

6 NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

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contents

pages:

1-2	COMMENTARY SUMMARY
3	CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE/MATCHES PLAYED
4-10	SCORING PROFILES - points scored - tries - penalty goals - 2004 compared with 1954, 1964, 1974, 1984, 1994 - kicking
10-15	TRIES - tries scored by winning team - source of tries - origin of tries - position where tries scored - build up to tries - timing of scores
16-21	MODE OF PLAY - match time - ball in play time - activity cycles – ruck/maul(2nd phase), passes,kicks - passing movements
21	RESTARTS
21-22	LINEOUT
22	SCRUM
22- 27	PENALTIES - number and incidence - teams penalised - times of penalties - offences penalised - pitch location of penalties - northern/southern hemisphere referees
27-29	RED/YELLOW CARDS - red card details - yellow card details
29	SUBSTITUTIONS
30	TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL

COMMENTARY

Six Nations 2004 provided a clear example of how much the game of rugby has changed over recent and not so recent years.

In 2004, for example, there was one penalty goal for every try. **Ten years ago, there were 3 times as many penalty goals as tries and 20 years ago twice as many.**

Of the 15 matches played in 6 Nations 2004, 13 were won by the team scoring most tries. In no game did the team scoring the fewest tries win - tries still win matches, and England's performance over the past 5 years illustrates this.

- they have scored more tries than any other country in each of the last 5 years with the exception of this year where Ireland also scored 17.
- they are the only team to have scored more tries than penalty goals in every one of the last five years. None of the other countries have come close. On all but a handful of occasions, the remaining 5 countries have consistently kicked more penalty goals than tries.
- In the last 5 years, England have scored 50% more tries than the second placed country, Ireland.

Penalty goals, as a proportion of all scores, therefore are in decline, and the extent of such a reduction is shown in the following table which shows the number of penalty goals kicked in the championship in each of the last 5 years:

2000	93 penalty goals
2001	93
2002	89
2003	65
2004	69

As an illustration of the effect of such a reduction, a comparison with England's championship win in 1996 is illuminating. While England have averaged over 4 tries per game in recent years, in 1996 they scored just 3 tries in the 4 matches, or less than one per game, and still won the

championship thanks to 17 penalty goals. This contrasts with France's 14 tries and 18 penalty goals in this year's championship.

Much of this change results from an increase in ball-in-play time. It continues to increase – there was no game with less than 40% (ie 32 minutes play) and for the first time, two games were 50% or over.

Since the game went professional at the end of 1995, ball in play time has increased by almost 40% resulting in more rucks/mauls kicks and passes with the number of passes increasing almost exponentially.

Despite this however, most tries are not the result of continuous recycling and sweeping passing movements. The data shows that in 2004, 88% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer second phases and 43% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer passes.

Other trends were also confirmed in 6 Nations 2004.

Conversion success rates continued to show a steady **reduction** in each of the last 5 years. From an 82% success rate in 2000, it has now declined to 63%. The year on year reduction is as follows:

Conversion success rate	2004	63%
	2003	74%
	2002	76%
	2001	79%
	2000	82%

This contrasts with penalty goal success rates which have remained more or less constant at around 72%. As explanation for this could be that defences are organised in such a way that try scoring is being pushed further and further towards the touchlines.

In one area, there was one notable difference in 6 Nations 2004 from recent years. There was a measurable difference between the Northern Hemisphere group of referees and the Southern Hemisphere group:

- Southern Hemisphere referees awarded 30% **more** penalties than Northern Hemisphere referees
- the **4 highest** penalised games were refereed by Southern Hemisphere referees while the 3 games with the **least** number of penalties were refereed by Northern Hemisphere referees and

- Northern Hemisphere referees were noticeably harsher on the tackled player than were Southern Hemisphere referees

The detailed report that follows covers the above and contains further analyses and breakdowns of other facets of play. It shows, for example, that

- France did not concede a single try in the first half of any of their matches and
- Scotland or Italy did not score a single try in the first half of theirs.
- England mauled the most, France the least
- Wales passed the most, Ireland the least
- Italy kicked the most, England the least
- Wales conceded the most penalties, while England conceded the largest proportion of penalties

and as a final illustration of how the game has changed, it shows that

- 22 substitutions were made after 40 minutes of the second half

6 NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS summary

- the average number of points scored per match was 43 - compared with 47 in 6 Nations 2003. Tries were slightly down and penalty goals showed a small increase.
- tries accounted for 53% of total points scored. In 2003, it was 52%. The last time this figure was exceeded was in 1965.
- ball in play time was 46% - up by 2% on 2003.
- rucks/mauls increased from an average of 150 to 152 per game
 - passes increased from 285 to 291
 - open play kicks decreased to 57 from 60
- 63% of tries were converted, a success rate that has declined in each of the last 5 years. 75% of penalty kicks at goal succeeded, a slight increase over 2003 – both rates slightly down on 2003.
- 68 tries were scored in the 15 matches. This compares with 74 tries in 2003 and 75 in each of the previous 3 years.
- of the 68 tries, 1 in 6 started from inside the scoring team's half compared with 1 in 3 three years ago.
- as in previous years, over 30% of tries were the direct result of lineout possession.
- almost 90% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer rucks/mauls.
- two thirds of all tries were scored in the second half while three quarters of penalty goals were kicked in the first half.
- around 80% of all passing movements continue to contain 2 passes or less.
- there were an average of 36 lineouts per game, the same as in 2003 but 3 more than 2003. Retained possession varied little at 80%.

- there were 21 scrums per game – one more than in 2003 – while the number of collapsed scrums increased.
- during the championship, only one free kick was awarded for a crooked scrum feed.
- penalties went down from 25 in 2003 to 23 in 2003.
- penalties for ground offences at ruck and tackle accounted for 47% of all penalties, compared with 49% in 2003 and 42% in 2002.
- no red cards were issued while 4 yellow cards were issued compared with 8 in 2003.
- the incidence of scoring during the sin bin period was not significant.
- in the 15 matches, there were around 9 substitutions per game, a small reduction over 2003

note

- Over the last 5 years, England have scored 50% more tries than the next highest country
- England are the only country to have scored more tries than penalty goals in every one of the last 5 years
- Over the last 5 years, England have scored the most tries
 France kicked the most penalty goals
 And Scotland have the highest penalty goal to try ratio

SIX NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	For	Against	Points
France	5	5	0	0	144	60	10
Ireland	5	4	1	0	128	82	8
England	5	3	2	0	150	86	6
Wales	5	2	3	0	125	116	4
Italy	5	1	4	0	42	152	2
Scotland	5	0	5	0	53	146	0

MATCHES PLAYED

27 Mar 2004	France vs England	24 - 21
27 Mar 2004	Ireland vs Scotland	37 - 16
27 Mar 2004	Wales vs Italy	44 - 10
21 Mar 2004	Scotland vs France	0 - 31
20 Mar 2004	England vs Wales	31 - 21
20 Mar 2004	Ireland vs Italy	19 - 3
07 Mar 2004	Wales vs France	22 - 29
06 Mar 2004	England vs Ireland	13 - 19
06 Mar 2004	Italy vs Scotland	20 - 14
22 Feb 2004	Ireland vs Wales	36 - 15
21 Feb 2004	Scotland vs England	13 - 35
21 Feb 2004	France vs Italy	25 - 0
15 Feb 2004	Italy vs England	9 - 50
14 Feb 2004	Wales vs Scotland	23 - 10
14 Feb 2004	France vs Ireland	35 - 17

