6 NATIONS 2005

STATISTICAL REVIEW
AND MATCH ANALYSIS
6 NATIONS 2005
STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

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At first sight, 6 Nations 2005 would appear pretty unremarkable. Superficially, at least, there appeared little change from recent years with all constituent playing elements being very similar:

- points per game were not far off those of previous years
- tries and penalty goals per game showed little change
- ball in play at 44% was similar, and so, not surprisingly
- passes, rucks and mauls and kicks reflected the recent past with
- lineouts and scrums occurring at the same rate as before.

Little change therefore. Underneath the raw data however there were some remarkable things happening.

It was a tournament of contrasts and extremes – both from match to match but also from team to team. Not only was it a tournament that proved yet again that possession was not a guarantee of success, it was a tournament where one team – Wales – showed a noticeably different pattern of play from the rest. It also proved to be a competition that questioned severely some commonly held perceptions about the modern game.

But first to the extremes.

The Scotland v Wales game had the highest ball in play time ever recorded at senior international level – 55% or 43mins 45secs. It also contained the highest number of passes (428) and rucks and mauls (229) ever recorded in one game. In order to give this some sort of context, the famous Barbarians v All Blacks game of 1973 contained 150 fewer passes.

That particular game - Scotland v Wales – also contained 40% more ball in play and as many as 255 more passes than the Scotland v Ireland game played just a few weeks earlier.

As a further example of extremes, Ireland and Scotland make an interesting comparison. In their first 3 matches, Ireland averaged 78 passes per game: Scotland on the other hand averaged 181 in their last three. Illustrated in another way – Scotland made almost as many passes in their one game against Wales, as Ireland did in their 3 matches against Italy, Scotland and England combined.
What also became clear as the tournament progressed was that the domination of possession and greater activity was not a guarantee of success.

England obtained more possession than its opponents in all 5 of its matches and, in all but one game, by a noticeably higher margin. It made more passes than any other team, and no other team’s opponents made fewer passes. It rucked and maulled substantially more than the other 5 teams and was penalised at no greater rate than its opponents.

Despite this, they lost their first 3 matches and ended fourth in the table.

Wales, on the other hand, the champion team in 2005, could not boast such figures. In fact, they made fewer passes than England, noticeably fewer rucks and mauls and in all but one game had less possession than their opponents. Further, England’s opponents found it more difficult to score against them than they did against Wales.

Wales were however 30% more efficient at converting possession into tries. They also showed certain different characteristics from the other teams.

- they put the ball into touch noticeably less than any other team and, unlike the other countries, kicked long at almost every restart

- they were the only team where more forwards than backs scored tries

- their forwards made far more passes than any other country – and made more passes than the English and Irish forwards combined

- the Welsh backs and scrum half made proportionately fewer passes that those of any other team while still maintaining the highest rate of passing - so while making fewer passes than England, their overall rate of passing was 20% more

- they scored their tries from further out – scoring more tries from inside their own half than England, France and Ireland combined

- they also scored more tries from opponents’ handling errors and opponents kicks than England, France and Ireland put together
Whether such facts go some way to explaining why Wales were successful in 2005, will remain a matter of conjecture and whether such an approach is an indicator of the way the playing of the game may develop is another imponderable at this stage but, for all that, no less interesting.

What perhaps became of equal, if not greater, interest as the analysis of the games progressed, was that one of the commonly held perceptions of the modern game - that backs play like forwards and forwards play like backs – was somewhat wide of the mark. The assumption that rugby is now a 15 man passing game is simply not true – at least as far as 6 Nations is concerned. Forwards seldom pass the ball. Only 15% of passes made in the tournament were made by forwards and in several matches, not even 15% was achieved. Examples from individual matches are the best illustration of this.

- the Irish forwards made just one pass in the first half of their game against Scotland

- England’s forwards made only 2 passes in the first half against Wales – as did Italy’s forwards in their match against Wales

- the Irish forwards made 5 passes in total against England

- Wales’ forwards made 46 passes in the first half against Scotland

- this was only 3 less than the Irish forwards made in all 5 games in the championship

- there were 105 passes made by the forwards in the Scotland v Wales game – but only 19 in the Scotland v Ireland game and 17 in the Ireland v England game.

