

# Key Competencies for Grading Referees

August 21, 2012

## Non-Compliances

- Failures in observation
- Errors in Law

## Materiality

C-Grade referees are not expected to apply materiality. If a C-Referee penalizes an offense the PR feels is non-material, this may be discussed, but should not be scored against the referee. If a C-Referee does not penalize an offense that is non-material, the referee is not responsible for addressing the infraction with the player.

B-Grade referees are held accountable for judging materiality. If a B-Referee penalizes an offense the PR feels is non-material, that is an error (subject to discussion as the referee may have a valid reason to call it material). If a B-Referee does not penalize because an observed offense is non-material, the referee is responsible for addressing the infringer at the next opportunity. This is a coaching point unless there are several similar omissions.

## Coaching Points

These are points to note and discuss with the referee, but are not Non-Compliances for scoring purposes.

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## **TACKLE**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Observed arriving players leaving their feet.
- Observed tackler playing the ball while on the ground.
- Observed ball carrier playing the ball while on the ground after releasing it.
- Did not permit pileups to continue after ball was buried.
- Awarded scrum put-in to the correct side when ball became unplayable.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed killing of the ball by tackler and ball carrier.
- Observed players lying on the ground interfering with ball availability.
- Observed players lying on the ground interfering with players on their feet.

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned out of the way of arriving players.
- When play is stopped, positioned close enough to administer effective corrective action.

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- \* Observed and prevented tackler infringements that delay the immediate availability of the ball. It is recognized that at lower-level territorial matches the speed with which the tackler conforms to expectations will be slower than at higher-level territorial matches.
- \* Observed and prevented ball carrier infringements that delay the immediate availability of the ball. It is recognized that at lower-level territorial matches the speed with which the ball carrier conforms to expectations will be slower than at higher-level territorial matches.
- \* Observed and prevented infringements by other players (i.e. non-tackler and non-ball carrier) that cause the ball not to be immediately available.
- Able to distinguish between other players entering the tackle with the intent to remove players on the ground and make the ball available and who may themselves end up on the ground. (a legal action) versus other players leaving their feet when they enter the tackle to secure (or slow) ball recycle (an illegal action).
- Able to recognize and prevented illegal zone entry. Understands that the tackled ball carrier does not have to release to a player who entered illegally.

*\* Observed and prevented was chosen because it best expresses the expectation of a T-Panel referee. Failures in observation are clear errors and are scored as such.*

*Preventative actions fall into two areas:*

- *Actions taken at each tackle (preventative voice and/or positioning). These are treated primarily as coaching points.*
- *Actions taken to prevent patterns of offenses. These are addressed in the control section.*

#### Coaching Points

- Initial position is close enough to manage the immediate availability of the ball.
- Final position anticipated which team would win the ball.

- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent tackle infringements from becoming material during the final stage of the tackle.
- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent infringements during the formative stage of the tackle.

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all elements listed above.**

## **ADVANTAGE**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Recognized distinctions of advantage for penalty kick infringements versus scrum infringements.
- Did not return play to the original infringement after territorial advantage had been gained.
- Played advantage with consideration of players' safety.
- Played advantage in all appropriate situations.
- Communicated advantage with voice and signal (without reference to specific details as listed below).

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Did not stop play before the non-offending was afforded the time to establish a tactical advantage from an obvious opportunity.
- Played advantage gained once the non-offending team had an obvious opportunity to play the ball as they wished.
- Did not bring play back when the non-offending team had gained a tactical advantage but then made an unforced error prior to capitalizing on the opportunity.
- Played advantage based on a clear and real opportunity rather than on a hope for some opportunistic event.
- Played advantage without putting non-offending players under pressure.
- \*Communicated when advantage is being played with signal and specific communication regarding the reason for the advantage (scrum or penalty)

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Recognized when infringements were not material and allowed play to continue without playing advantage.
- Played advantage with proper consideration for the preference/temper of each team.
- \* Identified the player, team and infringement while communicating that advantage is being played (e.g., "Blue 10 leaving his feet").
- \* Communicated when advantage was gained.
- Communicated to offender (and usually the captain) about the infringement if an advantage was gained.
- Communicated to offender (and usually the captain) about the non-material infringement if play had been allowed to continue after the infringement.

#### ***Scoring note***

*Communication elements (marked with \*) should not be scored as individual errors. Rather they should be viewed as a competency that is either met or not met. One omission does not impact scoring. This is a one-time glitch. More than one omission counts as one error.*

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all elements listed above.**

## **RUCK**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Observed flagrant illegal collapsing of the ruck.
- Observed other unsafe play.
- Observed offside by defending non-participants, including loiterers.
- Awarded scrum put-in to the correct side when the ball became unplayable.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed players who failed to remain on their feet.
- Observed players who used their hands to win the ball in a ruck.
- Observed players who joined the ruck from in front of the hindmost teammate.
- Observed players who obstructed in advance of the ball.
- Observed defenders who unbound and affected play.

