

TRI NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW
AND MATCH ANALYSIS

TRI NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

contents

-	pages:
1-2	COMMENTARY
3-4	SUMMARY
5	CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE/MATCHES PLAYED
6-10	SCORING PROFILES <ul style="list-style-type: none">- points scored- tries/drops/penalties- 2000 compared with 1999- kicking success rate- scoring mix/tries/penalties
10-17	SCORING MIX <ul style="list-style-type: none">- tries scored by winning team- penalty goals- source of tries- origin of tries- time of tries
17-22	MODE OF PLAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">- match time- ball in play time- activity cycles – passes/kicks/ 2nd phase- passing movements
23	LINEOUT
23-24	SCRUM
24	RESTARTS
24-25	PENALTIES <ul style="list-style-type: none">- number and incidence- offences penalised
26-27	RED/YELLOW CARDS <ul style="list-style-type: none">- red/- yellow card details- impact on scoring during sin bin period
27	TMO – TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL

COMMENTARY

Possession is clearly an important element in winning a game of rugby – but if ever an example were needed to disprove the assertion that possession is everything, then Tri Nations 2004 would rank as one of the best. It provided an almost classic example of how a lack of possession is not a barrier to winning a game or even a tournament.

While in RWC2003, 7 of the last 8 matches were won by the team that had most possession, South Africa in Tri Nations 2004 proved that possession is far from being the essential element in winning either games or tournaments.

In Tri Nations 2004, South Africa

- obtained far less possession than the other two teams
- created noticeably fewer rucks and mauls
- made significantly fewer passes and
- had a rate of rucking and passing that was markedly less than the other two countries.

These differences were not marginal

- New Zealand had 40% more possession than South Africa and Australia 11% more
- both Australia and New Zealand made 50% more passes
- New Zealand created almost double the rucks and mauls while Australia made 40% more.

In addition to this, South Africa were, by a long way, the most heavily penalized team in the tournament.

What South Africa did, however, was defend – and what was noticeable – they kicked more. They not only made far more kicks than New Zealand and Australia in open play but they used the kicking option at a far greater rate. Unlike the other two countries, they also attempted almost every kickable penalty.

But what they managed to do better than either of the other two teams was convert their restricted possession into tries. They used fewer rucks and passes to do so but in the end managed 13 tries compared to Australia's 9 and New Zealand's 4. Their effectiveness in converting possession into points is best illustrated by the following:

South Africa scored 1 try for every 4.5 minutes possession

Australia scored 1 try for every 7.2 minutes possession

New Zealand scored 1 try for every 20.6 minutes possession.

There were also other highlights or differences from previous years.

- **While ball in play went up by just 1%, it was noticeable that there was much more ball in play in the second half than the first. In New Zealand's case, they achieved 50% more**
- **Twice as many tries as last year started from within 22 metres of the goalline**
- **Scrum possession accounted for more tries than lineouts which is most unusual**
- **Two thirds of tries came from set piece possession compared with one third last year**
- **There was not a single successful drop goal in any of the six matches.**

There were, on the other hand, many similarities with previous years: scoring profiles changed little, neither had kicking success rates, ball in play showed minimal change, possession retained at set pieces was the same, and offences at the breakdown still accounted for around 45% of all penalties.

Nevertheless, some of this year's differences may indicate a certain shift in the game – for example, tries being scored from closer in, and set piece possession setting up more tries. Future matches will provide confirmation or otherwise. What will, however, characterize this year's Tri Nations 2004 is the fact that possession is not a guarantee of success. While it may be a characteristic of most wins, it is never a guarantee. South Africa proved that in 2004.

TRI NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS summary

- the average number of points scored per match was 45 - compared with 49 in 2003. Tries and penalty goals showed a small increase.
- Total points scored from tries and conversions exceeded points from penalty goals by more than 60%.
- ball in play time was 43% - up by 1% on 2003.
- rucks/mauls increased from an average of 146 to 157 per game

passes decreased from 263 to 251

open play kicks decreased to 57 from 50

- 65% of tries were converted, a success rate that has reversed the decline in each of the previous 3 years. 69% of penalty kicks at goal succeeded, a slight decrease over 2003.
- 26 tries were scored in the 6 matches. This compares with 30 tries in 2003 and 32 in 2002.
- of the 26 tries, 1 in 4 started from inside the scoring team's own half.
- 46% of tries originated within 22m of the goalline - twice as many as last year
- over 60% of tries were the direct result of set piece possession – over double last year's
- 73% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer rucks/mauls.
- around 80% of all passing movements continue to contain 2 passes or less.
- there was an average of 32 lineouts per game, the same as in 2003 - retained possession varied little.

- there was an average of 21 scrums per game – 5 more than in 2003 – while the number of collapsed scrums increased.
- during the championship, no free kick was awarded for a crooked scrum feed.
- the average number of penalties went up from 20 in 2003 to 23 in 2003.
- penalties for ground offences at ruck and tackle accounted for 43% of all penalties, compared with 46% in 2003.
- just as last year, there were no red cards while 5 yellow cards were issued compared with 4 in 2003.
- the incidence of scoring during the sin bin period was of possible significance in one match.
- there were 8 references to the TMO and 5 tries resulted.

