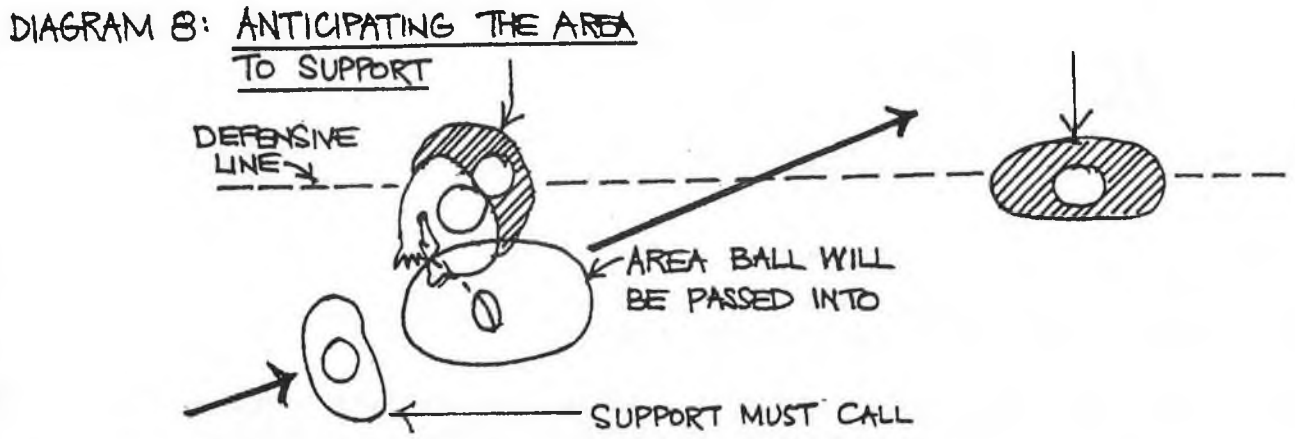
(2) Lack of positional hands to pass to

(3) The direction of the pass

(4) The type of pass and execution.

All these factors help in the deception of the organised defence but the onus is put squarely on the shoulders of the support player to get the ball. Once the centre has committed the defence and started to swivel to pass he must get there and "occupy the space under ball." The pass needs to be "deep delayed" ...but most importantly, the support must anticipate the ball movement and get there.

DIAGRAM 8: ANTICIPATING THE AREA TO SUPPORT



Note: Drills are given to increase players awareness of anticipation.

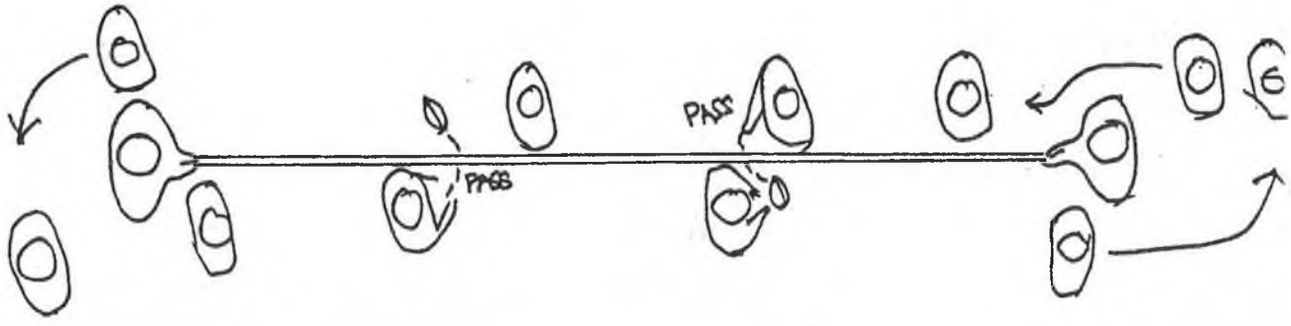
FLEXIBILITY

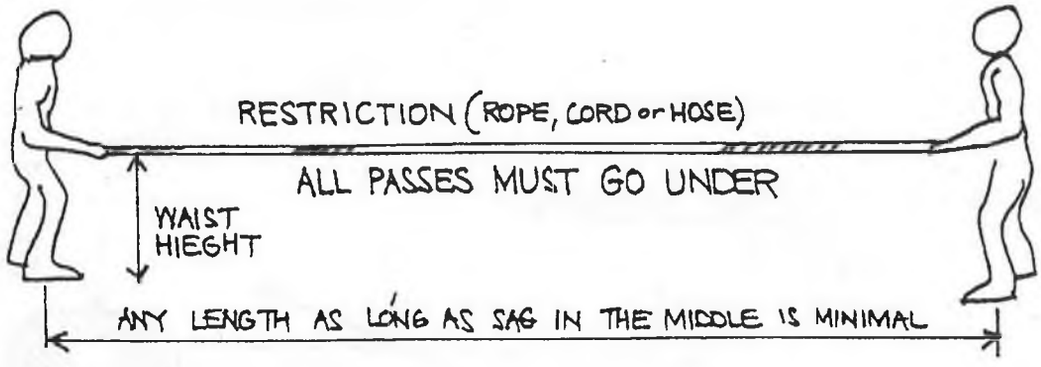
There is a need to stretch before training and competition, but whatever time span we may think is necessary to accomplish the task, it is not enough. All parts of the body require systematic stretching and to do this we need at least an hour.

However the one exercise that is crucial in the execution of the "circle ball" pass is the rotation of the hips. This was demonstrated initially using regular breathing ...then using the "3 second breath out method" and the result was amazing.

An exercise was demonstrated which was designed to improve passing skills and increase flexibility in the lower back.

EXERCISE 1: PASSING DRILL UNDER THE ROPE





The exercise will;

(1) INCREASE flexibility

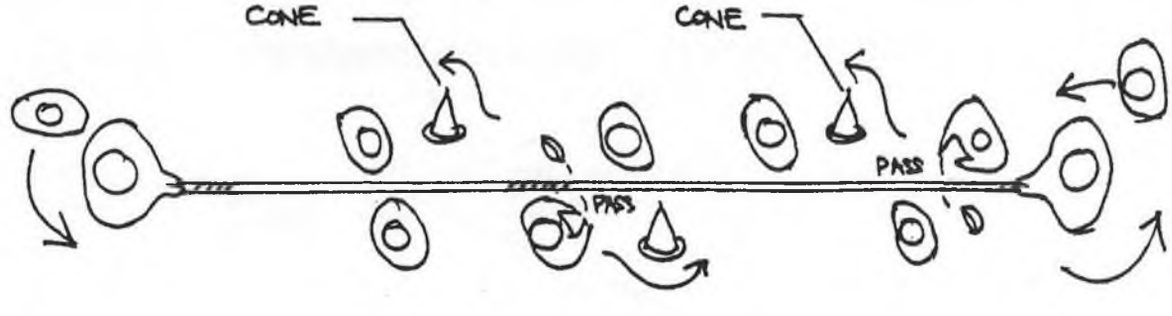
(2) INCREASE awareness of decision making ...the ball carrier does not have to pass ...especially if the receiver on the other side of the restriction has a ball ...or if he is in bad position.

(3) INCREASE passing skills.

(4) INCREASE reflexes.

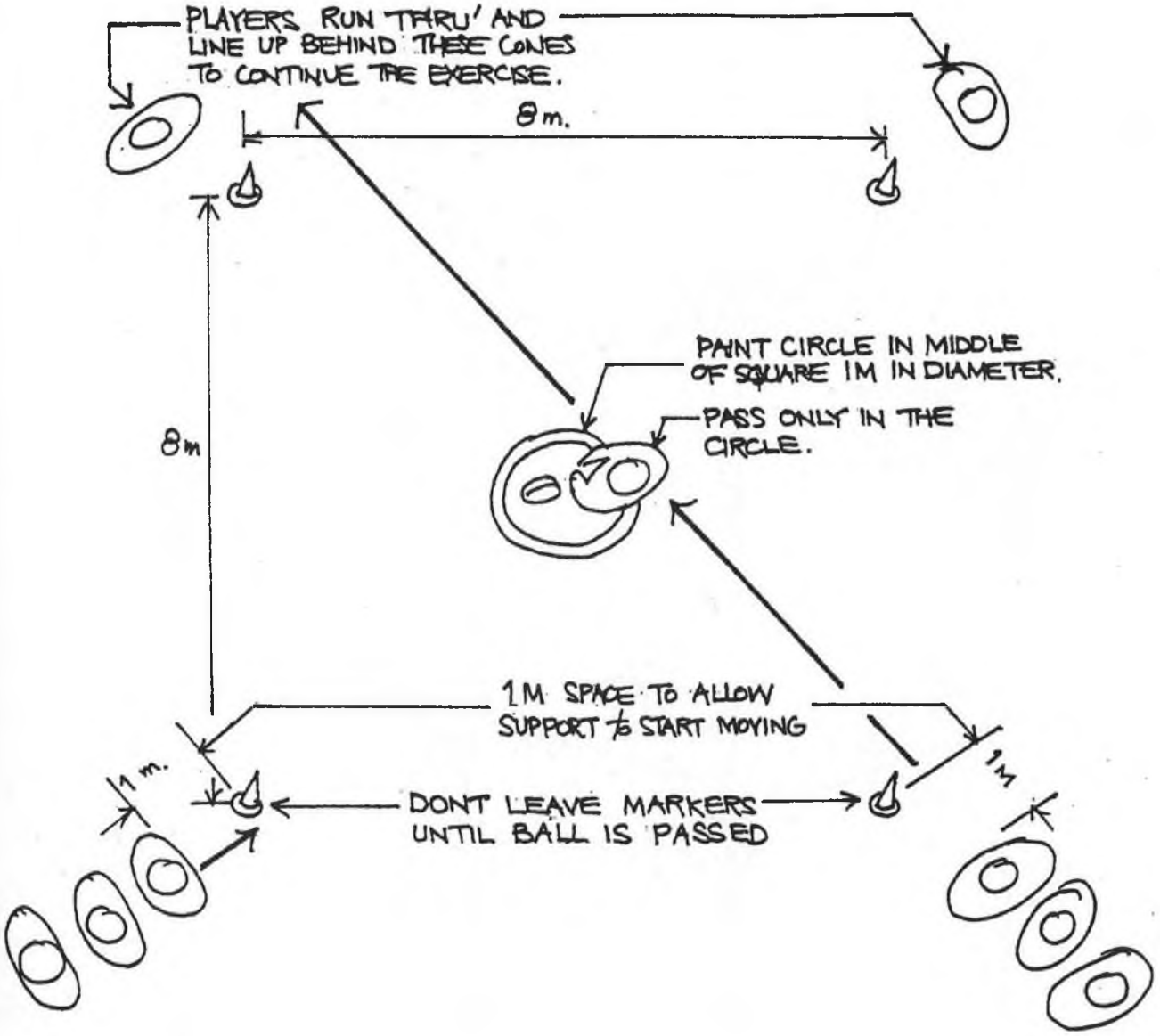
Once the exercise can be accomplished with one ball, introduce a second and then a third. The routine can be changed ...ball received, ball down ...next runner picks ups and passes.

CONES TO TEST PERIPHERAL VISION AND REFLEXES



EXERCISE 2: SYMPATHETIC PASSING

The drill is designed to show that there is sufficient time for a support player to get to a ball "popped" in the circle leaving when the ball is passed.



Points

1 Pass must be sympathetic to the receiver (support)

2 Support must time his run ...and

3 Occupy the space under the ball

4 Count the number of passes achieved in a minute (73 was the best our group managed)

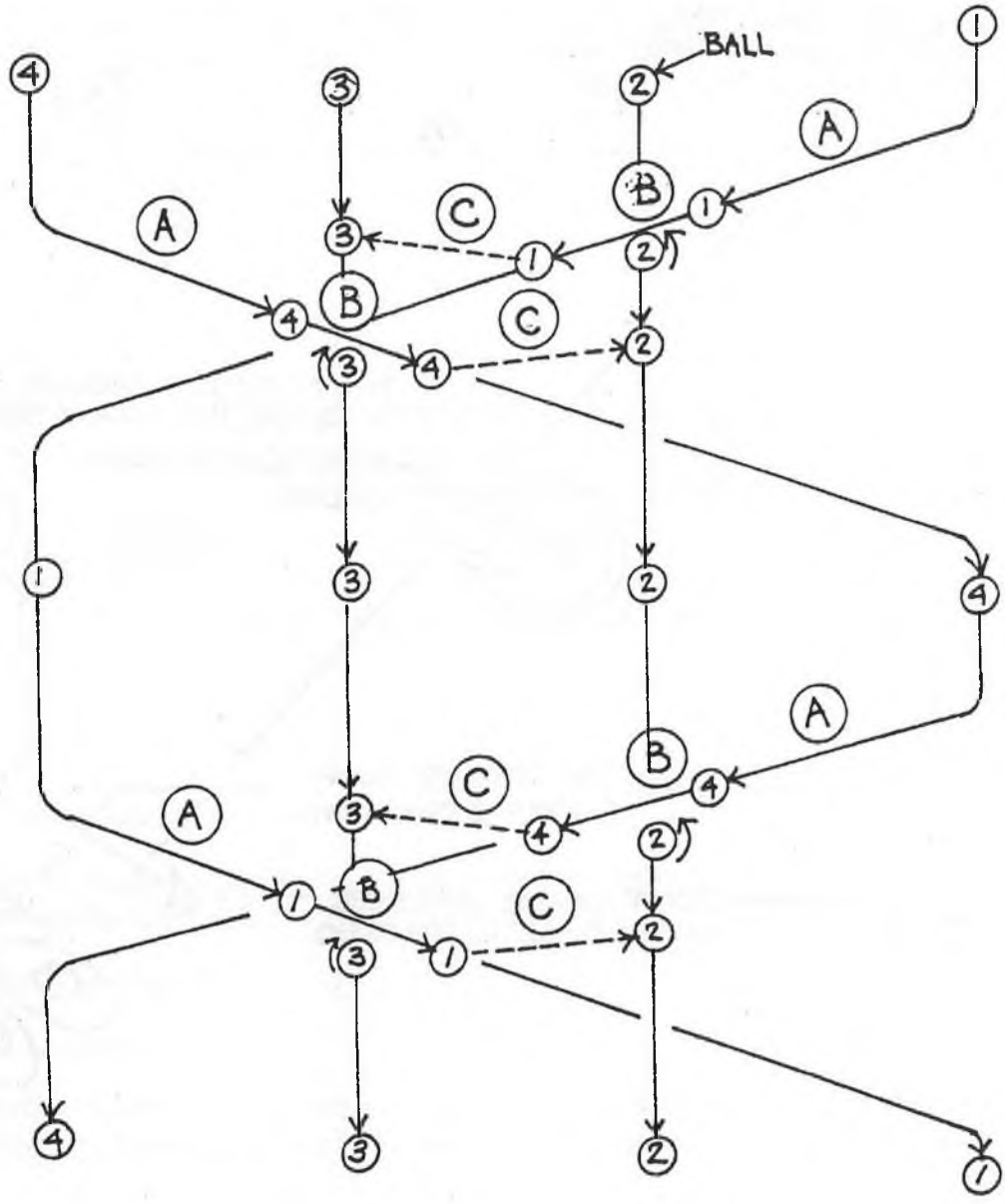
5 DON'T leave the marker until the pass is given

6 ANTICIPATION

7 Height of ball (in pass) will depend on the receivers ground speed.

EXERCISE 3: CIRCLE BALL PASSING

This drill requires a minimum of 4 players. It is the "circle ball" strategy with the outside support (wingers) coming inside on an acute angle to receive a sympathetic pass in behind the ball carrier ...and then off loading to a straight runner.