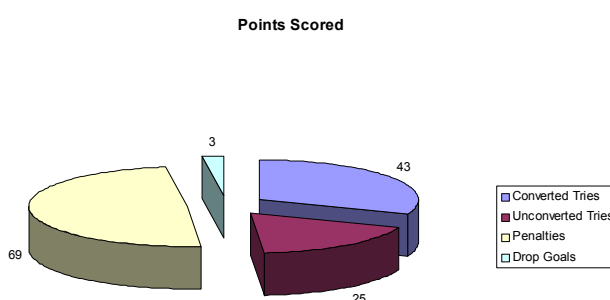
6 NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

A SCORING PROFILES

POINTS SCORED

- i There were **642** points scored in the 15 matches played. They were made up as follows:



43 converted tries	301
25 unconverted tries	125
69 penalties	207
3 drop goals	<u>9</u>
	<u>642pts</u>

- ii The average number of points per game was **43** – down 4 points over 2003's average of 47. The last 4 year's figures were: 53, 51, 47 and 43.
- iii There was a small reduction in the average number of tries scored per game.
- in 2000, there were 5.0 tries per match, an increase of 11%
 - in 2001, there were 5.0 tries per match – no change
 - in 2002, there were 5.0 tries per match – no change
 - in 2003, there were 5.0 tries per match – no change
 - in 2004, there were **4.5** tries per match – a reduction of a half a try per game.

Despite the small reduction in the number of tries, they still accounted for 53% of total points scored, a similar figure to 2003.

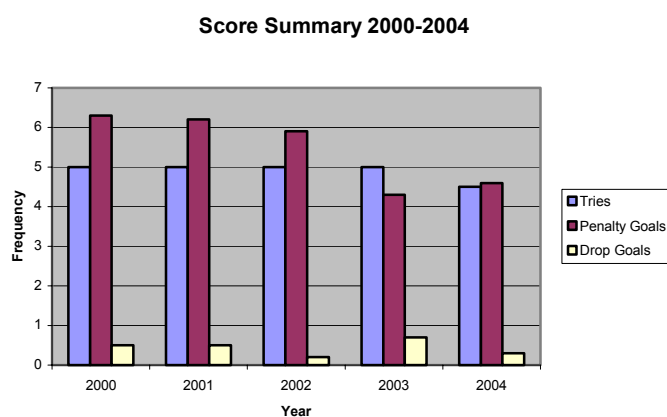
iv Drop goals decreased from 11 to 3 in the 15 matches

- in 2000, there were 0.5 drop goals per match
- in 2001, there were 0.5
- in 2002, there were 0.2
- in 2003, there were 0.7
- in 2004, there were 0.2

v Penalty goals averaged **4.6** per match, a slight increase over 2003.

- in 2000, there were 6.3
- in 2001, there were 6.2
- in 2002, there were 5.9
- in 2003, there were 4.3
- in 2004, there were 4.6

vi **SUMMARY:** average per match



TRIES

Over the 5 years since RWC99, the total number of tries scored by each country in the 6 Nations championship is as follows:

<u>Total tries scored in last 5 years</u>		<u>Average per game</u>
England	107	4.3
Ireland	71	2.8
France	67	2.7
Wales	53	2.1
Italy	35	1.4
Scotland	34	1.4

The table shows that that England have scored 50% more tries than the second placed country, Ireland. What is interesting to note however is that England's total try count has declined in each of the last 4 years – from **29** in 2001, to **23** in 2002, **18** in 2003 and **17** in 2004.

Nevertheless, England have scored more tries than any other country in each of the last 5 years with the exception of 2004 where Ireland also scored 17.

Finally, as an indication of how far the game has changed since the onset of professionalism, a comparison with England's championship win in 1996 is illuminating. While England have averaged over 4 tries per game in recent years, in 1996 they scored just 3 tries in the 4 matches, or less than one per game, and still won the championship thanks to 17 penalty goals.

PENALTY GOALS

Despite the slight increase, the 2004 average of 4.6 per game confirmed the diminishing reliance on penalty goals in the 6 Nations championship. The extent of such a reduction is shown in the following table which shows the number of penalty goals kicked in the championship in each of the last 5 years:

2000	93 penalty goals
2001	93
2002	89
2003	65
2004	69

A further breakdown shows that England is the only team to have scored more tries than penalty goals in every one of the last five years. None of the other countries have come close. On all but a handful of occasions, the remaining 5 countries have consistently kicked more penalty goals than tries.

This is further illustrated in the following table which shows the total number of penalty goals kicked by each country over the last 5 years together with the total number of tries over the same period:

	penalties kicked	tries scored	ratio pens:tries
England	65	107	0.6 to 1
Ireland	77	71	1.1 to 1
Wales	64	53	1.2 to 1
France	88	67	1.3 to 1
Italy	55	35	1.6 to 1
Scotland	60	34	1.8 to 1

The above table shows that over the 5 year period,

France have kicked the most penalty goals
England have scored the most tries and
Scotland have the highest penalty goal to try ratio.

SCORING PROFILE OF THE MODERN GAME

The following table shows the comparative figures for the 5 Nations Championships played in 1954, 1964, 1974, 1984 and 1994 – and compares them with 6 Nations 2004

scores - average number per game

	converted tries	unconverted tries	conversion success rate	total tries	pens	drops
1954	0.9	2.0	31%	2.9	1.3	0.2
1964	1.8	1.4	53%	3.2	1.2	0.2
1974	1.3	0.9	59%	2.2	3.4	0.7
1984	2.1	0.6	78%	2.7	5.4	0.7
1994	1.0	1.0	50%	2.0	6.1	0.2
2004	2.9	1.6	63%	4.5	4.5	0.3

As an indication of how the game has changed, it is worth noting that while **there were very nearly the same number of tries as penalty goals in 2004, ten years ago, there were 3 times as many penalty goals as tries and 20 years ago twice as many.**

KICKING

Over the last number of years, kicking success rates in all international matches including World Cups, have shown a noticeable improvement over earlier decades. In the 6 Nations tournament however, this increase now appears to have reversed.

Conversion success rates have shown a steady reduction in each of the last 5 years. From an 82% success rate in 2000, it has now declined to 63%. The year on year reduction is as follows:

Conversion success rate	2004	63%
	2004	74%
	2003	76%
	2000	79%
	2000	82%

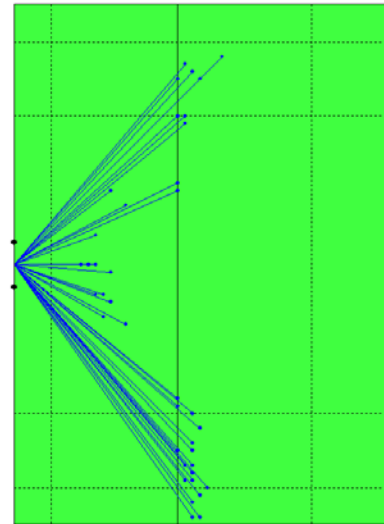
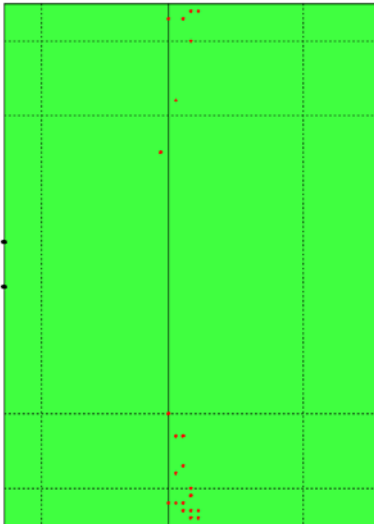
As for 2004, the following charts show all successful and unsuccessful conversion and penalty kicks during the 2004 championship.

