



Laws and Guidelines for U10 Mini Rugby

Introduction

(Revision 07th August 2012 – version 4)

The purpose of this document is to guide the:

- Referees on the laws of the game for a specific year group; and
- Coaches as to how they should be training their players to comply with the laws that apply across all 'Mini Clubs', especially for inter-club competitions such as festivals.

As such it is essential that all referees and coaches make themselves aware of these laws and that clubs provide suitable support to assist members and players in interpreting these laws correctly. Coaches are strongly encouraged to participate in referee training courses.

These laws are based on those published by the IRB for the senior game to ensure a,

- Smooth transition for players from mini to youth to senior rugby; and a,
- Consistent base for mini rugby player pathway development.

Naturally there are variations on the senior game and many of the laws have been simplified or even removed as appropriate. The numbering of laws for mini rugby uses the corresponding numbering in the IRB booklet "Laws of the Game – Rugby Union – 2012".

With the exception of U6 laws any **additions to** or **variations** of the laws of the preceding year group are given in **red** to make it easier for coaches moving up a year to identify the changes. Any text in **blue** represents a modified law from the IRB law. Any text in **green** represents the 2012 IRB Law Amendment Trials.

The 'Spirit of the Game and its Laws.'

"It is not the winning but the spirit of fair play, enjoyment and safety that is paramount." The "Spirit of the Game" includes:

- To enjoy the game;
- To play as part of a team;
- To give one's best efforts at all times;
- The ability to accept defeat gracefully and to win with equal grace;
- To play the game and not cheat because you think you may not get caught;
- The ability to abide by the referees decision without resentment;
- The ability to take hard knocks when fairly given and never bears a grudge.

Coaching and Refereeing Minis

The laws alter progressively across the year groups to accommodate the HKRFU approved 'Player Pathway Development'. It is essential that coaches avoid going beyond the laws for their year group even if he/she believes that the players are capable of it. To introduce skills from later year groups will both be unfair and possibly dangerous in inter-club games.

In games coaches are expected to encourage respect for the opposing team. In particular, where one team is clearly dominating a game at the expense of the morale of the other team, coaches should work with the referee in trying to bring some form of balance to the game so that both teams leave the pitch with a sense of satisfaction and achievement.



When coaches are allowed to accompany teams onto the pitch they are there to help the referee ensure that players get the maximum enjoyment and benefit from participating within the laws of the game. By their own actions and attitudes coaches must set an example to players of how the decisions of the referee must be accepted with good grace at all times. It is acceptable to request clarification of a decision, but it is totally inappropriate to challenge that decision on the field of play. Any further discussion should take place off the pitch away from the players.

The primary role of the referee is to allow the game to flow as far as possible, and to achieve that aim, full use of the 'advantage' rule should be taken. A referee is expected to:

- Conduct the game to ensure the safety of all participants;
- Apply advantage equally to both sides;
- Apply the rules fairly to both teams;
- Communicate clearly decisions to the players and, as far as possible, to spectators;
- Keep up with the game.

When the referee considers that spectators are behaving inappropriately towards the referee, a direct confrontation should be avoided. A complaint should be registered after the game with the coach of the relevant side and/or the chair of the club concerned. For serious cases, the referee should report the incident to the organizer of the event and/or the Chairman of the HKMRFU.

Common failings of some referees are:

- Not blowing the whistle loudly to ensure that all concerned are aware of the stoppage;
- Not clearly and loudly describing the decision by signal and voice (Whistle/Signal/Talk);
- Where appropriate not explaining to players involved how the offense can be avoided in the future; and
- Not admitting an error.

The U10 game

The 'U10 & U11 Game' should focus on the following Key Performance Indicators:

Individual Skills:

- Can Pass 1.5M off both hands.
- Can catch a pass while on the run.
- Can run in support of the ball carrier.
- Can safely fall to the ground.
- Can safely tackle.
- Can safely carry the ball into contact.
- Can take up safe & strong body position in contact (tackle, ruck, maul & scrum).

Unit/Team Skills:

- Understands the value of the team.
- The team can and do spread the ball into all hands.
- The team uses the full width of the field.
- The team play the game in the right spirit & complemented by opponents.
- Understandings the first principle of goal setting.
- The team encourages each other & constructively supports one another.



- The team can safely secure the ball at the breakdown and set piece.

Game Knowledge:

- Understands the key laws of the game.
- Focuses on game aspects rather than results.
- Developed learning through modified games.
- Develops respect for the referee.

Law 1. The Ground:

Definitions:

The Ground is the total area shown on the plan. The Ground includes:

The Field of Play is the area (as shown on the plan) between the goal lines and the touchlines. These lines are not part of the field of play.

The Playing Area is the field of play and the in-goal areas (as shown on the plan). The touchlines, touch-in-goal lines and dead ball lines are not part of the playing area.

The Playing Enclosure is the playing area and a space around it, not less than 5 metres where practicable, which is known as the perimeter area.

In-goal is the area between the goal line and the dead ball line, and between the touch-in-goal lines. It includes the goal line but it does not include the dead ball line or the touch-in-goal lines.

'The 10' is the area between the goal line and the 10-metre line, including the 10-metre line but excluding the goal line.

The Plan, including all the words and figures on it, is part of the Laws.

1.1 Surface of the playing enclosure:

(a) **Requirement.** The surface must be safe to play on at all times.

(b) **Type of surface.** The surface should be grass but may also be sand, clay, snow or artificial grass. The game may be played on snow, provided the snow and underlying surface are safe to play on. It shall not be a permanently hard surface such as concrete or asphalt. In the case of artificial grass surfaces, they must conform to [IRB Regulation 22](#).

1.2 Required dimensions for the playing enclosure:

(a) **Dimensions:** The field of play does not exceed 60 metres in length and 30 metres in width. Each in-goal does not exceed 5 metres in width and 30 metres in length.

(b) The length and breath of the playing area are to be as near as possible to the dimensions indicated. All areas are rectangular.

(c) The distance from the goal line to the dead ball line should not be less than 5 metres where practicable.

1.3 Lines on the playing enclosure:



Not applicable.

1.4 Dimensions for goal posts and crossbar:

Not applicable.

1.5 Flag Posts:

Not applicable.

1.6 Objections to the ground:

(a) If either team has objections about the ground or the way it is marked out they must tell the referee before the match starts.

(b) The referee will attempt to resolve the issues but must not start a match if any part of the ground is considered to be dangerous.

Law 2. The Ball:

2.1 Shape:

The ball must be oval and made of four panels.

2.2 Dimensions:

Size 4

2.3 Materials:

The ball should be made of leather or suitable synthetic material. It may be treated to make it water resistant and easier to grip.