Points

1 ALL players run straight

2 OUTSIDE support runs straight, accelerates then runs inside on an acute angle ... [A]

3 SUPPORT must call

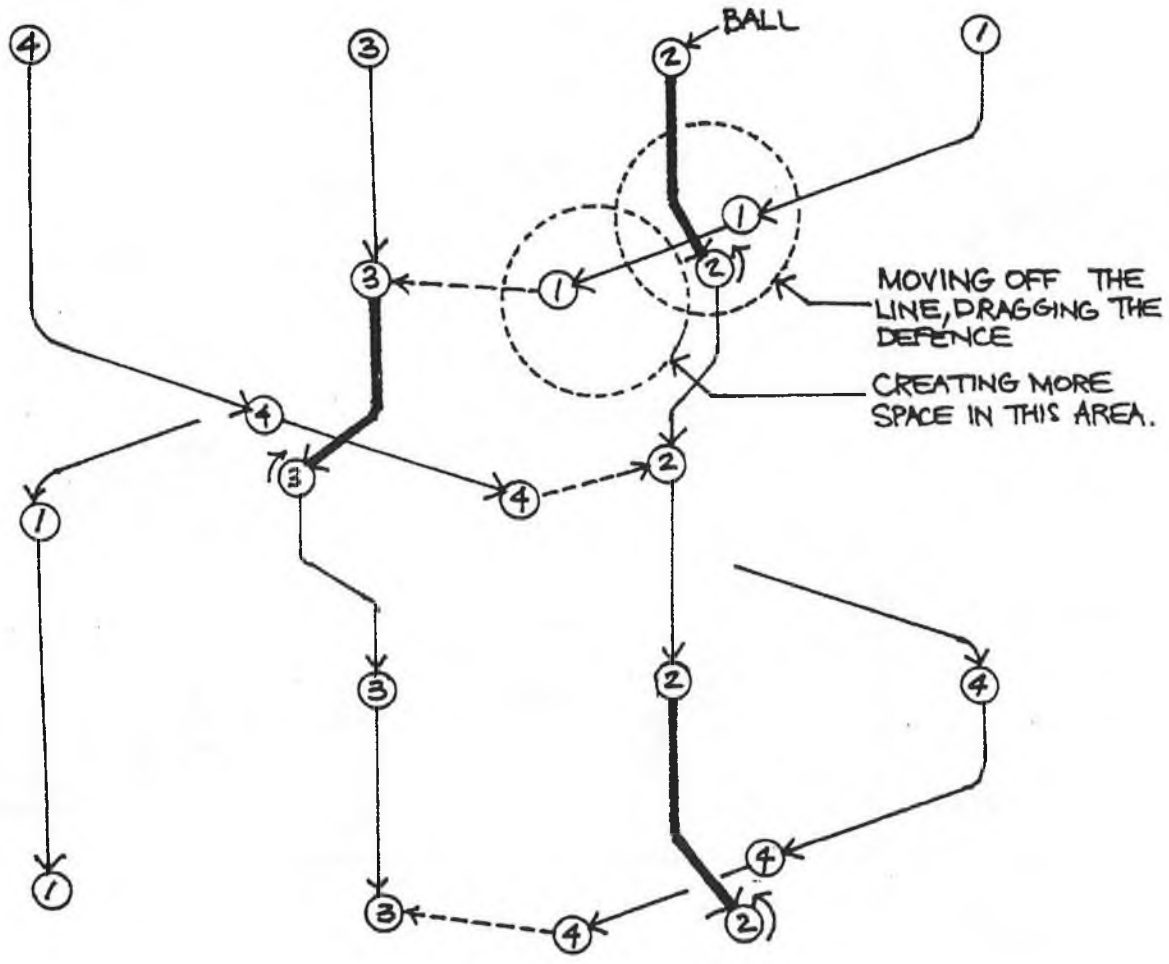
4 receives the ball from [2] and then gives a [B]

5 shovel pass to support [3] before he over runs him [C].

EXERCISE 4: MOVING OFF THE LINE

This exercise is similar to the previous "circle ball drill" ...however the subtle rotating of the hips to turn the tackler in has been replaced by a definite movement off the line ...to create space in the channel between the 2 centres.

Note: in this exercise the movement "off the line" is to the outside.



Points

1 Run straight to "fix" the defence

2 Ball carrier moves off the line at an angle

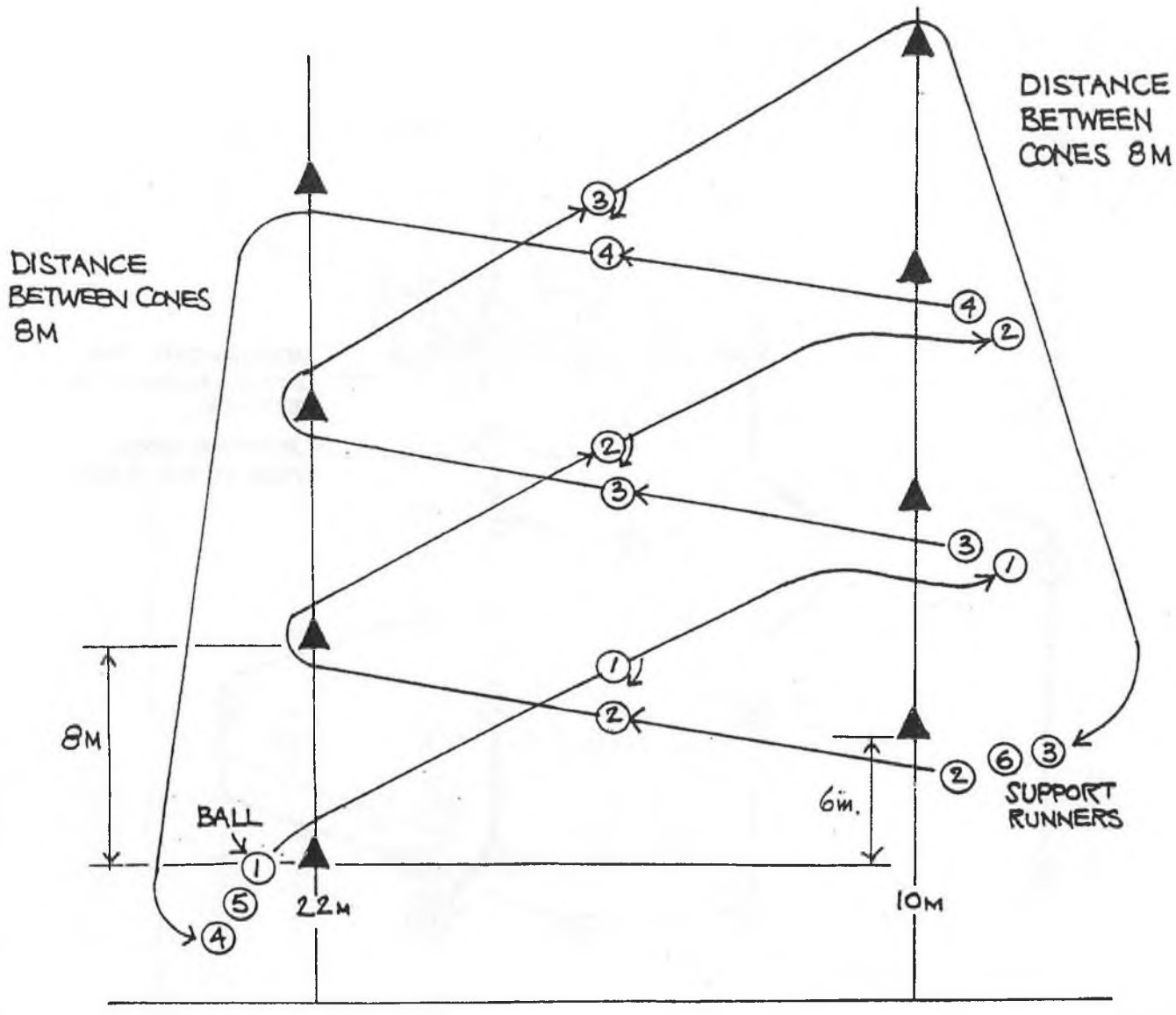
3 Outside support sees the manoeuvre and at the last moment changes direction to receive a pass coming inside ...he needs to be accelerating to make position.

4 Receives the pass from 2 and passes on to the straight runner 3

5 Ball carrier 3 completes the same move with 4 coming inside.

EXERCISE 5: POP-PASSING

This practice is to enable players to judge the ground speed of different support players who are running angles and being able to supply a pass to suit.



Notes: This drill can be conducted with a minimum of 6 players using 8 cones ...with one ball (as illustrated).

To increase the tempo put in a second ball and then a third ...set up 2 grids, time it and make it a race.

For larger groups just increase the number of cones.

Points

1 Increase awareness of timing ...anticipation

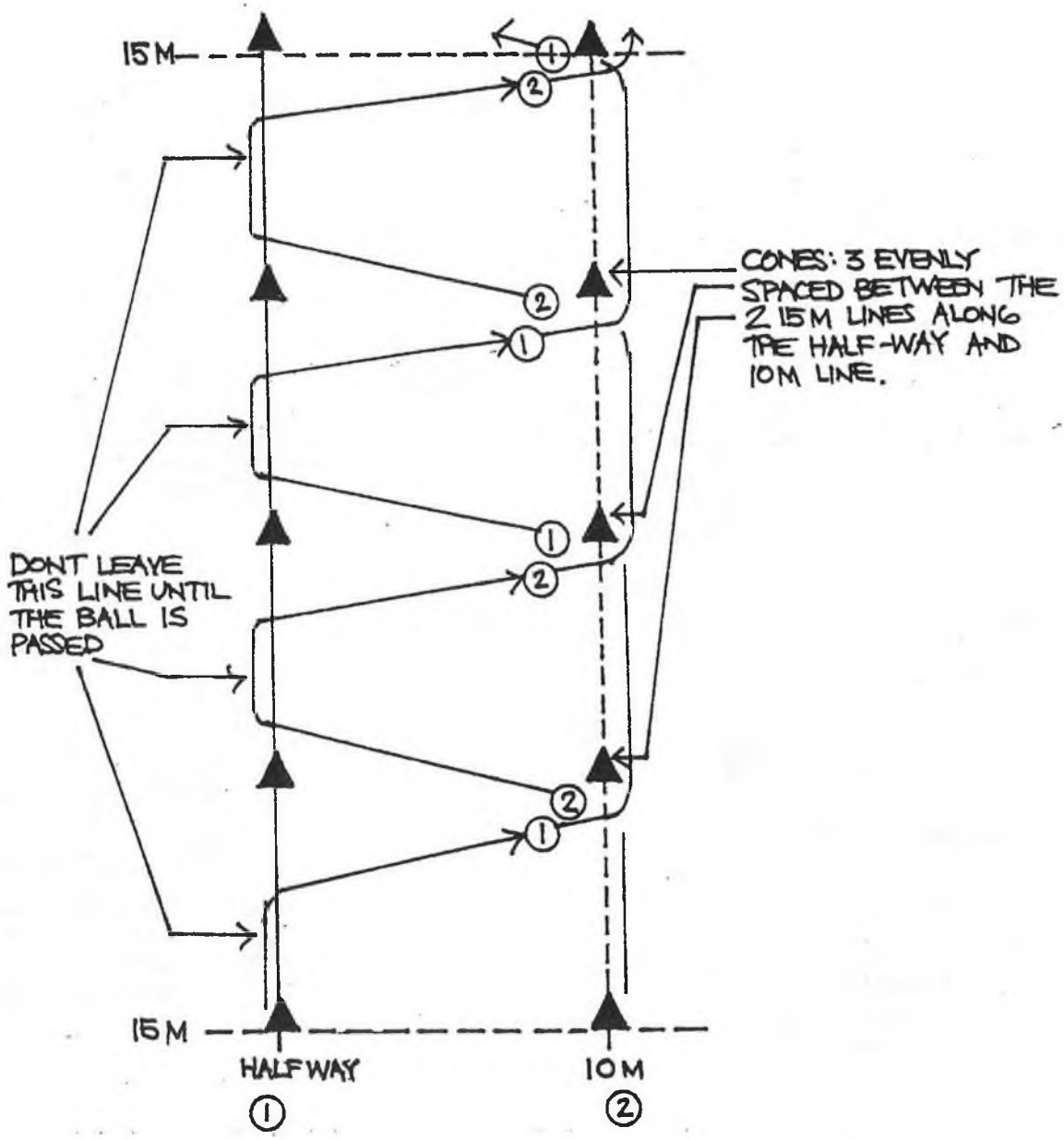
2 Increase passing, handling skills and reflexes

3 Increase awareness of running lines

4 Increase flexibility

EXERCISE 6: SUPPORT RUNNING ON "C" BALL

This exercise is a game simulation of the blind wing coming in off his line to pick up a pass in behind the centre. The support must judge his run and only leave his line when the ball is popped.



