

Rugby in my humble view suits the New Zealand managerial culture.

Indeed I often puzzle which led to which.

Was the country's managerial style copied from Rugby or the other way about.

There are lots of rules, hundreds of them.

They are not well defined.

This calls for decisions to be made all the time.

Every move in any particular direction means a rule has to be figured out.

The first point to decide is which rule applies.

Is it a maul , No its a ruck. , No its a maul.

So the ref gets to stop everything every few minutes to discuss this.

Having decided which rule applies then you have to consider the penalty.

This could be anything.

A scrum, a penalty kick, a telling off, a note to your mother. And then there's the constant monitoring of the rules.

Every player has to constantly check if they are on side.

Did they knock it on.

Has the ref played advantage.

Is he testing the wind with his arm or indicating that the rule book can be suspended for a few short minutes so they can get some play in.

Indeed so much concentration goes into worrying about the rules that deciding what to do is a very hurried affair.

## Rugby and NZ Management styles

Hector Brimson - April 2001

Its noticeable that in recent years lawyers who thrive on this sort of thing are doing better at the modern game.

To them its not what happens in the game that counts but which rules were broken and whose going to pay for the errors.

The winners are those who get the other side to break the most rules on your half of the paddock so your kicker (if he's having a good day) can kick you to victory.

In the final analysis as in a lot of New Zealand organisations you get a tightly strung group terrified of making mistakes following ill defined rules with any prospect of long sessions of productive activity stifled.

Very like the command and control management systems in some New Zealand companies.

Australian rules in contrast is a game of defined rules. Its the name of the game "Rules".

Any errors or breach of rules are sorted out over a beer at a tribunal midweek. Play goes on at a furious pace.

The Ref is the least important bloke on the paddock.

There may have been a day long ago when Rugby was just a game.

When the lads could toss the ball about and life's tough rules were set aside in a carefree chase across the field.

Alas those days are gone.

Its only a matter of time before the linesman need an LLB just to keep the rules observed.

Personally I blame Plunket -

In days gone by Sir Truby King had it so that all over the country every New Zealander under two sat on the potty at the same split second every day.

With that culture of control the modern game was inevitable.

Hector Brimson