2.4 Weight:

TBA

2.5 Air pressure at the start of play:

65.71 – 68.75 kilopascals, or 0.67 – 0.70 kilograms per square centimeter, or 9.5 – 10.0 lbs per square inch.

2.6 Spare balls:

Spare balls may be available during a match, but a team must not gain, or attempt to gain an unfair advantage by using them or changing them.

2.7 Smaller balls:

Balls of different sizes may be used for matches between young players.

Law 3. Number of Players – The Team

Definitions:



A Team. A team consists of **ten** players who start the match plus any authorized replacements and/or substitutes.

Replacement. A player who replaces an injured teammate.

Substitute. A player who replaces a teammate for tactical reasons.

3.1 Maximum number of players on the playing area:

Maximum: Each team must have no more than **ten** players on the playing area during play.

3.2 Team with more than the permitted number of players:

Objection: at any time before or during a match a team may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in their opponents' team. As soon as the referee knows that a team has too many players, the referee must order the captain of that team to reduce the number appropriately. The score at the time of the objection remains unaltered.

- Sanction: Penalty at the place where the game would restart.

3.3 When there are fewer than **ten** players:

A Union may authorize matches to be played with fewer than **ten** players in each team. When that happens, all the Laws of the Game apply except that each team must have at least five players in the scrum at all times.

Note: Agreement of each team's coach is required for a match with less than **ten** players. If agreement cannot be sort then the team with less than eleven players will forfeit the game.

3.4 Players nominated as substitutes:

The Union with jurisdiction over the match decides how many replacements/substitutes may be nominated to a maximum of seven (subject to Law 3.14 when it may be eight).

A team can substitute up to two front row players (subject to Law 3.14 when it may be three) and up to five other players. Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

3.5 Suitably trained and experienced players in the front row:

- Not applicable.
- Each player in the front row and any potential replacement(s) must be suitable trained and experienced.
- Not applicable.
- The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

3.6 Sent off for foul play:

A player sent off for foul play must not be replaced or substituted. **For an exception to this law, refer to Law 3.13.**



3.7 Permanent replacement:

A player may be permanently replaced if injured. If the player is permanently replaced, that player must not return and play in that match.

The replacement of the injured player must be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

3.8 The Decision for permanent replacement:

(a) Not applicable.

(b) In other matches, where a Union has given explicit permission, an injured player may be replaced on the advice of a medically trained person. If none is present, that player may be replaced if the referee agrees.

3.9 The referee's power to stop an injured player from continuing:

If the referee decides – with or without the advice of a doctor or other medically qualified person – that a player is so injured that the player should stop playing, the referee may order that player to leave the playing area. The referee may also order an injured player to leave the field in order to be medically examined.

3.10 Temporary replacement:

(a) When a player leaves the field to have bleeding controlled and/or have an open wound covered, that player may be temporarily replaced. If the player who has been temporarily replaced does not return to the field of play within **8 minutes (actual time)** of leaving the playing area, the replacement becomes permanent and the replaced player must not return to the field of play.

(b) If the temporary replacement is injured, that player may also be replaced.

(c) If the temporary replacement is sent off for foul play, the replaced player may not return to the field of play.

(d) Not applicable.

3.11 Player wishing to rejoin the match:

(a) A player who has an open or bleeding wound must leave the playing area. The player must not return until the bleeding is controlled and the wound has been covered.

(b) A player who leaves a match because of injury or any other reason must not rejoin the match until the referee permits the player to return. The referee must not let a player rejoin a match until the ball is dead.

(c) If a player rejoins or a replacement/substitute joins the match without the referee's permission, and the referee believes the player did so to help that player's team or obstruct the opposing team, the referee penalizes the player for misconduct.

– Sanction: A penalty kick is awarded at the place where play would restart.

3.12 Substituted players rejoining the match:

(a) If a player is substituted, that player must not return and play in that match, even to



replace an injured player.

Exception 1: A substituted player may replace a player with an open or bleeding wound.

Exception 2: A substituted player may replace a front row player when injured, temporarily suspended or sent off unless the referee has ordered uncontested scrums prior to the event which led to the front row player leaving the field of play and the team has used all the permitted replacements and substitutions.

(b) If uncontested scrums have been ordered and there is an injury to a front row player which requires that player to be replaced and there is a front row player available to replace that player then the front row player replacement must be used rather than players other than front row replacements.

3.13 Front row forward sent off or temporarily suspended or injured:

(a) If after a front row player has been sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended, and there are no further front row players available from the nominated team, then uncontested scrums will be ordered. It is not the responsibility of the referee to determine the suitability of trained front row replacements nor their availability, as this is a team responsibility.

(b) After a front row player is sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended the referee, upon awarding the next scrum, will ask that player's captain whether or not the team has another player on the field of play who is suitably trained to play in the front row. If not, the captain chooses any player from that team who then must leave the field of play and be replaced by a suitably trained front row player from the team's replacements. The captain may do this immediately prior to the next scrum or after another player has been tried in the front row.

3.14 Union Specific Variations:

(a) A Union may implement rolling substitutions at defined levels of the Game within its jurisdiction. The number of substitutions must not exceed seven. The administration and rules relating to rolling substitutions are the responsibility of the Union having jurisdiction.

(b) A Union or Unions, where a match or competition is played between teams from two or more Unions, may implement variations to Law 3.4 for matches below international level as set out in (c) and/or (d) below.

(c) When 17 players are nominated in a team there must be sufficient front row players to play at hooker, tight-head prop and loose-head prop who are suitably trained and experienced to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement in any front row position is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Law 4. Players' Clothing:

Definitions:

Players' clothing is anything players wear.

A player wears a jersey, shorts and underwear, socks and boots.

Detailed information relating to the permitted specifications for clothing and studs maybe found in [IRB Specifications \(Regulation 12\)](#)



4.1 Additional items of clothing:

- (a) A player may wear supports made of elasticated or compressible materials which must be washable.
- (b) A player may wear shin guards, which conform to [IRB Specifications \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (c) A player may wear ankle supports worn under socks, not extending higher than one third of the length of the shin and, if rigid, from material other than metal.
- (d) A player may wear mitts (fingerless gloves) which must conform to [IRB Specifications \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (e) A player may wear shoulder pads, which must bear the [IRB Approval Mark \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (f) A player may wear a mouth guard or dental protector.
- (g) A player may wear headgear, which must bear the [IRB Approval Mark \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (h) A player may wear bandages and/or dressings to cover or protect any injury.
- (i) A player may wear thin tape or other similar material as support and/or to prevent injury.

4.2 Special additional items for women:

- (a) Besides the previous items, women may wear chest pads, which must bear the [IRB approval Mark \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (b) Female players may wear cotton blend long tights with single leg seam under their shorts and socks.