TRI NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Bonus	Points
South Africa	4	2	0	2	110	98	3	11
Australia	4	2	0	2	79	83	2	10
New Zealand	4	2	0	2	83	91	1	9

Points tabulation:

- win 4pts
- draw 2pts
- loss 1pt for loss within 7 points of team that wins
- loss 0pts for loss of more than 7pts
- tries 1pt for scoring 4 or more tries in a match

MATCHES PLAYED

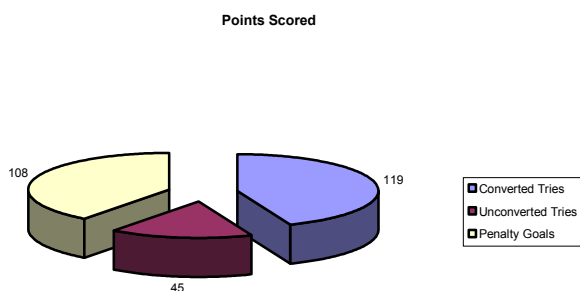
21 Aug 2004	South Africa	(23) v Australia	(19)
14 Aug 2004	South Africa	(40) v New Zealand	(26)
07 Aug 2004	Australia	(23) v New Zealand	(18)
31 July 2004	Australia	(30) v South Africa	(26)
24 July 2004	New Zealand	(23) v South Africa	(21)
17 July 2004	New Zealand	(16) v Australia	(7)

TRI NATIONS 2004

STATISTICAL REVIEW AND MATCH ANALYSIS

SCORING PROFILES

- i There were **272** points scored in Tri Nations 2004 made up as follows:



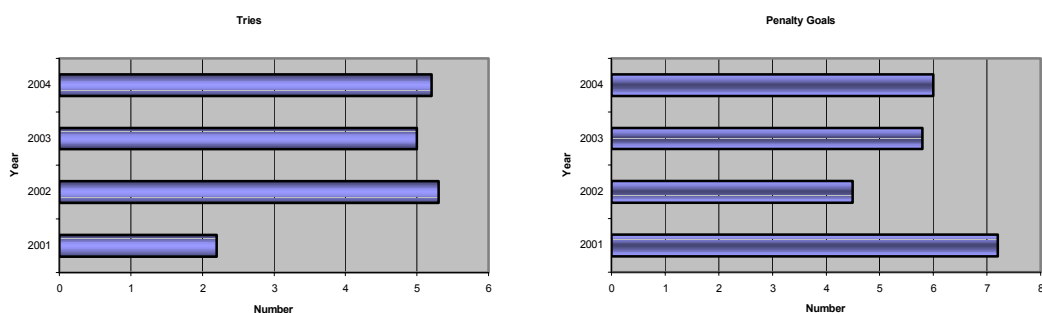
17 converted tries	119
9 unconverted tries	45
36 penalty goals	108
0 drop goals	0
	<u>272</u> pts

- ii The average number of points per game was **45** - a slight reduction from the 49 seen in both 2003 and 2002.
- iii The average number of tries and drop goals per game were as follows
- in 2004, There were **5.2** tries per match
 - in 2003, there were **5.0** tries per match
 - in 2002, there were **5.3** tries per match

 - in 2004, **there were no drop goals in 6 matches**
 - in 2003, there were **2** drop goal in 6 matches
 - in 2002, there were **4** drop goals in 6 matches
- iv Successful penalties increased slightly from **5.8** per game in 2003 to **6.0** in 2004.

v **summary:** average per match

	Average per match	2004	2003	2002	2001
Tries		5.2	5.0	5.3	2.2
Drop Goals		none	0.3	0.7	0.0
Penalty Goals		6.0	5.8	4.5	7.2



These figures show that the major turnaround in the scoring profile achieved in 2003 and 2002 compared with 2001 was largely maintained in 2004. Whereas in 2001 there were three and a half times more penalties than tries, recent seasons have seen the ratio settle to around 50:50.

Because of scoring values however, the total points scored from tries and conversions exceeded points from penalty goals by more than 60%.

Despite this however, in recent years, there has been a decreasing number of tries being converted. This year has however shown a reversal of this with the 2004 success rate moving up to 65%. This is shown in the following table:

2004	65%
2003	53%
2002	59%
2001	69%
2000	72%

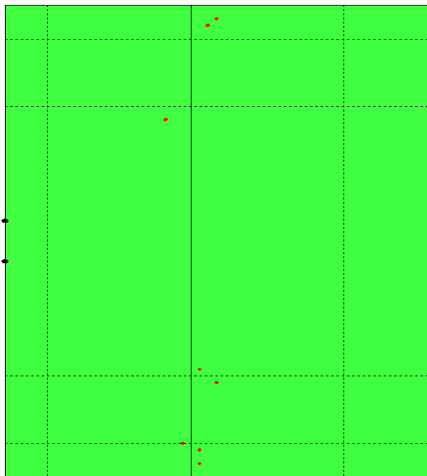
This could suggest that the quality of kicking has improved- especially when more tries were scored this year within 5 metres of the corner flag than last – 42% compared to 40%.

However, and conversely, the success rate of penalty kicks at goal decreased. From a success rates of 76% in 2003, this year it reduced to 69%. With this factored in, the overall kick at goal success rate of 68% suggests little change from last year's 67%.

The following charts show in graphical form all successful and unsuccessful conversion and penalty kicks during Tri Nations 2004.

