REFEREE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE

SCRUM MANAGEMENT

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At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the purpose of the scrum and the referee's role in the management of the scrum.
- Describe actions of the tighthead and loosehead props, which may disrupt the platform upon engagement
- Explain the four key points to cover in a referee's pre-match brief, which relate to your expectations at scrum time.
- Describe the process to identify the cause of disrupted scrums, using five scenarios as listed.

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What is the purpose of the scrum?

- A way of restarting the game
- A platform to launch from
- A contest between two forward packs and most importantly two front rows! (Bear in mind the more junior the players the more important the safety aspect).

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What is the referee's role at scrum time?

- Ensure a safe and fair contest,

- Ensure that the contest can continue throughout the game,

- Take action when necessary to address illegal tactics and practices.

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ACTIVITY 1

BINDING BY PROPS
MIDDLE LINE
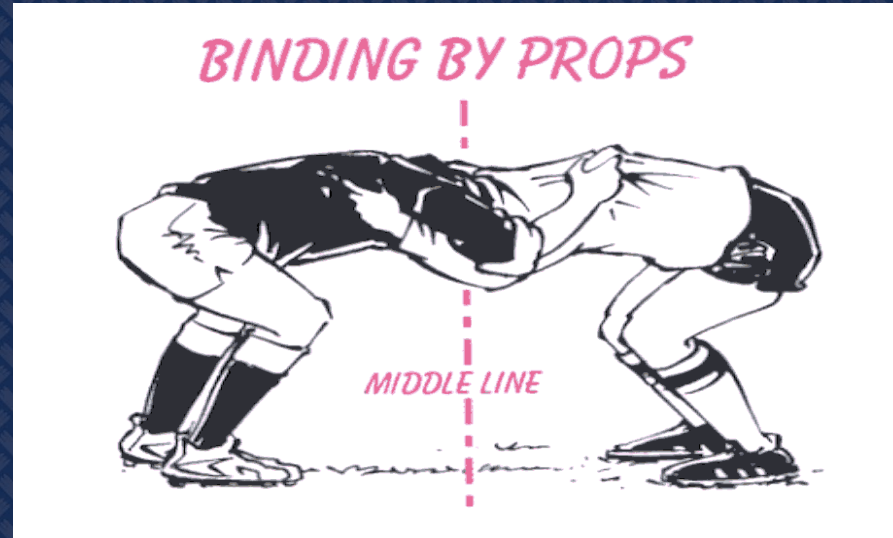
Question - What is the loosehead trying to achieve on their team's throw in?

Answer - Keep relatively high (for a clear and easy tunnel for the throw in), keep the scrum on his side straight so that the platform is steady.

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ACTIVITY 1

Question - What is the opposition tighthead trying to achieve, against the LH?

Answer – To put pressure on the platform and make it difficult for the throwing in team's hooker to hook the ball. To achieve this a TH may pack on an angle, (boring in).

ACTIVITY 1

- Question - What about the other side? What may you see?

- Answer - LH on the non-throwing in side may try to exert pressure on the TH by angling into the TH after engagement.   They may also try to cramp the space of the tighthead to negate the impact on engagement. The TH should be straight to ensure a settled platform on his ball.

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ACTIVITY TWO
In groups of 4

Task:

- Reflect on the learning points from Activity One and discuss what the referee is going to say to the props in the pre-match to ensure the right result is achieved

- Identify the main points you will emphasise at the pre-match briefing.

Someone from each group to present back to whole group

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THE 4 POINT PLAN PRE-MATCH

1. Advise the LH you are looking for the head to be above hips and the hit to be straight.
2. Advise the TH you are looking for a straight hit every time.
3. Advise the front row you are going to give them a call of, 'CROUCH' when they are formed up - 'BIND' then stability and 'SET' then stability before the ball is thrown in.

At Junior level, it is essential to summarise by saying that all actions at each scrum must work towards ensuring a SAFE and STEADY scrum throughout.

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ACTIVITY THREE "CAUSE AND EFFECT".

Back into your groups

The whole scrum management process can hinge around the points listed.

- Your group is to come up with the process to deal with each point:
- A different group to present feedback on each scenario. Others can discuss and add new points.

Scenarios

- Team is engaging early and not adhering to your call.

- The scrum is cribbing away from you.

- The scrum is cribbing towards you

- The scrum collapses

- The hooker stands up?

Scenarios
Team is engaging early and not adhering to your call.

- Do not say anything between your 'Crouch', 'Bind' and 'Set' calls.
- Ensure the calls are clear and concise - if a side engages early, they have chosen to do so, and the action must be adjudicated on accordingly.
- Be strong on taking action. If a team engages early and is clearly at fault – Free Kick.

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The scrum is cribbing away from you.

- The cause is likely to be on the loosehead side of the scrum.
- The cause of the scrum moving away from you is that one or both of the props on your side have angled into the hooker.
- Either the TH started on an angle and continued to go inwards, or the LH will have swung out and pushed in on the TH.
- The key is to watch the engagement position of the TH to determine whether the angling in was caused by the engagement alignment (a simple picture to watch).
- Observing the position of the feet immediately prior to engagement will assist this process.

The scrum is cribbing towards you

- The cause is likely to be on the tighthead side of the scrum.

- Apply exactly the same principles as in 2 above, only on the far props.

- As a referee, if the scrum comes towards you and you have to reset, go to the other side for the reset scrum and watch those props closely.

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The scrum collapses

- The cause on engagement is generally the front rows engaging too low (head below hips).
- As the referee, watch for poor body position and the back being arched, causing the collapse. (REMEMBER - this is a general rule of thumb and does not mean this is always the case!).
- The TH can lose their footing on engagement... if the collapse is after the ball is thrown in, the pressure has now contributed to the collapse and you need to watch the body positions of the two props as it happens.
- Shoulders can roll inwards, especially if TH drops the bind off the jersey and can therefore roll the shoulder.

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The hooker stands up?

- Watch the shoulders of the hooker who stood up: if both shoulders are level (in a straight standing position), the hooker has made the conscious choice of 'getting out'!
- This could be due to significant pressure from the other hooker who has got underneath them, but it is their job to stay in – they will either be going backwards and therefore stood up, or offensively drove through and up.
- If their LEFT shoulder is up in the air, with the right one still more or less in the scrum, then the props have forced them out sideways, due to the angling under pressure.
- Go back to points 1 and 2 to determine which prop caused the hooker to have to come out (while it seems logical the TH has caused it; a LH applying significant pressure can also be the cause).

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SUMMARY

Stick to the key messages, which make up the pre-match and create the picture in the referee's mind.

Add whatever you would like in terms of your own experience to insist on the importance of being able to

"IDENTIFY"

and then announce to the players the

"CAUSE".