Points

1 Pass is DEED DELAYED to allow the support time to occupy the space under the ball

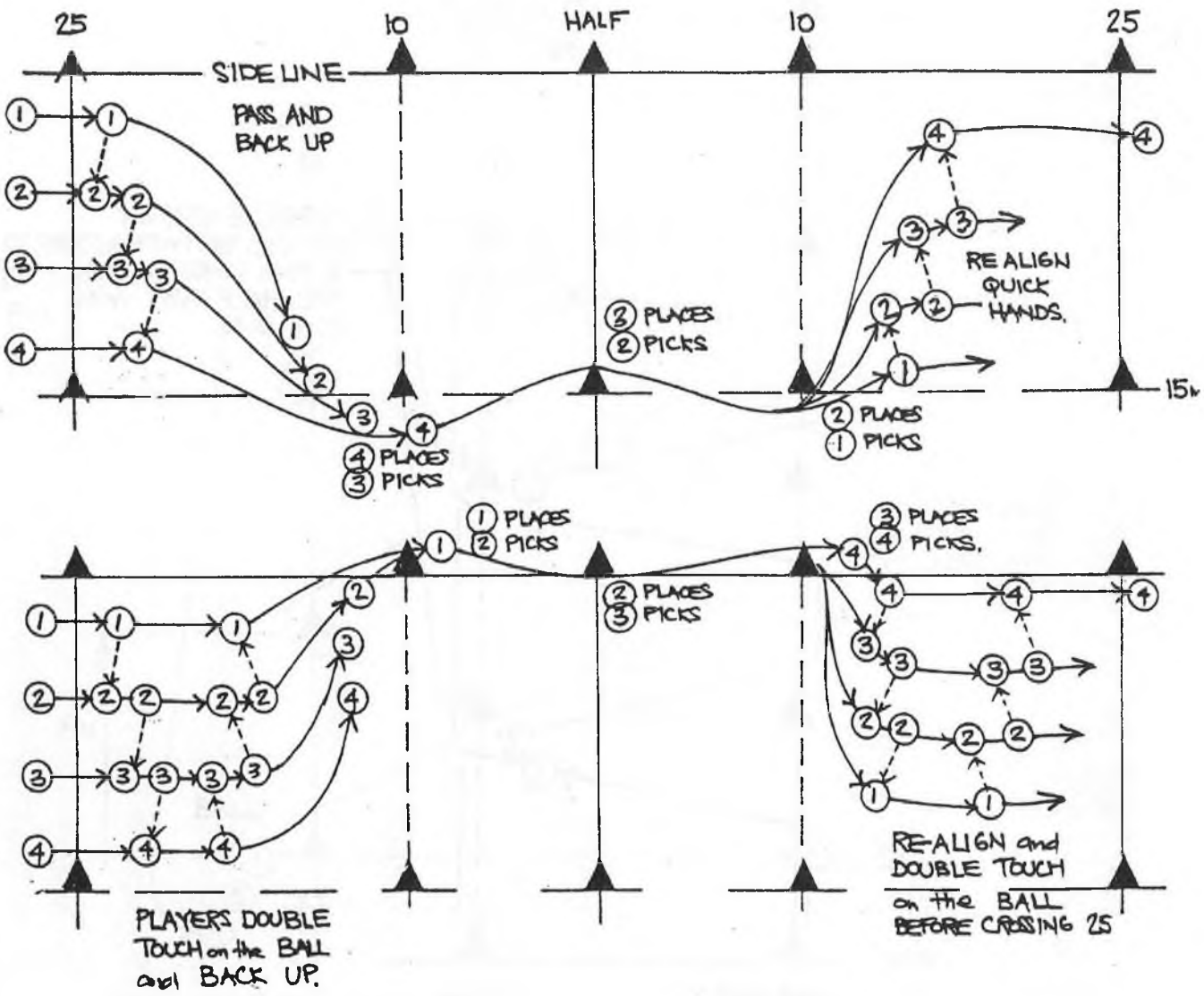
2 SUPPORT must anticipate when the pass is on

3 SUPPORT must accelerate toward the ball and call

4 TIMING

EXERCISE 7: REALIGNMENT DRILLS

These are variations to the "D" series drills ...this particular drill being D2, the "SNAKE"



Points

1 Must be done at PACE

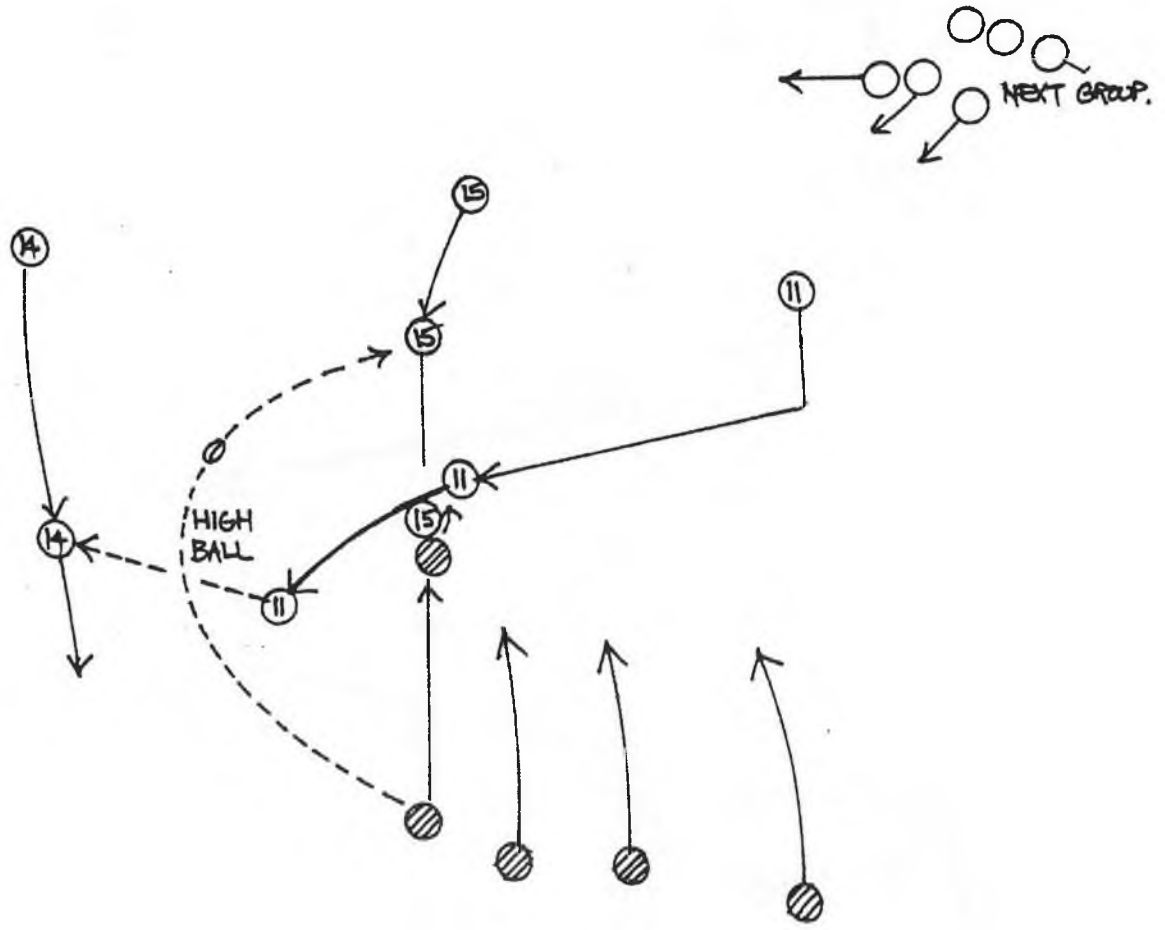
2 RUN STRAIGHT ...3 passes then the "snake" movement

3 INCREASE to 6 passes before the "snake"

4 INCREASE to 6 passes on re-alignment

5 ADD pressure by timing

EXERCISE 8: COUNTER ATTACK DRILL — HIGH BALL TO FULL BACK



Points

1 FULLBACK must catch confidently

2 HE them must run straight at the defence to stop it from going into "DRIFT" mode

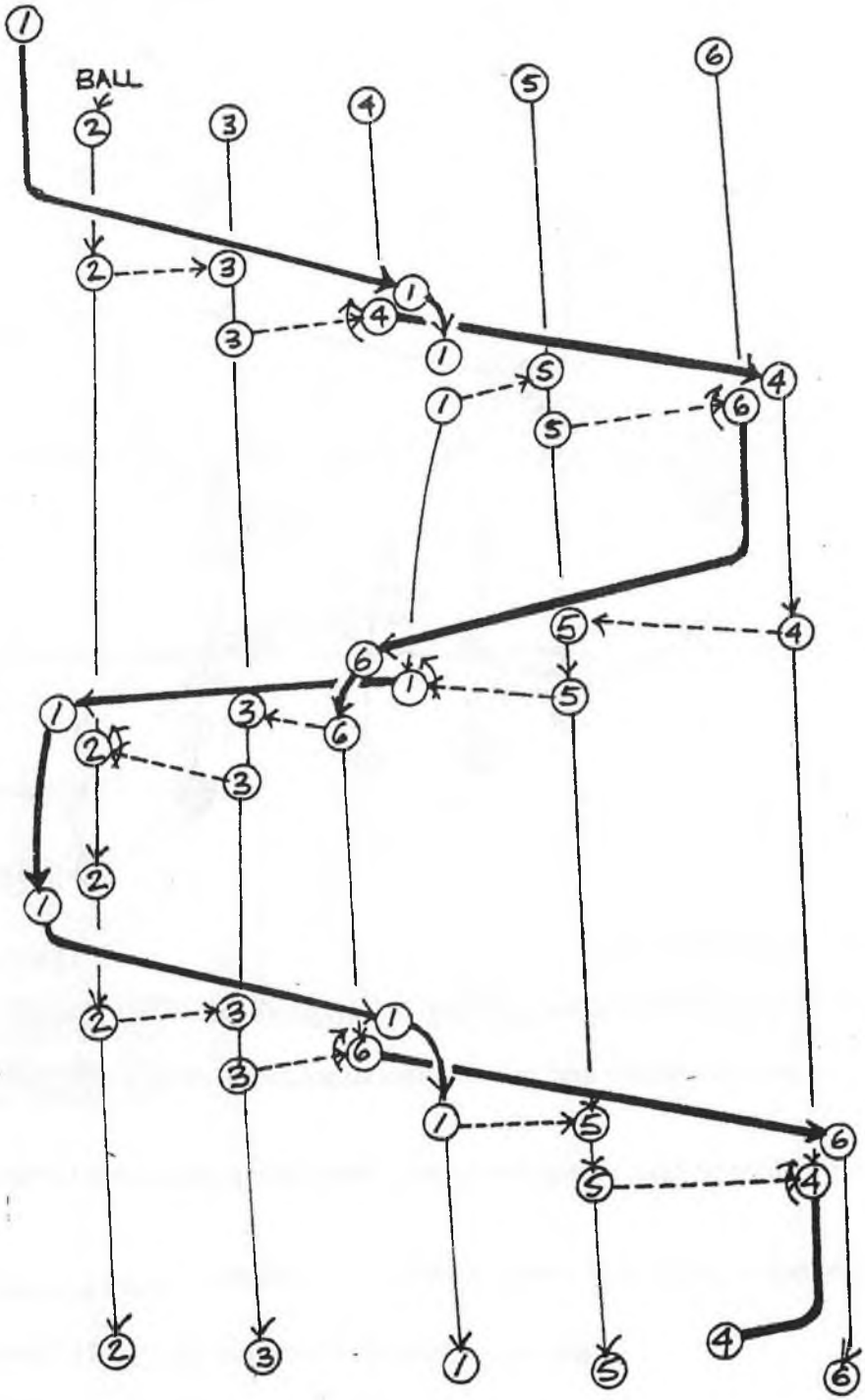
3 WINGER 11 runs straight initially and moves across to support ...receives the pass running behind the full back

4 IF possible he should straighten to stop the defence from sliding and passes to the open wing who is in support

5 USE an accurate high kicker with 1 chaser. Then put in 2 chasers

EXERCISE 9: CIRCLE BALL DRILL

A continuous passing drill with a group of 6 where the system is 2 lateral passes then a circle ball, another 2 lateral passes followed by circle ball ...etc.



