

## **What's the secret behind the perfect rugby kick?**

### **A lonely job**

At the highest level of rugby, matches can be won or lost by just one man.

When very little separates two Test sides on the scoreboard, a team's place kicker carries extra responsibility.

Penalty or conversion, the big pressure kicks are usually handed to you after you've played more than an hour of full-on rugby.

When the ref blows his whistle for a penalty, you might find yourself at the bottom of a ruck, or getting some treatment from the physio after a heavy knock.

But if the skipper points to the posts to opt for a match-winning kick, you've got to get to your feet and walk away from your team mates to take the ball.

It can be the loneliest place in world sport.

You've got just 60 seconds to catch your breath and get your balance, line up the ball on the tee and take your shot at the posts.

You have to block out the pressure of the moment and the expectation of millions: the television audience, the crowd in the stadium and your fellow players.

You have to repeat your kicking action with absolute precision... and then look on as either triumph or disaster awaits.

And in Test match rugby the difference between success and failure can be measured in just a few centimetres.

So what's the secret behind the perfect rugby kick?