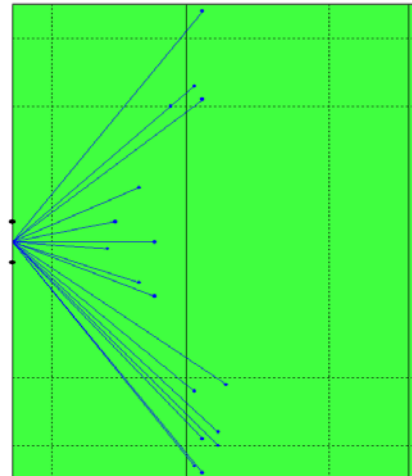
Conversions

9 missed attempts



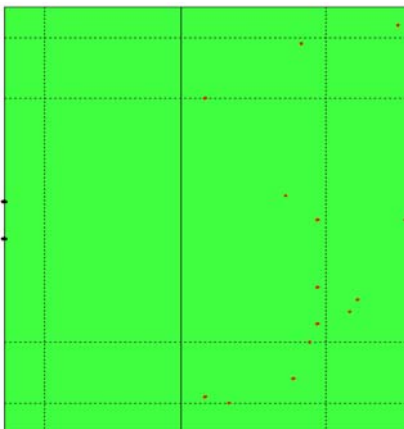
success rate: 65%
(2003 53%)

17 successful attempts



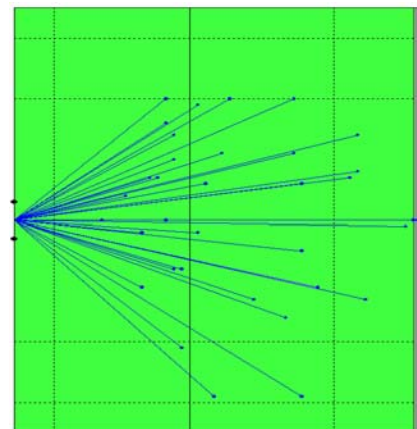
Penalties

16 missed attempts



success rate: 69%
(2003 76%)

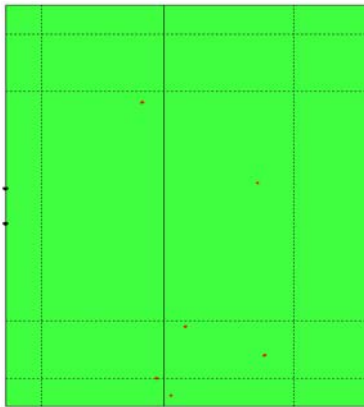
36 successful attempts



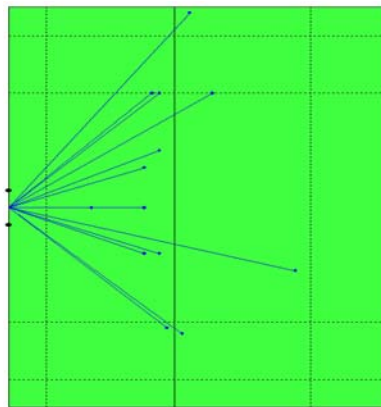
The successful and unsuccessful kicks by each of the three countries is shown below;

Australia

Unsuccessful

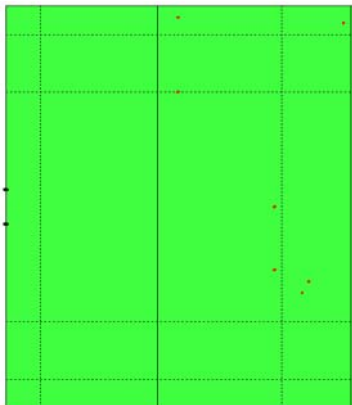


successful

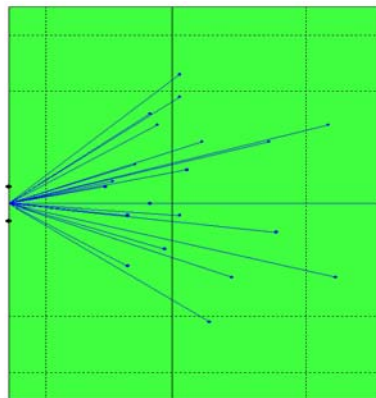


New Zealand

Unsuccessful

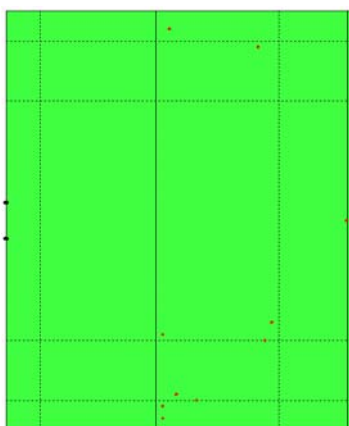


successful

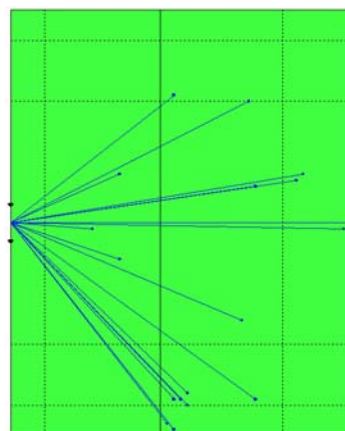


South Africa

Unsuccessful



successful



The above charts, illustrating each country's attempts at goal, become more interesting on further examination. It can be seen that outside the 22, Australia made a lot less penalty attempts at goal than the other two teams. There were 2 reasons for this:

- (a) they were awarded fewer penalties between the 22 and half way than the other two teams and
- (b) when they were, they opted for goal on fewer occasions.

Australia kicked at goal on 4 occasions out of 8 (50%). New Zealand, on the other hand, attempted 15 out of 20 (75%) while South Africa, chose to kick for goal 11 times out of 12, or on 92% of occasions.

SCORING MIX

i Tries

The **26 tries** that were scored in 2004 were slightly less than the 30 and 32 seen in the previous two years. The six matches each produced the following number of tries: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 7.

As for each team,

South Africa scored **13** tries
 Australia scored **9** tries and
 New Zealand scored **4** tries.

While there was a noticeable difference between the 3 teams in 2004, the total number of tries scored by each of the 3 countries over the last four years is largely similar as shown below:

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>4 year total</u>
New Zealand	4 tries in 4 matches	17 tries	10 tries	6 tries	37
Australia	9 tries in 4 matches	9 tries	9 tries	5 tries	32
South Africa	13 tries in 4 matches	4 tries	13 tries	2 tries	32
	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>99</u>

Within each year however, there can be interesting contrasts.