Conversions

25 missed attempts

43 successful attempts

success rate: 63% (2003 -74%)

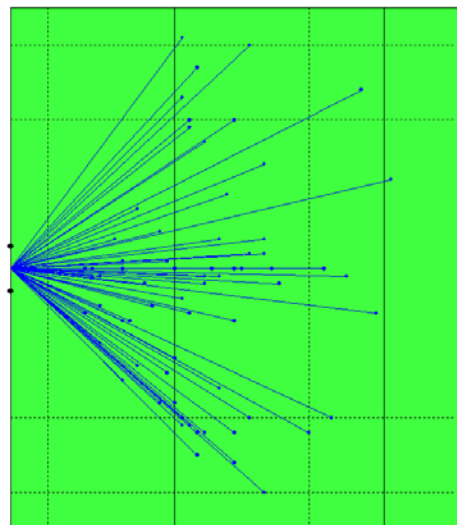
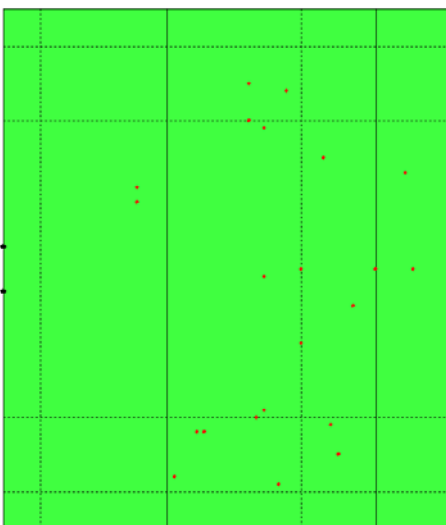


Penalties

23 missed attempts

69 successful attempts

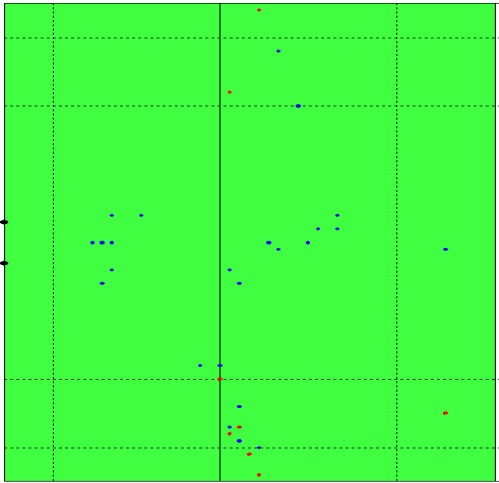
success rate: 75% (2003 - 72%)



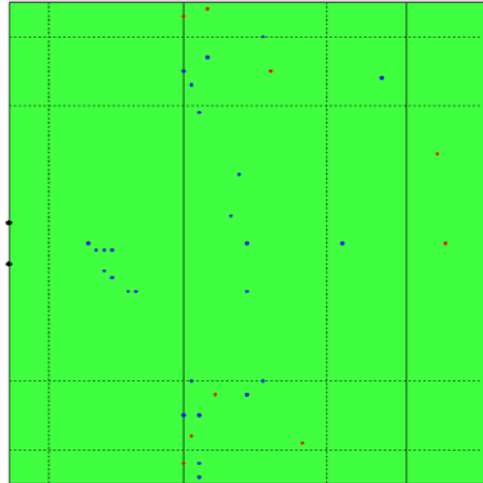
The following charts show each country's successful and unsuccessful kicks at goal. Blue = successful: Red = unsuccessful

SUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL KICKS AT GOAL BY COUNTRY

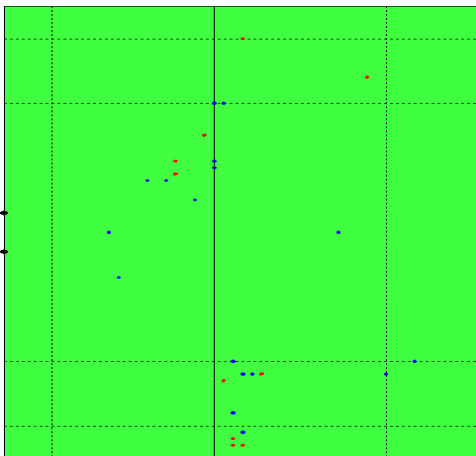
England



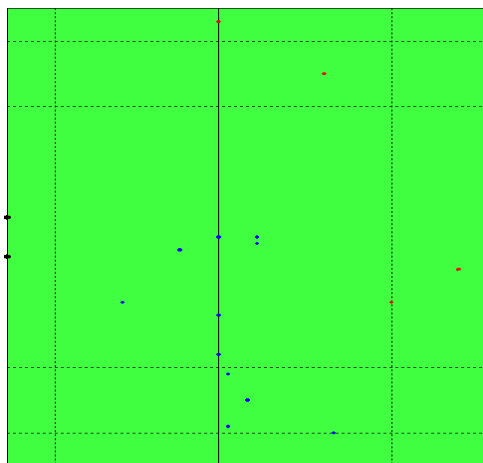
France



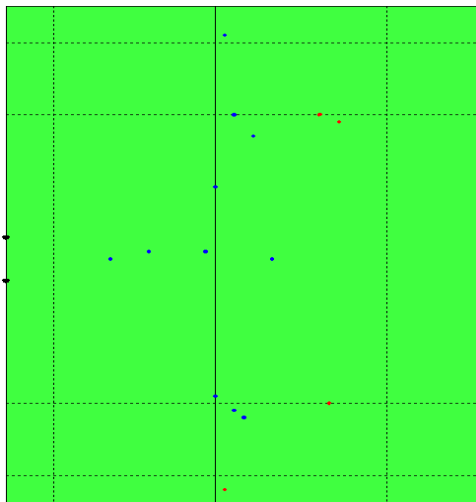
Ireland



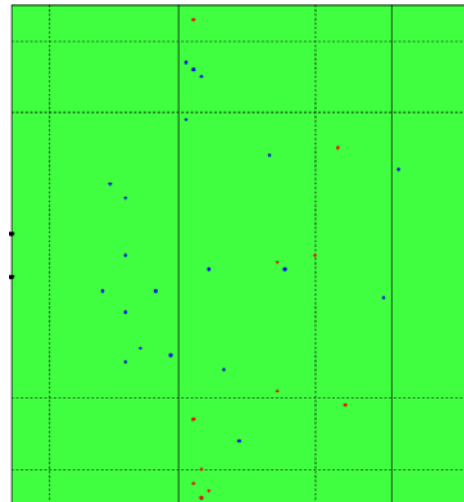
Italy



Scotland



Wales



KICKING SUCCESS RATES FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF PITCH

The success and failure rate of both conversions and penalties were combined in order to determine success rates from various parts of the pitch. An appropriate adjustment was made for left-footed kickers.

If the various areas are grouped into 3 – i.e. in front, right side and left side, the success rates are:

In front	87%
Right side	55%
Left side	61%

Overall therefore, the degree of difficulty of a kick is little affected by the side of the post from which the kick is taken.