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned out of the way of arriving players.
- Initial position was appropriate to manage the contest for the ball.
- Final position was appropriate to manage offside by participants and other destructive play by participants.

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- \* Observed and prevented players from entering the ruck with their heads and shoulders below their hips.
- \* Observed and prevented tactical illegal collapsing of ruck.
- \* Observed and prevented attackers who loitered at the side of the ruck (“Sentinels, Pillars, Posts, etc”).
- Immediately and accurately (Not at a tackle or hug) communicated *ruck*.

*\* Observed and prevented was chosen because it best expresses the expectation of a T-Panel referee. Failures in observation are clear errors and are scored as such.*

*Preventative actions fall into two areas:*

- *Actions taken at each ruck (preventative voice and/or positioning). These are treated primarily as coaching points.*
- *Actions taken to prevent patterns of offenses. These are addressed in the control section.*

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned out of the way of the outlet pass.
- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent ruck/maul infringements from becoming material during the final stage of the ruck/maul.
- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent ruck/maul infringements during the formative stage of the ruck/maul.

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all elements listed above.**

## **MAUL**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Correctly managed static mauls (including mauls moving laterally).
- Observed flagrant illegal collapsing of the maul.
- Observed other unsafe play.
- Observed offside by defending non-participants, including loiterers.
- Awarded scrum put-in to the correct side when the ball became unplayable.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed obstruction during the formation of the maul.
- Observed players who failed to remain on their feet.
- Observed players who joined the maul from in front of the hindmost teammate.
- Observed players who obstructed in advance of the ball when players roll off the maul.
- Observed defenders who unbound and affected play.

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned out of the way of arriving players.
- Initial position was appropriate to manage the contest for the ball.
- Final position was appropriate to manage offside by participants and other destructive play by participants.

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- \* Observed and prevented players from entering the maul with their heads and shoulders below their hips.
- \* Observed and prevented tactical illegal collapsing of maul.
- \* Observed and prevented attackers who loitered at the side of the maul (“Sentinels, Pillars, Posts, etc”).
- Immediately and accurately (Not at a tackle or hug) communicated *maul*.

*\* Observed and prevented was chosen because it best expresses the expectation of a T-Panel referee. Failures in observation are clear errors and are scored as such.*

*Preventative actions fall into two areas:*

- *Actions taken at each maul (preventative voice and/or positioning). These are treated primarily as coaching points.*
- *Actions taken to prevent patterns of offenses. These are addressed in the control section.*

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned out of the way of the outlet pass.
- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent ruck/maul infringements from becoming material during the final stage of the ruck/maul.
- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent ruck/maul infringements during the formative stage of the ruck/maul.

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all elements listed above.**

## **RESTARTS**

## **RESTART KICKS & OPEN PLAY**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Observed restart kicks (i.e. penalty kicks, free kicks, kickoffs, dropouts) that were taken incorrectly (method and place).
- Observed non-kicking team players who failed to retire 10 meters or who were not put outside by actions of other players at restart kicks.
- Observed offside kicking-team players at restart kicks.
- Observed forward passes and knock-ons.

#### Coaching Points

- Position & orientation were appropriate to observe offside at restart kicks.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed players lying on the ground (Law 14) interfering with ball availability.
- Observed players falling over a player on the ground with the ball.
- Observed offside players in open play when ball was kicked ahead.
- Observed accidental offside in open play.
- Recognized willful knock-ons.
- Facilitated quick tap penalty and free kicks.

#### Coaching Points

- Proactively prevented offenses at static restart kicks from occurring.
- Positioned even with ball carrier with suitable adjustment in anticipation of next phase.
- Positioned even with the front wave of players approaching the receiver of a kick.

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Proactively prevented offenses at quickly taken restart kicks from occurring.
- Proactively prevented offenses in open play from occurring.

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all of the elements above.**



## **SCRUM**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Awarded scrum at the correct position.
- Observed and ensured fair competition for the ball.
- Enforced proper engagement procedures.
- Observed and ensured that after engagement, the scrum was stationary and square to touch until the ball was put in.
- Did not allow repeated collapsing or lifting of scrums.
- Used and acted upon "Use it or lose it" at static scrums.
- Observed and ensured scrumhalf remained onside and stayed out of the pocket.
- Observed back row unbinding early.
- Observed offside by non-participants.