The most noticeable difference this year was that South Africa achieved what looks like their alternative year quantum leap - up from 2 tries to 13 in 2001 and 2002, and from 4 tries to 13 in 2003 and 2004. One consequence

of this is that over that last 4 years, South Africa have scored either the most tries or the least tries in the tournament.

This considerable increase in the tries scored by South Africa contrasts with New Zealand whose experience was the reverse. Tries accounted for just 24% of their New Zealand's total points – an unusually low percentage for that country. This is illustrated in the following table which shows the percentage of total points accounted for by tries over the last 4 years:

	<u>% of points accounted for by tries</u>			
	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>
New Zealand	24%	60%	52%	38%
Australia	57%	50%	50%	31%
South Africa	59%	32%	63%	19%

ii Penalties

Earlier paragraphs show that the penalty kick success rate was 69%.

This came from an average of 8.7 attempts per game – the fewest in a game was 5, the most 14. The total penalty goal attempts in each game in the last 4 years is as follows

	<i>Penalty goal attempts per game</i>									
2004	5	7	7	8			11		14	
2003	5	6		8	8	9	10			
2002	5	5	7	8		9	9			
2001				8	9	10		12	12	13

A consequence of the reduced number of penalty attempts at goal since 2001, is the low proportion of points scored by penalty goals since then. A comparison of the last 9 seasons of Tri Nations illustrates this:

<i>tries scored</i>	year	points scored	% of total points scored by penalties
26	2004	272	40%
30	2003	293	36%
32	2002	291	28%
13	2001	212	67%
29	2000	313	37%
17	1999	221	50%
22	1998	224	40%
48	1997	403	22%
25	1996	298	46%

TRIES

i tries scored by winning team

Of the six matches played in Tri Nations 2004, the winning team scored the most tries in three. In one, the try count was equal and in the remaining 2 games the winning team scored fewer tries than its opponents.

This latter case is unusual - **in the last 48 Tri Nations matches, the losing team has scored more tries than the winning team on only 6 occasions.**

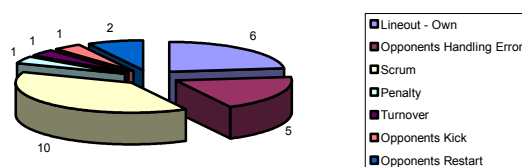
ii source of tries

There were **26 tries** scored in Tri Nations 2004.

Teams scoring tries obtained possession of the ball prior to the scoring of the try from a variety of sources. This is shown in the following table and chart which looks at the last 4 years:

	2004	2003	2002	2001
Lineout - Own	6	7	8	4
Opp's handling error	5	4	7	1
Scrum	10	1	8	2
Lineout - Opp	-	2	3	1
Penalty	1	4	1	1
Turnover	1	4	4	1
Opponent's kick	1	6	1	3
Opponent's restart	2	2	-	-
	<u>=26</u>	<u>= 30</u>	<u>= 32</u>	<u>= 13</u>

Source of Tries

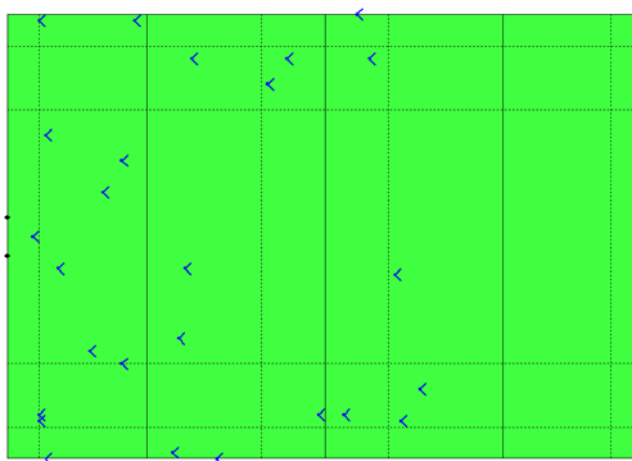


The possession source of tries fluctuates from year to year. This year for example, 62% of tries came from set piece possession – last year it was just 27%. The noticeable point in this year's breakdown is that scrums easily overtook lineouts as the most fruitful form of possession.

This is unusual. In most competitions, in most years, the primary source of try possession is the lineout.

iii origin of tries

Tries originated 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:

12	originated within the 22 metres of the goal-line
5	between the 22 and 10 metre line
3	between the 10 metre and halfway line, and
<u>6</u>	tries originated within the scoring team's half.
<u>26</u>	

Last year 23% of tries originated within 22 metres of the goalline. This year it doubled to 46%. A consequence of this is that in 2004, fewer tries started from within the scoring team's own half.
(23% c/f 30%)

iv time of scores

The time in the game when the 26 tries were scored was not spread evenly throughout the 92 minutes of matchtime. Tries scored in the second quarter were double those scored in the first quarter and tries scored in the final quarter were almost double those scored in the third quarter.

The second and fourth quarters are of course longer than the first and third because of stoppage time. Nevertheless, even allowing for

this, there are proportionately more tries scored in the latter part of each half.