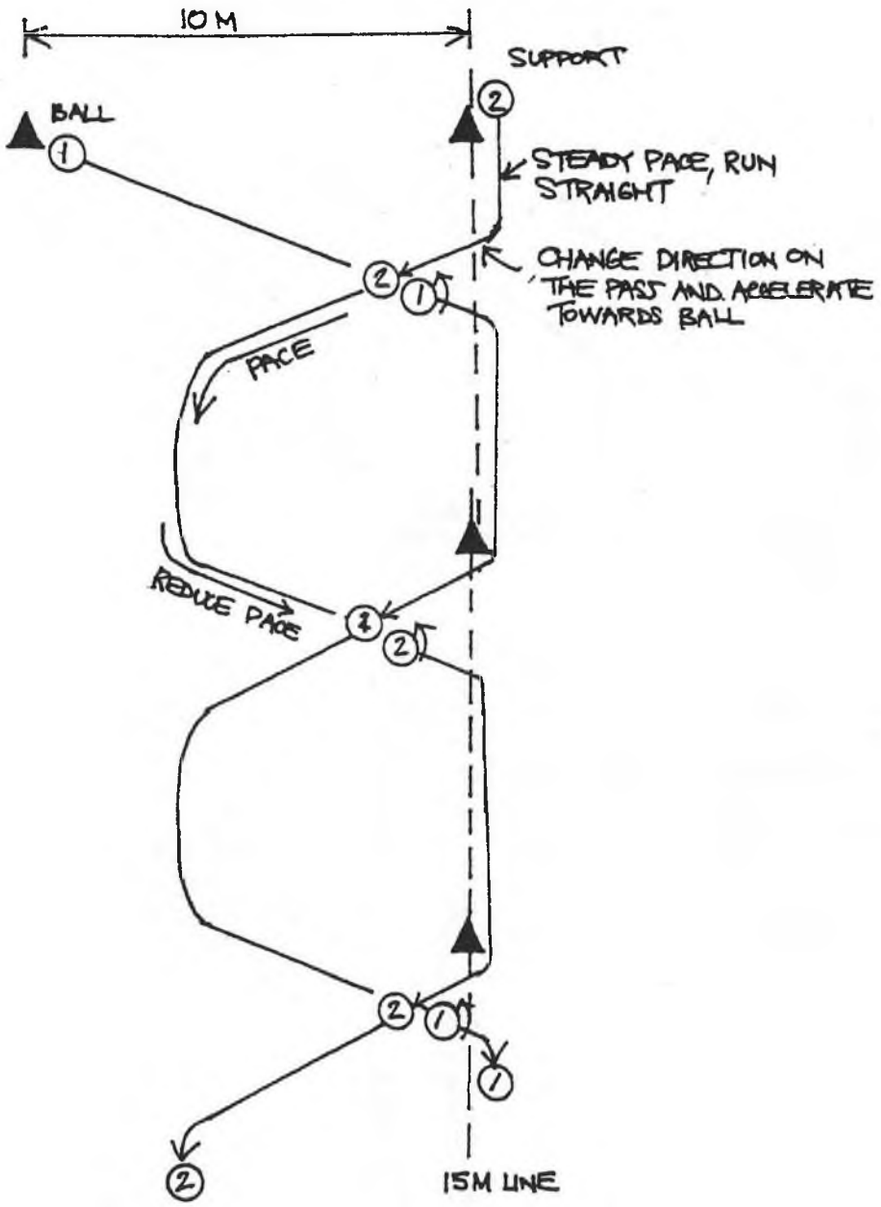
Points

1 Player trailing ...2nd line of attack

2 "Think" 2 and 3 passes

3 REMEMBER lateral alignment ...player 2, 3, 5, always run straight

EXERCISE 10: CHANGING PACE ON REVERSE PASS



Points

1 Support does not leave his line (15m line) until the ball is passed

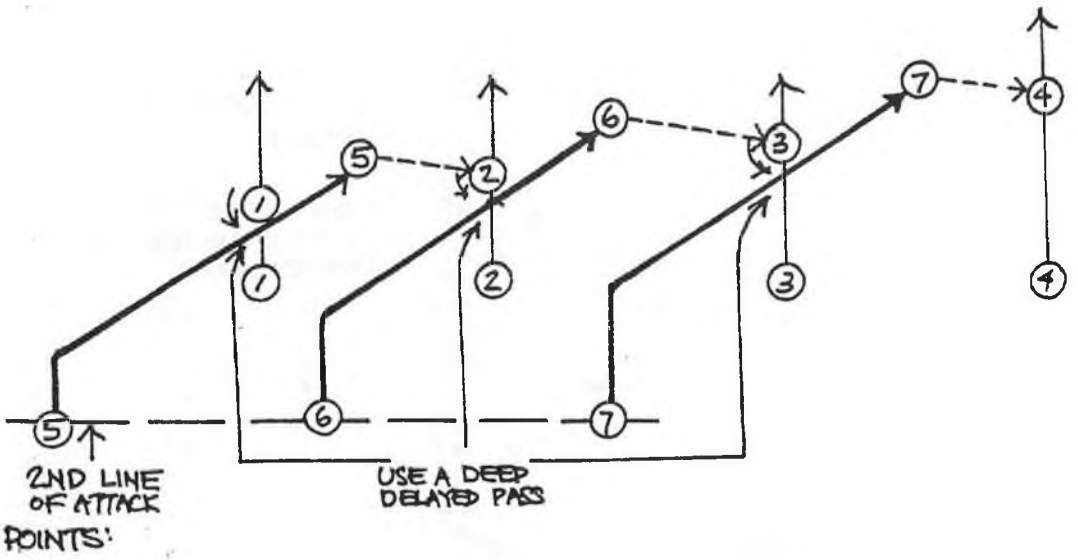
2 Steady pass, steady pace

3 Vary pace

4 Receiver of the reverse pass is moving faster

EXERCISE 11: ANGLE RUNNING DRILL

This drill is to demonstrate the use of the second line of attack.



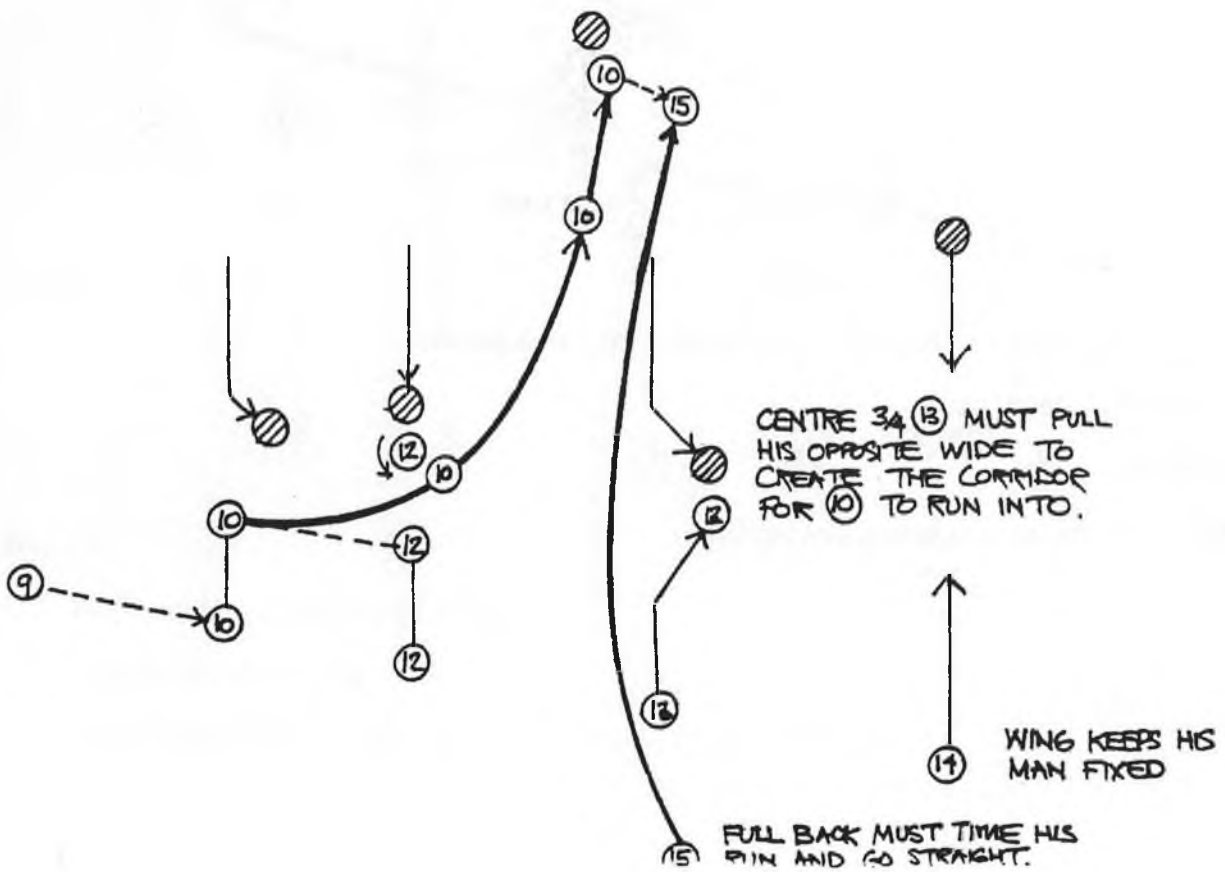
Points

1 Attacking angles ...a straight runner after the angle run

2 "Deep delayed" pass on the C-Ball

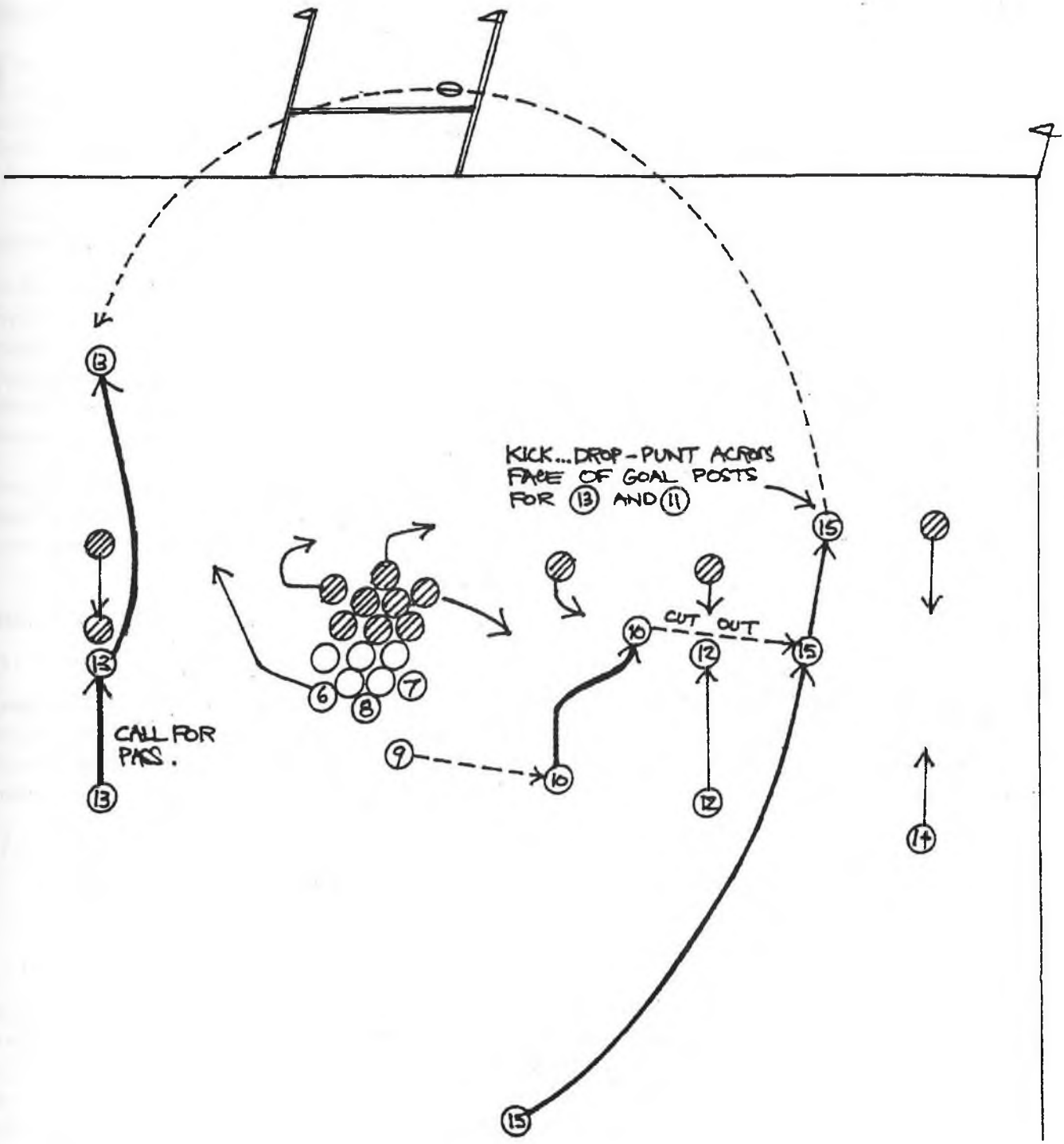
3 Support must call ...and ANTICIPATE

EXERCISE 12: TEAM RUN ...THE LOOP



EXERCISE 13: TEAM MOVE — CENTRE ASIDE ATTACKING USING KICK

This play is from a scrum centre field going into the opposites.



TRY SCORING

S. G. MEADE

OBJECTIVE

The research conducted for this paper has been done in order to analyse the mode and method of try scoring at the Under 19 or schoolboy 1st XV level with a view to analysing patterns which may have occurred and subsequently forwarding possible strategies which could be used by coaches at this level. There is also direct relevance in this study for the law makers in the game and more importantly, the referees who control the fixtures.

METHODOLOGY

An exhaustive analysis of 50 matches has been undertaken with detailed statistical information collated. These matches have been schoolboy 1st XV games covering the time period from 1991 to 1994 – i.e. 4 seasons. All of the tapes used have involved schools from the Greater Public Schools, Combined Associated Schools, and Combined High Schools associations as well as tapes from representative fixtures between these associations. These have been 19 different schools shown on the tapes, without counting the make-up of the C.H.S. teams.

Once the information has been collated, there is a brief analysis of it and then suggestions which could be taken on board by coaches, law makers and referees. Brief comparative analyses have also been undertaken.

FINDINGS

#1 • **That an average of 4.3 tries are scored per game.**

Analysis: The major point to note is that the introduction of the new ruck and maul laws for Under 19 fixtures which came in to operation mid-season 1992 saw an increase in the average number of tries scored per game from 3.9 to 4.6. The increase in continuity skills being displayed was marked with an increasing number of tries being scored as a result.

#2 • **11.1% of tries scored were from 1st phase play.**

- **20.4% of tries scored were from 2nd phase play.**
- **32.5% of tries scored were from 3rd phase play.**
- **36% of tries scored were from 4th or longer phase play.**

Analysis: These are vital statistics to come from the study and ones which need to be addressed by many coaches. Just over one tenth of all tries scored in the study were from set phases of play, yet many coaches at school boy level spend a far greater percentage of their time at training working on moves from the set phases. Obviously, techniques and skills must be coached at his area and there are valid reasons for this, including safety in the scrum, and the securing of ball at the lineout, but the preoccupation with backline moves based around static phase ball and set defensive lines would seem questionable.

The percentage of tries scored as the number of phases increases also increases. The final category of "4th or longer phase" was chosen as very few teams were able to mount attacks which were maintained for more than 4 phases and resulted in tries. Noticeable was the fact that while sides were able to maintain possession for many phases on end, they were unable to maintain control close to the line. On a number of occasions, it was an infringement by the defensive side which stopped the continuity of the attacking side and the referee had no option but to award a penalty. (Sometimes, the option for further advantage or even penalty try decisions loomed large.) Two points stood out in this grouping of phase play: firstly, that the lack of structure when 10 metres from the try line meant that invariably forwards would pick the ball

up from the back of the ruck or maul and blindly charge at the line, usually until they were held up over the line or the ball became unplayable. A little more discipline and the setting up of a fringe runner would have made all the difference on many occasions, and secondly, one G.P.S. school, St Josephs College, managed to maintain more extended phase attacks than any other school. (This was obvious not just in try scoring statistics.)

The obvious advantage of being able to maintain possession at the breakdown is highlighted in these figures. To be able to co-ordinate an attacking raid that has structure for more than one phase of the game is vital. Similarly, the defensive pattern was seen to disintegrate very quickly after one phase and many tries were scored against a small number of defenders soon after the ball had been maintained from even the second phase.

Comments for Coaches: The preoccupation with static play training would appear to be overdone at school level. Coaches must be very clear as to the purpose of the move they are practising and indeed, make sure the players executing the moves know the object of it. On too many occasions, moves are executed with no real result in mind other than to break the defensive line. No thought is given to what will happen when the ball comes back from the breakdown. It is very obvious, particularly in the past two years that defensive patterns from set plays have become very tight, and usually a missed tackle is the only way for the attacking side to make yardage at this phase.

It was noticeable that in more recent games more teams are using mid-field "crash ball" situations to set up good phase ball. This tactic makes the ball retention skills absolutely vital and all players need to be skilled in this area. It is interesting to note the role that is played by the backline players in this situation. Some teams do not use them as "rippers, blockers or clean-out" personnel at the contact site, while others seem to stress that the closest player be the one to help the ball carrier. From my observation, the latter plan would seem to work better and increase the probability of retaining possession, whilst not diminishing the attacking potential of the team when the ball does come back. Some teams used a fringe runner following the crash ball to give their backs time to re-align and attack the depleted defence from the third phase.

A quite obvious observation related to the set play which resulted in the most number of tries being scored from either 1st or 2nd phase. Mid-field scrums and right side scrums with a 15 metre plus blind side offered the greatest opportunity to score 1st or 2nd phase tries. The most interesting point to arise was the defensive alignments which were used to combat these situations. The role of the full-back becomes crucial and some schools quite openly place their defensive full-back on the blind side of the scrum all the time in these two situations mentioned above.

