

## Poultry Judging Tips for Coaches

### *Teaching Live Birds without Live Birds*

Because of issues of sanitation, safety, and spread of disease, you may have difficulty obtaining live birds for practice. Additionally, for some youth, starting with something similar rather than the bird itself may be calming in learning to navigate the cages.

A football hen is an easy way to practice skills and simulate the live bird. With four football hens you could even place a class.

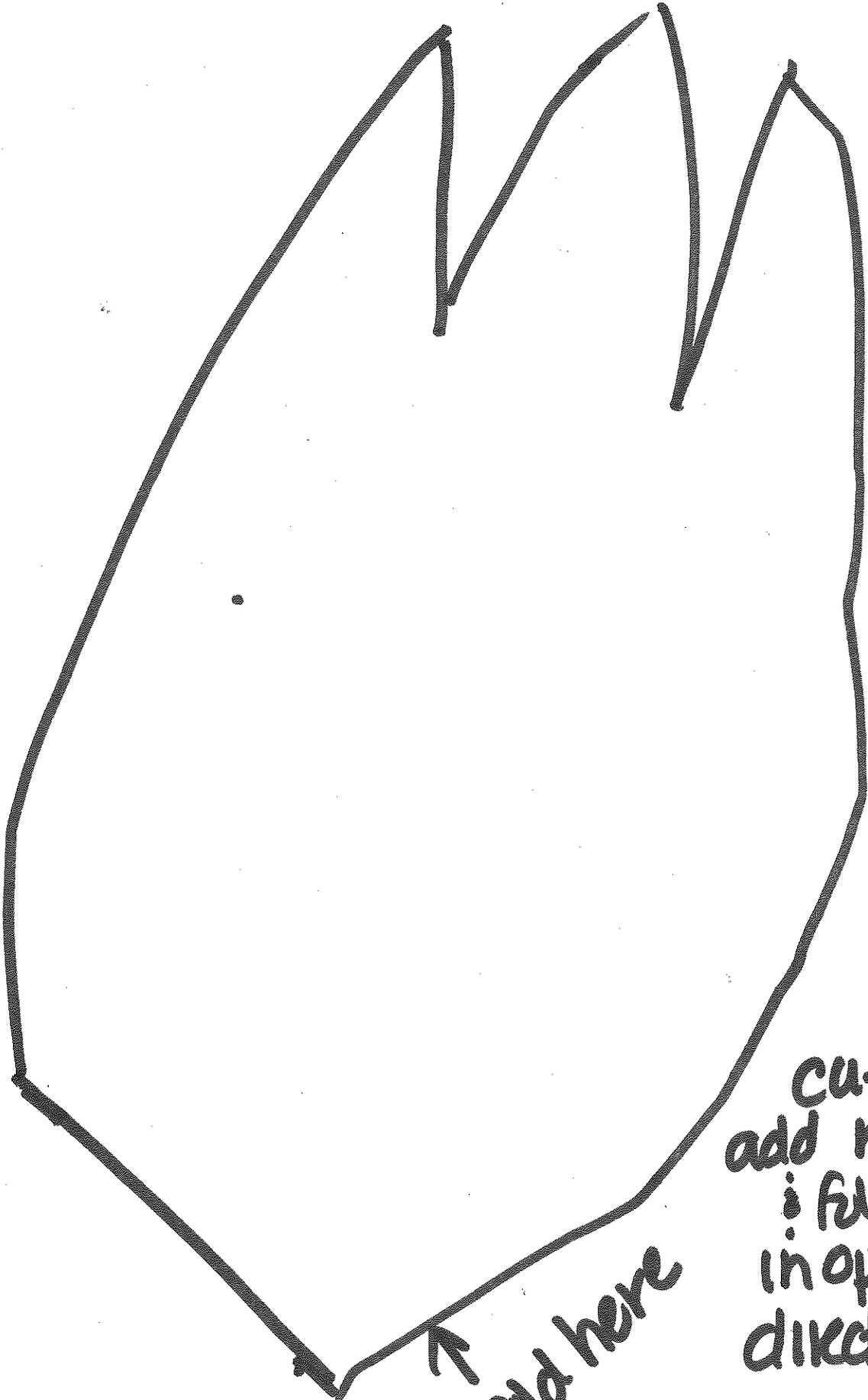
Begin by setting up a cage with a football. A regulation football will be about the size of the main body of a live bird. Have students practice removing the football with one hand on top and one on bottom (much like a quarterback pulls from the center) from the cage. Discuss, tucking the football under your arm and having two hands on the football. This simulates the same movement for holding a hen.