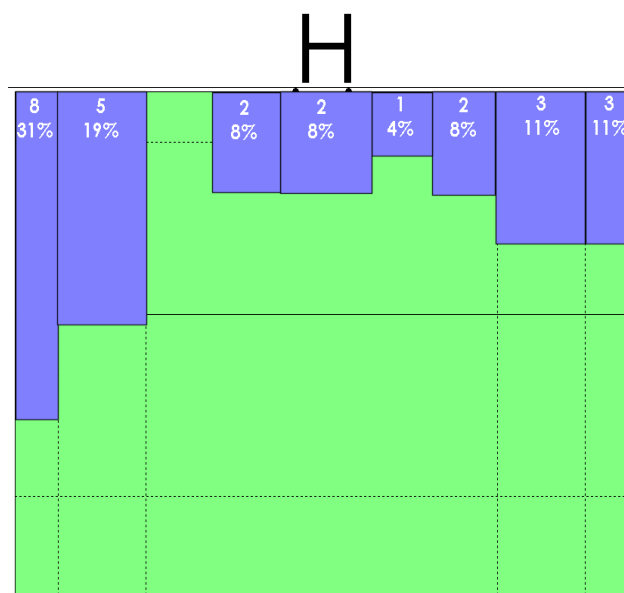
Conversely, penalty goals were more evenly spread with 53% in the first half and 47% in the second.

v position where tries were scored

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

It shows that **8%** 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.



vi 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+ phases)** that preceded each of the 26 tries scored in the 2004 championship.

<u>No of 2nd phases</u>	<u>frequency</u>
None	9
1	7
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	1
6	0
7	1
8	2
9	0
16	<u>1</u>
	<u>26</u>

The table shows that 73% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer second phases.

The next table shows the total number of **passes** that preceded each of the 26 tries.

<u>No of passes</u>	<u>frequency</u>
None	3
1	6
2	4
3	2
4	2
5	3
6	0
7	1
8	1
9	1
10	0
11	2
14	1

The table shows that 58% of tries were preceded by 3 or fewer passes.

A breakdown of the above figures show certain differences between the 3 countries. Around 50% of New Zealand and Australian tries were preceded by 2 or fewer rucks/mauls. In South Africa's case however, the figure was nearer 80%. A consequence of this was the number of passes preceding South Africa tries were around half those of the other two countries – 3 compared to 5 and 6.

vii timing of scores

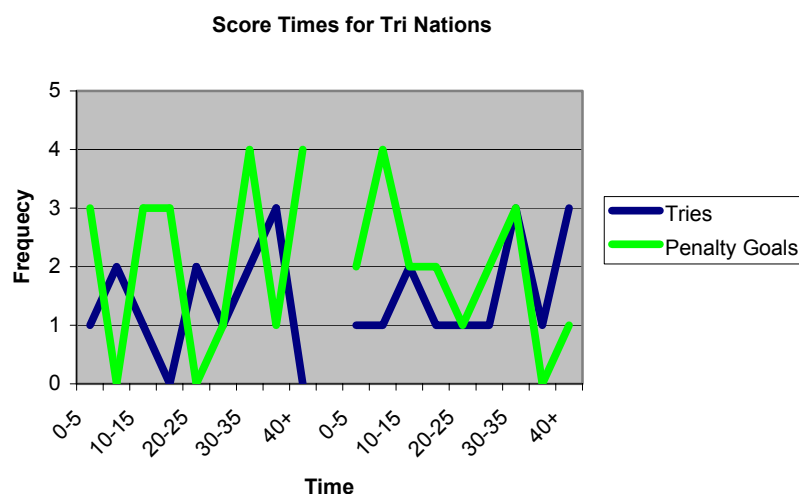
In Tri Nations 2004:

12 tries were scored in the first half – **14** in the second.

Penalties showed the reverse:

19 penalties were kicked in the first half - **16** in the second

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

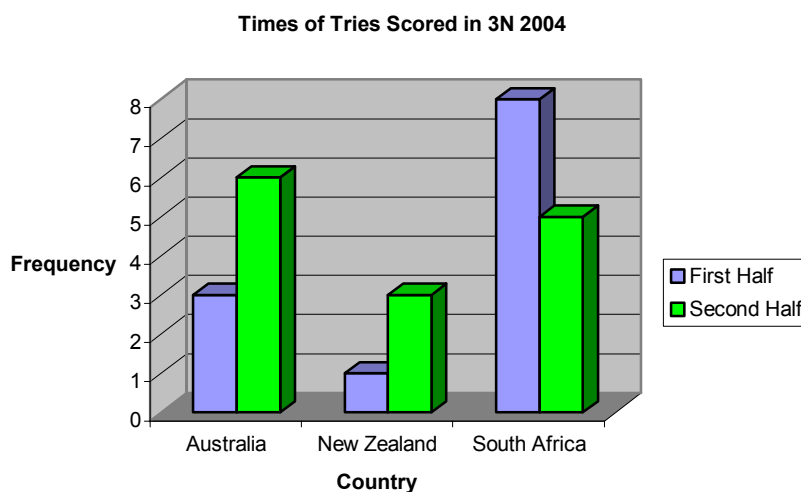


The above analysis has then been broken down further to see if the scoring profiles of each of the 6 countries reflected the overall scoring profile.

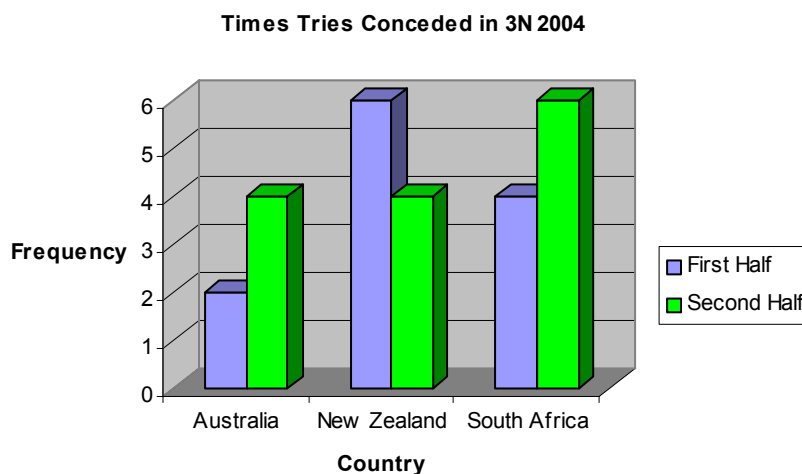
The 2 charts show that

- South Africa was the only country that scored most of its tries in the first half
- New Zealand was the every country conceded most of its tries in the first half

a the half in which each country scored their tries



b the half in which each country conceded tries.