B TRIES

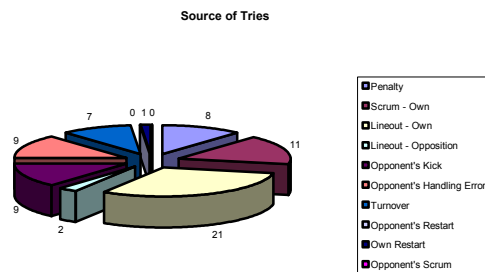
i tries scored by winning team

Of the 15 matches played in 6 Nations 2004, 13 were won by the team scoring most tries. In 2 games, tries were equal and in no game did the team scoring the fewer tries win. It remains true therefore – that 75% to 80% of matches are won by the team scoring the most tries. It is still infrequent for a team to score fewer tries but then win because of penalties.

ii source of tries

There were **68 tries** scored in 6 Nations 2004– six less than 2003.

The teams scoring the tries obtained possession of the ball prior to the scoring of the try from a variety of sources. This is shown in the following chart and table:

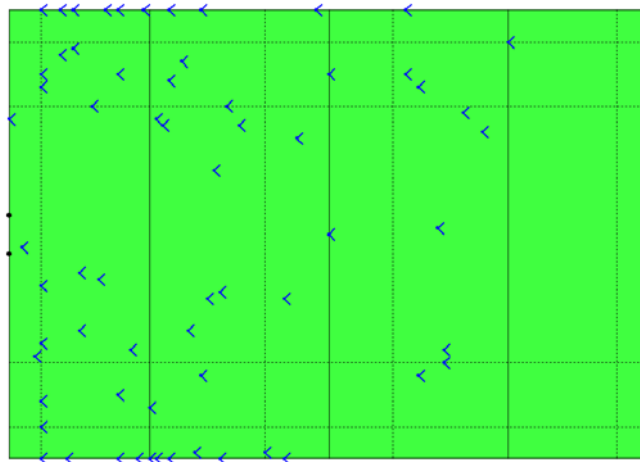


<u>Possession source</u>	2004	<u>2003</u>
Penalty	8	12
Scrum	11	11
Lineout - own	21	25
Lineout - opposition	2	3
Opponent's kick	9	9
Opponent's handling error	9	6
Turnover	7	5
Opponent's restart	0	1
Own restart	1	1
Opponent's scrum	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
	68	74

While lineout possession continues to account for most tries (around 30%), in 2004 tries from lineout possession went down slightly with tries from opponents' errors increasing correspondingly.

iii **origin of tries**

Tries originate from various parts of the pitch. The following chart shows where the attacking team obtained the possession from which they eventually scored.



This shows that:

- 34 or 50% originated within the 22 metre line (2003-51%)
- 18 or 26% between the 22 and 10 metre line (2003-19%)
- 6 or 9% between 10 metres and halfway (2003-14%) and
- 10 or 15% originated in the scoring team's half (2003-16%)

In 2001, 1 in 3 tries originated from within the scoring team's own half. This has become a less frequent occurrence over the last 3 years . In 2002, it went down to 1 in 5 and in 2003 and 2004 it was 1 in 6.

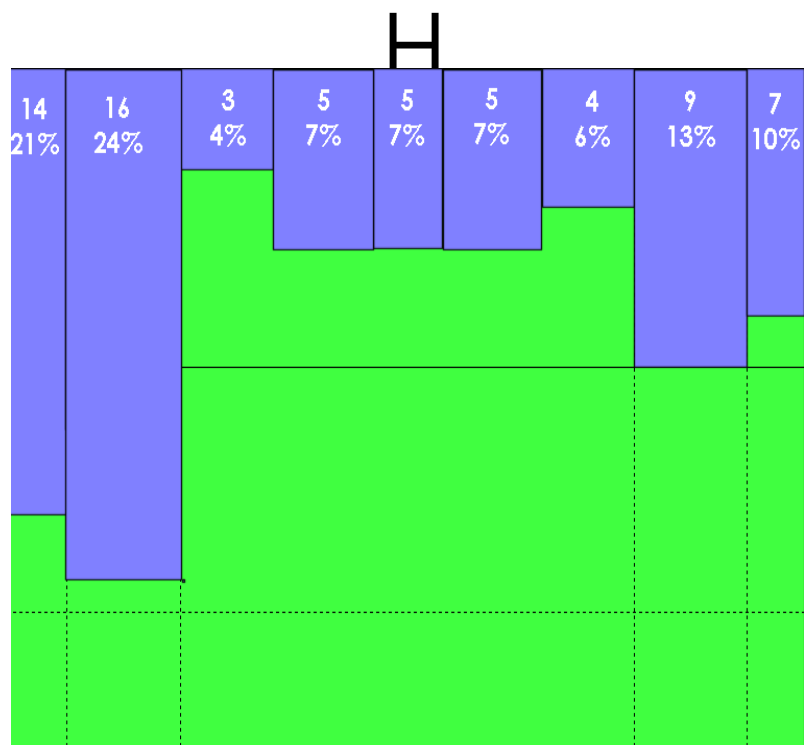
The corollary is that over 50% of tries started within 22 metres of the goal line in 2003 and 2004 compared with 30% in 2001.

iv Position where tries were scored

The chart below indicates where across the goal-line tries were scored.

It shows that 7% were scored under the posts
 56% on the left side of the posts, and
 36% on the right side of the posts.

The chart below shows that twice as many tries were scored within 15 metres of the left corner of the pitch than on the right.



v build-up to tries

Possession of the ball that leads to tries is obtained from a number of sources – and they are listed above. More often than not, other actions – second phase, kicks and passes – then take place before the try is scored.

The first table below shows the number of **rucks and mauls (2nd phase)** that preceded each of the 68 tries scored in the 2004 championship

<u>No of 2nd phases</u>	<u>frequency</u>
None	19
1	16
2	16
3	9
4	4
5	1
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10 - 13	<u>3</u>
	<u>68</u>

The table shows that 88% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer second phases.(2003 – 79%)

The next table shows the total number of **passes** that preceded each of the 68 tries.

<u>No of passes</u>	<u>frequency</u>
None	11
1	4
2	5
3	9
4	8
5	9
6	5
7	4
8	1
9	1
10	1
11	2
12	1
13	2
14	4
18	1

The table shows that 43% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer passes. (2003 – 50%)

This was not a figure that was seen consistently throughout all six teams.

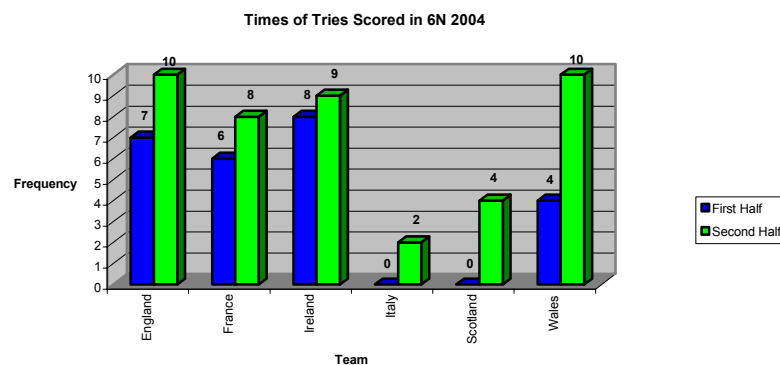
The table below shows that only 2 of Wales' 14 tries included 3 passes or less. In Ireland's case however, the opposite was the case - 12 out of their 17 tries had 3 or fewer passes.