- in the 5 matches played by Ireland, the passes made by the Irish scrum half exceeded the total number of passes made by the rest of the team.

- France’s forwards made only 4 passes in the first half against England. Their backs however made even less – just 3 - while the scrum half made 10. A grand total of 17 by the entire team.

and finally

- in the Ireland v England game, there were 246 passes of which
just 17 or 7% were made by forwards. In the corresponding game in 1983, the forwards also made 17 passes. There were however, over 100 fewer passes in that game which meant that 22 years ago, the 16 forwards passed proportionately at twice the rate of the forwards in 2005.

Forwards therefore, while being active throughout the game in recycling and tackling are not major ball handlers. They may receive many passes but frequently that’s it. Their role appears to be to create the next phase of play and not to continue the existing phase by passing the ball.

The interest now is to see whether this characteristic continues or whether the different approach adopted by Wales this year is suggestive of what may happen in the future.
6 NATIONS 2005

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

Summary

This Executive Summary is divided into 2 sections.

Section 1 takes a brief look at constituent elements in the 2005 tournament and compares them to 2004. It also looks at the overall game as reflected through this year’s 6 Nations Championship, while

Section 2 looks at how the individual countries performed in certain critical areas in 2005.

SECTION 1 – THE 2005 CHAMPIONSHIP

In many of its core elements, this year’s championship showed little change from 2004 as shown in the following comparisons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Av points per game</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av tries</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av penalty goals</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av drop goals</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball in play</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av passes per game</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av rucks/mauls</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av kicks per game</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av lineouts per game</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av scrums per game</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av penalties per game</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned in the Commentary however, the above figures hide a number of extreme contrasts and interesting trends that are covered more fully in the main report.

The following data also comes from the detailed report that follows and reflects the modern game as expressed through this year’s 6 Nations
• 53% of all points came from tries
  30% came from penalty goals
  17% came from conversions and drop goals

• tries averaged almost 5 per game
  penalty goals averaged around 4.5
  drop goals around 1 every other game

• 70% of tries were scored by backs
  30% were scored by forwards

• 53 individual players scored tries in the 15 matches

• almost 50% of matches had scoring margins of 9 points or less

• over the last 5 years, penalty goals have come down from 93 to 66

• conversion success rate was 66%
  penalty goal success rate was 65%
  drop goal success rate was 29%

• almost 70% of matches were won by the team scoring most tries

• 38% of tries came from lineout possession

• 28% of tries came from inside the scoring team’s own half

• Match time 91m 24s (2004 – 90m 26s)

• Ball in play time 44%

• 42% of all passes were made by backs
  43% of all passes were made by the scrum half
  15% were made by the forwards

• almost 80% of passing movements contained 2 or fewer passes

• at short restarts, only around 1 in 5 were retained

• lineout possession retained was 86%
• scrum possession retained was 91%
• there were no free kicks for crooked scrum feeds

• 43% of penalties were awarded for on ground offences at the ruck/tackle area

• there were 5 yellow cards, 8 references to the TMO and, on average, 10 substitutes per game

SECTION 2 – THE TEAMS’ PERFORMANCES

This section summarises each team’s activities and performances in certain critical areas of the game. Again, further analysis can be found in the main report.

The number of tries scored by each team, the number conceded by each team and the number of penalty goals kicked is shown in the following tables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tries scored</th>
<th>Tries conceded</th>
<th>Penalty goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WALES</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRELAND</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTLAND</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the table above shows that England scored only one less try than Wales, Wales were some 30% more effective than any other team in converting possession into tries.

Wales scored 1 try for every 5 min 04s possession
France scored 1 try for every 6 min 34s possession
England scored 1 try for every 6 min 39s possession
Ireland scored 1 try for every 6 min 42s possession
Scotland scored 1 try for every 11 min 22s possession
Italy scored 1 try for every 16 min 33s possession

Wales were not however the most effective in preventing opponents from converting possession into tries as shown below:

France conceded 1 try for every 14min 30s opposition possession
England conceded 1 try for every 13 min 03s opposition possession
Wales conceded 1 try for every 11 min 47s opposition possession
Ireland conceded 1 try for every 9 min 41s opposition possession
Scotland           4 min 38s
Italy           4 min 13s

Each team’s kicking success rate was as follows (penalty goals and conversions):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Kick Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average time in possession of the ball by each team is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Time in Possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>21m 17secs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>18m 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>17m 14s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>17m 05s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>16m 33s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>16m 04s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: England obtained more possession than their opponents in each of their 5 games.