Next, create a hen. Attached are the “body” parts that would be added to the football. For realism, color the hen to add yellow in appropriate places, feathers to the wings and such. If you are using four footballs, you could color the hens differently for placing or have students create the colorings.

Build your hen (or have your team members build the hen) and then have students practice removing the hen that now has feathers to flap, legs to maneuver. Discuss how best to check pigmentation and hanging qualities treating the hen as a “live” animal.

Remind students sanitation practices and be sure to include use of sanitizer and hand washing just as done with live hens.





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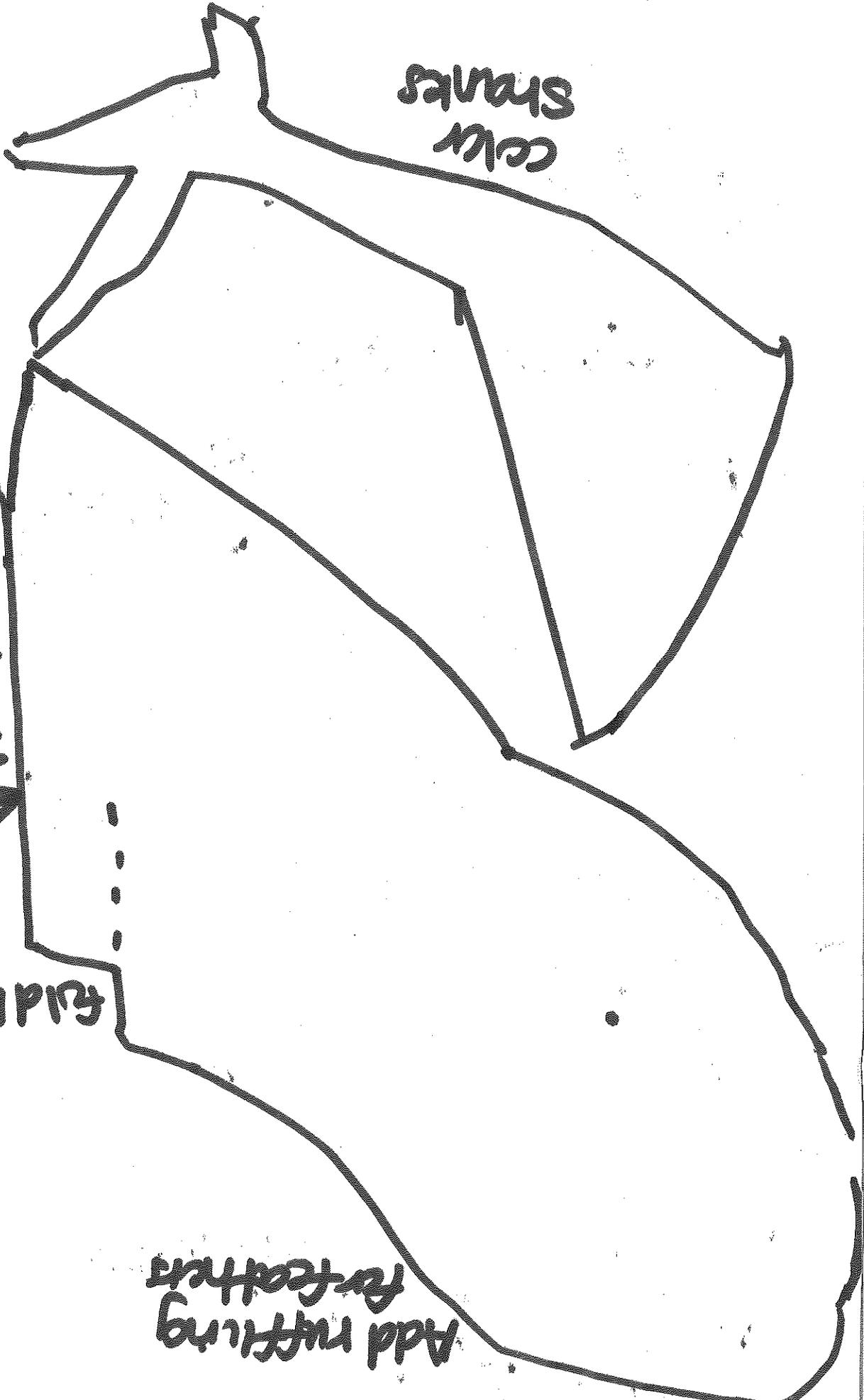
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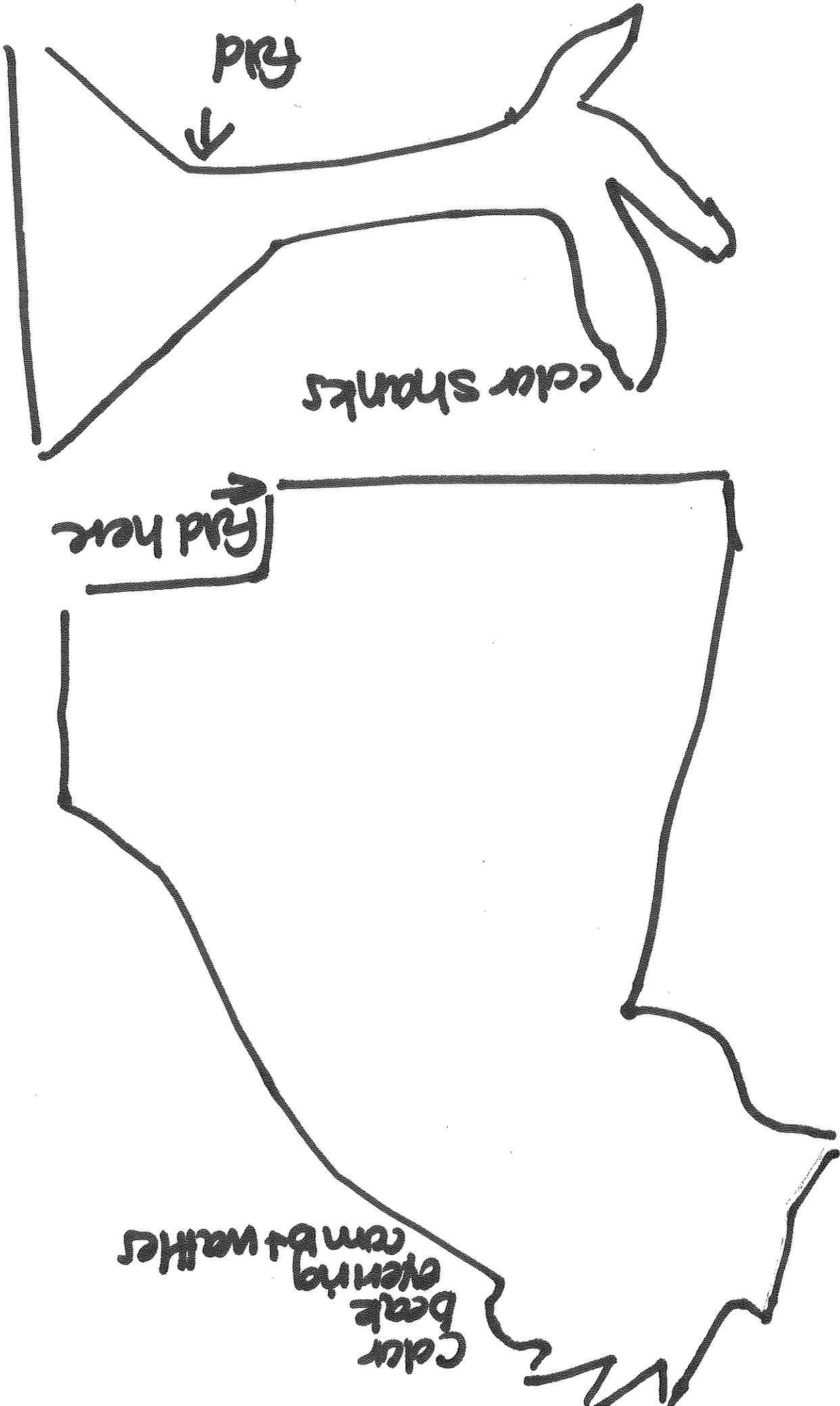
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Add ruffling  
for feathers





PRY



color shanks

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