4.3 Studs:

- (a) Studs of players' boots must conform to the [IRB Specifications \(Regulation 12\)](#).
- (b) Molded rubber multi-studded soles are acceptable provided they have no sharp edges or ridges.

4.4 Banned items of clothing:

- (a) A player must not wear any item that is contaminated by blood.
- (b) A player must not wear any item that is sharp or abrasive.
- (c) A player must not wear any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted under this Law.
- (d) A player must not wear jewelry such as rings or earrings.
- (e) A player must not wear gloves.
- (f) A player must not wear shorts with padding sewn into them.
- (g) A player must not wear any other item, which does not conform to the [IRB Specifications for such clothing \(Regulation 12\)](#).



- (h) A player must not wear any item that is normally permitted by Law, but, in the referee's opinion that is liable to cause injury to a player.
- (i) A player must not wear a single stud at the toe of the boot.
- (j) A player must not wear communication devices within that player's clothing or attached to the body.
- (k) A player must not wear any additional item of clothing that does not conform to IRB Regulation 12.

4.5 Inspection of players' clothing:

- (a) The referee or the touch judges appointed by or under the authority of the match organizer must inspect the players' clothing and studs for conformity to this Law.
- (b) The referee has power to decide at any time, before or during the match, that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. If the referee decides that clothing is dangerous or illegal the referee must order the player to remove it. The player must not take part in the match until the items of clothing are removed.
- (c) If, at an inspection before the match, the referee or a touch judge tells a player that an item banned under this Law is being worn, and the player is subsequently found to be wearing that item on the playing area, that player is sent off for misconduct.

– Sanction: A Free Kick is awarded at the place where play is restarted.

4.6 Wearing other clothing:

The referee must not allow any player to leave the playing area to change items of clothing, unless these are bloodstained.

For more information on provisions relating to players' dress, see IRB Regulation 12 at [IRB Regulation 12](#)

Law 5. Time:

5.1 Duration of a match:

A match lasts no longer than 15 minutes. A match can be divided into two halves of not more than 30 minutes playing time.

Note: Festival Schedules will normally nominate the duration of a match.

5.2 Half-time:

After half time the teams change ends. There is an interval of not more than 5 minutes. The match organizer, the Union or the recognized body, which has jurisdiction over the game, decides the length of the interval. During the interval the teams, the referee and the touch judges may leave the playing enclosure.

5.3 Time Keeping:



The referee keeps the time but may delegate the duty to either or both the touch judges and/or the official timekeeper, in which case the referee signals to them any stoppage of time or time lost. In matches without an official time-keeper, if the referee is in doubt as to the correct time the referee consults either or both the touch judges and may consult others but only if the touch judges cannot help.

[Note: Festival Schedules will normally nominate the duration of a match.](#)

5.4 Time lost:

Not applicable.

5.5 Making up for lost time:

Not applicable.

5.6 Playing extra time:

A match may last more than 30 minutes if the Match Organizer has authorized the playing of extra time in a drawn match in a knockout competition.

5.7 Other time regulations:

Not applicable.

Law 6. Match officials:

Definitions:

Every match is under the control of **Match Officials** who consist of the referee and two touch judges or assistant referees. **Additional persons**, as authorized by the match organizers may include the reserve referee and/or reserve assistant referee, an official to assist the referee in making decisions by using technological devices, the time keeper, the match doctor, the team doctors, the non-playing members of the teams and the ball persons.

A touch judge may be appointed by a match organizer or a team involved in a match and is responsible for signaling, touch, touch in-goal and the success or otherwise of kicks at goal. An assistant referee may be appointed by a match organizer and is responsible for signaling, touch, touch in-goal, the success or otherwise of kicks at goal and indicating foul play.

An assistant referee will also provide assistance to the referee in the performance of any of the referee's duties as directed by the referee.

6.A Referee:

Before the match:

6.A.1 Appointing the referee:

The match organizer appoints the referee. If no referee has been appointed the two teams may agree upon a referee. If they cannot agree, the home team appoints a referee.

6.A.2 Replacing the referee:



If the referee is unable to complete the match, the referee's replacement is appointed according to the instructions of the match organizer. If the match organizer has given no instructions, the referee appoints the replacement. If the referee cannot do so, the home team appoints a replacement.

6.A.3 Duties of the referee before the match:

(a) **Toss.** The referee organizes the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls to see who wins the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick off or to choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick off and vice versa.

(Note: The Festival Schedule will normally nominate which team kicks off.)

During the match:

6.A.4 The duties of the referee in the playing enclosure:

(a) The referee is the sole judge of fact and of Law during a match. The referee must apply fairly all the Laws of the Game in every match.

(b) The referee keeps the time.

(c) The referee keeps the score.

(d) The referee gives permission to the players to leave the playing area.

(e) The referee gives permission to the replacements or substitutes to enter the playing area.

(f) The referee gives permission to the team doctors or medically trained persons or their assistants to enter the playing area, as and when permitted by the Law.

(g) The referee gives permission to each of the coaches to enter the playing area at **half-time to attend to their teams during the interval.**

6.A.5 Referee altering a decision:

The referee may alter a decision when a touch judge has raised the flag to signal touch.

The referee may alter a decision when an assistant referee has raised the flag to signal touch or an act of foul play.

6.A.6 Referee consulting with others:

(a) The referee may consult with assistant referees in regard to matters relating to their duties, the Law relating to foul play or timekeeping and may request assistance related to other aspects of the referee's duties including the adjudication of offside.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) A match organizer may appoint a timekeeper who will signify the end of each half.



(d) The referee must not consult with any other persons.

6.A.7 The referee's whistle:

(a) The referee must carry a whistle and blow the whistle to indicate the beginning and end of each half of the match.

(b) The referee has the power to blow the whistle and stop play at any time.

(c) The referee must blow the whistle to indicate a score, or a touch down.

(d) The referee must blow the whistle to stop play because of an infringement or for an offence of foul play. When the referee cautions or sends off the offender, the referee must whistle a second time when the penalty kick or penalty try is awarded.

(e) The referee must blow the whistle when the ball has gone out of play, or when it has become unplayable, or when a penalty is awarded.

(f) The referee must blow the whistle when it would be dangerous to let play continue or when it is probable that a player has been seriously injured.

6.A.8 The referee and injury:

If the referee stops play because a player has been injured, and there has been no infringement and the ball has not been made dead, play restarts with a scrum. The team last in possession throws in the ball. If neither team was in possession, the attacking team throws in the ball.

6.A.9 The ball touching the referee:

(a) If the ball or the ball carrier touches the referee and neither team gains an advantage, play continues. If either team gains an advantage in the field of play, the referee orders a scrum and the team that last played the ball has the throw-in.