Activities:
- England made more rucks/mauls than any other team
- Ireland made the least
- England made more passes than any other team
- Ireland made the least
- Ireland made the most kicks
- England made the least

When it came to the rate of activity (i.e., rucks/passes/kicks per minute’s possession) the order changed however.

Scotland rucked/mauled at the highest rate
Wales passed at the highest rate
Ireland’s rate of kicking was also the highest as well as kicking the most.
Wales forwards made noticeably more passes than any other team’s forwards
Ireland was the least penalised team
Wales scored more tries from within their own half than England, Ireland and France combined. They also scored more tries from opponents' handling errors and opponents' kicks than the other countries did in total.

SIX NATIONS 2005

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Played</th>
<th>Won</th>
<th>Lost</th>
<th>Drawn</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MATCHES PLAYED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 Mar 2005</td>
<td>England vs Scotland</td>
<td>43 - 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Mar 2005</td>
<td>Wales vs Ireland</td>
<td>32 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Mar 2005</td>
<td>Italy vs France</td>
<td>13 - 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Mar 2005</td>
<td>Scotland vs Wales</td>
<td>22 - 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Mar 2005</td>
<td>England vs Italy</td>
<td>39 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Mar 2005</td>
<td>Ireland vs France</td>
<td>19 - 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Ireland vs England</td>
<td>19 - 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Feb 2005</td>
<td>France vs Wales</td>
<td>18 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Scotland vs Italy</td>
<td>18 - 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Feb 2005</td>
<td>England vs France</td>
<td>17 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Scotland vs Ireland</td>
<td>13 - 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Italy vs Wales</td>
<td>3 - 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Italy vs Ireland</td>
<td>17 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Feb 2005</td>
<td>Wales vs England</td>
<td>11 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Feb 2005</td>
<td>France vs Scotland</td>
<td>16 - 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A SCORING PROFILES

POUNTS SCORED

i There were 671 points scored in the 15 matches played. They were made up as follows:

- 47 converted tries      329
- 24 unconverted tries   120
- 66 penalties           198
- 8 drop goals           24

Total: 671 points

Points makeup

ii The average number of points per game was 45 – up 2 points over 2004’s average of 43. The last 5 year’s figures were: 53, 51, 47, 43 and 45.

iii There was a small increase in the average number of tries scored per game.

- 2001 there were 5.0 tries per match
- 2002 5.0 tries per match
- 2003 5.0 tries per match
- 2004 4.5 tries per match
- 2005 4.7 tries per match

Tries accounted for 53% of total points scored, an identical figure to 2004.
iv Drop goals increased from 3 to 8 in the 15 matches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Drop Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

v Penalty goals averaged 4.4 per match, a slight increase over 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Penalty Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vi SUMMARY: average per match

![Score Makeup 2001-2005](image)

Of the total points scored:

- 53% came from tries
- 30% came from penalty goals
- 14% came from conversions
- 3% came from drop goals

Points from tries therefore exceeded the total number of points scored from all forms of kick – penalty goals, conversions and drop goals.
SCORING PROFILE OF THE MODERN GAME


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Converted tries</th>
<th>Unconverted tries</th>
<th>Total tries</th>
<th>Pens</th>
<th>Drops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As an indication of how the game has changed is that in 2005, tries exceeded penalty goals. This phenomenon happened only once in the 20 years between 1975 and the game turning professional in 1995.

WINNING MARGINS

The winning margins in each of the 15 matches fell into the following ranges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points margin</th>
<th>Matches</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 with 4 points or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7 with 9 points or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9 with 19 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12 with 29 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13 with 39 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15 with 49 or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost 50% of matches had margins of 9 points or less.
TRIES

The total number of tries and penalty goals scored by each country in the 2005 6 Nations Championship was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tries</th>
<th>Penalty goals</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.7:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.9:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.9:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.7:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.6:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An interesting point to note is that England’s total try count has declined in each of the last 5 years – albeit by just 1 try in each of the last 2 years - from 29 in 2001, to 23 in 2002, 18 in 2003, 17 in 2004 and 16 in 2005.

