

EDITOR'S NOTES 15.04.08

There was an interesting email from Huw Bowen, who teaches at St. Peter's Woodlands Grammar School in Glenelg, Australia. He wrote, "Having just read the lineout article by Mark Cornwell, I am surprised to see that he advocates/coaches a 'jumper triggered call' - surely if any jumper is in the air before the ball is thrown then a free kick should result!"

The Law actually states: "19.9 (k) **Jumping or supporting before the ball is thrown.** A player must not jump for the ball or support any player before the ball has left the hands of the player throwing it in."

My response to Huw was that it is part of the game that seems not to be refereed, but at the practical level, especially at the very highest level, it seems to work acceptably for all parties concerned - but I did ask whether it is enforced in schools' rugby in Australia and got the following reply.

"Fully appreciate the reality of the LO situation and yes the same happens all over Australia at every level and it continues to bug me! Why have the law in the first place if it is not going to be applied? Bit like the scrum put-in and refereeing the tackler properly at the tackle area! If refs applied the laws harder there might not need to be a need to mess with the current laws and we would not have to put up with these ELVs! Personally I and many of my rugby mates are hating the S14 this season with short-arm after short-arm, despite what you might read in the Aussie and Kiwi press!

Coming back to the LO I have found that if you coach LO where the ball is thrown before the jump, it is a far more effective way of stopping the opposition competing effectively and therefore winning your ball. The U18 team I coached in the past two seasons achieved this and our LO success at season end was 93%! Nearly every LO we messed up was due to a technical slip, usually with the support or more commonly the throw."

So, coaches, where do you stand on this one? Should the Law be refereed to the letter or is it better to have variation that does, at least, get the ball in play? Are there implications at your playing level for laws that are disregarded (seemingly) at the top levels, yet you seem to be playing to a different set of rules?

Responses, as ever, to keithrichardson@therfu.com

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