(b) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of an attacking player the referee awards a try where the contact took place.

(c) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of a defending player, the referee awards a touch down where the contact took place.

6.A.10 The ball in in-goal touched by non-player:

The referee judges what would have happened next and awards a try or a touch down at the place where the ball was touched.

Before the match:

6.A.11 Score:

The referee communicates the score to the teams and to the match organizer.

6.A.12 Player sent-off:

If a player is sent off the referee gives the match organizer a written report on the foul play



infringement as soon as possible.

Note: For U9-U12 age groups, if a player is sent off due to foul play, the referee will provide in writing to the HKMRFU – Referee Coordinator, the name of the player and the offence for which the player was sent off.

6.B Touch judges and assistant referees:

Before the match:

6.B.1 Appointing touch judges and assistant referees:

There are two touch judges or two assistant referees for every match. Unless they have been appointed by or under the authority of the match organizer, each team provides a touch judge.

6.B.2 Replacing a touch judge or assistant referees:

The match organizer may nominate a person to act as a replacement for the referee, the touch judges or assistant referees. This person is called the reserve touch judge or reserve assistant referee and stands in the perimeter area.

6.B.3 Control of touch judges and assistant referees:

The referee has control over both touch judges or assistant referees. The referee may tell them what their duties are, and may overrule their decisions. If a touch judge is unsatisfactory the referee may ask that the touch judge be replaced. If the referee believes a touch judge is guilty of misconduct, the referee has power to send the touch judge off and make a report to the match organizer.

During the match:

6.B.4 Where the touch judges or assistant referees should be:

(a) There is one touch judge or assistant referee on each side of the ground. The touch judge or assistant referee remains in touch except when judging a kick at goal. When judging a kick at goal the touch judges or assistant referees stand in in-goal behind the goal posts.

(b) An assistant referee may enter the playing area when reporting an offence of dangerous play or misconduct to the referee. The assistant referee may do this only at the next stoppage in play.

6.B.5 Touch judge or assistant referee signals:

(a) Each touch judge or assistant referee carries a flag or something similar with which to signal decisions.

(b) **Signaling result of kick at goal.** Not applicable.

(c) **Signaling touch.** When the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch, the touch judge or assistant referee must hold up the flag. The touch judge or assistant referee must stand at the place of the throw-in and point to the team entitled to throw in. The touch judge or assistant referee must also signal when the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch-in-goal.

(d) **When to lower the flag.** When the ball is thrown in, the touch judge or assistant referee



must lower the flag, with the following exceptions:

Exception 1: When the player throwing in puts any part of either foot in the field of play, the touch judge or assistant referee keeps the flag up.

Exception 2: When the team not entitled to throw in has done so, the touch judge or assistant referee keeps the flag up.

Exception 3: Not applicable.

(e) It is for the referee, and not the touch judge or assistant referee, to decide whether or not the ball was thrown in from the correct place.

(f) **Signaling foul play.** An assistant referee signals that foul play or misconduct has been seen by holding the flag horizontally and pointing infield at right angles to the touchline.

6.B.6 After signaling foul play:

A match organizer may give authority to the assistant referee to signal for foul play. If an assistant referee signals foul play, the assistant referee must stay in touch and continue to carry out all the other duties until the next stoppage in play. At the invitation of the referee the assistant referee may then enter the playing area to report the offence to the referee. The referee may then take whatever action is needed. Any sanction awarded will be in accordance with Law 10 – Foul Play.

After the match:

6.B.7 Player sent-off:

If a player has been sent-off following an assistant referee's signal and report to the referee, the assistant referee submits a written report about the incident to the referee as soon as possible after the match and provides it to the match organizer.

6.C Additional persons:

6.C.1 Reserve touch judge or assistant referee:

When a reserve touch judge or assistant referee is appointed, the referee's authority regarding replacements and substitutions may be delegated to the reserve touch judge or reserve assistant referee.

6.C.2 Those who may enter the playing area:

The match doctor and the non-playing members of the team may enter the playing area as authorized by the referee.

6.C.3 Limits to entering the playing area:

In the case of injury, these persons may enter the playing area while play continues, provided they have permission from the referee. Otherwise, they enter only when the ball is dead.

Law 7. Mode of Play:

Playing a Match:

A match is started by a kick-off.



After the kick-off, any player who is onside may take the ball and run with it.

Any player may throw the ball.

Any player may give the ball to another player.

Any player may tackle, hold or push an opponent holding the ball.

Any player may fall on the ball.

Any player may take part in a scrum, or ruck.

Any player may ground the ball in in-goal.

Whatever a player does must be in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

Law 8. Advantage:

Definition:

The Law of advantage takes precedence over most other Laws and its purpose is to make play more continuous with fewer stoppages for infringements. Players are encouraged to play to the whistle despite infringements by their opponents. When the result of an infringement by one team is that their opposing team may gain an advantage, the referee does not whistle immediately for the infringement.

8.1 Advantage in practice:

- (a) The referee is sole judge of whether or not a team has gained an advantage. The referee has wide discretion when making decisions.
- (b) Advantage can be either territorial or tactical.
- (c) Territorial advantage means a gain in ground.
- (d) Tactical advantage means freedom for the non-offending team to play the ball as they wish.

8.2 When advantage does not arise:

The advantage must be clear and real. A mere opportunity to gain advantage is not enough. If the non-offending team does not gain an advantage, the referee blows the whistle and brings play back to the place of infringement.

8.3 When the advantage law is not applied:

- (a) **Referee contact.** Advantage must not be applied when the ball, or a player carrying it, touches the referee.
- (b) **Ball out of tunnel.** Advantage must not be applied when the ball comes out of either end of the tunnel at a scrum without having been played.
- (c) **Wheeled scrum.** Advantage must not be applied when the scrum is wheeled through more than 45 degrees (so that the middle line has passed beyond a position parallel to the touchline).



(d) **Collapsed scrum.** Advantage must not be applied when a scrum collapses. The referee must blow the whistle immediately.

(e) **Player lifted in the air.** Advantage must not be applied when a player in a scrum is lifted in the air or forced upwards out of the scrum. The referee must blow the whistle immediately.

8.4 Immediate whistle when no advantage:

The referee blows the whistle having determined that the non-offending team cannot gain an advantage.

8.5 More than one infringement:

(a) When there is more than one infringement by the same team:

- If advantage cannot be applied to the second offence the referee applies the appropriate sanction to the first offence.
- If advantage is played for the second offence but none accrues, the referee applies the appropriate sanction for the second offence.
- If either sanction is for foul play, the referee applies the appropriate sanction for that offence.