RATE OF TRY SCORING

The table immediately above shows the number of tries scored by each country.

The table does not show however how effective each team was in scoring tries in relation to the possession that it obtained. A team may obtain little possession but still manage to score a significant number of tries. The following paragraphs consider this and attempt to show how successful each team was in converting possession into tries.

This was done by adding together the time each team was in possession of the ball in each of the 5 matches played and then dividing it by the number of tries scored. The result then gave a rate of try scoring – or a measure of how effective each country was in converting possession into tries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rate of try scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>1 try scored for every 5 min 04s possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>6 min 34s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>6 min 39s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>6 min 42s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>11 min 22s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>16 min 33s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures show that Wales was some 30% more effective than any other team at converting possession into tries. What was also noticeable was the fact that France, England and Ireland scored their tries at an all but identical rate.
RATE OF TRY CONCEDING

Following the above exercise, the converse was looked at ie. how effective was each team in restricting tries in relation to the possession that their opponents obtained. The following paragraph tries to measure this by illustrating how successful each team was in preventing their opposition from converting possession into tries.

This was done by adding together the total time the team’s opponents were in possession of the ball - and then dividing it by the number of tries conceded. The result then gave a rate of try scoring by the opposition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Rate of Try Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1 try for every 14min 30s opposition possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>13 min 03s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>11 min 47s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>9 min 41s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>4 min 38s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4 min 13s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table indicates that while France and England conceded the same number of tries, France managed to keep their opponents out somewhat longer.

PLAYERS AND TRIES

It has been noted above that there were 71 tries scored in the 15 matches:

- 70% of tries were scored by backs
- 30% of tries were scored by forwards

With regard to individual players that scored tries

- 34 backs scored tries
- 19 forwards scored tries

A total of 53 individual players therefore scored tries in this year’s 6 Nations tournament.

Only one country fell outside the pattern of more backs than forwards scoring tries – and that was Wales where 4 backs scored tries compared with 6 forwards.
PENALTY GOALS

The slight decrease this year to 4.4 per game from last year’s 4.6 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Goals Kicked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further breakdown shows that England is the only team to have scored more tries than penalty goals in every one of the last six 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. Wales was the only other exception this year.

This is further illustrated in the following table which shows the total number of penalty goals kicked by each country over the last 6 years together with the total number of tries over the same period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Goals Kicked</th>
<th>Tries Scored</th>
<th>Ratio Pens:Tri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>0.6 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.1 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.1 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.3 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.6 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1.7 to 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that over the 6 year period since RWC 99

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

KICKING

Kicking success rates were as follows:

- Conversions: 66%
- Penalty goals: 65%
- Drop goal attempts: 29%
From a conversion success rate of 82% in 2000, the success rate since has declined to 66%. The year on year reduction is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Conversion success rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for 2005, the following charts show all successful and unsuccessful conversion, penalty kick and drop goal attempts during the 2005 championship.

**Conversions**  
*success rate: 66% (2004 - 63%)*

- 47 successful attempts
- 24 failed attempts

**Penalty Goals**  
*success rate: 65% (2004 - 75%)*

- 66 successful attempts
- 36 missed attempts
Drop Goals

*success rate: 29%*

8 successful attempts

20 missed attempts

The kicking success rate i.e. penalty goals and conversions – of each of the participating countries was as follows;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following charts show successful and unsuccessful place kicks at (ie. excluding drop goals)

SUCCESSFUL PLACE KICKS AT GOAL PER TEAM
The 3 most successful teams – Ireland, Wales and Scotland – used 5 kickers between them (2, 2 and 1). The remaining teams – France, England and Italy - used 10 (4, 3 and 3).

**DROP GOALS**

Eleven individual players attempted drop goals – 6 succeeded in at least one attempt.

The best drop goal rate was Wales at 50%. England, Ireland and France had a 1 in 3 success rate while Italy and Scotland each failed all three of their attempts.

