



The Dark Arts 😊, not really.

June, 2024

# Why getting it right matters

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- Scrums PKS are high-impact decisions. Teams use scrums as a weapon, you get it wrong it throws game plan into disarray.
- Frequent collapses lead to increased player aggression.
- Poorly managed scrums lead to frustration which then puts doubt in players minds re other areas of your game.

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- More questioning of calls
- Less compliance. He/she doesn't know what they are doing at scrum, therefore no idea re TRM.
- I missed one? That's right – safety.



# When do you start managing the scrum?

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- When you arrive at ground?
  - Pre-game chat?
  - At first scrum?
  - At each scrum?
  - None of the above?
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# Prep

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- Pregame Talk - Know what you want to say to the players – Front row – Write down your speech and learn it. Builds confidence.
- Your talk needs to be interactive – Get the players to agree with you regarding standards and obligations for them – It should not be a conference with one speaker. Put your ego away. Get agreement from each of them so they are in no doubt.
- My pre-game is short and sharp. 3 calls, three actions. On the crouch down nice and quick, on the bind, nice and long and stay off the shoulders and on the set I want to see a hit but don't chase your feet. Both sides work up; you will get rewarded, you don't, you won't. My problem children are those with elbows down so keep them up. That's it, simple to the point.





# Pre-game talk goal

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- Establish a rapport with the players
- Explain your engagement sequence and what you are looking for the players to do
- Get the players to give you verbal agreement that they understand these objectives
- Make your requirements known and accepted before you start the match – Put onus on players to comply



# What are the teams trying to do

- It is clear from Hudl that this is a weakness. We as a group don't understand what teams are trying to do.

| <b>Team putting ball into scrum</b> | <b>Opponents</b>          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Control the scrum                   | Disrupt their opponents   |
| A tool to launch an attack          | Limit attacking options   |
| Wheel the scrum                     | Wheel the scrum           |
| Wear down their opponents           | Wear down their opponents |



# What are the front rowers trying to do?

| Putting the ball into the scrum  | Not their pain   |
|--|--|
| <b>Loosehead Props</b>   |  |
| Stable Scrum / Move forward / Get ball out   | Get under their opponent / Push on an angle / Put pressure on other hooker / Destabilize the opponents                             |
| <b>Hooker</b>  |  |
| Stay square / Keep low / Ball out via channel 1 or 2 / See the ball before its introduction  | Put pressure on opposing hooker / Push on other tighthead prop / Squeeze the opponent's head                                       |
| <b>Tighthead Props</b>   |  |
| Keep his opponents under control / Push forwards / Destabilize his opponents   | Push but often on an angle / Cause problems for his opponents / Put pressure on the other hooker's head / Be a nuisance in general |
| <b>Complete Front Row</b>  |  |
| Solid / Be low / Ready to Push / Dominant / Bodies in strong position / Capable of exploding or absorbing pressure / ready quickly | Solid / Be low / Ready to Push / Be disruptive / Pushing / Win the hit to control the scrum / Wheel the scrum as needed            |



# The call

- One of the Biggest issues among senior referees is the three calls, three actions.
- It's almost like you are so excited to get scrum done that you are rushing the call, and it is leading to instability.
- Slow it the 'F' down. Don't move to next step until compliance is achieved, it is taking too long.. Free kick the offending team.. Simples 😊





# Body position – The Tower of Power

Firstly, the feet are a shoulder width apart and able to support their body weight



The hips are facing forward



The shoulders are above hips



The back is flat



And the head is in a neutral position

Other key points

Can you see six shoulders?

Is the scrum the same height?

Are the players steady?

