



INFORMATION PAGE

Week of June 5th 2011

1 The Picture

I would like to thank all of you that sent me gentle, if slightly mocking, corrections of my mistake last edition-the above picture is obviously NOT from the Heineken Cup, but rather from an England test match.

I received some clever captions for the above picture. While I can't include them all (and several were a bit too naughty), I offer up a few below:

"Yup-the radio slipped all the way down. So you've been talking through your @#\$.
(Anon)

"There, you're all tucked now. Your tail was sticking out again!" (*"better the Devil you know?"*)(R. Schwartz)

"So those are the new Jockeys that Dan Carter models." (R. Jones)

"Wow-the captain's boot is pretty far in there." (T. Carson)

"I sure hope nobody takes a picture of this!" (M. Robins)

2 NACRA Men's XV's Second Round matches

Bermuda visited Mexico for the last pool match of the Northern Division of the NACRA 2011 Men's XV's Championships. A win for Bermuda would put them to the final against the top team from the Southern Division. A win by Mexico would put Mexico and Bermuda in a tie with the Bahamas for first place, which would be decided by points differentials. No need for the calculators this time, though, as Bermuda was strong in all departments, claiming first place in the pool with a 26-7 win over Mexico and a 13-10 win over the Bahamas. Bermuda will now wait for the results of the Southern Pool last match between Barbados and Guyana on June 11th in Guyana. Barbados needs to win by more than 12 points to take first place, while a victory by Guyana assures them a spot in the final against Bermuda. A narrow win by Barbados could see Trinidad & Tobago take first place in South!

3 Lee Smith Article

The articles from Lee Smith on coaching continue to be popular among the readers that have contacted me. Here is #7 in his recent series on Attack:

THE PROBLEM OF ATTACK – PART 7

A Decision Making Model

Broadly speaking ball that is re-cycled by the attack at a ruck creates a decision making situation as to whether to go directly forward, go to the left or the right.

As a guide as to whether to go straight ahead or not realise that if the ball is easily won it is because there are not many defenders around it so the attack should go straight ahead. If, on

the other hand, there is a real battle for the ball, it is because they are counter rucking and, when the ball is delivered, it can be moved laterally to where there are fewer defenders across the field.

The decision is now to decide which side to go left or right and, of course, you go to the side where the number of attackers exceeds the number of defenders. This is called an overlap and this is lateral support. Its use is dependent on each ball carrier committing a defender so that there are attackers who are not defended at the end of the attacking line. The overlap can be defeated by passes being made too soon or if passes miss out some in the attacking line so that the defenders marking these players can drift.

There are problems if the numbers in both lines are numerous say 6 defenders against 9 attackers. Attacking players seem to have difficulty seeing the miss match and taking advantage of it. In these situations it may be necessary to create a ruck after a few passes to take out some defenders and re-cycle quickly going the same way again retaining the overlap.

As play develops the defenders will try to drift across to counter the overlap. What the attack must now do is cut back into the inside space the defence has moved from.

The opposite situation occurs when the defence outnumbers the attack. In other words the attack has made a wrong decision. Under these circumstances the further the ball is passed along the line the more isolated will be the ball carrier and a turnover is likely. This can be overcome by the attack overloading a weak point in the defence line with a number of attackers playing down a channel. This is linear support. Channel play is explained above. Maybe we could call this the underlap.

In these situations it is standard practice for the defence to have up to 3 players, usually forwards, positioned on each side of the ruck. These players are close together the aim being for them to stop those who pick and go and the first receivers who aim to re-establish momentum charging at the gain line close to the source of possession. If delivery is slow they are able to drift with the pass from the ruck adding to the defensive screen when a pass/run option is used. To overcome this #9 can run laterally. If a close in defender moves to defend #9 the close in attacker should be passed to as #9 will have taken out the tackler and there will be space ahead. If they don't move forward #9 can pass to the attacking line once #9 has cleared them.

Reading the Defence Pattern

Set Pieces

From set pieces the defence's initial priority will be to contest the line between the attacking player they are marking and each defender from inside the attacker in order to encourage the attacker to use up lateral space on the fringes. It is the attacking player's role to run at the defender to prevent this from happening. If the attack is able to do this an extra player entering a gap that has been created will penetrate. If not a defender will be able to drift into this space to tackle the extra player.