Comments for Referees: A couple of points are worth noting in this important phase of the game: (a) the role played by the defender at the crash ball site. Illegalities are rife at this point and the referee must be aware of the intention of the defender and how crucial it is for the defender to do everything in his power to stop the ball being retained by the attacking side. Referees should look carefully at this situation. (b) offside play by the defending backline. When is a penalty warranted and when does the advantage run out? The age old problem for the referee but in my viewing there seemed to be not enough understanding of what the attacking side was trying to achieve. From a personal point of view, I like to see referees warn players of their offside line in an effort to allow the game to flow. At too many meetings of the referees association which I have attended do I hear the conversation try to stifle the "talking" by referees on the field.

#3 • **35% of tries scored started within 25 metres of the tryline.**

- **45% of tries scored started between 25 and 50 metres of the tryline.**
- **20% of tries scored started in the scoring team's own half.**

Analysis: Most of the tries scored from 25 metres or less were 1st or 2nd phase tries. This is the position where the set piece backline moves were put into operation with the greatest effect. While the defensive

patterns still seemed tight and well established, there was not enough time or space for the defensive pattern to pick up missed one-on-one tackles. Most defence patterns were "man on man" in this area of the field.

Tries scored from 25 to 50 metres from the tryline usually began with a well executed move from the set piece but less than 5% of them were completed in one phase. The role of the first support player at the breakdown varied widely and it was quite obvious to see the schools who train to retain possession at the breakdown and even estimate where the breakdown will occur.

Tries which resulted from breaks initiated in the scoring team's own half seemed to start due to laziness by the defending team or poor positional play. On many occasions, the defending team was not ready for the team with the ball to run it. The other noticeable feature in the manner of tries scored from this distance was the number scored from counter-attack. Quick re-alignment skills stood out clearly as did poor defensive efforts on counter attack.

It was noticeable how few tries were scored as a result of kicks by the attacking team. The "bomb" was a little used weapon, the grubber being used on more occasions. Most kicks which were successful were ones placed for the wingers.

Comments for Coaches:

- The role of the backrowers in defence close to the tryline appears to have been neglected.
- The importance of counter attacking skills and positioning is under-emphasised.
- Defence against counter attack is poorly constructed.
- Sides appear to become lazy in their defensive alignments when the side with the ball is a long way from the tryline. Many sides think a kick is the easiest way out of their own quarter. A side who runs the ball from their own quarter is likely to make good ground and set up attacking ball in the other team's half.
- Defence from the phase play is poor, particularly around the fringes of the breakdown.

Comments for Referees: One major point stands out; defending sides are not getting penalised for their backrowers breaking from the scrum before the ball is out of the scrum. There is roughly one penalty given for this offence every 5 games when it is obvious that it is happening regularly.

#4
- **5% of tries were scored by front rowers.**
- **5% of tries were scored by locks (second rowers).**
- **10% of tries were scored by back rowers.**
- **5% of tries were scored by half backs.**
- **16% of tries were scored by five eights.**
- **20% of tries were scored by centres.**
- **26% of tries were scored by wingers.**
- **13% of tries were scored by full backs.**

Analysis: Interesting but not really surprising results. The obvious feature is the importance of the five eight and the full back as attacking positions and how the try scoring potential of the team is increased when a dominant force is in either of these positions. Sides which had very skilful players in either of these positions tended to opt for more set plays to score tries.

The big forwards were rarely used as try scoring weapons even in sides where forward dominance was obvious. In games played in dry conditions the forwards ball skills were utilised greatly particularly when phase ball was gained. Although they scored relatively few tries, they gave passes in the final phase on a high percentage of occasions.

The ingenuity used by some sides to involve their most enterprising backs was marked. Wingers and full backs were used to break the line all over the field and it is obvious that the stereo-typed positions have largely gone from the schoolboy game. It is very noticeable when a back in particular plays to a rigid positional game plan.

Comments for Coaches: The development of ball skills, attacking skills and linking skills stands out. All players must realist that their role is becoming less defined in the modern game and they must be competent in all facets of the game in broken play. The days of props running down the centre of the field waiting for in-field kicks have gone.

SUMMARY

The game of rugby at schoolboy level is exciting to play and exciting to watch. It is also very rewarding to coach. There is so much for the players to master and the laws of the game are promoting the development of skilful, multi-talented players in all positions. With this upshot of the new laws, the coaches must be ready to adopt new, inventive strategies if they are to succeed.

The absolute conclusion which comes from this study is the fact that ball retention is vital. The importance of phase ball has taken on even greater importance in the past three years. If a side is to be successful they must have 15 players on the field who are capable of securing ball at breakdown. The emphasis placed on these skills is still to drawn on a few coaches coaching in the school ranks but the results are helping to bring home the obvious. Hours and hours of lineouts and scrums are a thing of the past. Honing "on the ground" skills in all players and ball retention techniques must become the big push in schoolboy rugby in the very near future – if it is not being done now.

PREPARATION FOR RUGBY: A TWELVE MONTH PROGRAM

JOHN McKEE

INTRODUCTION

In the 1990's, for rugby players to achieve goals of competing successfully at representative level and of gaining national selection, it is necessary for these players to be undertaking 12 month structured training programs.

This paper outlines the reasons a twelve month program is necessary and the structure such a program should take based on the principles of periodisation and the match commitments of the players involved. The match commitments are based on representative players with representative matches early in the season (April - May) and playing a club season with finals matches taking place in September. This model would be typical for many players in Australia and refers specifically to the program developed for the Victorian State Squad.

It is not the purpose of this paper to give a detailed training program but to describe the 12 month periodised training format, the reasons for such a format, and to look at the types of training undertaken during each period of training.

A 12 Month Cycle: Why?

It is well documented that to achieve high levels of fitness and skill a solid fitness base must be built up. This base is not built up over a short time. This base takes 3 to 4 years of 12 month periodised cycles of co-ordinated aerobic, anaerobic, strength, power, sprint and skills training to reach optimum levels. Rugby players who are serious about achieving high goals should be looking at these long term programs and, through each twelve month cycle, presenting themselves for each season at a higher level of fitness and skill than the season before.

In discussing these 12 month cycles it should be recognised that rugby is a very complex sport in its fitness requirements. Endurance, speed, strength, power, flexibility and skill are all important factors in team game performance. This variety of factors along with the requirements of individual players and the need to maintain a high level of performance during the season increase the complexity of planning programs when compared to individual sports. (Pyke p. 250)

Modern theory of periodisation was first advanced by L.P. Matveyeu of the USSR in 1965. (Dick p. 230) Periodisation may be described as an organised division of the training year with the objective of preparing the team for the competition of the season and for the optimum preparation for peaks within that season. Matveyeu divided the year into three periods; *Preparation, Competition, and Transition*. For an illustration of the training year refer to Appendix A.

The *Preparation Period* is divided into two phases. The first phase could be described as training to train. The object of this phase is to build a base of endurance and strength to increase the players ability to accept the loading of the 2nd phase of the preparation.

It should be pointed out that players who do not undertake sufficient training in this phase will not only fail to reach a peak as high as those committed to this phase, they will be susceptible to injury as the intensity steps up in the pre-competition phase.

In this first phase of preparation the emphasis is on general training directed at the endurance end of the fitness required for rugby. The volume of training should increase gradually. Players with little or no weight training experience should be on general type weight training programs. Those players with a 12-18 month background in weight training can advance to more specific individualised programs which, at this stage, should be aimed at hypertrophy.

Special individual requirements should be addressed during this phase. This would include individual skill assessment and improvement drills and specialised training techniques, such as plyometrics or hill running for example, to improve individual performance.

Match specific drills should not be neglected during this phase but take a smaller part of the overall training than the general and special fitness components. This component would include drills to improve individual skills and to improve team cohesion and an understanding of tactics for later matches.

These three components, General Training, Special Training, and Match Training must be included throughout the 12 month cycle. It is the part each plays in relation to the other two in the total volume of training that varies depending on the period of training.

The second phase of the preparatory period could be called training for matches. The three components of the training continue with the emphasis on general fitness reducing in relation to the emphasis on special training and match specific training increasing. The practice of basic skills increases and the use of group drills will develop elements of team play. Those players experienced in weight training should move onto programs aimed at increasing strength and power. Those players inexperienced in this type of training should continue on their general strength improvements programs. It takes 18 months for the new weight trainer to build up a sufficient base to get significant gains from power type training. Their general strength improvement and hypertrophy from the general programs will improve their match performance while building this base.

An illustrated guide to preparation period training and a specific example of that prepared for the Victorian State Squad can be found in Appendix 'B'.

The next period of the cycle is the competition period. The match season. The emphasis here changes to skill practice and the development of match strategy while working to maintain conditioning levels. It is important not to neglect the status of basic fitness components such as strength and speed in favour of tactical development.

To maintain levels gained during the Preparation Period a reduced workload is required but gains in strength and aerobic and anaerobic conditioning will be lost without a maintenance program. Strength can be maintained with one session each 7-10 days. Aerobic and anaerobic conditioning can be maintained with one session per week and with the incorporation of skill practices and small games or drills which require intense physical effort during training sessions.

The training load, based on volume and intensity increases during the Pre Season, peaking just before the commencement of the season. This load reduces during the early part of the match season, building up again through the mid season and easing off again through the late season and finals.

This fits in well with a season such as that facing the Victorian Team with representative matches early in the season. With such a program of early season representative commitments it would be a good idea to add a sub phase at the end of the representative season where the match specific training is reduced and the general and special training components increased for 3 to 4 weeks. Coaches must look at the season in its totality rather than being completely concerned about next Saturdays match. This can be a difficult concept for some coaches, especially at club level.

A break down of a typical match season training session can be found in Appendix 'C'.

Immediately following the season comes the Transition Period. During this period there should be a reduction of training load and the emphasis should be on general fitness. On no account should this period be passive as the detraining effect will result in players being unable to undertake the loadings of the Preparation Period training. At the end of the Transition players should be refreshed and have maintained sufficient base fitness to undertake the training loadings of the next Phase.

As so the cycle continues.

SUMMARY

Given that the ultimate aim of any training program for rugby players should be to maximise performance during important matches, that training program should improve skill levels and improve fitness (all components) to such a standard that the skill level can be maintained for the 80 minutes of a game of rugby.

Other sports have used, for a number of years, long term training programs periodised over 12 months to achieve goals in their respective areas of performance. The base fitness required to perform at high levels cannot be built up in a short time. This base required 3-4 years of 12 month cycles to maximise performance.

The three periods of training, Preparation, Competition and Transition provide an important basis for program planning. It is important to develop aspects of General training, Special training and Match training during each period. The emphasis on each aspect based on volume changes during each period and phases within that period.

With a 12 month cycle gains made in previous years are maintained and a higher level can be achieved in each succeeding Preparation Period.

For many years rugby players, coaches and administrators have considered rugby to be different from other sports and a complete lay off is required at the end of the season. This lay off in many cases stretches into months. This thinking was based on ignorance and is still prevelant in many areas today.

It is clear that rugby does not differ from other sports, although fitness and skill requirements are complex, and to maximise performance 12 months cycles must be followed.

I have in this paper emphasised aspects of fitness and skills development. These are not the only factors which maximise performance. There are other important areas for consideration such as nutrition and sports psychology. Education and development programs in these areas should be run in unison with the physical and skill preparation. These 'other' factors relate importantly to training performance and application just as they do to ultimate team performance.

For Australian Rugby to remain at the top of the World Rugby Ladder it is important that rugby players, coaches and administrators at all levels understand the principles of 12 month training cycles. To maximise the development of young talent, players must start training from a young age so that they can reach their full potential.

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Pyke Frank S. (ed) BETTER COACHING: Advanced Coaching Manual 1991.

APPENDIX A

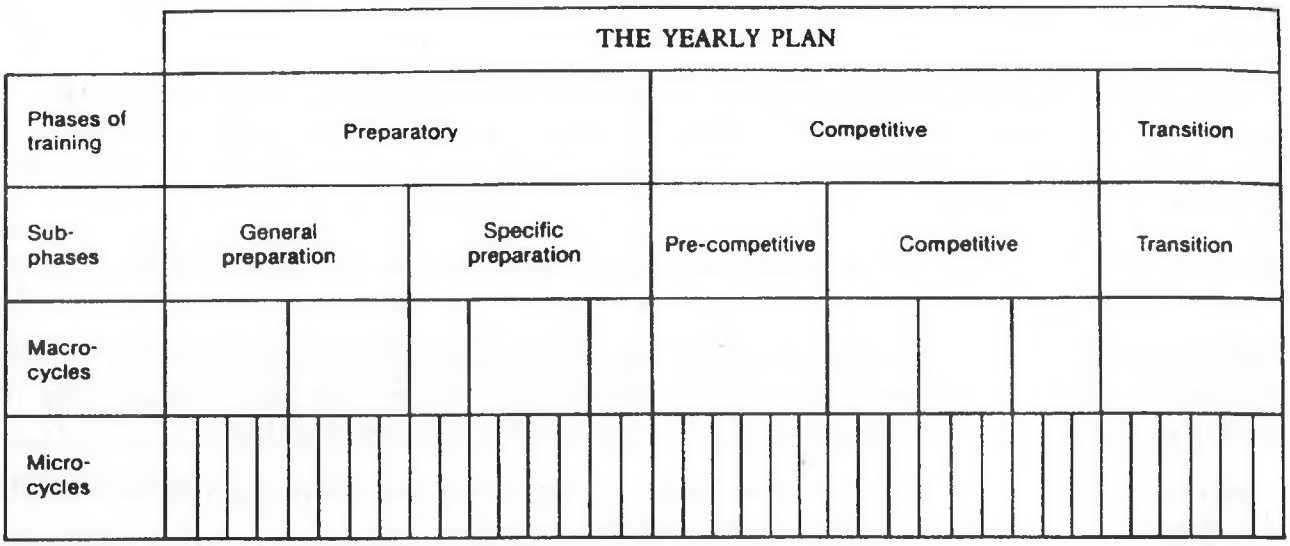

FIGURE 17-2:
A schematic illustration of the division of an annual plan in its phases and cycles of training.
(Reprinted by permission from Bompa, 1983. Copyright 1983 by Kendall-Hunt Publishing.)