**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.

If the various areas are grouped into 3 – i.e. in front, right side and left side, the success rates are:
In front 81%
Right side 55%
Left side 68%

B  TRIES

i  Tries scored by winning team

Of the 15 matches played in 6 Nations 2005, 10 were won by the team scoring most tries. In 3 games, tries were equal and in two games the team scoring the fewer tries won. 67% of matches were won by the team scoring most tries. This is slightly lower than the annual average of around 75%

ii  Source of tries

There were 71 tries scored in 6 Nations 2005– three more than in 2004.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possession source</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penalty</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrum - own</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lineout - own</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lineout - opposition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponent’s kick</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponent’s handling error</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opponent’s restart 2 0
Own restart 1 1
Opponent’s scrum 1 0

Lineout possession continues to account for most tries. In 2005, tries from lineout possession went up to 38% of all tries with tries from scrums and turnovers decreasing.

**Wales** scored 8 tries from opposition handling errors and opposition kicks. This exceeded the total figure for **England, France and Ireland** – which amounted to 6.

Eleven of **England’s** 16 tries (or 69%) came from the set pieces of scrum and lineout. **Wales**’ figure on the other hand was 6 out of 17 (or 35%)

### iii Origin of tries

Tries originate from various parts of the pitch.

- 21 or 30% originated within the 22 metre line (2004-50%)
- 21 or 30% between the 22 and 10 metre line (2004-26%)
- 9 or 12% between 10 metres and halfway (2004- 9%) and
- 20 or 28% originated in the scoring team’s half (2004–15%)

In 2001, 1 in 3 tries originated from within the scoring team’s own half. This became a less frequent occurrence over the next 3 years. In 2002, it went down to 1 in 5, in 2003 and 2004 it was 1 in 6 but now it has reverted to just over 1 in 3.

The corollary is that only 29% of tries started within 22 metres of the goal line compared with 50% in 2004.

With regard to the 6 competing teams, **Wales** scored 8 or almost 50% of their tries from within their own half. This was more than **France, Ireland and England’s** combined total.

### iv Position where tries were scored

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

It shows that 14% were scored under the posts
46% on the left side of the posts, and
40% on the right side of the posts.
The chart below shows that unlike 2004, where twice as many tries were scored within 15 metres of the left corner of the pitch than on the right, in 2005 the location of tries showed little difference from left side to right side.

![Chart showing try locations]

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 (2\textsuperscript{nd} phase) that preceded each of the 71 tries scored in the 2005 Championship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of 2\textsuperscript{nd} phases</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 83% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer second phases (2004 – 88%)
The next table shows the total number of passes that preceded each of the 71 tries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of passes</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 51% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer passes. (2004 – 43%)

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

**Wales** scored 8 tries from opposition handling errors and opposition kicks. This exceeded the total figure for **England, France and Ireland** – which amounted to 6.

**vi  Timing of tries**

The following 2 charts show that

- **Wales, France** and **England** scored most of their tries in the first half: **Scotland, Ireland** and **Italy** scored most of theirs in the second.
- Two of **Italy’s** 5 tries came after the 45th minute of the second half
a  the half in which each country **scored** their tries

**Times of tries scored 2005**

![Graph showing times of tries scored in 2005](image)

b  the half in which each country **conceded** tries.

**Times of tries conceded 2005**

![Graph showing times of tries conceded in 2005](image)

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 2005

34 tries were scored in the first half – 37 in the second.

Penalty goals however showed a different profile:

36 penalties were kicked in the first half – 30 in the second
The following chart breaks down the timings further and shows both penalties and tries in 5 minute sequences:

![Time of Scores Chart]

The above pattern is unusual. In recent years, noticeably more tries have been scored in the second half with noticeably more goals in the first half.

This year, the incidence of scoring was different. Both tries and penalty goals were evenly spread throughout the 80 minutes.

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.

Only one team kicked more penalties in the second half – **France** whose 9 comfortably exceeded the 5 kicked in the first half.

**C MODE OF PLAY**

**i Match time**

The average length of a match in 6 Nations 2005 was **91 mins 24 seconds**

The comparative figure for 6 Nations 2004 was **90 mins 26 seconds**

– an increase of 58 seconds.