(b) If advantage is being played following an infringement by one team and then the other team commits an infringement, the referee blows the whistle and applies the sanctions associated with the first infringement.

Law 9. Method of Scoring:

9.A Scoring points:

9.A.1 Points values:

Try. When an attacking player is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, a try is scored.

Note: For Festival Rugby 1 point is awarded for a try.

Penalty Try. If a player would probably have scored a try but for foul play by an opponent, a penalty try is awarded between the goal posts.

Note: For Festival Rugby 1 point is awarded for a try.

9.A.2 Kick at goal – Special circumstances:

Not applicable.

9.B Conversion kick:

Not applicable.

Law 10. Foul Play:

10.1 Obstruction:



(a) **Charging or pushing.** When a player and an opponent are running for the ball, either player must not charge or push the other except shoulder-to-shoulder.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Running in front of a ball carrier.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in front of a team-mate carrying the ball thereby preventing opponents from tackling the current ball-carrier or the opportunity to tackle potential ball-carriers when they gain possession.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) **Blocking the tackler.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in a position that prevents an opponent from tackling a ball carrier.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) **Blocking the ball.** A player must not intentionally move or stand in a position that prevents an opponent from playing the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) **Ball carrier running into team-mate.** A player carrying the ball must not intentionally run into teammates in front of that player.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

10.2 Unfair Play:

(a) **Intentional Offending.** A player must not intentionally infringe any Law of the Game, or play unfairly. The player who intentionally offends must be either admonished, or cautioned that a mandatory replacement will result if the offence or a similar offence is committed.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored. A player who prevents a try being score through foul play must either be cautioned or mandatory replacement.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Time-wasting.** A player must not intentionally waste time.

– Sanction: Free Kick

(c) **Throwing into touch.** A player must not intentionally knock, place, push or throw the ball with his arm or hand into touch, touch-in-goal, or over the dead ball line.

– Sanction: Free Kick on the 5-metre line if the offence is between the 5-metre line and the touchline, or, at the place of infringement if the offence occurred elsewhere in the field of play, or, 5 metres from the goal line and at least 5 metres from the touchline if the infringement occurred in in-goal.

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.



10.3 Repeated Infringements:

(a) **Repeatedly offending.** A player must not repeatedly infringe any law. Repeated infringement is a matter of fact. The question of whether or not the player intended to infringe is irrelevant.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Repeated infringements by the team.** When different players of the same team repeatedly commit the same offence, the referee must decide whether or not this amounts to repeated infringement. If it does, the referee gives a general warning to the team and if they then repeat the offence, the referee cautions or mandatory replace of the guilty player/s.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

(c) **Repeated infringements: standard applied by referee.** When the referee decides how many offences constitutes repeated infringement, the referee must always apply a strict standard at Mini Rugby Festivals. When a player offends three times the referee must caution that player.

10.4 Dangerous play and misconduct:

(a) **Punching or striking.** A player must not strike an opponent with the fist or arm, including the elbow, shoulder, head or knee(s).

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Stamping or trampling.** A player must not stamp or trample on an opponent.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) **Kicking.** A player must not kick an opponent.

– : Sanction Free Kick.

(d) **Tripping.** A player must not trip an opponent with the leg or foot.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) **Dangerous Tackling.** A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

A player must not tackle (or try to tackle) an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders. A tackle around the opponent's neck or head is dangerous play.

– Sanction: Free Kick.



A 'stiff-arm tackle' is dangerous play. A player makes a stiff-arm tackle when using a stiff-arm to strike an opponent.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

Playing a player without the ball is dangerous play.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

A player must not tackle an opponent whose feet are off the ground.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(f) **Playing an opponent without the ball.** Except in a **scrum or ruck**, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push or obstruct an opponent not carrying the ball.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(g) **Dangerous charging.** A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without trying to grasp that player.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(h) **A player must not charge into a ruck.** Charging includes any contact made without the use of arms, or without grasping a player.

(i) Not applicable.

(j) Lifting a player from the ground and dropping or driving that player into the ground whilst that player's feet are still off the ground such that the player's head and/or upper body come into contact with the ground is dangerous play.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(k) **Dangerous play in a scrum, or ruck.** The front row of a scrum must not rush against its opponents.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

Front row players must not intentionally lift opponents off their feet or force them upwards out of the scrum.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

Players must not charge into a ruck or maul without binding onto a player in the ruck or maul.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

Players must not intentionally collapse a scrum, ruck or maul.

- : Sanction Free Kick.

(l) **Retaliation.** A player must retaliate. Even if an opponent is infringing the laws, a player



must not do anything that is dangerous to the opponent.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(m) Acts contrary to good sportsmanship. A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship in the playing enclosure.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(n) Misconduct while the ball is out of play. A player, must not, while the ball is out of play, commit any misconduct, or obstruct or in any way interfere with an opponent.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

The penalty kick is awarded at the place where play would restart. If that place is on the touchline or within 3 metres of it, the mark for the penalty kick is on the 3-metre line, in line with that place.

If play would restart at a 5-metre scrum, the mark for the penalty kick is at that place of the scrum.

If play would restart with a dropout, the non-offending team may choose to take the free kick anywhere on the 10-metre line.

If a free kick is awarded but the offending team is guilty of further misconduct before the kick is taken, the referee cautions or mandatory replaces the guilty player and advances the mark for the penalty kick 5 metres. This covers both the original offence and the misconduct.

If a free kick is awarded to a team but a player of that team is guilty of further misconduct before the kick is taken, the referee will caution or mandatory replace the guilty player, declare the kick disallowed, and award a penalty kick to the opposing team.

If an offence is committed outside the playing area while the ball is still in play, and if that offence is not covered by any other part of the law, the free kick is awarded on the 5-metre line, in line with where the offence happened.

(o) Not applicable.

(p) Flying Wedge and Cavalry Charge. A team must not use the 'Flying Wedge' or 'Cavalry Charge'.

- Sanction: Free Kick at the place of the original infringement.

'Flying Wedge'. The type of attack known as a 'Flying Wedge' usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a free kick. The kicker tap-kicks the ball and starts the attack, either by driving towards the goal line or by passing to a team-mate who drives forward. Immediately, team mates bind on each side of the ball carrier in a wedge formation. Often or more of these team mates is in front of the ball carrier. A 'Flying Wedge' is illegal.

- Sanction: Free Kick at the place of the original infringement.

'Cavalry Charge'. The type of attack known as a 'Cavalry Charge' usually happens near the goal line, when the attacking team is awarded a penalty kick or free kick. Either a single player



stands some distance behind the kicker, or attacking players form a line across the field some distance behind the kicker. These attacking players are usually a metre or two apart. At a signal from the kicker, they charge forward. When they get near, the kicker tap-kicks the ball and passes to a player who had started some distance behind the kicker.