APPENDIX B

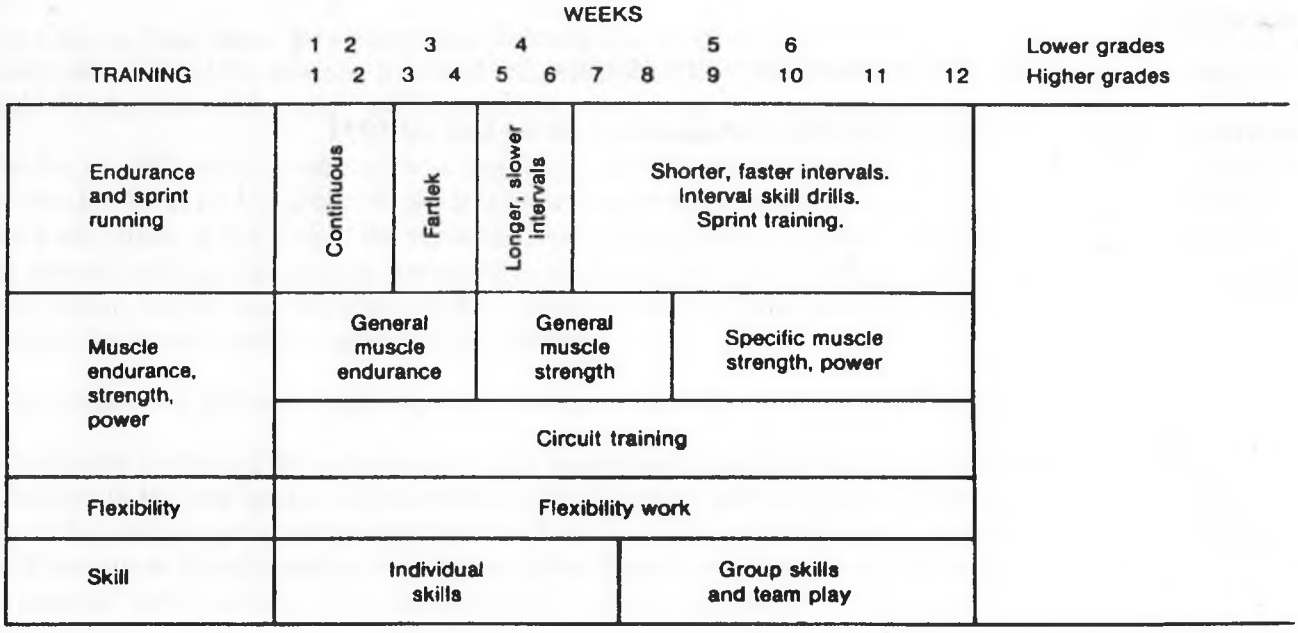

FIGURE 17-10:
A guide to preparation phase training for a team game. Coaches can select from the methods available and plan a programme according to the specific requirements of their teams (modified from Pyke, 1980).

TRANSITION / PREPARATORY TRAINING FOR JRU SUMMER SQUAD 1994-95

	SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER				NOVEMBER				DECEMBER				JANUARY			FEBRUARY					MARCH		
	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	5	12
PHASE				TRANSITION					OFF SEASON								MAINTENANCE			PRE SEASON								
ANAEROBIC FITNESS									1 x p/w								1 x p/w			2 x p/w								
AEROBIC FITNESS			2 x any aerobic activity (P.U.) 20 mins (minimum) continuous activity						2 x p/w								2 x p/w			2 x p/w								
WEIGHTS			2 x p.w. preparation programs						3 x p/w Hypertrophy program								1 x p/w			3 x p/w strength → power program								
SPEED									1 x p/w											1 x p/w								

NOTES

- START WEEK AFTER LAST MATCH.
- This is not an inactive period.
- At the end of this period you must be ready to commence training for next season
- Gradual increase in loadings during this period.
- commitment to whole program necessary
- Keep training diary.
- Don't lose it over Xmas
- Maintain gains made in off season
- change of emphasis now.
- Volume with decrease but intensity will be higher.
- more emphasis on team work drills & skills

1ST GAMES

VIC. XV. vs. Townsville SAT 11th March

VIC EMERGING XV v T.ville Wed 8th March

APPENDIX B

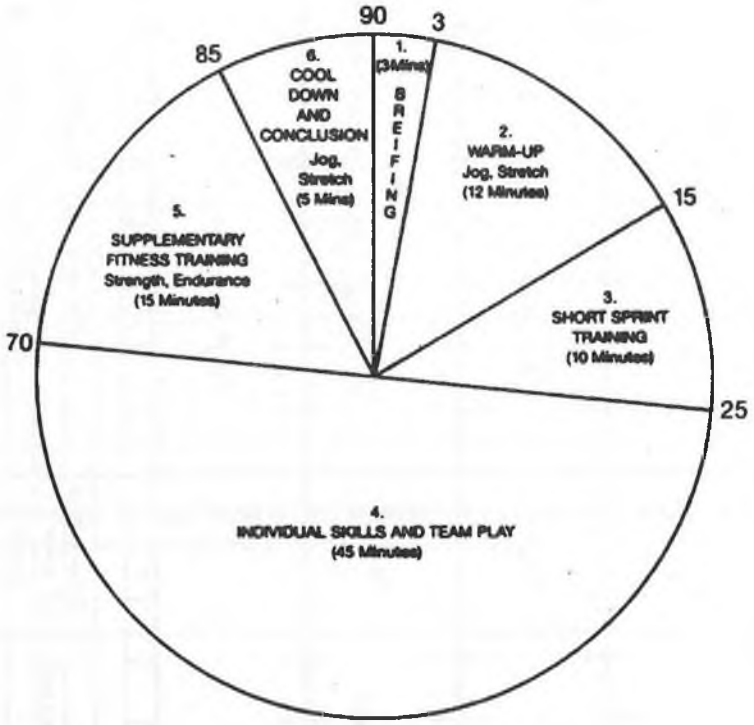

FIGURE 17-11:
Time allocation for parts of a typical 90 minute in-season team game practice session. Coaches may wish to adjust the duration and order of sections 3, 4 and 5, depending on the stage of the session and team requirements (modified from Pyke, 1980).

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MICHAEL HALL

INTRODUCTION

Phases of the game that are constantly the topic of debate are those when the ball, or a player carrying the ball, is on the ground, and those where an apparent maul collapses to ground. Whether it be at a tackle situation, a loose ball in general play, or a "pile-up". Poor management of these aspects frustrate players, referees and spectators unlike any other.

The difficulty in achieving consistency of refereeing of such situations is obvious to all and the solutions are not readily attainable. Interpretation is crucial to successful management of such phase play and consistency of interpretation can only be achieved with expansive negotiation. I believe that this negotiation can lead to the acceptance of "principles of refereeing"; principles that can guide on-field decision making. Agreement of these principles by referees and coaches, and through them, the players, should promote improved continuity and subsequently, enhanced enjoyment of the game.

THE PACKAGE

This paper will form part of a package that can assist in the development of referees at all levels.

The package will include:

- the video cassette containing the selection of video segments on the topic, and
- the responses from coaches and referees as recorded in this paper, and,
- worksheets that allow for quiz sessions as part of the development lesson or program.

It is hoped that the package will provide the basis for discussion between coaches and referees in the search for consistency. If the response of the coaches who participated is any indication, then this process should prove successful.

Packages using this format, addressing other phases of the game of Rugby, are now being planned.

AIM

The primary aim of this paper is to report on some research that sought to identify *principles for refereeing phases of play where the ball is, and/or the player/s carrying the ball are, on the ground, or where such players are held in an attempted tackle and/or ensuing maul.*

The development of referee's abilities to adhere to these principles and to apply them in a consistent manner, are further aims of the work.

All rugby communities may not agree with these principles but I hope that they present as a topic for debate and a focus for referee development.

LIMITATIONS

The results of this research are not presumed to be the answer for all referees.

The sample of coaches and referees addressed in this research is assumed to be fairly representative of the target population of coaches and referees.

The research was conducted within the confines of the ACT rugby community.

The limitations of time and finances somewhat influence the professionalism of the video package but this could be addressed with support from the A.R.U. level through the National Referees Development Officer.

AUDIENCE

The audience for this research is divided into several groups.

1 The Convenor – A.R.U. Level 3 Referee Development Program.

2 The A.C.T. Referees Association and the A.C.T. Coaching fraternity.

3 The A.R.U. Refereeing fraternity.

The participants in the research were a group of three senior coaches, including the A.C.T. representative coach, three senior first grade referees, including a national panel referee and this researcher.

METHOD

A video package of 43 incidents in a selection of games at the representative level was prepared. The incidents reflect a variety of situations where the ball was, and/or the player/s carrying it were, on the ground, or, where players were involved in an apparent maul which collapses on the ground.

Each video segment indicates the game referee's judgement of this situation as well as recording the media commentators interpretation of the decision. The participants in the research acknowledged that this commentary was not necessarily a true reflection of the referees decision, nor was the video record to be seen as a true interpretation of the referee's judgement. Participants accepted that there is more to game management than that obvious on a video snapshot of a particular incident. Their integrity in this matter can only be measured by the extent of their involvement in the game of Rugby.

The package of video segments was shown to the participants independently and they were asked to give a decision on each incident in turn. They were asked to give an initial decision but each was allowed to review the incident as often as they wished and could do so in slow-motion or freeze-frame format. This enabled them to fully analyse the incident and to give greater consideration to their decision.

The decision of each participant was recorded as if it were the decision in a game situation; for example,

"Play on" or, "Penalty #2 green, playing the ball off feet".

The participants could add relevant comments that would explain their thinking behind each decision and were free to discuss the incident with the researcher. these comments were recorded.

At the conclusion of viewing the video package each participant was asked to comment on any general aspect of management/refereeing of those phases under consideration. These comments were also recorded.

DISCUSSION

(See end of discussion for Details of Findings.)

The research results indicated that there was more agreement about the philosophy surrounding the management of these situations than the level of dissenting comment at games implies. Perhaps this level of agreement is a reflection of the experience of the participants. It may also be a function of the fundamental understanding by referees, of the intention of the coaches and players. Perhaps it is also due to the skill mastery of the players at the level of rugby with which the participants are primarily involved.

One could also point to the developed skills of the referees at this level as a contributing factor. Whatever the reasons for agreement, all participants were adamant that there was a lack of consistency in the interpretation amongst referees through all grades.

The coaches were insistent that every opportunity should be given to encourage continuity. They asked that the referee allowed as much time as possible for the ball to emerge before penalising or blowing for a scrum. They also asked that the referee be more aware of which situations might deliver ball to the team in possession and which ones might not. Obviously, they were concerned with player safety but rejected strongly the suggestion that all breakdowns be blown up quickly. The implications of requests of this nature are that the referee must be in a close and unobscured position to make such judgements and have an affinity for the intention of those players present at the breakdown.

A suggestion that referees utilise the advantage signal more in the situations under discussion, to give that little extra latitude, also focuses on this theme of continuity. Appropriate and full use of this law gives some more time for continuity to develop and rewards players skill and effort.

The coaches were also critical of the decisions that penalise the team in possession. They are particularly concerned with those penalties that are awarded against support players who end up off their feet at a tackle situation when their intent has been to clean out or create a secure platform (not a wall) for the use of the ball. Often these players end up on the ground due to the lack of, or weakness of, the opposition at this tackle situation. They also end up tripping over the tackler and tackled player due to the force of the support drive. When asked if this showed a lack of controlled play at the breakdown and a blind attempt to drive over the ball at all costs, the coaches expected referees to assess which were cases of sheer incompetence and which came under the previously described conditions. What they could accept, however, was penalties awarded against players launching themselves off their feet without regard for the legality and constructiveness of this action.

All participants were eager to accept that player intention held a key to successful management of these situations. The coaches were eager to see referees permit players to start with a very low body height and with considered intention, drive upwards and into defenders to secure their possession. This action must be allowed even if the end result is players off their feet after a strenuous and constructive effort through and past the tackle. The positive contribution of their first action must be considered in the decision-making process. Furthermore, this consideration should be extended rather generously to the team in possession, to ensure continuity.

Debate also was generated by consideration of decisions that result in a penalty against a strong defender. All too often, in the opinion of the coaches, the offensive tackle, where the tackler takes the player ball-and-all and ends up on top of him, was penalised. In this situation, the support players from both sides arrive immediately and prevent the tackler/s release of the tackled player. On such occasions, coaches and referees tended to agree that they need to blow it up quickly, unless they believe one side to have a superiority at the particular situation, when only a short time delay then seemed appropriate. This again implies, that the referee needed to be on the spot to analyse the situation properly.

Some reflection on those phases of play that were attempted tackles (ie the player and/or ball in his possession are not on the ground, but an attempt is being made to effect this) but ended up as a maul dropping to the ground, saw the referees in the group deliberating. The situation is when an attempted tackle is made by more than one tackler and a maul results that collapses to the ground. Are the mechanics of the tackle attempt still influencing this phase or are the defenders dragging a maul to ground? The desire for continuity could see a prolonged struggle for the ball by those players involved and by other support players arriving. The solution again seemed to be for the referee to be at the breakdown quickly and to travel around it to see if the ball is emerging. They must also talk to the players involved to speed up the use of the ball. If not, then blow it up as prolonged struggling will inevitably lead to dangerous play and/or a penalty.

All participants accepted that the game is best played by players who stay on their feet. However, considering the dynamics of the game and the need for continuity to provide enjoyment for players and spectators alike, all agreed that the management of the situations under discussion can only be enhanced with this type of shared opinion.

The challenge then, was to identify clearly from this debate, the principles for guiding decision making at these situations. The following principles emerged as paramount. Some will be recognised as well worn learning/development practices, but together, they can present as a code for refereeing these difficult situations.

PRINCIPLES P - A - I - D - A - C PRINCIPLES

- **Positioning**
  The referee must be at the breakdown early to view the situation clearly. He must be in a position that will enable him to view both the breakdown phase, the support players and the players aligned for the next phase.

- **Analysis** – OF THE PHASE
  The referee must quickly analyse the breakdown situation; Is it a tackle? Has the tackler released the tackled player as required by law? Was he able to do so? Did the tackled player take one of his options immediately? Was he permitted to do so? Did a ruck actually form? Was it a maul? Where is the ball? Where are the off-side lines, if any? Was the ball made readily available and fail to emerge? Why?; and so on. This process is crucial to the effective management of the situation.

- **Intention** – LOOK FOR PLAYER INTENTION
  This must be a developed skill. The referee must look for the intention of all players involved in the situation. The player with the ball, any immediate opposition players, and the support players, must all be appraised for their intentions. Basically, if the player is intent on being constructive to play, then give them every support.

- **Driving upwards and past the ball *or* down and over the ball** – ARE SUPPORT PLAYERS INTENT ON DRIVING UPWARDS AND PAST THE BALL?
  The answer to this question is crucial to the quality of adjudication of these situations. All participants agreed, that if supporting players were intent on engaging, driving upwards and past the ball, and remaining on their feet to constructively contribute to continuity of play, then they should be penalised only as a last resort for going to ground. Often the reason for them going to ground is due to the force with which they engage the opposition and/or the weakness of that opposition, and there are players on the ground impeding a balanced forward drive.

- **Advantage** – GIVE ADVANTAGE TO THE TEAM BEING POSITIVE WHILE IN POSSESSION
  Again, without allowing dangerous situations to develop, the referee should give every encouragement to the team being positive and constructive while in possession of the ball. This principle conforms to the intention of the laws of the game that are designed to penalise destructive and negative play.