The longest match time was 96 mins 28 secs
The shortest match time was 84 mins 54 secs
ii Ball in play times

In percentage terms, the 2005 matches produced the following ball-in-play times:
36%, 38%, 39%, 41%, 42%, 44%, 44%, 44%, 45%, 46%, 47%, 47%, 48%, 49%, 55%. An overall average of 44%

In 2004, the corresponding figure was 46%

The average ball in play time reduced therefore from 46% to 44%, a similar figure to 2003.

However, in one game this year – Scotland v Wales – the highest ball in play ever was recorded – 43 minutes 45 seconds or 55%.

An indication of how far ball in play time has increased is when a comparison is made with 5 Nations 1999. In that year, only one game exceeded 40% ball in play time while in 2005, all but 3 of the 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 2005: 35 mins 28 secs (44%)

Since the game went professional at the end of 1995, ball in play time has increased by as much as 33% to 40%.
In over the 15 matches, when it came to possession, one team stood apart from the others. **England** was way ahead. In each of its 5 games, it obtained more possession than its opponents on every single occasion and in all but one game to a noticeably greater extent.

The average time in possession of the ball of each team is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>21m 17secs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>18m 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>17m 14s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>17m 05s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>16m 33s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>16m 04s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rucks/mauls (2nd phase)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passes</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open play kicks</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kick:pass ratio</td>
<td>1 to 5.3</td>
<td>1 in 4.8</td>
<td>1 in 5.1</td>
<td>1 in 4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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. The level of such actions is however no longer increasing since average ball in play time now appears to have stabilised.

(a) Rucks/Mauls (2nd+ phases)

The average number per game was 147 (2004 – 152).

The most in any game was 229 – the fewest was over 130 less at 96. The most by any team in a game was 137 (Scotland) – the fewest, at 100 less, was Italy (37)

There was a noticeable difference between some of the 6 teams. England for example created 26% more rucks/mauls than Wales. The average per country is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average no of rucks/mauls per game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>66 overall av. – 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Ireland rucked and maulled 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Rucks/Mauls per Minutes Possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>4.3 average: 4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of rucks/mauls (2nd phases) created by a team can however vary enormously from match to match. The following table shows the average number of rucks/mauls per country per game as shown above together with the most in a game and the least in a game:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average per Game</th>
<th>Most in a Game</th>
<th>Least in a Game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Passes

Games, on average, contained 264 passes (2004 - 291). The most in any game was 428 (Scotland v Wales) – the fewest was over 250 less at 175. (Scotland v Ireland)

The most by any team in a game was 215 (Wales) – the fewest, 66 (Ireland).

Again, there were noticeable differences between the six teams – England completed almost 50% more passes than both Italy and Ireland. Each team’s average is shown below:
Average no of passes per game

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Passes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 England by almost 20% and Ireland by 30%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passes per minutes possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of passes made by a team can also vary significantly from match to match. The following table shows the average number of passes per country per game as shown above together with the most passes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Passes av per game</th>
<th>Most in a game</th>
<th>Least in a game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Already it can be seen that 6 Nations 2005 saw a championship of contrasts – with none more noticeable than in the area of passes. While one game had as few as 175 passes, one game (Scotland v Wales) had 428. This is an international record. It is a figure that has not been exceeded in any game since 1995 and is not likely to have been exceeded in any game played in the amateur era since it is in the professional era that the increase in activity – which includes passes – has become almost exponential.

As a further example of contrasts, Ireland and Scotland make an interesting comparison. In their first 3 matches, Ireland averaged 78
passes per game: Scotland on the other hand averaged 181 in their last three. Expressed in another way – Scotland made almost as many passes in their one game against Wales, as Ireland did in their 3 matches against Italy, Scotland and England combined.

There were other interesting contrasts:

- Over their 5 matches, Wales made fewer passes than their opponents
- Wales were nevertheless, after England, the second highest passing team being equal with Scotland
- England made almost 50% more passes than their opponents
- England not only made the most passes, but no other country’s opponents made fewer passes.

