

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1924.

RUGBY UNION IMPERIAL CONFERENCE.

Proposals to Alter Rules and Value of Scores.

Penalty and Dropped Goals.

The forthcoming Imperial Rugby Union Conference, to be held before the New Zealanders return home, will be called upon to decide some important resolutions dealing with the rules and the method of scoring.

The All Blacks will endeavour to convince the delegates that several new rules operating Overseas [*sic*] are for the betterment of the game and should be generally adopted. Suggestions, it is understood, will also be made that the points value of the penalty and dropped goal should be reduced to two points, but this proposal is certain to arouse opposition in England.

Mr. W. T. Pearce, Gloucestershire's representative on the Rugby Union, and a member of the Laws' Committee, has favoured me with his views on the suggested proposals which will be read with great interest.

Mr. Pearce says :

The New Zealand proposals for the revision of scoring are scarcely likely to meet with wide approval. On one point there is likely to be much resistance, viz., the reduction in value of the penalty goal. Latter-day developments, now that the eight-back game is tending to become more general (which involves under the present rules numerous charges of "obstruction" — deliberate or otherwise), have thrown the players into disorder to such an extent that penalties have become very frequent.

Also it will be remembered that a year or so ago the International Board actually addressed a letter to referees impressing them with the necessity for inflicting more penalties under the rules as they were then and are now. Those in charge of the game, therefore (in this country at least), will not be likely to agree to the penalty goal scoring less than a try.

In regard to the drop goal, there may be a little more difference of opinion. Moderns like Dr. L. G. Brown apparently would agree to the try being the paramount score, i.e., worth more than any other, but there is a very powerful old school who think the drop goal one of the best features in the game, and from these stubborn resistance will be experienced before any change is made.

I have an open mind as to this at the moment, but am in the fullest agreement with the penalty goal scoring as much as a try. The New Zealand scheme of points is quite worthy of consideration, but I should say stands little chance of acceptance for the reasons named — at least at present.

JC