- **Continuity** – GIVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR CONTINUITY WITHOUT CREATING DANGER
  Referees should be intent on allowing the ball to be used and not create a game of stoppages and restarts. All participants acknowledged that players and coaches have a responsibility in this regard also but recognised that referees could have a damaging impact on the tone of the game with poor decision making.

FINDINGS

Each of the incidents are described and the summary of findings, i.e., the participant's decisions and their general comments, is recorded.

Incident Description: (Game Referee Decision – Offending Team/Number)

1 Green #2 falls to ground and blue #7, from on his feet, picks up the ball and falls/pushed onto player on the ground and continues to play the ball releasing it onto his side of the breakdown. – PENALTY (#7)

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise blue #7 off feet, playing the ball
#2 Penalise blue #7 starting from off-side position
#3 Penalise blue #7 starting from off-side position

Referee: #1 Penalise blue #7 off feet, playing the ball
#2 Penalise blue #7 off feet, playing the ball
#3 Penalise blue #7 off feet, playing the ball

Comments: Coaches #2 and #3 believed he started from his feet and was 'bowled over' but, he came from an offside position.

2 Blue driving scrum, blue #8 picks up and tackled by green #9 – green #7 drives blue support player over tackle situation to both go to ground, ball becomes available slowly. – PENALTY.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – no interference
#2 Play on – no interference
#3 Play on – no interference

Referee: #1 Penalise green #7 off feet, killing the ball
#2 Play advantage, penalise green #7 off feet, killing the ball
#3 Play advantage, penalise green #7 off feet, killing the ball

Comments: Referees #2 and #3 accept penalty decision and acknowledge the video gives advantage of seeing ball emerge.

3 Green #8 tackled by blue #7 – green #12 support player binds onto tackled player, blue #7 fails to release tackled player. – PENALTY (#7).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – great tackle – use it or loose it
#2 Penalise blue #7 not releasing
#3 Play on – tough call – great tackle

Referee: #1 Penalise blue #7 not releasing
#2 Penalise blue #7 not releasing
#3 Penalise blue #7 not releasing

4 Green #11 attacking, tackled by blue #?, ball released into areas of close proximity, blue #6 dives onto loose ball in traffic. – PENALTY.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – must dive on loose ball
#2 Penalise blue #6 – must stay on feet – #6 had time
#3 Play on – tough call

Referee: #1 Penalise blue #6 – must stay on feet
#2 Penalise blue #6 – must stay on feet
#3 Penalise blue #6 – must stay on feet

5 Light blue attacking, tackled by dark blue, light blue #6 support player dives over tackled player to secure ball. – PENALTY.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet
#2 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet
#3 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet

Referee: #1 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet
#2 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet
#3 Penalise light blue #6 – must stay on feet

6 White #10 up-and-under taken by gold #11, he is grabbed at and this causes him to fall to ground, he then passes off ground to support. – PENALTY.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise gold #11 – tackled – didn't release immediately
#2 Play on – tough call
#3 Play on – tough call

Referee: #1 Play on – tough call
#2 Play on – tough call
#3 Play on – tough call

7 Gold #14 tackled by white #11, which #8 assists later in the tackle forcing gold #14 backwards causing ball to be trapped, white #8 slow to release. – SCRUM.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – scrum – great offensive tackling
#2 Play on – scrum – great offensive tackling
#3 Play on – scrum – great offensive tackling

Referee: #1 Penalise white #8 – not releasing player *(see comment)***
#2 Penalise white #8 for not immediately releasing player
#3 Play on – scrum – tackler could not release due support

Comments – ** Do mechanics of a "maul" that forms almost as part of a tackle, i.e. just before tackle (players hit ground) is made, mean that it isn't a tackle, just a collapsed indecisive maul, so blow it up?

8 White #8 picks up from scrum base and with support runs forward and is tackled. White support players drive past tackle and trip to ground with little opposition. Ball available for continuation, gold #1 drives in from off-side position of forces white support player to ground over ball preventing release. – PENALTY (#1).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet
#2 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet
#3 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet

Referee: #1 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet
#2 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet
#3 Penalise #1 gold – offside and off-feet

9 Gold #1 sweeps from lineout and is tackled., White #8 attempts to assist tackle and goes to over tackle but immediately retreats without interference to ball delivery. – PENALTY (#8).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise #8 white – off-feet
#2 Play advantage
#3 Penalise #8 white off feet – play advantage?

Referee: #1 Play advantage – ball immediately available
#2 Play advantage – ball immediately available
#3 Play advantage – ball immediately available

Comment: Technically correct penalty but premature in the awarding of penalty since ball was delivered without interference.

10 White #12 held and well supported by white and gold players, Gold #6 and #3 drive around edge of maul and drop to ground. – PENALTY (#6 and #3).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise gold – off-feet
#2 Penalise gold – off-feet
#3 Penalise gold – off-feet – play advantage?

Referee: #1 Penalise gold – off-feet – collapsing maul
#2 Penalise gold – off-feet – collapsing maul
#3 Penalise gold – off-feet – collapsing maul

11 Black (shorts) #14 flicks ball inside and to ground. Players from both teams dive off feet to attempt to secure ball 3 metres from white (shorts) goal line. It appears defenders were first to dive on ball and attackers, who were originally in possession went to ground upon driving past the breakdown. – PENALTY (BLACK SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – probably a scrum, attackers feed, defenders had ball.
#2 Penalise white shorts (defenders) – off feet – second defender
#3 Penalise white shorts (defenders) – off feet

Referee: #1 Penalise white shorts (defenders) – off feet – second defender
#2 Penalise white shorts (defenders) – off feet
#3 Penalise white shorts (defenders) – off feet – second defender

12 Black (shorts) #10 tackled. Support players create ruck, ball obviously available. Black (shorts) #7 on one knee at breakdown, scoops ball back with one hand. – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on – constructive play from balanced stance
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

13 White (shorts) #7 sweeps lineout tapped ball and falls to ground. Black (shorts) #4 goes over player to ground but rolls well clear with no interference. Black (shorts) #7, on one knee, searches for and scoops ball back with one hand. – PENALTY (BLACK SHORTS #7).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise black shorts #7
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Penalise black shorts #7
#2 Penalise black shorts #7 – off feet
#3 Penalise black shorts #7

Comments: Preferred situation didn't develop but better to use buried ball when it became available within short time.

14 Black (shorts) #10 tackled by white (shorts) #7. Black (shorts) #6 collects placed ball and tackled. Makes ball available for support but white (shorts) player prevents emerging ball. – PENALTY (WHITE SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise white shorts
#2 Penalise white shorts
#3 Penalise white shorts

Referee: #1 Penalise white shorts
#2 Penalise white shorts
#3 Penalise white shorts

Comments: Ask the question, why didn't good ball emerge?

15 Black (shorts) #1 goes to ground to recover grubber kick and regains his feet. Immediately tackled backwards. No release obvious and both teams contest ball while off their feet. White (shorts) secures ball and black (shorts) #6 prevents emerging ball. – PENALTY (BLACK SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalise black shorts
#2 Penalise black shorts
#3 Penalise black shorts

Referee: #1 Penalise black (shorts) feed from kick
#2 Penalise black shorts
#3 Penalise black shorts

Comments: Referee #1 acknowledges why penalty given but believes both sets of support players were off feet contesting ball and one team had kicked away advantage of possession.

16 Black (shorts) #10 tackled, looses ball. White (shorts) gather ball, tackled and players from both teams contest ball while off their feet. white (shorts) secures ball. – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All participants were happy that referee could see ball.

17 Black (shorts) #8 catches lineout ball and maul forms. Maul collapses and players from both teams contest ball while off their feet. Ball is obvious to referee but white (shorts) delays delivery of ball. – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on – referee to signal advantage for penalty against white
#3 Play on – referee to signal advantage for penalty against white

Referee: #1 Play on – see comment section incident number 7
#2 Play on – referee to signal advantage for penalty against white
#3 Play on – referee to signal advantage for penalty against white

18 Black (shorts) #6 tackled and support players #13 and #7 use hands to scoop ball from ground back to halfback – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – players on feet with balanced stance – continuity
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on – no ruck formed
#2 Play on
#3 Play on – no ruck formed

19 Black (shorts) #4 catches ball from kick off and falls to ground. He immediately places the ball for support. White (shorts) player comes from one side position and immediately picks up ball and almost immediately tackled by black (shorts) support – PENALTY WHITE (SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Agree with penalty but for white taking out black support
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on – ball available for play

20 White (shorts) gain ball from own 22m drop out. Black (shorts) player comes from off side position and immediately drops to ground in tackle attempt – PENALTY BLACK (SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Agree with penalty
#2 Agree with penalty – tackler can drive to ground but must retire
#3 Play advantage – back from penalty if no ball

Referee: #1 Agree with penalty – destructive intent
#2 Agree with penalty – video shows chance for advantage
#3 Agree with penalty – destructive intent – leads to danger

21 White (shorts) secures lineout ball. Black (shorts) player tackles this player and delays release to slow down delivery for phase play – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on – advantage signal?

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

22 White (shorts) #14 tackled and tackler holds on to prevent quick release. Other black (shorts) players drive to ground – PENALTY BLACK (SHORTS).

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – providing tackler not taking ball back – delay okay
#2 Penalty black tackle okay, good ball presented, why not emerge?
#3 Penalty black maybe ref talk to player – allow time

Referee: #1 Penalty black
#2 Penalty black – but a little quick
#3 Penalty black

23 White (shorts) #11 tackled and tackler, black (shorts) #2, gets to one knee and passes placed ball from ground support – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalty black #2
#2 Penalty black #2
#3 Penalty black #2

Referee: #1 Penalty black #2
#2 Penalty black #2
#3 Penalty black #2

24 Gold #10 tackled and gold #7, first support player, drives defender up and away from tackled player. Following support players drive past ball, some lose their footing. Ball available – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All agreed that the first and subsequent support players intended to deliver constructive support to tackled player and to ensure continuity.

25 Gold take scrappy ball from kick off. gold player tackled by black #5. Tackler slow to release and black support players drive over tackle to ground preventing ball delivery – PENALTY BLACK SUPPORT PLAYERS.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Tough call – play on – black being off feet generated penalty
#2 Penalise black – diving off feet
#3 Penalise black – diving off feet

Referee: #1 Penalise black – diving off feet
#2 Penalise black – diving off feet
#3 Penalise black – diving off feet

Comments: All agreed that the black support players needed to stay on feet and ensure continuity.

26 Gold #13 held and slow tackle ensues. Gold support players drive onto and past tackled player now on ground. Ball available – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on – gold went off feet after constructive support
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All agreed that the gold support players were on feet at breakdown and provided constructive support before going to ground.

27 A segment of David Campese magic which, all agreed, was pure magic.

36 Black #7 tackled from phase play, plays ball in one direction but appears to change mind and plays it in another – PENALTY BLACK #7.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalty Black #7
#2 Penalty Black #7
#3 Play on – for sake of continuity

Referee: #1 Penalty Black #7
#2 Play on
#3 Penalty Black #7

Comments: Some debate about the immediacy with which black took option and if he had two goes.

37 Blue #14 tackled and places. Green #12 collects and immediately tackled blue #13. Blue support arrive and gain ball for maul past tackle situation – PENALTY BLUE #13.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Penalty Blue #13
#2 Play on – accepts referee closer to play – but blue had ball?
#3 Penalty blue #13 – off feet and played ball (I think)

Referee: #1 Can't judge from video but accepts referee in good position
#2 Can't tell what occurred
#3 Penalty blue #13 failed to roll away and did interfere

38 Blue #12 tackled – ruck forms. blue #5 reaches into ruck and delivers ball with hands – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

39 Blue #10 tackled – blue #7 drives from a very low body position into tackler lifting him up and away from tackled player but they both collapse to ground just past tackle – PLAY ON.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All agreed that blue #7, whilst ending up off feet and on ground in close proximity to tackle, had acted constructively.

40 Green #9 as being tackled flicks ball inside to green #14 (knock on) but ball goes to ground. Green #8 dives onto loose ball in close proximity to original attempt at tackle – (Scrum for knock on)

Question: Was the action of green #8 okay?

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All agreed that green #8 had acted constructively.

41 Green #6 from second phase releases in traffic to green #1. Green #1 tackled and green support players clean out all blue player on their feet in close proximity (table-top) to tackle. Ball available to green – PLAY ON.

Question: Was the action of green in cleaning out okay?

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on

Comments: All agreed that green had acted constructively and there were no obstructions.

42 Blue up and under not taken by green #15. blue #2 takes ball knocked down and passes to blue #6 who is tackled 2 metres from green goal line. Tackler and green support players do all possible to kill ball. Blue support dig out ball for use. PLAY ON

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on
#2 Play on – why not an advantage signal from referee?
#3 Play on – why not an advantage signal from referee?

Referee: #1 Play on
#2 Play on
#3 Play on – advantage signal expected

43 Green up and under not taken by blue #15 under contest and ends up on ground between blue and green player. Blue player dives to secure ball, and green #1 goes over top in pile-up. Other green players go off feet and in pile-up green hands deliver ball – PENALTY GREEN.

Response:s – Initial Comments:

Coach: #1 Play on – scrum decision earlier to avoid pile-up
#2 Penalty green – playing ball off feet
#3 Penalty green – playing ball off feet

Referee: #1 Penalty green – playing ball off feet
#2 Penalty green – playing ball off feet
#3 Penalty green – playing ball off feet

Comments: Most agreed that this play should have been stopped earlier since penalty was only end result.

OBJECTIVE SELECTION IN RUGBY

BRIAN P. TRENDELL

INTRODUCTION

At the pinnacle of Rugby in Australia (State and National), it is often said that "the players virtually pick themselves". There seems to be some truth in this, at least when it comes down to final selection from a small squad of players who have been competing directly against one another e.g. Queensland V New South Wales. Maintaining the competitive edge of our flagship teams depends not only on the performance of existing elite players, but also on the identification, development and selection of future representative players at all levels.

In business (human resource development) it has been beneficial to draw on aspects of teamwork and personal motivation from sport to provide role models for managers and others. There may also be a place for drawing on some aspects of human resource system from business and applying them to sport.

In particular the system procedures for staff selection may have a place in not only ensuring an objective selection process in Rugby, but also to assist with talent identification from outside of the traditional centres of Brisbane and Sydney for inclusion in training squads. The potential for more objective selection has been made possible through the squad management system and scientific fitness and strength testing.

HUMAN RESOURCE SELECTION

In organisations, "Selection" is the process of gathering information and making decisions about applicants for positions. It is important that all aspects of this process are carried out effectively and professionally, as the quality of staffing decisions will determine to a large extent the quality of an organisation.

The first step in staff selection is to define the job or role and to determine the competencies (attributes and abilities) needed in the role. This process is known as job analysis.

Job Analysis

Many decisions in the human resources field rely on information about jobs. Job Analysis is no more than a systematic process for collecting and analysing this information. In selecting an applicant for a job, we need to know what attributes (abilities, experience, personality etc) they should possess in order to perform the job tasks effectively.

