



Hong Kong Mini Rugby Football Union

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Mini Rugby Newsletter – November 2011



Peter Hudson – HKMRFU Coaching and Refereeing Coordinator

Dear Chairman,

The Festival Season kicked off with the Tigers Tournament held at Kings Park on Sunday 6th November. The HKMRFU would once again like to pass its congratulations onto Brenton Judge and the DeA Tigers RFC for hosting a cracking tournament. The rugby was fast and furious, but as always this first tournament clearly defined the baseline standard from which this season will progress.

This newsletter will discuss the 'Hot Spots' that were highlighted from the DeA Tigers Tournament. These 'Hot Spots' include, the scrum and its management, coach-the-coach training session, refereeing information sessions, the issue of crutch binding, mandatory replacements and finally the U10s scrum half options.

Scrum and Scrum Management:

This facet of the game, by far, created the most concern for coaches and referees. There are two aspects to this issue that we need to address. Firstly, scrum coaching, and secondly scrum refereeing.

Scrum Coaching: Many of your coaches would have attended the HKRUFU Rugby Ready Course. This course focuses on delivery hotspots, crossovers and buddy systems using picture/analogy style coaching. The scrum is one of the 'Big Five' covered in this course and I would like you to strongly encourage ALL of your coaches to go back and review this material in relation to coaching the scrum. Post tournament analysis and discussion has highlighted that most of the components that make up a SAFE scrum were lacking, either in isolation or combination. In particular, the HKMRFU would like your coaches to focus on the areas of front row body position and post engagement binding.

To help your coaches with this review, Leigh Jones (Hong Kong National Coach Development Manager) along with Steve Jones (Club Coaching Coordinator) will conduct a very focused 'Coach-the-Coach' session on scrum training. This will be an intensive, hands on session which will focus on, and expand on, the concepts taught in the Rugby Ready Program and Level 1 Program. **This Coach-the-Coach Session will be held at HKIED, Friday 2nd December, 2011 - 7.30pm-9.30pm.** Please contact Mark Leonard email: mark.leonard@gmail.com to register your coaches. Please get your coaches motivated to attend and get them FOCUSED on scrum training and safety.

Scrum Refereeing: The referee is the last line of defence in SAFETY when it comes to the management of a scrum. SAFETY is your NO.1 PRIORITY. In the October Issue of 'Mini Rugby Refereeing' I went into great detail on the frameworks and thought processes that you need to apply in your SAFE management of a scrum. This newsletter is on the HKRUFU Mini Rugby website, so again, I strongly urge you to have ALL of your coaches review this material and discuss amongst themselves THEIR interpretation and strategies on SAFE scrum management. BUT most importantly, please drum into them these four aspects of scrum management that are not negotiable!

- 1) Scrum MUST be STEADY and STABLE before allowing the scrum half to feed the ball.
- 2) The push MUST NOT BE ALLOWED to go more than 1.5 metres! A guide used by most referees is 3 STEPS. You MUST blow your whistle loudly when the situation demands so!
- 3) Do NOT allow the scrum to wheel more than 45 degrees! A guide used by most referees is that as soon as the scrum begins to wheel you MUST blow your whistle loudly!
- 4) USE YOUR COMMONSENSE! There are invariably mismatches and if you sense any abnormal mismatch or are unable to produce STABLE and STEADY scrums after one attempt at coaching the scrum, then GO UNCONTESTED!

Refereeing Information Sessions:

It is the long term aim of the HKMRFU to train a group of dedicated referees for festival rugby! This will however take some time to achieve, so in the short term I would like you to urge your coach/referees to attend anyone of the upcoming 'Refereeing Information Sessions'. These session are designed to provoke discussion on refereeing techniques and law interpretation and application. It is my intention to run one of these sessions every month up until March 2012.

The first of these sessions will be held at Kings Park on Tuesday 22nd November, 7.30 - 9.30 pm. This session will be hosted by Peter Hudson (HKSRFUR, HKMRFU Coaching and Refereeing Coordinator), Willy Chan (HKSRFUR) and Colin Durbridge (HKSRFUR). The focus of this session will be on scrum and ruck management, there will be plenty of time to discuss any questions on laws and there application. This session is designed for U8s, U9s, U10s and U11s coach/referees.

For those interested in attending the session, the Angelo Chinese School (U16s) from Singapore will be on tour and playing the mighty Island School Tuesday 22nd November, Kings Park, kick off 6pm!

Crutch Binding:

Several coaches have asked the HKMRFU for their policy on Crutch Binding. 'Around the Hip' and 'Crutch Binding' are both discussed and taught on the iRB Level 1 coaching course. The HKMRFU's current position on 'Crutch Binding' is that it is NOT allowed. The fundamental reason for this is that in Hong Kong Mini Rugby we still play mixed teams at U12s and that 'Crutch Binding' is not acceptable in the mixed tight five. Having said that, I did table at the last HKMRFU meeting Thursday 17th November, 2011, the option to have a variation to this policy. The option stated: "If the tight five are all male, or all female, then crutch binding is an acceptable option." The HKMRFU committee and chairman's agreed that this was an acceptable option and it is therefore adopted with immediate effect.

Mandatory Replacement:

The 'Player Festival Brief' is now available online through the HKRFU Mini Rugby website. That briefing states that if a player is sanctioned by mandatory replacement, then the player will remain in the sin bin for 4 minutes. This policy was reviewed at the HKMRFU meeting, 17th November, 2011 and it was decided that if a player is subject to a mandatory replacement then that player will remain off the pitch for the remainder of the game. Please be advised that this HKMRFU policy on mandatory replacement is effective immediately. The 'Festival Player Briefing' will be amended in due course.

U10s Scrum Half (Options):

A review by some U10s coaches has resulted in a request to allow this years U10s the all option scenario for the scrum half from a scrum. The reasoning behind this request was that last year, under the old laws, the U9s scrum half had the all option available. Therefore to maintain a consistent approach for this years U10s, the HKMRFU has approved the temporary variation to allow the current U10s scrum half all option from the scrum. This variation is only valid for this years U10s.

In summary, please have your coaches regularly review the HKRFU website for information and newsletters. Please do motivate as many of your coaches as possible to attend the 'Refereeing Information Sessions' and the 'Coach-the-Coach' sessions.

In the meantime, have fun!

Kind Regards

Peter Hudson
HKMRFU - Coaching and Refereeing Co-ordinator.