If the attack is unsure what pattern the defence is using the simple method is to accept a tackle and look who is making the tackle. At #12 if #10 makes the tackle then the defence is using "one-out" or #12 tackles #12 then man-on-man defence is being used with the option of moving one out when a passer doesn't commit a defender.

If the team is using one-out the defence they will have obtained a defender from somewhere else. From scrum this is probably using #9 in the defensive line. So the aim should be to attack close in forcing #9 to reposition around the scrum. From line-out it is difficult to contain the defensive #7. An option is to throw the ball to the tail of the line-out and involve #7 in line-out play and the maul that may be formed.

Another pattern from set pieces is "outside- in" defence. In this situation the players may be defending say the 4th receiver but, as play develops, they move in to tackle the 3rd or even the 2nd receiver from outside the attacker. As the ball is coming from inside and the attackers focus will be on it, the defender can catch the attack unawares.

One way of overcoming this is to pass to the space the defence has moved away from but, because of the line of running at the defence, the pass can be intercepted. Another option is to kick the ball across the field and behind the defence. This may result in a loss of possession.

The most effective method is to overload the channels around the 1st or 2nd defenders around attacking #10 and #12 with linear support. The support is based on depth so that the support can react to the play of the ball carrier. Depth even allows the support to react to a tackle so that the ball is quickly re-cycled. What has to be avoided is lateral support so that, when the ball carrier goes into contact, the support goes forward of the ball carrier delaying their support and the speed of re-cycling.

Phase Play

If the attack is more numerous than the defence outside in defence may be used to tackle the ball carrier from their blind-side. This is only overcome by attacking players wide out telling the ball carrier. It is difficult for close in attackers to anticipate this themselves as they are usually watching the ball.

In the situation in which the defence exceeds the attack the options are mentioned above. Realise that the defence can afford to take individual opportunities to intercept, tackle from the blind-side or come out of the defence line to tackle. In this situation channel play is even more important.

4 HARSH LESSONS FOR USA AGAINST SAXONS

NORTHAMPTON, England – The USA Eagles took on the England Saxons on Saturday in their opening match of the 2011 Churchill Cup and ended up on the rough end of an 87-8 score line. The USA started mostly domestic players to give them experience against a Saxons team that was fully professional.

Head Coach Eddie O’Sullivan tried some experimental combinations and gave domestic players an opportunity to play at a very high level. The Eagles were starved of possession by the Saxons and the English side was able to capitalize on turnovers, scoring seven tries from turnover ball.

USA struck first after solid phase play resulted in a penalty which outside center, Tai Enosa, converted with ease in the 3rd minute. England answered back quickly through the very lethal Miles Benjamin, who ended up scoring a hat trick in the encounter.

The first 20 minutes would see the Saxons run rampant and the Eagles were up against it to the tune of 33-3 at halftime.

“The game got away from us early on and we were struggling early. On some occasions we held onto the ball and did some good things,” said O’Sullivan.

“It was a very big ask of our team to go against the fully professional England Saxons side and a lot of our problems were of our own making.”

The coach continued to say that mistakes and turnovers were compounded by the Saxons’ speedy backs and defensive lapses by the Eagles.

The scrums were also an issue for the Eagles and the Saxons were able to drive the American forwards back, compromising the USA’s attacking platform when awarded scrums.

Even under immense Saxons pressure and a unfavorable score line, the Eagles kept fighting as Scott LaValla pushed over for a try in the 78th minute after the USA forwards built on strong phase play to get the Saxons back pedaling.

Colin Hawley and John van der Giessen played well for the Eagles and were very gritty in their defense. Van der Giessen was also very good in the lineouts and was

able to provide a threat in the air to that set piece. Roland Suniula did a good job at flyhalf off the bench and got the Eagles moving forward late in the game.

Tonga is up next for the Eagles, which is a full test match and a ranking test so fans can expect to see a very different Eagles team on Wednesday as the talents of several seasoned internationals will be called on.

The USA v. Tonga match will kick off at 12:30 ET and will be broadcast live online at www.universalsports.com and on tape delay on Universal Sports at 8 p.m. ET on Wednesday.