While the above data may be a surprise to some, the bigger surprises came when passes were broken down into 3 groups - viz

- Passes made by backs
- Passes made by forwards
- Passes made by the scrum half

When the 4000 or so passes made in 6 Nations 2005 were allocated into these 3 groups, the results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of all passes made by backs:</th>
<th>42%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of all passes made by scrum half:</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of all passes made by backs:</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As far as the backs were concerned, all countries had a similar profile – ie backs accounted for around 42% of all passes. The percentages for each country are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% of all passes made by backs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More noticeable differences started to arise however when the percentage of passes made by the scrum half was examined.
The overall average was 43% but there were wider divergences than in the case of backs, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of all passes made by scrum half</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences are even more pronounced in the case of passes by forwards where Wales is especially noticeable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of all passes made by forwards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the above 3 tables are combined, it can be seen that there are noticeable contrasts between certain of the teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of passes by backs</th>
<th>by scrum half</th>
<th>by forwards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The extent of these differences are further accentuated when the percentages are converted into figures. These illustrate even more emphatically not only the differences between teams but sometimes quite dramatic differences at individual match level.

- Scotland made 140 passes in the second half against Wales
• conversely, France made just 17 passes in total in the first half against England of which the backs made 3

• the Irish forwards made just one pass in the first half of their game against Scotland

• England’s forwards made just 2 passes in the first half against Wales – as did Italy’s forwards in their match against Wales

• the Irish forwards made 5 passes in total against England

• Wales’ forwards made 46 passes in the first half against Scotland

• this was only 3 less than the Irish forwards made in all 5 games in the championship combined

• there were 105 passes made by the forwards in the Scotland v Wales game – but only 19 in the Scotland v Ireland game and 17 in the Scotland v Ireland game.

• in the 5 matches played by Ireland, the passes made by the Irish scrum half exceeded the total number of passes made by the rest of the team.

and finally

• in the Ireland v England game, there were 246 passes of which just 17 or 7% were made by forwards. In the corresponding game in 1983, the forwards also made 17 passes. There were however, over 100 fewer passes in that game which meant that 22 years ago, the forwards passed proportionally at twice the rate of the forwards in 2005.

(c) Kicks

The average number per game was 62 (2004 – 57)
The most open play kicks in a game was 91 - the fewest 36.
The most by any team in a game was 46 (Ireland) – the fewest 17 (Wales).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average no of kicks per game</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRB Game Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nations 2004</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When an adjustment is made to take account of the percentage possession obtained by each team, it shows that **Ireland** was the highest kicking team in relation to the possession they obtained while **England** were the lowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kicks per minutes possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 5 matches played by **Italy** contained, on average, over 20% more kicks than the other 10 matches where they were not involved. The reason for this was that the highest number of kicks made by **Wales**, **Scotland and Ireland** happened to be in their matches against **Italy**. This explains why Italy’s matches averaged 70 kicks per game while those not involving Italy averaged 58.

**Summary**

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average per game</th>
<th>Average per minute possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rucks passes kicks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>93 156 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTLAND</td>
<td>82 147 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALES</td>
<td>74 147 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>66 107 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>66 129 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRELAND</td>
<td>60 106 34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(d) **Passing movements**

Passes are grouped into passing movements – i.e. one pass movement, two pass movements and so on.
The data shows that some 79% 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. The noticeable change this year relates to England. While last year, 71% of their passing movements contained just one pass, a far higher percentage than any other country, this reduced this year to 47% - the lowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Sequences</th>
<th>1 Pass %</th>
<th>2 Pass %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D RESTARTS

Of 50m restarts, 53% were kicked long – 47% were kicked short and were contestable. Wales however kicked long on 90% of occasions – and while Wales kicked short only twice, no other country kicked short less than 12 times.

When 50m restarts were kicked short, the kicking team regained possession on 1 in 6 occasions.

At 22m restarts, 83% were kicked long 17% short. The success rate on the short kicks was 1 in 4.

E LINEOUT

The following data compares lineouts in 2003, 2004 and 2005:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>average number per game</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percentage competed</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lineout penalties per game</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possession retained</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most lineouts in a game was 43; the fewest 29.

All teams had high success rates on their own throw. France was the most successful with 94% - Italy the least successful with 82%.

On opponents throw ins, the most successful team was France with a 1 in 5 success rate; the least successful was Italy with 1 in 11.