vi timing of tries

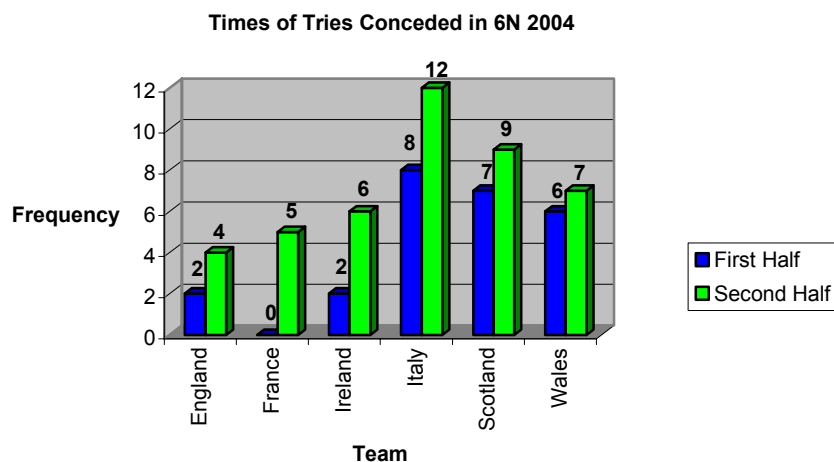
The 2 charts show that

- every country scored most of their tries in the second half
- every country conceded more tries in the second half
- France did not concede a single try in the first half of any of their matches and
- Scotland or Italy did not score a single try in the first half of theirs.

a the half in which each country scored their tries



b the half in which each country conceded tries.



vii timing of scores

There is a noticeable difference between the time when tries are scored and the time when penalties are kicked.

In 6 Nations 2004:

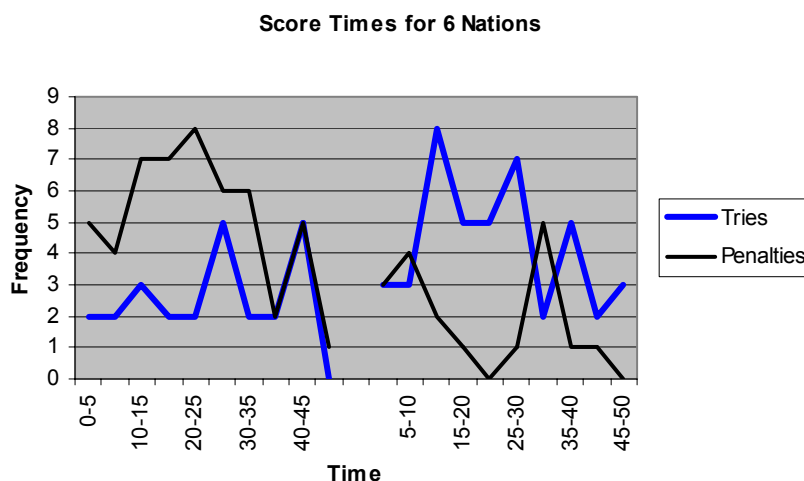
25 **tries** were scored in the first half – 43 in the second.

Penalties however showed a different profile:

51 **penalties** were kicked in the first half - 18 in the second

In general therefore, almost twice as many tries were scored in the second half than the first half but three quarters of penalty goals were kicked in the first.

The following chart breaks down the timings further and shows both penalties and tries in 5 minute sequences:



The above analysis was then broken down further to see if the scoring profiles of each of the 6 countries reflected the overall scoring profile.

With regard to penalties, all countries kicked the majority of their penalties in the first half. Ireland and Scotland did not kick a single penalty in the second half of any of their matches. France however kicked almost as many 2nd half penalties as the other 5 countries combined.

C MODE OF PLAY

i match time

The average length of a match in 6 Nations 2004 was
90 mins 26 seconds

The comparative figure for 6 Nations 2003 was
88 mins 49 seconds.

– an increase of 1 min 37 seconds.

The longest match time was 96 mins 09 secs
The shortest match time was 84 mins 01 secs

ii ball in play times

In percentage terms, the 2004 matches produced the following
ball-in-play times

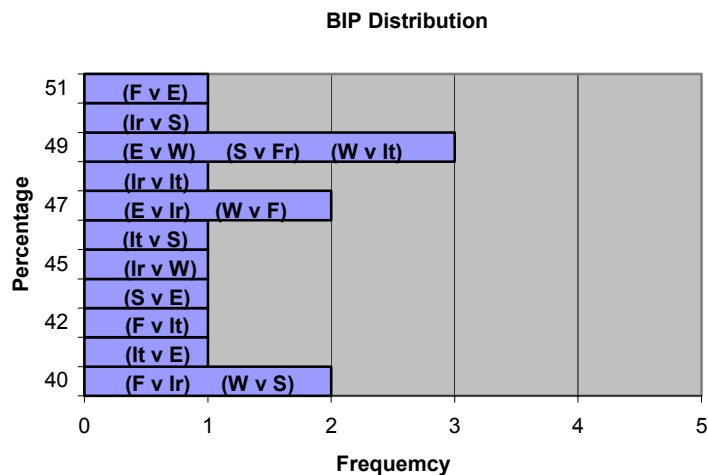
40%, 40%, 41%, 42%, 44%, 45%, 46%, 47%, 47%, 48%, 49%, 49%, 49%,
50%, 51%.- an average of **46%**

In 2003, the corresponding figures were

38%, 41%, 41%, 42%, 42%, 42%, 42%, 43%, 43%, 45%, 45%, 46%, 48%,
49%, 50% - an average of **44%**

The average ball in play time increased therefore from 44% to
46%.

Ball in play time continues to increase – there was no game with
less than 40% (ie 32 minutes) and for the first time, two games
were 50% or over. The ball in play for each game is shown in the
chart below:

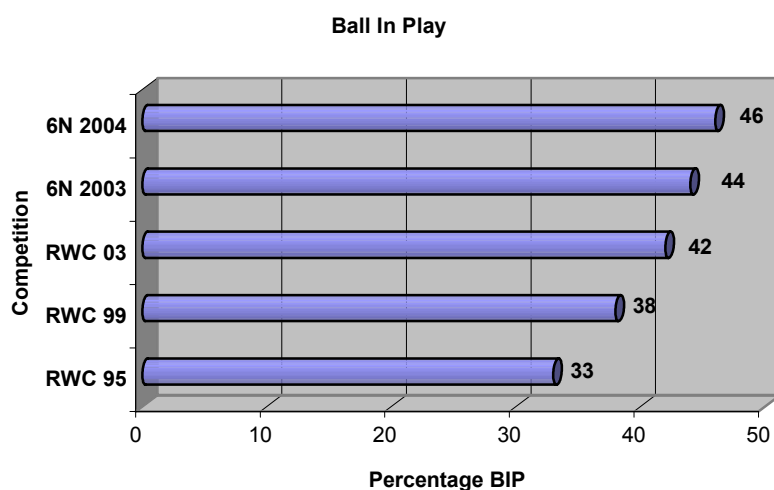


An indication of how far ball in play time has increased is when a comparison is made with with 5 Nations 1999. In that year, only one game exceeded 40% ball in play time while in 2004, all 15 achieved 40% or more.

Not surprisingly, the above figures also show noticeable increases from RWC91, 95 and 99 as shown below:

ball in play time RWC91	24 mins 48 secs (31%)
ball in play time RWC95	26 mins 43 secs (33%)
ball in play time RWC99	30 mins 35 secs (38%)
ball in play time 6 Nations 2004	36 mins 41 secs (46%)

Since the game went professional at the end of 1995, ball in play time has increased by almost 40%.