– Sanction: Free Kick at the place of infringement.

(q) Advantage may be played for acts of foul play, but if the offence prevents a probable try, a penalty must be awarded.

(r) For an offence reported by an assistant referee a free kick may be awarded where the offence occurred, or advantage may be played.

(s) All players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee's decisions. They must stop playing at once when the referee blows the whistle except at a kick-off or at a penalty kick following admonishment or mandatory replacement.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

10.5 Sanctions:

(a) Any player who infringes any part of the Foul Play Law must be cautioned or mandatory replaced.

(b) A player who has been cautioned on two occasions, who then commits a third offence within the Foul Law must be mandatory replaced.

10.6 Yellow and Red Cards:

Not applicable.

10.7 Player Mandatory Replaced:

A player who is mandatory replaced takes no further part in the match.

Law 11. Offside and Onside in general play:

11.1 Offside in general play:

(a) A player who is in an offside position is liable to sanction only if the player does one of three things:

- Interferes with play or,
- Moves forward, towards the ball or
- Not applicable.

A player who is in an offside position is not automatically penalized.

A player who receives an unintentional throw forward is not offside.

A player can be offside in the in-goal.

(b) **Offside and interfering with play.** A player who is offside must not take part in the game. This means the player must not play the ball or obstruct an opponent.



(c) Not applicable.

11.2 Being put outside by the action of a teammate:

In general play, there are three ways by which an offside player can be put outside by actions of that player or of teammates.

(a) **Action by the player.** When the offside player runs behind the teammate who last touched or carried the ball, the player is put outside.

(b) **Action by the ball carrier.** When a teammate carrying the ball runs in front of the offside player, that player is put outside.

(c) Not applicable.

11.3 Being put outside by opponents:

In general play, there are three ways by which an offside player can be put outside by the action of the opposing team. These three ways do not apply to a player who is offside under the 7-Metre Law.

(a) **Runs 5 metres with the ball.** When an opponent carrying the ball runs 5 metres, the offside player is put outside.

(b) **Passes.** When an opponent passes the ball, the offside player is put outside.

(c) **Intentionally touches the ball.** When an opponent intentionally touches the ball but does not catch it, the offside player is put outside.

11.4 Offside under the 7-metre law:

Not applicable.

11.5 Being put outside under the 7-metre law:

Not applicable.

11.6 Accidental offside:

(a) When an offside player cannot avoid being touched by the ball or by a team-mate carrying it, the player is accidentally offside. If the player's team gains no advantage from this, play continues. If the player's team gains an advantage, a scrum is formed with the opposing team throwing in the ball.

(b) When a player hands the ball to a teammate in front of the first player, the receiver is offside. Unless the receiver is considered to be intentionally offside (in which case a penalty kick is awarded), the receiver is accidentally offside and a scrum is formed with the opposing team throwing in the ball.

11.7 Offside after a knock-on:

When a player knocks-on and an offside teammate next plays the ball, the offside player is liable to sanction if playing the ball prevented an opponent from gaining an advantage.



– Sanction: Free Kick.

11.8 Putting onside a player retiring during a ruck, or scrum:

When a ruck or scrum forms, a player who is offside and is retiring as required by Law remains offside even when the opposing team wins possession and the ruck or scrum has ended.

The player is put onside by retiring behind the applicable offside line.

No other action of the offside player and no action of that player's teammates can put the offside player onside.

If the player remains offside the player can be put onside only by the action of the opposing team. There are two such actions:

- **Opponent runs 5 metres with the ball.** When an opponent carrying the ball has run 5 metres, the offside player is put onside. An offside player is not put onside when an opponent passes the ball. Even if the opponents pass the ball several times, their action does not put the offside player onside.
- **Opponent kicks.** Not applicable.

11.9 Loitering:

A player who remains in an offside position is loitering. A loiterer who prevents the opposing team from playing the ball as they wish is taking part in the game, and is penalized. The referee makes sure that the loiterer does not benefit from being put onside by the opposing team's action.

– Sanction: Free Kick at the offending player's offside line.

Law 12. Knock-on or Throw-Forward:

Definitions:

A knock-on occurs when a player loses possession of the ball and it goes forward, or when a player hits the ball forward with the hand or arm, or when the ball hits the hand or arm and goes forward, and the ball touches the ground or another player before the original player can catch it.

'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

A throw-forward occurs when a player throws or passes the ball forward.

'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

Exception. Bounce forward. If the ball is not thrown forward but it hits a player or the ground and bounces forward, this is not a throw forward.

12.1 The outcome of a knock-on or throw forward:



- (a) **Unintentional knock-on or throw forward.** A **scrum** is awarded at the place of infringement.
- (b) **Unintentional knock-on or throw forward at a lineout.** Not applicable.
- (c) **Knock-on or throw forward into the in-goal.** If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a **scrum** is awarded where the knock-on or throw forward happened.
- (d) **Knock-on or throw forward inside the in-goal.** If a player of either team knocks-on or throws-forward inside the in-goal, a 5-metre **scrum** is awarded in line with the place of infringement not closer than 3 metres from the touchline.
- (e) **Knock-on or throw forward into touch.** When the ball goes into touch from a knock-on or throw forward, the non-offending team will be offered the choice of a free kick or a scrum at the place of the knock-on or throw forward.
- (f) **Intentional knock or throw forward.** A player must not intentionally knock the ball forward with hand or arm, nor throw forward.

Sanction: Free Kick.

A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

Law 13. Kick-off and Restart Kicks:

Definitions:

The kick-off occurs at the start of each half of the match and at the beginning of each period of extra time. Restart kicks occur after a score or a touch down.

13.1 Where and how the kick-off is taken:

- (a) A team kicks off with a **drop kick**, which must be taken at or behind the centre of the half way line.
- (b) If the ball is kicked off by the wrong type of kick, or from the incorrect place, the opposing team has two choices:
- To have the ball kicked off again, or
 - **To have a scrum at the centre of the halfway line and they throw in the ball.**

13.2 Who takes the kick-off and restart kick:

- (a) At the start of the game, the team whose captain elected to take the kick after winning the toss will kick off, or the opposing team if the winning captain elected to choose an end.

(Note: The Festival Schedule will normally nominate which team kicks off.)

- (b) After the half-time interval, the opponents of the team who kicked off at the start of the games kick off.



(Note: The Festival Schedule will normally only have one 10-20min game period.)

(c) After a score the opponents of the team who scored restart play.

13.3 Position of the kicker's team at a kick-off:

All the kickers team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, a scrum is formed at the centre. Their opponents throw in the ball.