MODE OF PLAY

i match time

The average length of a match in Tri Nations 2004 was
92 mins 15 seconds.

The time range in the six matches was from 86 mins 32 secs to 97 mins 55 secs.

ii ball in play time

Ball In play time for each of the 6 matches was as follows:

39%,42%,43%,44%,45%,46%, - an average of **43%** - one per cent more than last year.

As is usually the case, the more tries that are scored, the shorter the ball in play time. This is again shown this year where the 3 matches with the most tries produced the 3 lowest ball in play times.

Of major interest this year however was the fact that in all 6 matches, there was noticeably more ball in play time in the second half of matches than in the first half (55%c/f45%). This was even more pronounced in the case of New Zealand whose ball in play possession in their 4 matches was half as much again in the second half compared with the first (60:40). Further, in their home game

against South Africa, 75% of second half ball in play time was with New Zealand.

There were therefore, major differences between the 3 teams in the amount of possession they obtained. In fact, the team that won the tournament had the least possession – New Zealand and Australia had 40% and 11% respectively more possession than South Africa with New Zealand also having 26% more possession than Australia.

What all this served to show was that the superior amount of possession gained by a team is no guarantee of success. It can be a characteristic of success however – in 7 of the last 8 matches in RWC2003, for example, the winning team was the team that won the most possession.

Exceptions are however, not infrequent - and Tri Nations 2004 serves as a clear example of such exceptions. This year, the least amount of possession – and the least by a long way – was obtained by the winning team – South Africa. South Africa also provided clear confirmation of the commonly heard phrase – “ it’s what you do with possession that counts”. Tries per minute’s possession are a graphic illustration of this:

South Africa scored **1 try for every 4.5mins** possession
Australia scored **1 try for every 7.2 mins** possession
New Zealand scored **1 try for every 20.6 mins** possession

iii activity cycles

In recent years, increased ball in play times has followed a reduction in the number of game stoppages. This trend continued in 2003 with an average of only 84 stoppages. In 2004 however, this moved up again to 94.

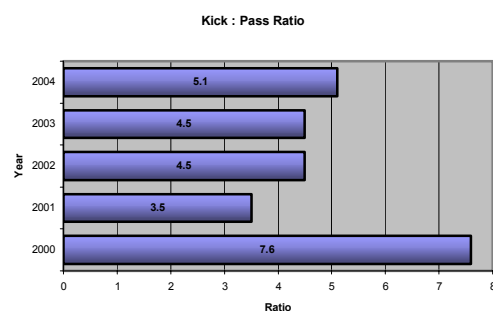
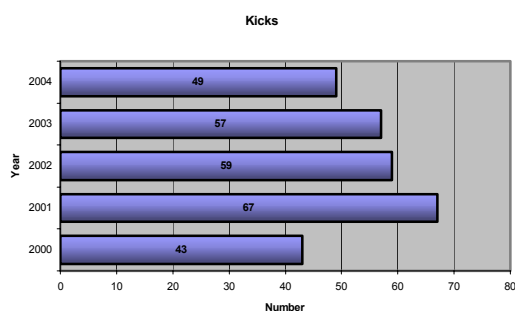
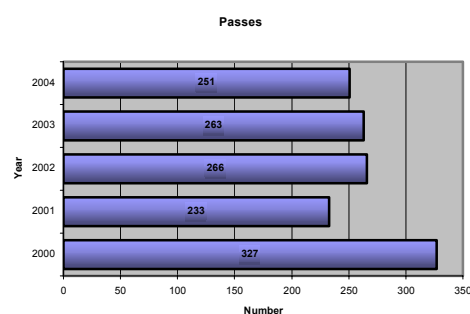
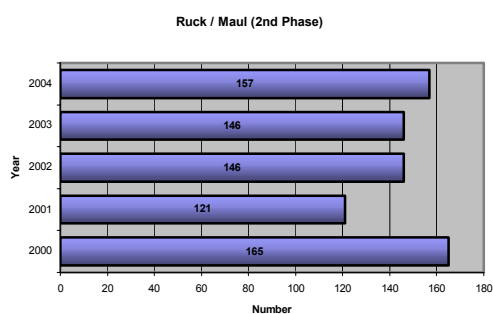
The average number of rucks/mauls, passes and kicks was as follows:

Rucks/mauls (2 nd phase)	157
Passes	251
Kicks	50

These figures are very similar to those seen in recent years as shown in the following table:

A 5 year comparison is shown in the following table:

activity	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
ruck/maul	112	165	121	146	146	157
passes	241	327	233	266	263	251
kicks	64	43	67	59	57	50
Kick:pass ratio	1 to 3.8	1 to 7.6	1 to 3.5	1 to 4.5	1 to 4.5	1 to 5.0



Ruck/Mauls (2nd phase)

The average number per game was **157** (2003 - 146)

The most in any game was **179** – the fewest, **107**.