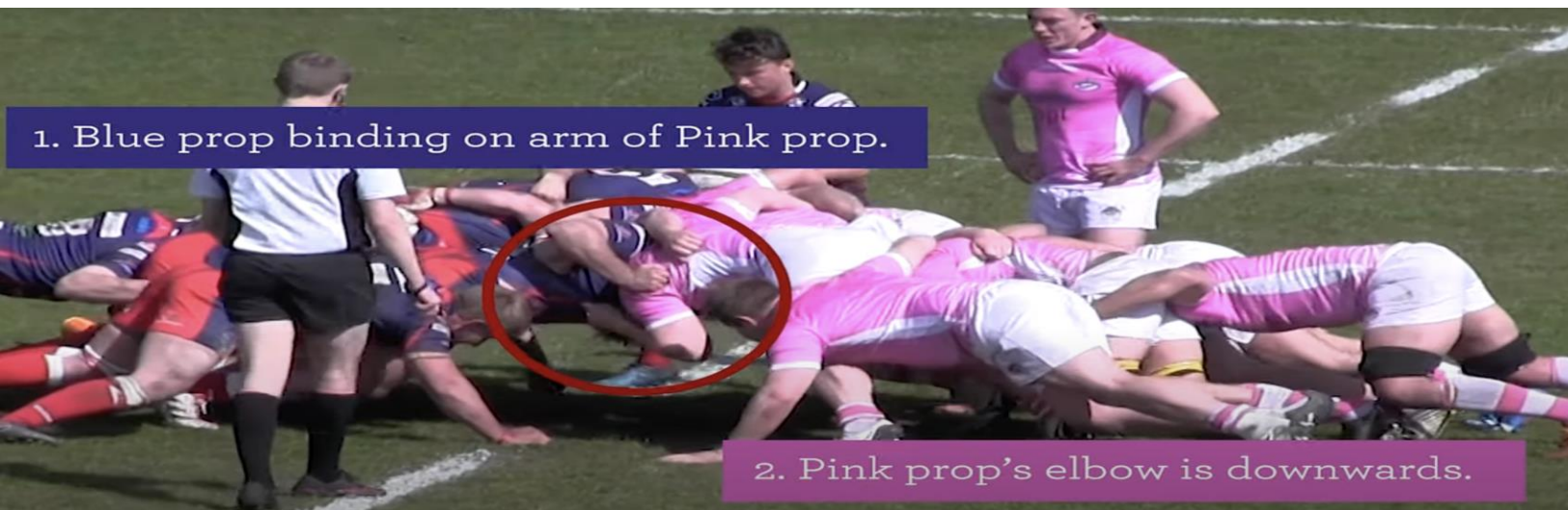
Can you see whole scrum, you are not the half back 😊

Don't call 'set' if there's movement.

KISS – Who is going forward? Are both sides going forward?



# Handy scrum pictures





# So the scrum has gone to shite?

Resets are bad but guessing is worse. Senior referees have way too much of both. Also don't call 'use it' until ball at 8

| Problem                       | Probable cause and solution  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Scrum Collapsed On engagement | a. During the engagement, watch the TH closely. If his head is lower than his hips, this position leads to collapses   |
| The scrum moves away from you | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Due to action of the props nearest to you</li> <li>b. Look at the engagement angle of the near side tighthead prop (TH)</li> <li>c. Look at the angle of the hips of the near side loosehead prop (LH) , specifically right after the engagement</li> <li>d. Look at the positions of the feet for the front row prior to the ball being put into the scrum</li> </ul> |
| The scrum moves Towards you   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Due to action of the props farthest from you</li> <li>b. Look at the engagement angle of the far side TH</li> <li>c. Look at the angle of the hips of the far side LH , specifically right after the engagement</li> </ul>   |
| LH Boring In                  |  |
| Quick cue:                    | Outside foot up and bum out  |
| Accurate cue:                 | LH left shoulder and head up and head towards sternum of opposing TH. Also, LH bum low and shoulders high while driving inwards  |
| Poor technique:               | LH left shoulder down. Shoulders lower than hips while facing inwards  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| TH Boring In:                                       |  |
| Quick cue:  | Outside foot up and bum out. Body facing inwards   |
| Accurate cue:                                       | Both feet facing inwards and bum down and outwards   |
| Poor technique:                                     | TH right shoulder up and bum high with body angles inwards, often result of opposing LH boring in. |
| LH Pulling Scrum Down (often to get reset quickly): |  |
| Quick cue:  | Elbow points down to the ground as scrum collapses   |
| Accurate cue:                                       | Head and elbow are directed downwards and inwards. Bum is high in the air.                         |
| Poor technique:                                     | LH knees drop down. Elbow naturally reaches for the ground to prevent head impact                  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| TH Pulling Scrum Down (often to get reset quickly): |  |
| Quick cue:  | Elbow points down to the ground as scrum collapses   |
| Accurate cue:                                       | TH pulls elbow backwards and downwards as TH rolls shoulder inwards.   |
| Poor technique:                                     | TH bum stays high. Elbow naturally reaches for the ground to prevent head impact.  |
| Hooker Is Upright:                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If the hookers shoulders are parallel, hooker stood up</li> <li>b. If one shoulder is higher than the other, it is likely to be the actions of the opposition props pushing him in the air.</li> </ul> |
| Front Row Being Lifted:                             | a. Props knees straighten and head stays down.   |



# The Bus aka clips