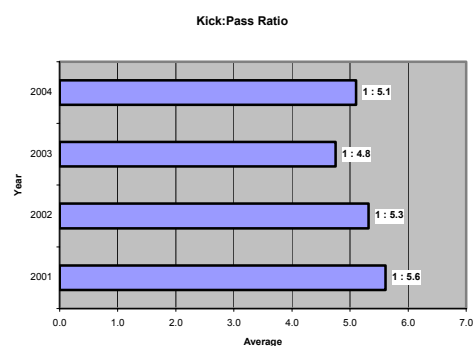
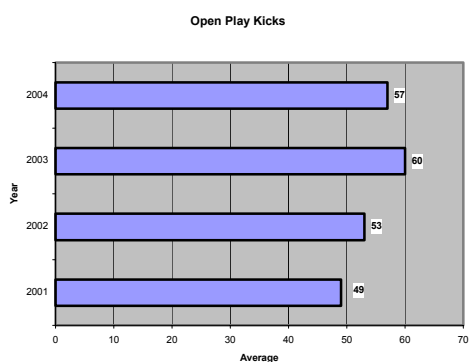
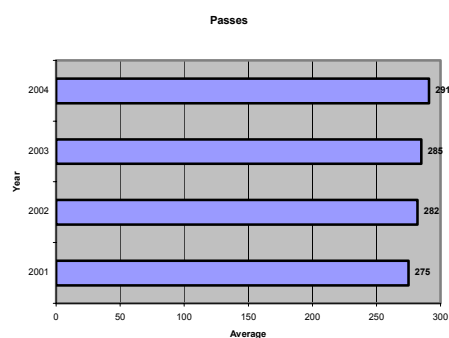
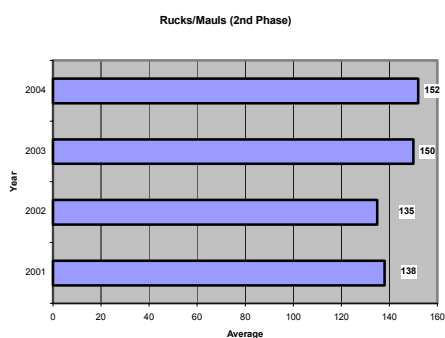


iii activity cycles

Activity cycles reflect what happens when the ball is in play - and with increased ball in play times, there has been a consequent increase in activity levels i.e. there have been more passes, kicks and ruck/mauls. Consequently, the average number of stoppages in the game has come down and in recent years has stabilised at around 95 per game.

The following data compares the average for the matches played in the last 4 years

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
rucks/mauls (2nd phase)	138	135	150	152
passes	275	282	285	291
open play kicks	49	53	60	57
kick:pass ratio	1 to 6.3	1 to 5.3	1 in 4.8	1 in 5.1



It can be seen that the increase in ball in play time over recent years has resulted in more rucks, passes and kicks with open play kicks increasing proportionately more than rucks and passes.

Rucks/Mauls (2nd phase)

The average number per game was **152** (2003 – 150).

The most in any game was 207 – the fewest was almost 100 less at 108. The most by any team in a game was 143 (England) – the fewest, 53(Italy).

There was a noticeable difference between some of the 6 teams. England for example created 34% more rucks/mauls than Wales. The average per country is shown below:

	Average no of rucks/mauls per game
England	90
Scotland	84
Ireland	74
Italy	71
France	71
Wales	67

The above table shows the total number of rucks/mauls created by each team in the competition expressed as an average per game. On a game by game basis therefore it shows that England and Scotland created the most rucks and mauls while Wales rucked and mauled the least.

However, the number of rucks and mauls made by one team may be constrained because it obtained only limited possession of the ball. In order to address this, an alternative calculation has been made which relates the number of rucks/mauls to the share of ball in play time won by each team.

ruck/mauls per minutes possession

England	4.6	
Italy	4.4	
Scotland	4.3	average: 4.2
Ireland	4.0	
Wales	4.0	
France	3.6	

The above chart shows certain changes from the former. While England remained the highest ruck/mauling team on both measures, France's rate of rucking was seen to be less than any other country.

Passes

Games, on average, contained 291 passes (2003 - 285). The most in any game was 348 – the fewest was almost 150 less at 212. The most by any team in a game was 260 (France) – the fewest, 98 (Ireland).

Again, there were noticeable differences between the six teams – France completed almost 50% more passes than Italy. Each team's average is shown below:

Average no of passes per game

France	166
Wales	162
Scotland	157
England	150
Ireland	125
Italy	114

When an adjustment is made to take account of the percentage possession obtained by each team, then the table changes however.

This table now shows that Wales were the clearly the highest passing team, their rate exceeding France and Ireland by 14% and 41% respectively.

	Passes per minutes possession	
Wales	9.6	
France	8.4	
Scotland	7.9	average: 7.9
England	7.7	
Italy	7.0	
Ireland	6.8	

Kicks

The average number per game was 57.

The most open play kicks in a game was 81 - the fewest 42.

The most by any team in a game was 44 (Ireland) – the fewest 19 (Scotland and Italy).

There were little differences between the 6 participating teams - all were within 6 kicks of each other.

Average no of kicks per game

Scotland	31
France	30
Ireland	29
Italy	29
England	28
Wales	25

When an adjustment is made to take account of the percentage possession obtained by each team, it shows that Italy was the highest kicking team in relation to the possession they obtained while England were the lowest.

Kicks per minutes possession

Italy	1.8	
Ireland	1.6	
Scotland	1.6	average: 1.6
France	1.5	
Wales	1.5	
England	1.4	

A summary of both tables – the first showing the average number of rucks, passes, and kicks per game and the second the rate per minute possession – is given below:

	<u>Average per game</u>			<u>Average per minute possession</u>			
	rucks	passes	kicks	rucks	passes	kicks	
ENGLAND	90	150	28	ENGLAND	4.6	7.7	1.4
FRANCE	71	166	30	FRANCE	3.6	8.4	1.5
IRELAND	74	125	29	IRELAND	4.0	6.8	1.6
ITALY	71	114	29	ITALY	4.4	7.0	1.8
SCOTLAND	84	157	31	SCOTLAND	4.3	7.9	1.6
WALES	67	162	25	WALES	4.0	9.6	1.5

vi **passing movements**

Passes are grouped into passing movements – i.e. one pass movement, two pass movements and so on.

The data shows that some 83% of all passing movements contained two passes or less. This now appears to be a constant and varies little from year to year.

Most teams played to this formula, but there are exceptions. The noticeable differences this year relate to England: 71% of their passing movements contained just one pass which was a far higher percentage than any other country. The corresponding figure for France, for example, was just 46%. The 71% figure was also noticeably different from the 2003 figure of 50%

Passing Sequences	1 Pass%	2 Pass %	Total %	2003
England	71	19	90	80
France	46	30	76	77
Ireland	54	32	86	82
Italy	59	26	85	84
Scotland	58	24	82	81
Wales	58	20	78	75

D **RESTARTS**

There were 198 start and restart kicks in the 15 matches. Just under 1 in 4 were contestable and of these, the kicking team regained possession on 28% of occasions.

Overall, and after allowing for kicking errors, possession was retained by the kicking team on 1 in 8 occasions.

E **LINEOUT**

The following data compares lineouts in 2002, 2003 and 2004:

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
average number per game	33	36	36
percentage competed	70%	64%	61%
lineout penalties per game	1.6	1.4	1.5
possession retained	78%	83%	80%

The most lineouts in a game was 44; the fewest 23.

Competition at the lineout has reduced in each of the last 4 years. Possession retained by the throwing in team has however changed little. **However, it should be noted that quality of possession has not been measured. No distinction has been made therefore between good and bad possession. This same qualification applies to scrum data.**

F SCRUM

The following data compares scrummages in 2002, 2003 and 2004

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
average number per game	24	20	21
scrum penalties per game	3.3	3.1	3.1
scrum pens as % of all pens	15%	12%	14%
penalty : scrum ratio	1 : 7	1 : 7	1 : 6
possession retained	91%	88%	87%

In 6 Nations 2004, there were 314 scrummages and 100 resets making a total of 414 scrum engagements.

