



INFORMATION PAGE

Week of March 25th, 2005

1 Coaching defence

Notes taken by Lee Smith at a presentation by John Mitchell

1. Statistical evidence shows that defence wins games and that if time is pressing it is better spent on defence disproportionately to get a result.
2. Patterns and individual roles should be planned for scrum, line-out and phase play. Phase play may be modified for those on the right and left sides of the field.
3. Align in relation to teammates, not getting ahead of those inside, and opponents, being in a position to move up and across into the tackle.
4. Get off the line quickly to close down time and space.
5. Go directly forward after positioning in the channel between 2 attackers.
6. After closing down most of the space use "reactive agility" to keep moving at a slower speed so that adjustments can be made to the behaviour of the attack.
7. Tackle to contest the ball based on the situation. This may depend on the "match-up" with the relative strengths of the ball carrier and the tackler being taken into account. The overall aim is to regain possession, but this may take some time, so initially the aim is to stop forward movement and contest the ball. This may be by the tackler or the tackler and support players. In this second example the tackler stops the forward movement by taking away the legs and the support player support the ball.
8. If a pass is made the defender maintains the line for at least 2 further passes to defend cutback moves.
9. The quality of tackles can be graded and points allocated based on effectiveness. The highest mark can be given for a turnover, the next for preventing forward movement and delaying the recycling of the ball, the next for preventing forward movement, the next for completing a tackle and no marks given for a missed tackle.
10. Players should move into tackles with their arms in the ready position. Players with their arms down react by raising them, causing high tackles.
11. As play continues it becomes more and more important not to infringe because, in infringing, the player negates the effort of all those in the preceding play.
12. As a guide at the post-tackle our shoulders must be under theirs.

2 Coaching attack

And more notes taken by Lee at a presentation by Aussie McLean

1. The defence gives the attack its options in time and space. It is therefore important that when a player is tackled the tackler is noted to give the attack a signal as to what the defence is doing.
2. Defenders who drift give the ball carrier more time on the ball and more time to manipulate the defence.
3. Players should avoid ball watching, as by doing this they don't see the options available, especially those wide out.
4. Under current practice the #8 taking the ball from scrums merely creates the opportunity for a defensive screen unless a substantial advantage is created.
5. The skills of attack apply to all players just as the skills at the tackle and post tackle do. This is emphasised by the number of phase plays that exist in the game.
6. Decisions are made on the following criteria:
 - a. Attacking numbers compared with defensive numbers.
 - b. Miss matches at a particular place in the defensive line.
 - c. The use of the width of the field.
 - d. The grouping of players at points across the field.
7. This will be further helped by recognising the characteristics of individual defenders:
 - a. The type of tackle they most likely make.
 - b. The defender looking in.
 - c. The defender who rushes across the field in the drift.
 - d. The defender who rushes up out of line.
 - e. The defender who is a ball watcher.
 - f. The defender who lacks pace and stands wide to compensate for this.

3 Final stats from the 2005 RWC Sevens in Hong Kong

- 0.1 - Average kicks per game by New Zealand [lowest]
- 1.6 - Average missed tackles per game by Argentina [lowest]
- 2 - Number of times Fiji have won the RWC Sevens
- 2.1 - Average number of errors per game made by Scotland during RWC Sevens 2005 [lowest]
- 2.82 - Number of passes per tackle during RWC Sevens 2005
- 4 - Average kicks per game by Tunisia [highest]
- 4.5 - Average missed tackles per game by Georgia [highest]
- 5 - Number of try assists by Vili Satala of Fiji [highest]
- 5.1 - Average number of errors per game made by Hong Kong during RWC Sevens 2005 [highest]
- 5.6 - Average number of tries per match scored by New Zealand during RWC Sevens 2005 [highest]
- 7.6 - Average tackles per game by Hong Kong [lowest]

8 - Number of tries scored by the joint top try scorers during RWC Sevens 2005 - Sireli Bobo (Fiji), David Lemi (Samoa) and Rudi Wulf (New Zealand)
10.6 - Number of passes per try during RWC Sevens 2005
14.8 - Average tackles per game by Japan [highest]
19.8 - Average passes per game by Georgia [lowest]
21 - Number of tries scored by Canada, France and Russia during RWC Sevens 2005
45 - Number of tries scored by New Zealand during RWC Sevens 2005 [highest]
46.8 - Average passes per game by Samoa [highest]
59 - Number of points conceded by England during RWC Sevens 2005 [lowest]
120 - Number of passes completed by Chinese Taipei during RWC Sevens 2005 [lowest]
245 - Number of times teams kicked while in possession
287 - Number of points scored by New Zealand during RWC Sevens 2005 [highest]
297 - Number of conversions kicked during RWC Sevens 2005
313 - Number of scrums won during RWC Sevens 2005
375 - Number of passes completed by Samoa during RWC Sevens 2005 [highest]
389 - Number of penalties awarded during RWC Sevens 2005
432 - Number of turnovers during RWC Sevens 2005
497 - Number of tries scored during RWC Sevens 2005
564 - Number of missed tackles during RWC Sevens 2005
619 - Number of errors made during RWC Sevens 2005
993 - Number of points Fiji has scored in RWC Sevens history
1863 - Number of effective tackles during RWC Sevens 2005
3084 - Number of points scored during RWC Sevens 2005
5324 - Number of passes completed during RWC Sevens 2005

Best wishes to all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Jones
Regional Development Manager