13.4 Position of the opposing team at a kick-off:

All the opposing team must stand on or behind the 5-metre line. If they are in front of that line or if they charge before the ball is kicked, it is kicked off again.

If the ball reaches the opponents' 5-metre line or reaches the 5-metre line and is blown back, play continues.

13.5 Kick-off of 5-metres:

If the ball reaches the opponents' 5-metre line or reaches the 5-metre line and is blown back, play continues

13.6 Kick-off of under 5-metres by played by an opponent:

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 5-metre line but is first played by an opponent, play continues.

13.7 Kick-off of under 5-metres and not played by an opponent:

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 5-metre line the opposing team has tow choices:

- To have the ball kicked off again, or
- To have a scrum at the centre of the half-way line and they throw in the ball.

13.8 Ball goes directly into touch:

The ball must land in the field of play. If it is kicked directly into touch the opposing team has three choices:

- To have the ball kicked off again, or
- To have a scrum at the centre and they have the throw-in, or
- To accept the kick.

If they accept the kick, the free kick is on the half way line. If the ball is blown behind the half way line and goes directly into touch, the lineout is at the place where it went into touch.

13.9 Ball goes into the in-goal:

(a) If the ball is kicked into the in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player, the opposing team has three choices:

- To ground the ball, or
- To make it dead, or



- To play on.

(b) If the opposing team grounds the ball, or if they make it dead, or if the ball becomes dead by going into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, they have two choices:

- **To have a scrum formed at the centre, and they throw the ball,** or
- To have the other team kick off again.

(c) If they opt to ground the ball or make it dead, they must do so without delay. Any other action with the ball by a defending player means the player has elected to play on.

13.10 Drop out:

A drop-out is a tap kick taken by the defending team. The drop-out may be taken anywhere on or behind the 10-metre line.

A drop-out is used to restart play after an attacking player has put or taken the ball into the in-goal, without infringement, and a defending player has made the ball dead there or it has gone into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line.

13.11 Delay in drop-out:

The drop-out must be taken without delay.

- Sanction: Free Kick on the 10-metre line.

13.12 Drop-out incorrectly taken:

Not applicable.

13.13 Drop-out must cross the line:

Not applicable.

13.14 Drop-out goes directly into touch:

Not applicable.

13.15 Drop-out goes into the opponents' in-goal:

Not applicable.

13.16 The kicker's team:

(a) All the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. **If not, a scrum is formed at the centre of the 10-metre line. The opposing team throws in the ball.**

(b) However, if the kick is taken so quickly that players of the kicker's team who are retiring are still in front of the ball, they will not be penalized. They must not stop retiring until they have been made onside by an action of a team-mate. They must not take part in the game until they have been made onside in this way.

- Sanction: **Scrum at the centre of the 10-metre line. The opposing team throws in the**



ball.

13.17 The opposing team:

- (a) The opposing team must not charge over the 10-metre line before the ball is tapped.
- Sanction: Free Kick at the place of infringement.
- (b) If an opponent is on the wrong side of the 10-metre line and delays or obstructs the tap, the player is guilty of misconduct.
- Sanction: Free Kick on the 10-metre line.

Law 14. Ball on the Ground No-Tackle:

This situation occurs when the ball is available on the ground and a player goes to ground to gather the ball, except immediately after a scrum or a ruck. It also occurs when a player is on the ground in possession of the ball and has not been tackled. The Game is to be played by players who are on their feet. A player must not make the ball unplayable by falling down. Unplayable means that the ball is not immediately available to either team so that play may continue.

A player who makes the ball unplayable, or who obstructs the opposing team by falling down, is negating the purpose and Spirit of the Game and must be penalized.

A player who is not tackled, but who goes to ground while holding the ball, or a player who goes to ground and gathers the ball, must act immediately.

14.1 Players on the ground:

- (a) A player with the ball must immediately do one of three things:
- Get up with the ball
 - Pass the ball
 - Release the ball.
- Sanction: Free Kick.

14.2 Players on their feet:

- (a) Falling over the player on the ground with the ball. A player must not intentionally fall on or over a player with the ball who is lying on the ground.
- Sanction: Free Kick.
- (b) Falling over players lying on the ground near the ball. A player must not intentionally fall on or over players lying on the ground with the ball between them or near them.
- Sanction: Free Kick.

Law 15. Tackle:

When one opponent holds the ball carrier, and a team-mate of the ball carrier binds on to that ball carrier, a maul has been formed and a tackle cannot take place. The referee is to



immediately call 'Tackle, Release, Go to Ground!' in which the ball carrier is allowed to go to ground and present the ball (180 Present or Heads Present) to allow the ball to be recycled.

The ball carrier is brought to ground:

- If the ball carrier has one knee or both knees on the ground, that player has been 'brought to ground',
- If the ball carrier is sitting on the ground, or on top of another player on the ground the ball carrier has been 'brought to ground'.

Normal Ruck Laws then apply.

15.1 Where can a tackle take place:

A tackle can only take place in the field of play.

15.2 When a tackle cannot take place:

When one opponent holds the ball carrier, and a team-mate of the ball carrier binds on to that ball carrier, a maul has been formed and a tackle cannot take place.

15.3 Brought to the ground defined:

- (a) If the ball carrier has one knee or both knees on the ground, that player has been 'brought to ground',
- (b) If the ball carrier is sitting on the ground, or on top of another player on the ground the ball carrier has been 'brought to ground'.

15.4 The tackler:

- (a) When a player tackles an opponent and they both go to ground, the tackler must immediately release the tackled player.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (b) The tackler must immediately get up or move away from the tackled player and from the ball at once.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (c) **The tackler must get up before playing the ball and then play the ball from any direction.**
 - **Sanction: Free Kick.**

15.5 The tackled player:

- (a) A tackled player must not lie on, over, or near the ball to prevent opponents from gaining possession of it, and must try to make the ball available immediately so that play can continue.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (b) A tackled player must immediately pass the ball or release it. That player must also get up or move away from it at once.



– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) A tackled player may release the ball by pushing it along the ground in any direction except forward provide this is done immediately.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) A tackled player may release the ball by pushing it along the ground in any direction except forward, provided this is done immediately.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) If opposition players who are on their feet attempt to play the ball, the tackled player must release the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(f) If a tackled player's momentum carries the player into the in-goal, the player can score a try or make a touch down.

(g) If a player is tackled near the goal line, that player may immediately reach out and ground the ball on or over the goal line to score a try or make a touch down.

15.6 Other Players:

(a) After a tackle, all other players must be on their feet when they play the ball. Players are on their feet if, no other part of their body is supported by the ground or players on the ground.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

Exception: Ball goes into the in-goal. After a tackle near the goal line, if the ball has been released and has gone into the in-goal any player, including a player on the ground, may ground the ball.