Of the 414 engagements, there were 96 collapses or 23% of all engagements (2003, 15%)

On 2 occasions the 'use it or lose it' law was seen to apply. There were 4 in 2003.

There was 1 free kick for a crooked feed compared with four in 2002.

G PENALTIES

i number and incidence

In 6 Nations 2004, the average number of penalties and free kicks awarded in a game was **23**. This compares with 25 in 2003.

In 2004, the most awarded in a single game was 33 – the least, 13. The comparative figures for 2003 were 31 and 21. In 2003 the extremes

came far closer. The difference between the most and least penalties in 2004 was 20 – this was the same number as 2002 and 2001. Last year however, the differential was only 10.

In the 15 matches, the team playing at home was awarded the most penalties in 4 matches, the away team the most in 10 matches with an equal number of penalties being awarded in the remaining match.

ii **teams penalised**

Wales conceded the most penalties while Ireland conceded the fewest (including free kicks) as shown in the following table:

	penalties conceded
Wales	67
Italy	60
Scotland	57
France	55
England	51
Ireland	50

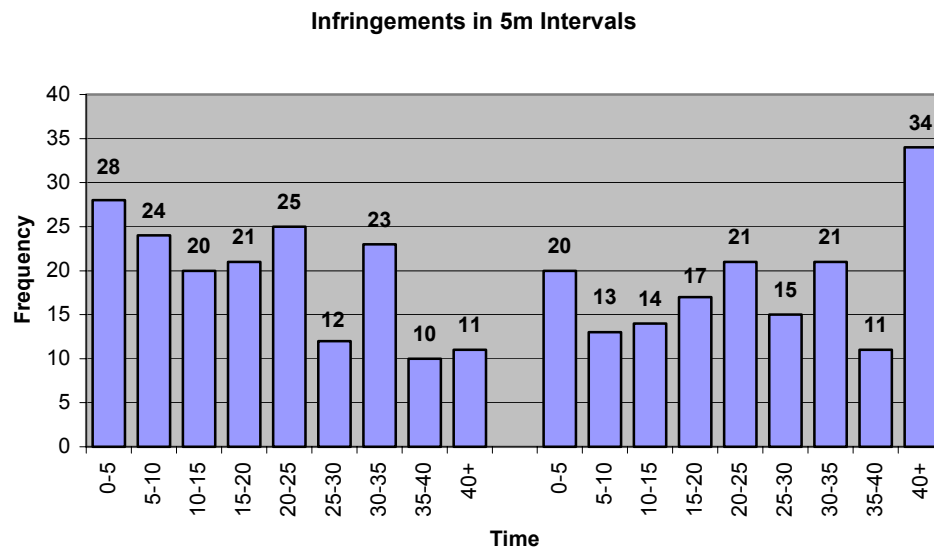
What needs to be noted is that the above are absolute figures – but because the number of penalties can vary from match to match (in 2004, between 13 and 33), a better and probably more accurate indicator, is the **proportion** of penalties conceded by a team in all their matches compared with their opponents.

	Proportion of times penalised
England	54%
Scotland	53%
Wales	53%
Italy	50%
France	49%
Ireland	43%

The second table shows that England, just as in 2002 and 2003, conceded proportionately more penalties than their opponents. By contrast, Ireland were penalised the least.

iii times of penalties

There were more penalties awarded in the first 5 minutes of the game than in any other 5 minute period while the highest proportion of penalties were awarded in stoppage time at the end of the game. Overall however, there was little difference in the number of penalties awarded in the first half and the second half. The following chart shows the times at which penalties were awarded:

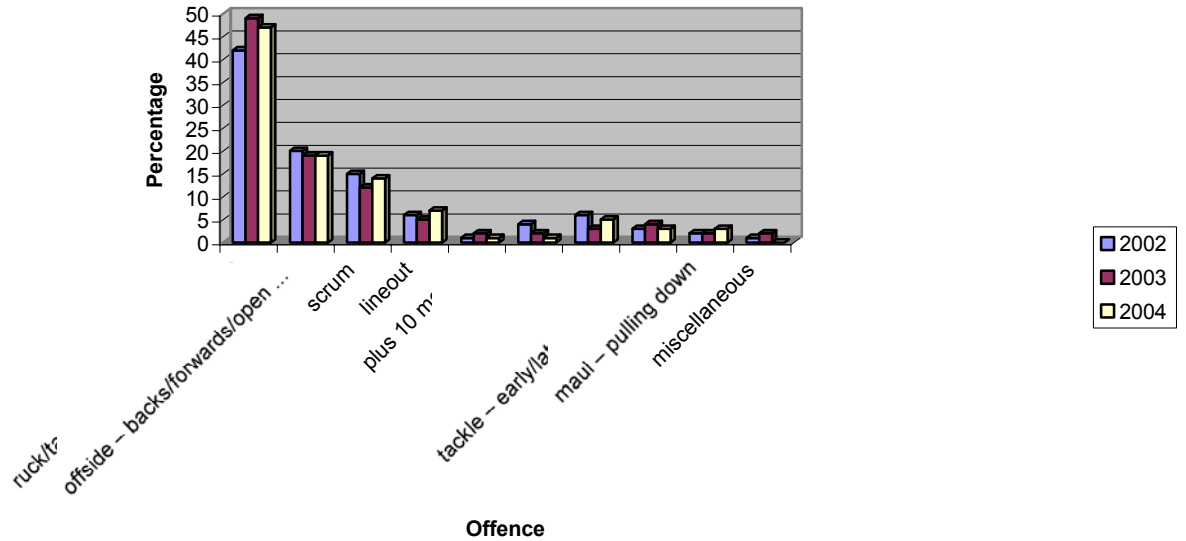


iv categories of offences penalised

The following table groups the penalties awarded into 10 categories – and shows the comparative figure for 6 Nations 2001 and 2002:

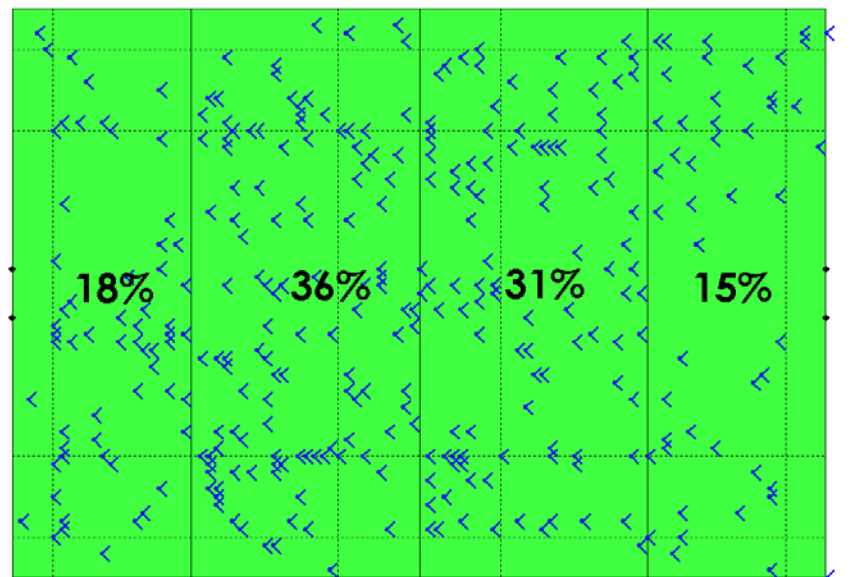
	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %
ruck/tackle – on ground offences	42	49	47
offside – backs/forwards/open play	20	19	19
scrum	15	12	14
lineout	6	5	7
plus 10 metres	1	2	1
foul play	4	2	1
obstruction	6	3	5
tackle – early/late/dangerous	3	4	3
maul – pulling down	2	2	3
miscellaneous	1	2	-
	100%	100%	100%