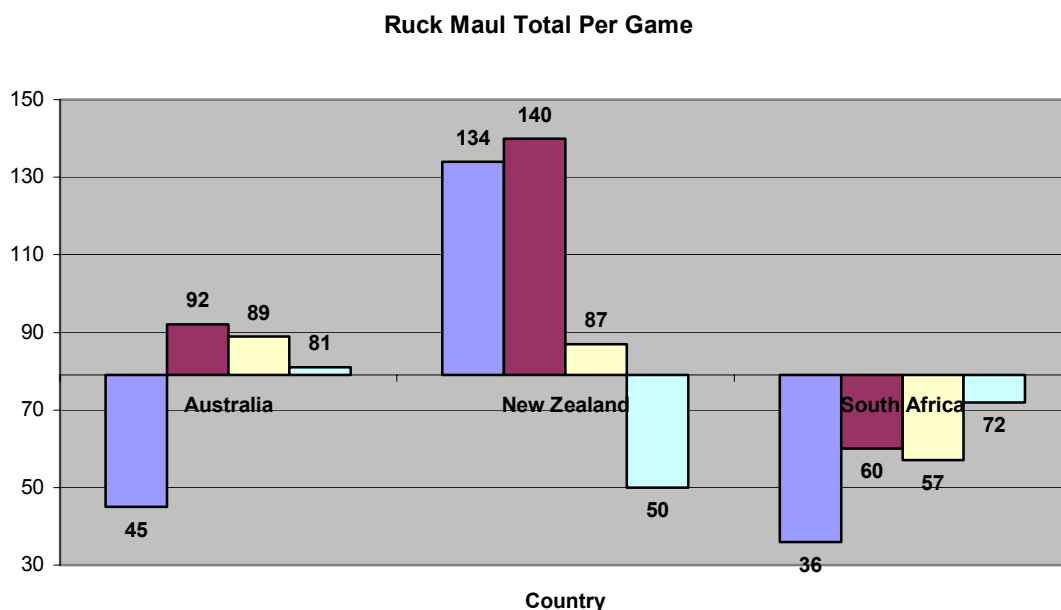
The most by any team in a game was **140** (NZ) – the fewest, **36**(South Africa)

There was a noticeable difference between the teams. New Zealand, for example, created over 80% more rucks/mauls than South Africa. The average per country is shown below:

Average no of rucks/mauls per game

New Zealand	103
Australia	77
South Africa	56

The following chart shows the number of rucks/mauls(2nd phases) created by each team in each of their 4 matches.



The above table shows that on a game by game basis South Africa never once reached the tournament average per game while New Zealand and Australia exceeded the average in three out of their four.

However, the number of rucks and mauls made by one team is frequently 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.

Rucks/mauls per minutes possession	
New Zealand	5.0
Australia	4.7
South Africa	3.8

The above chart shows that New Zealand not only made more ruck/tackles than the other two teams because they had more possession, they also rucked/mauled at a higher rate than the other two countries.

Passes

The average number per game was **251** (2003 - 152), with 84% of passing movements containing 2 passes or less – an identical percentage to 2003 and 2004.

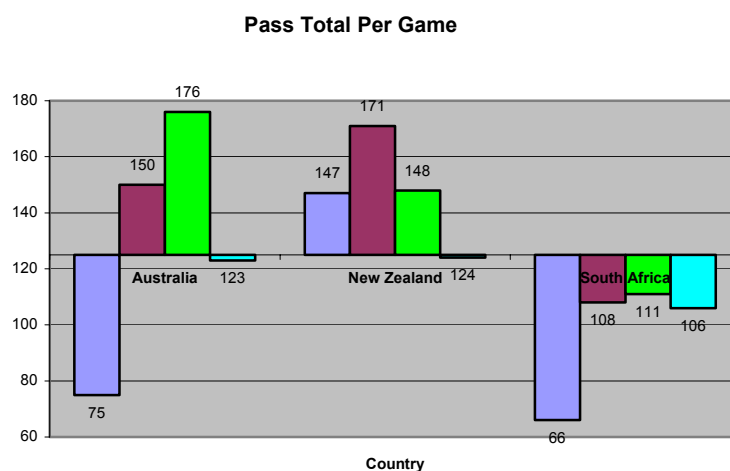
The most in any game was **324** – the fewest, **229**.

The most by any team in a game was **176** (Australia) – the fewest, **66** (South Africa)

There was, however, a noticeable difference between the teams as shown below

Average no passes per game

New Zealand	148
Australia	141
South Africa	98



This table now shows that South Africa were the clearly the lowest passing team, with New Zealand making over 50% more passes and Australia 44%. The chart below also shows that South Africa never once reached the tournament average of 125 passes per game.

When passes are related to time in possession however, the picture changes. On this basis, Australia was the team with the highest passing rate although all 3 teams are relatively close. The rate of passing was nowhere near as disparate as the total numbers suggested.

Passes per minutes possession

New Zealand	7.1
Australia	8.0
South Africa	6.6

c Kicks

The average number per game was **50** (2003 - 152)

The most in any game was **66** – the fewest, **28**.

The most by any team in a game was **35** (Australia) – the fewest, **10** (New Zealand)

The average number of kicks per team per game was as follows

Average no of kicks per game	
New Zealand	20
Australia	25
South Africa	30

This shows that South Africa made 50% more kicks than New Zealand. However, when possession is factored in, their rate of kicking was over double that of New Zealand.

This is shown when an adjustment is made to take account of the percentage possession obtained by each team.

Kicks per minutes possession	
New Zealand	0.9
Australia	1.5
South Africa	2.0

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
NEW ZEALAND	103	148	20	NEW ZEALAND	5.0	7.1	0.9
AUSTRALIA	77	131	25	AUSTRALIA	4.7	8.0	1.5
SOUTH AFRICA	56	98	30	SOUTH AFRICA	3.8	6.6	2.0

Finally, the **kick:pass ratio** showed clear differences between the three teams, with South Africa's ratio being particularly high, kicking once every 3 passes compared with New Zealand's once every 7 passes.