Wales caused the ball to go into touch noticeably fewer times than any other team.

Competition at the lineout increased slightly this year. 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 2003, 2004 and 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>average number per game</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scrum penalties per game</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scrum pens as % of all pens</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>penalty : scrum ratio</td>
<td>1 : 6</td>
<td>1 : 6</td>
<td>1 : 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possession retained</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 6 Nations 2005, there were 295 scrummages and 114 resets making a total of 409 scrum engagements.

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

There were no free kicks for crooked feed compared with one in 2004.

G PENALTIES
i  Number and incidence

In 6 Nations 2005, the average number of penalties and free kicks awarded in a game was 20. This compares with 23 in 2004.

In 2005, the most awarded in a single game was 26 – the least, 12. The comparative figures for 2004 were 33 and 13. The highest number of penalties in a game (26) was only one more than the average for 2003.

In the 15 matches, the team playing at home was awarded the most penalties in 6 matches, the away team the most in 7 matches with an equal number of penalties being awarded in the remaining 2 matches.

ii  Teams penalised

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Total penalties conceded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that even between the most penalised team and least penalised team the difference was relatively small. On average, Italy, who gave away the most penalties, conceded only 2 penalties a game more than Ireland, the least penalised team who were also the least penalised team last year.

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 2005, between 12 and 26), a better and probably more accurate indicator, is the proportion of penalties conceded by a team in all their matches compared with their opponents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of times penalised</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iii Categories of offences penalised

The following table groups the penalties awarded into 10 categories – and shows the comparative figure for 6 Nations 2003 and 2004:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ruck/tackle – on ground offences</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offside – backs/forwards/open play</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scrum</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lineout</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus 10 metres</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foul play</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obstruction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tackle – early/late/dangerous</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maul – pulling down</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miscellaneous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vi Northern and Southern Hemisphere referees

Of the 15 matches, 6 were refereed by Northern Hemisphere referees, and 9 by Southern Hemisphere referees. The following table looks at the breakdown of penalties and other match details between the two groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>northern</th>
<th>southern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a average points per match</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b average ball in play times</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c average number of penalties</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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, 2005.

i red cards

There were none issued during the 2005 championship.(2004 – none)
ii  yellow cards

Number issued  5  (2004-4)

Matches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Referee</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wales v England</td>
<td>S Walsh (NZ)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France v Scotland</td>
<td>N Williams (W)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland v Wales</td>
<td>J Kaplan (SA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy v France</td>
<td>D Courtney (I)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

iii  Offences for which yellow card issued:

- Foul Play         2
- Ruck/Tackle – player to ground 1
- Offside - forward 1
- Dangerous play at lineout 1

iv  Countries conceding yellow cards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8  4  5

The yellow cards issued against Italian players amounted to just one – just as in 2003 and 2004. This total of three compares with 11 yellow and 1 red card received over the 2 previous seasons.

v  Awarded by Northern Hemisphere referees  2
Awarded by Southern Hemisphere referees  3

Issued against home team player  2
Issued against away team player  3

Issued during first half  3
Issued during second half  2
Issued against player of team in lead 3
Issued against player of team behind 2

vi Impact on scoring during sin bin period
   a in one game a player from each side was dismissed thereby negating any benefit
   b in one game the team carded won the game comfortably
   c in another the team carded lost very heavily.
   d in one game a player of the team in the lead was carded during which time the opposition scored a last minute winning try.

I SUBSTITUTIONS

In the 15 matches, there were

8 blood bins
and
148 tactical and injury substitutions

There were, on average, 10 replacements per game. This shows a slight increase over last year. The range of replacements varied between 2 a game and 14 a game.

Countries also used substitutes to varying degrees. Ireland, for example, averaged 4 per game while France averaged just over 6. The other 4 countries were between these 2 figures.

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

J TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL

- During the championship, there were 8 references to the TMO (2004 – 7).

- As a result of the 8 references, 5 tries were awarded.

- The shortest reference to the TMO took 51 seconds – the longest, 1 min 41 seconds.

- 4 of the references took more than one minute (1m 41s, 1m 38s, 1m 03s, 1m 02s).

- The remaining 4 references took 51s, 51s, 56s, 57s.

CT April 2004