#### Coaching Points

- Final position was appropriate to observe offside and destructive play.
- Body orientation & scanning provided good view of all non-participants.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed and ensured binding between opposing props was correct.
- Observed and ensured that heads and shoulders were above the hips until the scrum was over.
- Observed and ensured that the body and feet of all front row players were in a normal position to make a forward shove.
- Observed illegal wheeling.
- Did not have repeated reset of scrums. In other words, the problems causing reset scrums were identified and solved.
- Ensured back rows remained bound until the scrum was over.
- Ensured non-participants remained onside.

#### Coaching Point

- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent scrum offenses from occurring.

**Referees graded Territorial, National and International panel are expected to meet all elements listed above.**

## **LINEOUT**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Awarded the lineouts at the correct place.
- Established correct positioning of the thrower, the thrower's opposite and the receivers (if any) prior to the throw.
- Observed improper numbers of players in the lineout
- Observed unfair competition for the ball.
- Observed jumpers jumping early or remaining supported in the air prior to the throw-in.
- Observed destructive offenses across the lineout and made this a priority.
- Observed offside infringements by participants.
- Observed illegal support of jumpers.
- Observed offside by non-participants when ball was held in the lineout.
- Observed improper quick throw-ins.

#### Coaching Points

- Positioned is such that referee is visible to backs when ball is held in the lineout.

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Ensured jumpers did not jump early or remain supported in the air prior to the throw-in.
- Ensured there were no destructive offenses across the lineout.
- Ensured participants remained onside.
- Ensured proper support of jumpers.
- Ensured non-participants remained onside when ball is held in the lineout.
- Ensured that players of the team throwing in do not obstruct prior to forming of a maul at a lineout.
- Managed quick throw-ins.

#### Coaching Point

- Positioning and communications were appropriate to prevent lineout offenses from occurring.

**Referees graded Territorial, National and International panel are expected to meet all elements listed above**

# **MANAGEMENT**

## **CONTROL/COMMUNICATION**

### **Key Elements of Competence**

#### **C2 Elements**

- Observed dangerous tackles (e.g. high or no-wrap).
- Observed late tackles on kicker.
- Observed early tackles on the receiver of a kick.
- Controlled unsafe behavior and foul play promptly and effectively.
- Candidly admitted mistakes, but did not try to compensate for them.
- Behaved professionally both on and off the playing enclosure.
- Observed trampling of players at tackles
- Whistle tone was distinctive according to decision.
- Primary signal (penalty kick, free kick, or scrum) was clear and given simultaneously with whistle

#### **C1 Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Observed late or early tackles.
- Observed obstruction and players who obstructed prior to a maul being formed.
- Observed use of a teammate as a "pick" or shield.
- Observed unfair play and applied the appropriate punitive measures.
- Observed dangerous play and misconduct and applied the appropriate punitive measures.
- Observed individual acts of cynical infringements and applied appropriate sanctions, including caution and sin bin and/or penalty try (without prior warning).
- Used appropriate punitive measures.
- Communicated with captains/players so that they complied with his requests upon formal prompting (i.e., players were compelled to comply).
- Remained calm in tense situations.
- Secondary signal was clear and given simultaneously with verbal explanations promptly after the whistle was blown and explanation for penalty was concise, specific and clearly understood by players.

#### **B-Panel Elements**

- All elements listed above.
- Identified flash points and dealt with them effectively.
- Managed observed repeated team infringements effectively by applying appropriate sanctions, including caution and sin bin (usually after prior warning has been given).  
Repeated team infringements can be:
  - A number of similar offences in a short period of time
  - A pattern without time limit (e.g. offences occurring close to the goal line throughout the match)
- Managed observed repeated infringements by individuals by applying appropriate sanctions, including caution and sin bin (usually after prior warning has been given).  
Repeated infringements by the individual are without time limit. Once a warning has been given it stands in effect for the remainder of the game

- Recognized when infringements were not material and managed them, without stopping the game, so they would not recur.
- Resolved problems without continually penalizing for the same offense.
- Communicated with captains/players so that they willingly corrected problems upon formal and informal prompting.
- Communicated no infringement had occurred in situations where there was a possibility of doubt.
- Communicated effectively with other match officials.
- Demeanor was one of confidence.

#### Coaching Points

- Communications applied at the moment of infringement should not be repetitive. For example, *Ruck* or *Hands off* (at a ruck) should be said only once.

**National and International Panel referees are expected to meet all of the elements above.**

#### **NOTE:**

Certain aspects of COMMUNICATION are found within other units. For example:

- Communications in TACKLE, RUCK, MAUL, RESTART KICKS & OPEN PLAY, SCRUM, and LINEOUT that pertain to the preventive nature of infringements at the moment of the infringement.
- Communications in ADVANTAGE that are designed to facilitate play after an infringement has been observed.