Penalty Offences 2002-2004



∇ **pitch location of penalties**

The chart below shows the location of every penalty awarded during the championship. The figures on the chart show the percentages for each quarter of the pitch.



vi **Northern and Southern Hemisphere referees**

Of the 15 matches, 8 were refereed by Northern Hemisphere referees, 7 by Southern Hemisphere referees. The following table looks at the breakdown of penalties and other match details between the two groups:

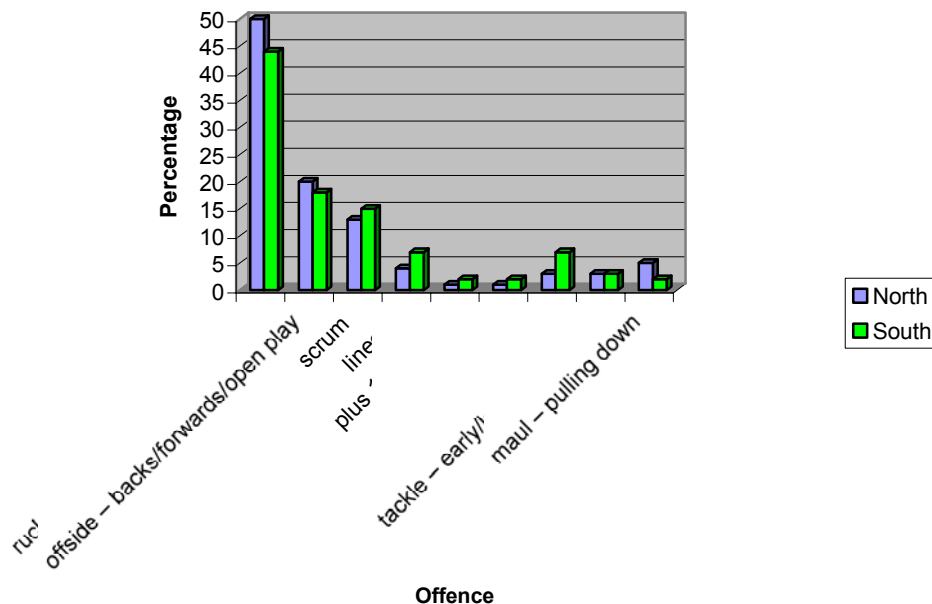
	northern	southern
a average points per match	43	43
b average ball in play times	46%	45%
c average number of penalties	20	26
d % of penalties given <u>against team in possession at</u> ruck/tackle on ground offences	48% (36% - 2002)	38% (33% - 2002)

This is the first time for several years that there has been a noticeable difference between the 2 groups of referees.

- Southern hemisphere referees awarded **30% more penalties** than northern hemisphere referees
- Northern hemisphere referees were harsher on the tackled player than were southern hemisphere referees
- The 4 games with the most penalties were refereed by Southern Hemisphere referees
- The 3 games with the lowest number, were refereed by Northern Hemisphere referees

e offences penalised:	<u>NH referees</u>	<u>SH</u>
	%	%
ruck/tackle – on ground offences	50	44
offside – backs/forwards/open play	20	18
scrum	13	15
lineout	4	7
plus 10 metres	1	2
foul play	1	2
obstruction	3	7
tackle – early/late/dangerous	3	3
maul – pulling down	5	2
	100%	100%

Penalty Offence North v South



H RED AND YELLOW CARDS ISSUED

The following paragraphs examine the circumstances and effects of the issue of red and yellow cards during the 6 Nations championship, 2004.

i red cards

There were none issued during the 2004 championship. (2002 - none)

ii yellow cards

Number issued 4 (2003-8)

Matches:

Scotland v England	McHugh (I)	1
Ireland v Wales	Jutje (F)	1
Scotland v France	Young (SA)	1
Ireland v Italy	Deaker (NZ)	1
		<u>4</u>

In 11 of the 15 matches, not a single yellow card was issued.

iii Offences for which yellow card issued:

Tackle - dangerous	1
Ruck/Tackle – player to ground	1
- wrong side	1
Offside - forward	<u>1</u>
	<u>4</u>

During the 15 matches, there were just 4 penalties awarded for foul play offences. – none resulted in a yellow card.

iv Countries conceding yellow cards:

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
France	0	0
Italy	1	1
Wales	2	0
England	2	0
Scotland	3	2
Ireland	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>

The yellow cards issued against Italian players amounted to just one – just as in 2003. This total of two compares with 11 yellow and 1 red card received over the 2 previous seasons.

v Referees

Northern Hemisphere referees	
matches refereed	<u>8</u>
matches with yellow cards	2
yellow cards issued – 1, 1	2

Southern Hemisphere referees	
matches refereed	<u>7</u>
matches with yellow cards	2
yellow cards issued – 1, 1	2

vi Home team/Away team

Issued against <u>home</u> team player	3
Issued against <u>away</u> team player	1

vii Times of issue

Issued during first half	2
Issued during second half	2

- viii Winning/Losing team
 - Issued against player of team in lead 1
 - Issued against player of team behind 2
 - Scores equal 1

- ix Impact on scoring during sin bin period
 The points benefit to the team with 15 players while an opponent was off the field was as follows:
 - a 7 pts. Last quarter of game - team penalised also losing heavily
 - b 7pts. Team penalised win comfortably.
 - c 5pts. First try to Ireland v Italy
 - d none

The above figures indicate that the points benefit to the team with 15 players continues to be relatively marginal at best.

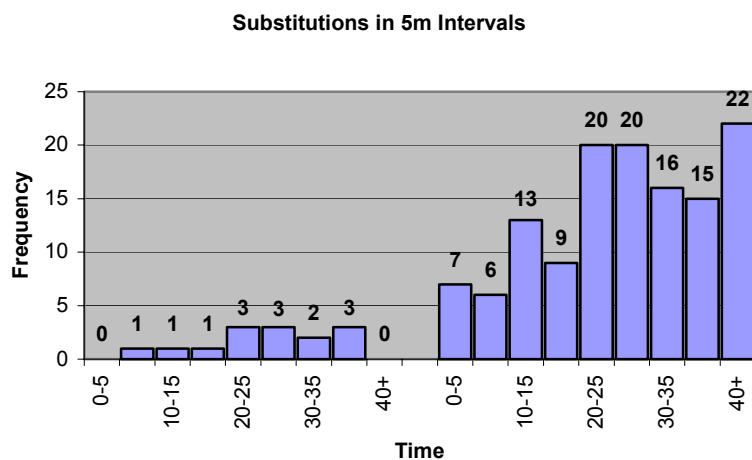
I **SUBSTITUTIONS**

In the 15 matches, there were

9 blood bins
and
133 tactical and injury substitutions

There were, on average, over 9 replacements per game. This shows a slight reduction over last year.

The following chart shows the number of substitutions – both injuries and tactical – made in each 5 minute period



J TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL

- During the championship, there were 7 references to the TMO (2003 – 7).
- As a result of the 7 references, 1 try was awarded.
- The shortest reference to the TMO took 36 seconds – the longest, 1min 35 seconds.
- Only 2 references took more than one minute (1m 35s, 1m 17s).
- 4 of the remaining references took between 36s and 48s
- one took 59 secs