USA EAGLES

- 15 Mike Palefau (Utah Warriors)
- 14 Mile Pulu (San Francisco Golden Gate)
- 13 Tai Enosa (Belmont Shore)
- 12 Junior Sifa (Nottingham RFC)
- 11 Colin Hawley (Olympic Club)
- 10 Troy Hall (New York Athletic Club)
- 9 Mike Petri (New York Athletic Club, captain)
- 1 Eric Fry (Las Vegas Blackjacks)
- 2 Phil Thiel (Life University)
- 3 Will Johnson (London Irish)
- 4 John van der Giessen (Utah Warriors)
- 5 Scott LaValla (Stade Francais)
- 6 Pat Danahy (Life University)
- 7 Danny LaPrevotte (San Francisco Golden Gate)
- 8 JJ Gagiano (Univ. of Cape Town)

Reserves:

- 16 Chris Biller (San Francisco Golden Gate)
- 17 Shawn Pittman (London Welsh)
- 18 Louis Stanfill (Mogliano)
- 19 Inaki Basauri (L' Aquila)
- 20 Tim Usasz (Nottingham RFC)
- 21 Roland Suniula (Boston Rugby)
- 22 Andrew Suniula (Chicago Griffins)

USA Tries: LaValla (78') **Penalties:** Enosa (3')

Substitutions: Pittman on for Fry (50'), Biller on for Thiel (50'), R. Suniula on for Pulu (52'), Stanfill on for LaPrevotte (55'), Basauri on for Gagiano (62'), Usasz on for Petri (70'), A. Suniula on for Sifa (77')

England Saxons

- 15 Mike Brown (Harlequins)
- 14 Topsy Ojo (London Irish)
- 13 Henry Trinder (Gloucester Rugby)
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees (Leicester Tigers)
- 11 Miles Benjamin (Worcester Warriors)
- 10 Rory Clegg (Harlequins)
- 9 Micky Young (Newcastle Falcons)
- 1 Matt Mullan (Worcester Warriors)
- 2 Joe Gray (Harlequins)
- 3 Matt Stevens (Saracens)
- 4 Mouritz Botha (Saracens)

5 Dave Attwood (Gloucester Rugby)

6 James Gaskell (Sale Sharks)

7 Tom Johnson (Exeter Chiefs)

8 Jordan Crane (Leicester Tigers, captain)

Reserves:

16 David Paice (London Irish)

17 Kieran Brookes (Newcastle Falcons)

18 Graham Kitchener (Worcester Warriors)

19 Jamie Gibson (London Irish)

20 Paul Hodgson (London Irish)

21 Alex Goode (Saracens)

22 Charlie Sharples (Gloucester Rugby)

Saxons Tries: Benjamin 3 (4', 10', 57') Brown 2 (6', 42'), Hodgson (73'), Johnson (49'), Kitchener (71'), Sharples (67'), Trinder (60'), Twelvetrees (52'), Young (24')

Conversions: Clegg 11

Substitutions: Goode on for Brown (53'), Sharples on for Ojo (53'), Brookes on for Mullan (60'), Paice on for Gray (55'), Brookes on for Stevens (40'), Kitchener on for Botha (60'), Gibson on for Gaskell (17')

CHURCHILL CUP SCHEDULE | ENGLAND

June 4, 2011: USA vs. England Saxons (Franklin's Gardens, Northampton)

June 8, 2011: USA vs. Tonga (Moseley Road, Surrey)

June 18, 2011: Elimination Match (Sixways, Worcester)

Visit www.churchillcuprugby.net for more details on the tournament.

Universal Sports will be broadcasting the USA pool matches as well as the Bowl and Cup finals. These will be LIVE online and delayed on television, with the schedule available at www.universalsports.com or by [clicking here](#).

Further Information:

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5 IRB Laws Clarifications and decision from the May 2011 Council meeting.

Attached please find decisions regarding laws and regulations from the May 2011 IRB Council Meetings and a laws clarification on front row substitutions.

6 Article on Rugby in the June 1st Philadelphia Daily News.

(Former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell writes a weekly sports column for the Daily News from a fan's perspective. His column appears Wednesdays.)

IF YOU'RE fed up with the NFL lockout, if you think it's just a dispute between billionaires and millionaires, but the thought of not having a football season is still too much for you to bear, I have some advice.

Head down to PPL Park in Chester on Saturday and Sunday and check out the USA Sevens Collegiate Rugby Championship.

Yes, I said go watch a rugby tournament. Despite the fact that there are about 2,500 rugby clubs in the United States, including a number in our area, most Eagles fans

know little or nothing about this fast-paced, rugged sport. What little we may know comes from watching Matt Damon and Morgan Freeman in the film "Invictus," which told the inspiring story of how South Africa's winning of the Rugby World Cup helped unite the previously socially divided country. The Rugby World Cup is played with traditional rules and 15-man teams. The Collegiate Rugby Championship to be played in Chester features a newer, even more exciting version of this ancient sport.

