

**TO: KEVIN BOWRING**

**FROM: CORRIS THOMAS**

**REVIEW OF REFEREE for Wales v Scotland match - 7 March 1998**

**REFEREE: JOEL DUME France**

- 1 Joel Dume has refereed 3 matches involving Wales in the last three years:

(a)	2.9.95	South Africa	40pts	v	Wales	11pts
(b)	17.2.96	Wales	14pts	v	Scotland	16pts
(c)	15.3.97	Wales	13pts	v	England	34pts

Wales lost all three.

- 2 He also refereed the match between **New Zealand and Australia** on 16 August 1997. This is the only match he has refereed since IB Charter was introduced and therefore this is the match which comprises the larger part of this report.
- 3 Firstly however, a brief analysis of the 2 Five Nations matches serves as a background.
- a **Wales v Scotland 1996**
- i the penalty count was 25
- ii of the 25, 2 were for foul play - both against Wales
- iii there were therefore 23 technical offences in the game which was around the average for IB matches
- iv of these 23 offences, Wales were penalised 13 times while Scotland was penalised 10 times.

**(b) Wales v England 1997**

- i the penalty count in this match was 30
- ii of the 30, 4 were for foul play (2 against Wales, 2 against England)
- iii there were therefore 26 technical offences in the game.
- iv of these 26 offences, Wales were penalised 9 times, while England were penalised 17 times.

**5 home team/away team**

**In the Wales v Scotland game:**

the home team was awarded 10 penalties (40%)  
the away team was awarded 15 penalties (60%)

**In the Wales v England game:**

the home team was awarded 19 penalties (63%)  
the away team was awarded 11 penalties (37%)

While this latter game showed a typical penalty profile of a home team getting substantially more penalties than the away team especially when losing, the Wales/Scotland game was very untypical. Wales, the home team, were penalised more than Scotland despite not being in the lead. This is most unusual.

In both matches, most penalties came in the first half - 16-9 (64%) and 18-12 (60%)

- 7 There were 55 penalties awarded in total in both games and they were given in the following groups or categories:**

Line out (free kicks)	2
Line out- disruptive offences	0
Scrummage (free kicks)	0
Scrummage - disruptive offences	4
Ruck/tackle	14

Tackle - high/late/early	1
Offside - open play	2
Offside backs @ ruck/maul/scrum	10
Offside forwards @ ruck/maul/scrum	9
Obstruction	6
Foul Play	6
plus 10 metres	1
total	55

The indications from these 2 matches suggest that he is not over fussy on lineouts and scrums but concentrates his efforts on the tackle/ruck/maul and related offences such as handling and offside forwards and backs.

If players adopt a fairly disciplined approach at lineouts and scrums, then there should be no particular problems. He does not, for example, give the impression of being anywhere near as pernickity as say Colin Hawke on scrummage engagements in that he appears to allow for adjustments before the ball is put in.

He is however pretty keen on backs being onside at ruck/maul. This is an area where the players need to be particularly vigilant.

- 8 His most recent IB match was **New Zealand v Australia** on 16 August 1997. This was played after the IB Charter which may or may not account for what was an extraordinary refereeing performance.
- 9 a **New Zealand v Australia 1997**
- i the penalty count was 43
- ii of the 43, 2 were for foul play - (1 each against each country) - and 1 for dissent
- iii there were therefore 40 technical offences in the game **which is the highest we have ever recorded in matches between two IB countries.**
- iv of these offences, Australia were penalised 23 times while New Zealand were penalised 20 times.

10 The 43 penalties awarded were given in the following groups or categories:

Line out (free kicks)	0
Line out- disruptive offences	3
Scrummage (free kicks)	1
Scrummage - disruptive offences	5
Ruck/tackle	10
Tackle - high/late/early	1
Offside - open play	0
Offside backs @ ruck/maul/scrum	4
Offside forwards @ ruck/maul/scrum	10
Obstruction	2
Foul Play	2
plus 10 metres	4 (1 backchat/3 not retreating)
Dissent	1
total	43

When a referee is in the frame of mind to give so many penalties, it is difficult to warn players what to expect. Because of the nature of the game he will not have to look far if he wants to find something to penalise - every scrum/ruck/maul contains a variety of transgressions. Whether they deserve to be penalised is, of course, another issue, but if the referee is so minded, he can whistle to his heart's content. In the above game for example, there were two periods of 10 minutes each when the penalty rate was, on average, one every 60 seconds. Both players and commentators gave every impression of being somewhat at a loss.

Nevertheless, there may be one or two indicators coming out of the game - and the previous two - that may be helpful:

**LINEOUT**- in this area, he is relatively relaxed. There should not therefore be any particular problem **as long as the temptation to pull down is resisted.**

**SCRUM** - as mentioned earlier, he is not as fussy as someone like Colin Hawke with regard to premature engagement and early shove. He is prepared to spend some time sorting out the front rows, making them re-engage and getting them back on their feet in the case of a collapse. Once the scrum is in play he does not appear to be too concerned about heads popping up. Where players need too

be especially careful however is once a scrum has collapsed. If it happens a second time, he is likely to penalise one team or the other. **They should therefore make every effort to stay on their feet whatever the pressure.**

**TACKLE/RUCK/MAUL** - This appears to be his specialist area, although it must be said that in the New Zealand v Australia game there were bodies flying everywhere and under any referee the penalty count would have been on the high side.

He seems to concentrate mostly on the area surrounding the ball. Players driving over the top seemed to have a relatively easy time of it since his priority appears to be to spot the ball, and then focus almost exclusively on players handling the ball or lying on it, concentrating mostly on the defending team. **Players therefore must be urged to stay on their feet especially if they intend handling the ball. He'll probably allow them to drive in hard and over even though they might find themselves way on the opponents side.**

**The backs should be warned to think before they advance on the opponents ball. They should be told that staying back an extra yard or so could bring dividends.**

**GENERAL** - He is a very dramatic referee. He blows his whistle longer and louder than most, and awards penalties with gestures that would put Laurence Olivier to shame.

He does have a language problem however. Although the word is that his English is not that bad, in refereeing terms it is pretty primitive. He therefore gives far fewer in-play instructions than other referees, although he does try to compensate with signals. **Players therefore need to be more alert than usual and keep an eye on him - and the touch judges - in order to pick up any helpful gestures that may result in fewer penalties being given away.**

He does try and explain his decisions however, albeit in an Inspector Clousot sort of way. As a result, **detailed querying of his decisions is a somewhat futile exercise and should be avoided.**



Finally, it should be noted that at times **he is prepared to play a long advantage**. Players ought to be made aware of this not only when the opponents are in possession and also for the counter attacking possibilities that may present themselves because of this.

If his last few games are anything to go by, then there are likely to be a large number of penalties. **Players should be forewarned of this and just keep cool and focussed if penalties start to be scattered around. They should also remember that they are the home team and history suggests that they should receive more penalties than the visitors.**

**Corris Thomas**

**3 March 1998**