

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF RUGBY

1. Thou shalt not hesitate at the breakdown, but be mighty in the seizing of your rightful ball; for though it is written that the meek shall inherit the earth, this is in truth but a poor translation. The meek shall be trampled into the dirt is more to the point.

2. Thou shalt not speak profanely of the Whistler, nor question the purity of his birth, even though he be blind to the transgressions of the evildoers among thine enemies at the ruck and the maul, and whistleth them not.

3. Thou shalt not smite thine enemies with an clenched fist, yeah, even in retaliation; for it is written that the Whistler and the Flag Waver shall assuredly be blinded to the coward which delivereth the first punch, only to see that which avengeth it second. Believeth thou then that what goeth round it shall surely come to pass again, and verily, in the fullness of time, the evil among men shall surely be found at the bottom of the ruck.

4. Thou shalt not kiss thy teammate on the mouth, even when he hath scored; for such is an abomination unto the game, especially he that kisseth in tongues, unless it cometh to pass that thou shouldst play with the circular balls, for then it is truly expected of thee.

5. Thou shalt not take the Word of the Lord thy Coach in vain, for blessed is the Word of that Lord. Verily, thou shalt wonder at His mighty wisdom and sticketh thou then to His Game Plan lest He acquainteth thee with these of his disciples who labour in the lower grades.

6. Thou shalt not chip nor kick for touch if thou be numbered amongst the props or if thou wear any jersey below that of the number 9; for this is an abomination unto the Word of the Lord thy Coach, and surely shalt thy soul and thy body be His at training, perhaps in everlasting pain.

7. Thou shalt not run across the field with the ball in hand, but see that thou runneth straight ahead upfield; for it is written in the Word of the Lord thy Coach that the touchline is the best defender.

8. Thou shalt not kick the ball to the hands of thine enemies unless first thou maketh it to bounce; for then the Spirit of the Bounce of the Ball shall bring confusion among them, and if thy heart be pure, shall command that it bounceth back unto you.

9. Thou shalt not pass the ball to a brother thy team-mate about to be smashed by thine enemies, unless it be known to all men that he oweth you money, or hath porked someone dear to your heart, in which case all shall be forgiven and then, verily, thou mayest pass to him right slowly and on high.

10. Thou shalt not vomit upon the brethren of thy team after the game, nay even though thou hast partaken right fully of the waters of Guinness or of the entrails of pigs in a pie

or of the beans which baketh right slowly in an earthen crock, for this shall be deemed unmanly in the eyes of thy brethren, and they mayest do it unto you.