Rugby sevens, as it is known, creates a wilder, more wide-open form of rugby, as each team has only seven players who must attempt to defend a full-size rugby field (which is 30 percent bigger than a football field).

Because of the incredible pace and intensity of the game, each match consists of two 7-minute halves. With only seven players on each side, you're likely to see a lot of man-on-man hits, and players can go the distance with one shifty move or a broken tackle. Given the exciting nature of the game, rugby sevens has become immensely popular in a short period of time, and it has been made an official sport at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

This weekend, 16 of the top men's college teams will play 39 matches over 2 days to determine the national champion. The field for the championship will showcase teams from some of the most accomplished athletic programs in the country, including Arizona, Boston College, Cal, LSU, UNC, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and local favorites Army, Navy, Notre Dame, Penn State and Temple. This incredible assemblage of players represents some of the talent pool from which the 2016 U.S. Olympic team will be drawn. An eight-team women's tournament also will take place, with Penn State, Temple and Princeton among the competitors. Each match will be won or lost in only 14 minutes, and I can assure you that if you love football, you will love rugby!

Dan Lyle, the executive vice president of USA Sevens, played tight end at VMI and was offered a contract by the Minnesota Vikings in 1996. He chose to pass up the deal and eventually went to Europe to play rugby, and because of his size (6-5, 252 pounds) he became known as "Captain America."

I asked Lyle to compare rugby and football, and he said that they are basically "kissing cousins." The similarities: When a player carries the ball into the end zone and touches it down, it is known as a "try" and is worth five points; after a try is scored, there is a chance to score two points with a conversion kick, which is attempted from the spot the ball was touched down (extra point - this can get tricky if a player is tackled in the end zone near the side line); a penalty kick can be attempted after an infraction (field goal), and is worth three points if good, but it must be dropkicked; if a penalty occurs rather than a lesser infraction, the kick may be taken off a tee; lastly, a player can be stopped only by tackling (although tackling too high is an infraction).

There are, however, some differences:

** First, the players do not wear pads. (Think, football with no pads? Incredible.)*

** Second, you cannot pass the ball forward but every player can pass (think, seven QBs) the ball backward (a lateral to another player).*

** Third, there are no downs - it is free-flowing, with few stoppages of play, so that the action rarely ceases. The "scrums" you might have seen happen only after infractions, but when a player is tackled, a makeshift scrum can ensue as the other team tries to*

grab the ball, while players from the team with possession try to block opposing players and pass the ball backward to another player.

** Fourth, American football is a collision sport, so despite the pads, there are more serious injuries. In rugby, tackling is key and you absolutely have to wrap up (Asante Samuel need not apply). So treat yourself and your family to this whirlwind, exciting tournament. It will help you forget about Jerry Jones, Roger Goodell, et al. Tickets are incredibly cheap by NFL standards, and it will be a great deal of fun.*

(Full disclosure, my son's management company is providing marketing, promotions and media relations services to USA Sevens in connection with the event.)

There's one more major reason you should come to PPL Park this weekend: With NBC Sports targeting the Collegiate Rugby Championship as one of its franchise events, with live coverage on both days, and with the fact that NBC plans to have Philly host the event indefinitely, we can own this event for years to come if we have sellout crowds.

In addition to the event's obvious economic stimulus – with college students and alumni coming in from across the country, the game's rising popularity and its acceptance into the 2016 Olympics - the game will increase Philadelphia's growing prominence on the international sports scene (adding to the inroads made by the Union in soccer).

In fact, a main reason we missed out on our previous bid to host the Olympics was our lack of international sporting events. The Collegiate Rugby Championship can become another of the area's marquee sporting events, along with the Army-Navy Game, the Dad Vail Regatta, the Penn Relays, the International Cycling Championship, the National Dog Show (in Philly through 2019, with 20 million viewers - you knew I had to sneak this in) and the Winter Classic. All of these can combine to make Philadelphia the greatest sports town in America.

The tournament's theme is "the toughest sport in the toughest town." Let's show once again why we really are the best and the toughest sports fans in the country.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/sports/eagles/122909959.html>

Actively yours

Scott Harland

Regional Development Officer
North America Caribbean Rugby Association
www.nacrugby.com



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