New Zealand	kick: pass ratio	1:7.6
Australia	kick: pass ratio	1:5.2
South Africa	kick: pass ratio	1:3.3

LINEOUT

The following data compares lineouts in 2004 and 2003:

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
average number of lineouts	32	32
percentage competed	60%	74%
possession retained	81%	83%

The percentage of lineouts competed went down noticeably this year from 74% to 60%. However, possession retained by the throwing in team showed little change reducing only slightly from 83% to 81%. This suggests that when lineouts are competed, they are perhaps being contested more effectively. What should be noted however, is that this report does not attempt to quantify the quality of such possession. A different enquiry would need to be carried out to establish any differences in quality possession from year to year.

SCRUM

The following data compares scrummages in 2004 and 2003

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
average number per game -	21	16
penalty:scrum ratio	1 in every 6	1 in every 7
possession retained	92%	94%

In Tri Nations 2004, there were 126 scrums (98 in 2003 and 107 in 2002). There were also further 56 scrum re-sets.

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Scrums	126	98
+ resets	56 1 in 2.3	<u>36</u> 1 in 2.7
= total scrumage engagements	182	134
collapses	59 1 in 3.1	30 1 in 4.5

When comparing such data with 2003, the results show that

- there were slightly **more resets** in 2004 and
- **scrum collapses increased** from 1 in every 4.5 engagements in 2003 to 1 in 3.1 in 2004.

On only one occasion in 6 matches was the 'use it or lose it' law seen to apply, and there was not a single free kick awarded for a crooked feed.

What was, however, of major interest at the scrummage was that of the 20 scrum penalties, only 1 was against the team putting in the ball.

RESTARTS

There were 98 start and restart kicks in the 6 matches. One in 4 were contestable and of these, the kicking team regained possession on 42% of occasions.

Overall, and after allowing for kicking errors, possession was retained by the kicking team on 1 in 10 occasions. This was not however consistent between the three teams. One in three of Australia's restarts were contestable – the figure for New Zealand and South Africa was one in six. A consequence of this was that Australia won a higher proportion of their own restarts.

PENALTIES

i number and incidence

In Tri Nations 2004, the average number of penalties awarded in a game was **23** compared with 20 in 2003 and 24 in 2002.

Southern Hemisphere referees averaged 23 penalties per game in their 3 matches

Northern Hemisphere referees also averaged 23 in their two

58% of penalties were awarded in the first half – 42% in the second.

On 5 occasions, the home team received the most number of penalties
On 1 occasion, it was the away team.

Again this year South Africa conceded the most penalties and free kicks. They conceded 20% more than Australia and almost 50% more than New Zealand. This is a slight improvement over 2003 when South Africa conceded almost 50% more penalties than both Australia and New Zealand. This year

New Zealand conceded	6.2
Australia	7.1
South Africa	9.2

ii categories of offences penalised

The following table groups the penalties awarded into 10 categories –

2004	<u>2003</u>		
ruck/tackle – on ground offences		43%	46%
offside – backs/forwards/open play		18	19
scrum		14	13
lineout		7	7
plus 10 metres		<1	2
foul play		4	4
obstruction		3	2
tackle – early/late/dangerous		8	5
maul – pulling down		2	2
		<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

Ruck/tackle area

The penalty count in the ruck/tackle ground area was 43% or between 4 or 5 in every 10. This now appears to be the universally expected percentage.

Of these, **28% were against the team in possession compared with 26% in 2003. This remains a noticeable reduction from the 46% in 2002.**

However, – and within the constraints of only 6 matches being reviewed – there was a noticeable difference in one particular area between the 3 matches refereed by Northern Hemisphere referees and the 3 by the Southern. In the Northern case, 38% of penalties went against the team in possession (39% - last year.) – in the Southern however it was only 22%. (19% last year). There now appears to be hardening of a slight difference between Northern and Southern hemisphere referees. Northern hemisphere referees are now more likely to penalise the team in possession at the breakdown than referees from the Southern hemisphere.

RED AND YELLOW CARDS ISSUED

The following paragraphs examine the circumstances and effects of the issue of red and yellow cards during Tri-Nations 2001.

I Red Cards

Number issued **0** (2003 – 0)

ii Yellow Cards

a Number issued **5** (2003 – 4)

b Matches where yellow card issued:

New Zealand v Australia	ref: A Rolland (I)	2
Australia v New Zealand	ref: J Kaplan (SA)	1
South Africa v Australia	ref: P O'Brien (NZ)	2

c Countries conceding yellow cards:

	2004	2003
South Africa	2	2
Australia	2	1
New Zealand	1	1

d Offences for which yellow card issued:

Foul Play	1
Illegal tackle	1
Ruck – on ground offence	2
Offside	<u>1</u>
	5

e Home team/Away team

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

f Time of issue

Issued during first half	1
Issued during second half	4

vii	Issued against player of team in lead	4
	Issued against player of team behind	1

In one of the four matches, one player from each team was sent off at the same time; in another, the team sin-binned won the game despite having two players in the bin; in one there were no scores in the sin bin period but in the final one the only try scored in the game was scored in the sin bin period at the end of the first half.

In this year's Tri Nations therefore, the issue of the yellow card may have had an impact on the final result on possibly one game.

TMO – TELEVISION MATCH OFFICIAL

During the tournament, there were 8 references to the TMO.

As a result of these references, 5 tries were awarded.

The shortest reference to the TMO was 36 secs – the longest 2m 13 secs.

What the timings suggest is that once there is an initial element of doubt, then the time taken to come to a decision can increase by a factor of 3 to 4.

Finally, after the 2 longest deliberations, - 2m23secs and 2m 08 secs – tries were not awarded.