The most obvious way of collecting this information is to talk to somebody who is very familiar with the job, and to watch a job-holder in action. However, over the past decade there has been a growing awareness that this process should be based on a more rigorous, systematic procedure. This is partly a result of the growing number of psychometric tests, questionnaires and job simulations which are now providing a greater quantity and complexity of information concerning the individual at work. This growth has not only led to an increasing need for more accurate and sophisticated job information but has increased the complexity of the decisions which need to draw on this information. One technique with some relevance to Rugby is described below.

Critical Incident Technique

As the name suggests it is a procedure for collecting observed incidents which have proved very important or critical to performance. An incident is defined as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences to be made about the person performing the act" and to be critical, "the incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects". What emerges hopefully are those essentials of job performance which make the difference between success and failure.

Assessment Techniques

There are a range of techniques that have been used for assessing potential job performance to aid the selection process. How "valid" are these different techniques?

With tests we are able to estimate by a number of standard methods, the margin of error around out measurement and profile decisions accordingly. This is known as the concept of *Test Reliability.*

In testing we are concerned to establish whether the test actually does the job for which it is being used, that is to establish the test's *Validity.*

At the top of Validity Ladder comes the *Assessment Centre* which is the most valid method of assessing people at work. This is not altogether surprising because Assessment Centre involve a range of techniques, like group activities, in trays, tests and structured interviews used to assess a set of clearly defined job criteria.

Of rather lower validity comes interviewing with graphology and astrology giving no better than chance prediction.

HIGH VALIDITY	Assessment Centres
	Ability Tests
	Personality Questionnaires
	Group Activities
	Bio-data
	In-trays
	Interview
	Graphology
LOW VALIDITY	Astrology

Occupational Tests

An occupational or psychometric test is a standardised sample of behaviour which can be described by a numerical scale or category system.

Occupational tests (abilities, personality, interests and motivation) are now used for all types and levels of job selection: from unskilled factory worker to senior management positions. Most of this usage tends to be in larger organisations, clearly because they employ more staff, but also because they have more readily appreciated the difficulties of obtaining comparable assessments from different interviewers.

Interviewing

Interviewing by trained personnel against a clear person specification can achieve a great deal. Nevertheless interviewing can be a chancy business. We have all attended badly conducted interviews where we have not been given the opportunity to show our relevant experience or abilities or where the interviewer has made wrong interpretations of our responses.

It has been shown that the social interactions or 'chemistry' of the interview can lead to different interviewers reaching variable impressions of the same candidate. The personal liking effect and the tendency for untrained interviewers to make judgements of candidates 'as soon as they walk through the door' can lead to serious errors and considerable prejudice in the selection process. Tests aid the selection by ensuring that candidates are treated equally on properly administered and relevant exercises.

Tests can be used to challenge stereotyped judgements made by interviewers and to enable a more objective analysis than is possible by interviewing alone. And it is for these reasons that the introduction of relevant tests, following a rigorous job analysis exercise, forms part of many organisation's equal opportunities programme.

Whereas interviews have been found to be relatively poor predictors of job success the same is not true of occupational tests. Indeed there is more data on the validity of ability tests for predicting training and job success than any other method of selection.

Tests have achieved this success by scaling results against the performance of representative and relevant groups of people. That is, results are interpreted against a Norm Group.

The Validity Ladder, Assessment Centres are high because they include a combination of lower validity techniques (group activities, in-trays and structures interviews.

OBJECTIVE SELECTION IN RUGBY

The traditional selection process for first level representative teams at School, Colts and Country levels in particular has been plagued with criticism of ineffectiveness and even bias. My experience as a Queensland and Queensland Country Colt's Selector (1984-92) confirms some of these views (including my own "bias"). It is not surprising when the selection process involves viewing a large number of players in a restricted number of games. The opportunities for individual to demonstrate their abilities are not the same.

The essentially subjective process is open to the same (unconscious) perception bias that has limited the validity of the personal interview as the sole or main means of staff selection. Even the possible correction of perception "bias" through a committee or panel can be negated by "group think".

The following model of an objective selection process is proposed to improve the reliability and validity of selection. At this point in time it is offered for further discussion and as a stimulus for the applied research needed for its implementation.

OBJECTIVE SELECTION MODEL

Stage	Method	Business Equivalent	Objective	Current Situation
1	Position Analysis	Job Analysis	. Establish Attributes and Abilities for Positions	General Descriptions Exist NEEDS FURTHER RIGOROUS ANALYSIS
2	Nominations	Job Application	Establish a Base Group or Squad	Consultative Process Used Plus Selector Observation
3	Testing	Ability Tests	Eliminate Players Below Standard	Testing Procedures Available REQUIRE VALIDATION AND NORMS
4	Skill Drills (Based on Position Analysis)	Assessment Centre	Objectively Compare Abilities	Some Drills Exist REQUIRE MEASURES AND STANDARDS AS WELL AS TRAINING FOR ASSESSORS
5	Practice Game	Probationary Appointment	Validate Selection	Probables v Possibles

Application

Skill drills were used as part of the selection process for the Brisbane Under 19's in 1991-92. Following the traditional observation system a group of forty players were assessed during a series of drills such as "corner passing grids" and "mauling drills". The process proved to be useful in giving players from "weaker" club teams an opportunity to confirm their skills (and potential) as well as indicating that some players were benefiting from playing in strong club teams i.e. their observed performance was as much a function of other players as it was of their own ability.

Additional stages of the model were trialed during 1992 for the selection of the Queensland Country Colts and Under 21 sides.

These teams are selected from a player base spread throughout the State with 11 Sub Unions each with between 4 and 8 Clubs. The total number of Colts players is approximately 540.

The logistics and cost of a selection process involving observing all players in competitive matches were prohibitive. During March, Sub Unions from each of 3 Regions were asked to nominate a total of 45 players who were considered to be of "a suitable standard" for representative selection. These players participated in a range of "coaching sessions" and "skill drills" while being observed by the selection panels.

On the following day a series of games were played (Under 21 Forwards and Colts Backs v Colts Forwards v Under 21 Backs) as the final selection process. As these were teams who had not trained together these games were an additional *Assessment Centre.*

The regional teams were then selected by a panel to "play" at Country Selection Trials that involved a round robin of games, skill drills and a possibles v probables match all played during a long weekend in early May.

The process was generally successful. Some difficulties occurred because of the belief of some administrators that players have to be "competing for their region" in order to perform. They did not accept the "Assessment Centre" approach as part of the first round robin games.

The subsequent possibles v probables game (together with the skills sessions) provided the most effective selection process I have been part of in nine years.

The result of this trial objective selection process can be judged by the decision (by Country Presidents) to repeat the process in 1993.

It should be emphasised that this process is not intended to deny the place of competitions between teams, but rather it is to indicate that these games alone are not the most effective means of selection for higher representation.

Required Improvements

The process could be significantly improved with the inclusion of a battery of reliable and valid tests during the early elimination process. The data derived from the AIS Squad (1989-92), the Queensland and Queensland Country Train on Squads as well as the current Queensland Academy of Sport Squad (Colts) should be analysed to confirm the reliability and validity of testing as well as to establish standards (norms).

Performance in the selected tests combined with observed performance in skill drills would provide a more objective guide to the final selection or validation process of a possibles v probables game.

Validity

In general the validity of a test is concerned with the extent to which it actually measures what it has been designed to measure; in particular, how relevant it is to job or training content. The validity of a test can take a number of different forms depending on the question being asked.

Face validity is concerned with whether a test appears to have relevance for a particular job (playing position). Poor perceived relevance can lead to low motivation and scepticism on the part of candidates. Face validity is not the same as *true validity,* however.

True validity can take two main forms, *content* validity and *empirical* validity.

Content validity is concerned with whether the test items are representative of the domain to be measured. Content validity can be assessed by carrying out a detailed analysis of job content followed by matching this information to test content. Through this process, the chosen tests will be measuring relevant skills at the required level (speed, fitness and strength) and will provide a basis for establishing empirical validity.

Empirical validity can be of two kinds; *concurrent* validity, where the potential effectiveness of new methods is evaluated on current representative players or *predictive* validity, where the impact of a new method or test is evaluated by following up the performance of selected individuals some time after initial testing.

Validation

The process of test validation involves correlating individual's scores on that test with their scores on appropriate criterion measures. These indicators of criterion performance must, of course, be obtained from sources independent of the individual in question, such as assessments made by a panel of assessors. Selection in a team should only be one criterion as this can depend on opportunity etc.

Also, in identifying the appropriate criteria which should be used, it is important to have first carried out a job (player position) analysis study in order to identify the key dimensions of effective performance. Job analysis also helps define the range of tests which could be examined in a validity study.

Job analysis should be a consultative process and include input from current Representative Players (Job Incumbents) and Coaches.

Personality

While Personality (self report instrument) Tests are known to have medium validity for job performance, they are rarely used as a means of eliminating or selecting applicants as can be the case with ability tests. Rather they are used to focus the structured interview process i.e. any "questionable" styles or traits are "validated" during an interview.

Perhaps a more important use of these tests is in providing feedback during Management Development and Coaching.

Similarly a number of tests are currently used for Player Development and Coaching in Rugby. I do not propose any change to this application at this time.

For example, I have personally used some Occupational Personality Questionnaires as an aid in improving the coachability of players. The instruments improved my understanding of the individual's style when relating to others, thinking style and coping with stress and emotions. I have only used this information after the player has been selected.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper it has been implied that the model of Objective Selection has particular application when selecting teams such as the Queensland Country Under 21 and Under 19's where the logistics of traditional selection techniques are prohibitive.

The process does have a far wider potential. Australian Rugby is founded on a relatively small player base. It is therefore essential to identify and develop the maximum number of players with "representative potential" from ACT and other States as well as the current major centres.

Position Analysis, Ability Testing and Skill Assessment are essential to this aspect of "Selection". For these to be implemented there needs to be an on-going validation and reliability testing procedure.

As a member of a committee, a selector will have a prime responsibility for the success of a process based on the principle of selection on merit. Faith validity in this process will be increased when selectors are able to demonstrate that they have used a combination of reliable and valid objective selection processes. More importantly we will have enhanced our chances of identifying and developing future Australian Representatives at all levels.

FORWARD PLAY OPTIONS UNDER THE NEW TACKLE LAW

JOHN ALLEN

1. Hypothesis

My hypothesis is this - that the new Law 18/19 requirement, (i.e. that the third man in to a tackled situation be on his feet), will cause a new skill to be adopted by successful rugby sides. Rather than simply diving in and "building the wall", a practice previously sanctioned by referees as positive play, the third man in will have to pick up the ball, take one or two steps, and then go to ground placing the ball behind him, making the ball available for his teammate to possibly do the same. In the absence of a better name, I have called this *"pick and place" forward play.*

2. Analysis of the Alternative Options at the Tackle.

The various forward play alternatives at the tackle appear to be the following:

(a) "Clear Out" opposition players from the tackle area.

(b) Pick up the ball and try to form a maul.

(c) Pick up the ball and move forward to confront the opposition in a driving maul situation.

(N.B. The fourth option at the tackle is obviously to pick up the ball and kick, pass or run with it. I have deliberately not considered this as I am concentrating on forward play.)

I believe that in senior rugby, all of these options are fraught with danger. Option (a), clear out opposition players from the tackle area, has some inherent problems. The ball can become isolated in general play, thus allowing an opponent to come in *from any side* to pick up the ball and still be onside. For the clear out option to succeed, your side must be extremely well drilled, with backlines realigning quickly and forwards remaining on their feet so as not to be left behind.

Option (b), pick up the ball and try to from a maul, is probably the least effective option. If no opponents are at the tackle on their feet *immediately when your player picks up the ball,* a static target is created for some opposition forward to "smash" at will. Even if opponents are in the immediate vicinity, remaining static gives them a better than even chance of disturbing your chances of winning clean ball.

Option (c) is better than option (b), but still has inherent dangers. It relies on the player moving forward, presenting the ball in a way that provides the opposition with a chance to at least "kill" the movement by wrapping up your player and the ball, or at worst, dispossess your player. Keeping possession in this situation is all the more important now that the Maul Law gives the ensuing scrum feed to the opposition team.

It also assumes that the player moving forward has sufficient teammates to secure possession and keep their momentum. Again, this will require extremely disciplined and mobile forward packs to be successful.

3. Advantages Gained By Adopting "Pick & Place" Forward Play

(a) It satisfies the requirements of the new tackle Law. Law 18 (1)(b) states that "after a tackle any other player must be on his feet when he plays the ball." Because the third player in *is on his feet when he plays the ball* the tackle is over and it is general play when the player goes to ground with the ball.

(b) It keeps the momentum moving forward without isolating the ball carrier. Even though the point of continuity may only be moved forward a metre or so in each movement, this still significant in moving the advantage line forward and accruing all the advantages that

entails. The forwards can gain two or three steps of momentum before engaging an opponent and the backline is moving forward if and when they receive possession.

(c) It commits opponents to the ball carrier and hopefully takes one or two to the ground, thus taking out of play. After two or three "pick & place" movements, up to six or seven opponents may be on the ground and out of play. Those remaining on their feet will have their defensive alignment in tatters.

(d) It "shields" the ball from the opposition, thus creating a "mini wall". Most coaches in senior rugby acknowledged the tactic of "building the wall" as an effective method of securing possession at the tackle. Given that this is now outlawed, "pick & place" allows your side to move forward and create a controlled one-man shield from opponents kicking the ball, picking it up, killing it, etc.

(e) It creates a controlled, forward propelling movement. The principle argument against "clearing out" at the tackle is that it raises the tempo of the movement, which may result in handling errors by players coming through. One possible reason for this is that opponents are able to pressure them more easily because it becomes a general play situation. "Pick & place" results in more of your team being in the vicinity of the ball carrier. Thus, "safety in numbers" should prevent some handling errors.

(f) It is easy to referee. That is, the *referee should always be able to see the ball in your team's possession*. Thus, any attempt by the opposition to kill the movement will usually result in a favourable decision from the referee. The effect of this should not be underestimated. As long as the referee sees the ball, he is unlikely to blow-up static movements, with the feed going to the opposition.

4. Experience in Games To Date.

The best example I have seen of "pick & place" was in the NSW v Wales game in 1991. NSW kept possession for incredibly large slabs of the match by using this technique to prevent the ball carrier from being isolated. Rod Macqueen later stated at the 1992 Level II course at Narrabeen that NSW's objective was to keep possession while keeping continuity. That is, as few line-outs and scrums as possible, even though they would probably win them. In effect, NSW pre-empted the new Laws.

Since the Law changes have come into effect in June, I have experienced games where all of the aforementioned options have been used. I honestly believe "pick & place" to be the best option in a tackle situation.