(b) After a tackle any players on their feet may attempt to gain possession by taking the ball from the ball carrier's possession.

(c) Players in opposition to the ball carrier who remain on their feet who bring the ball carrier to ground so that the player is tackled must release the ball and the ball carrier. Those players may then play the ball providing they are on their feet and do so from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or a tackler closest to those players' goal line.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) At a tackle or near to a tackle, other players who play the ball must do so from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players' goal line.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) Any player who gains possession of the ball at the tackle must play the ball immediately by moving away or passing the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.



(f) Any player who first gains possession of the ball must not go to the ground at the tackle or near to it unless tackled by an opposition player.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(g) Any player who first gains possession of the ball at the tackle or near to it may be tackled by an opposition player providing that player does so from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to that players' goal line.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(h) After a tackle, any player lying on the ground must not prevent an opponent from getting possession of the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(i) After a tackle, any player on the ground must not tackle an opponent or try to tackle an opponent.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(j) When a tackled player reaches out to ground the ball on or over the goal line to score a try, an opponent may pull the ball from the player's possession, but must not kick or attempt to kick the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

15.7 Forbidden Practices:

(a) No player may prevent the tackled player from passing the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) No player may prevent the tackled player from releasing the ball and getting up or moving away from it.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) No player may fall on or over the players lying on the ground after a tackle with the ball between or near him or her.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) Players on their feet must not charge or obstruct an opponent who is not near the ball.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) Danger may arise if a tackled player fails to release the ball or move away from it immediately, or if that player is prevented from so doing. If either of these happens the referee awards a free kick immediately.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

15.8 Doubt about failure to comply:



If the ball becomes unplayable at a tackle and there is doubt about which player did not conform to Law, the referee orders a scrum immediately with the throw-in by the team that was moving forward prior to the stoppage or, if no team was moving forward, by the attacking team.

Law 16. Ruck:

Definitions:

A ruck is a phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet, in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. Open play has ended. Players are rucking when they are in a ruck and using their feet to try to win or keep possession of the ball, without being guilty of foul play.

The ruck will consist of a maximum of 5 players: The ball carrier, two defenders and two attackers. This law challenges players to find rucking solutions with a low body position. Rucking is an essential player skill and is key component to the tactical skill of attack patterns, defense and defensive systems. By creating this 2 V 2 situation the players are able to develop this core skill at a fundamental level.

16.1 Forming a ruck:

(a) **Where can a ruck take place:** A ruck can take place only in the field of play.

(b) **How can a ruck form:** Players are on their feet. At least one player must be in physical contact with an opponent. The ball must be on the ground. If the ball is off the ground for any reason, the ruck is not formed.

Note: There is a maximum of 5 players involved in the ruck: The ball carrier, two defenders and two attackers.

16.2 Joining a ruck:

(a) All players forming, joining or taking part in a ruck must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) A player joining a ruck must bind on a team-mate or an opponent, using the whole arm. The bind must either precede, or be simultaneous with, contact with any other part of the body of the player joining the ruck.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) Placing a hand on another player in the ruck does not constitute binding.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) All players forming, joining or taking part in a ruck must be on their feet.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

16.3 Rucking:



- (a) Players in a ruck must endeavor to stay on their feet.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (b) A player must not intentionally fall or kneel in a ruck. This is dangerous play.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (c) A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck. This is dangerous play.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (d) A player must not jump on top of a ruck.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (e) Players must have their heads and shoulders no lower than their hips.
 - Sanction: Free Kick
- (f) A player rucking for the ball must not intentionally ruck players on the ground. A player rucking for the ball must try to step over players on the ground and must not intentionally step on them. A player rucking must do so near the ball.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.

16.4 Other ruck offences:

- (a) Players must not return the ball into a ruck.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (b) Players must not handle the ball in a ruck except after a tackle if they are not on their feet and have their hands on the ball before the ruck is formed.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (c) Players must not pick up the ball in a ruck with their legs.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (d) Players on the ground in or near the ruck must try to move away from the ball. These players must not interfere with the ball in the ruck or as it comes out of the ruck.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (e) A player must not fall on or over a ball as it is coming out of a ruck.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.
- (f) A player must not take any action to make the opposing team think that the ball is out of the ruck while it is still in the ruck.
 - Sanction: Free Kick.

16.5 Off-side at the ruck:



(a) **The off-side line.** There are two offside lines parallel to the goal lines, one for each team. Each off-side line runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the ruck. If the hindmost foot of the hindmost player is on or behind the goal-line, the off-side line for the defending team is the goal- line.

(b) Players must either join a ruck, or retire behind the off-side line immediately. If a player loiters at the side of the ruck, the player is offside.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) **Players joining or rejoining the ruck.** A player joining a ruck must do so from behind the foot of the hindmost team-mate in the ruck. A player may join alongside this hindmost player. If a player joins the ruck from the opponents' side or in front of the hindmost team-mate, the player is offside. A player may bind onto an opposition player providing the player is not otherwise offside.

– Sanction: Free Kick on the offending team's offside line.

(d) **Players not joining the ruck.** If a player is in front of the offside line and does not join the ruck, the player must retire behind the offside line at once. If a player who is behind the offside line oversteps it and does not join the ruck, the player is offside.

– Sanction: Free Kick on the offending team's offside line.

16.6 Successful end to a ruck:

A ruck ends successfully when the ball leaves the ruck, or when the ball is on or over the goal line.

16.7 Unsuccessful end to a ruck:

(a) A ruck ends unsuccessfully when the ball becomes unplayable and a scrum is ordered. The team that was moving forward immediately before the ball became unplayable in the ruck throws in the ball.

If neither team was moving forward, or if the referee cannot decide which team was moving forward before the ball became unplayable in the ruck, the team that was moving forward before the ruck began throws in the ball.

If neither team was moving forward, then the attacking team throws in the ball.

(b) Before the referee blows the whistle for a scrum, the referee allows a reasonable amount of time for the ball to emerge, especially if either team is moving forward. If the ruck stops moving, or if the referee decides that the ball will probably not emerge within a reasonable time, the referee must order a scrum.

(c) When the ball has been clearly won by a team at a ruck and the ball is available to be played, the referee will call "Use it!" after which the ball must be played within five seconds. If the ball is not played within the five seconds the referee will award a scrum and the team not in possession of the ball at the ruck is awarded the throw in.

Law 17. Maul:

When one opponent holds the ball carrier, and a team-mate of the ball carrier binds on to that



ball carrier, a maul has been formed and a tackle cannot take place. The referee is to immediately call 'Pass/Tackle' in which the ball carrier is allowed to go to ground and present the ball (180 Present or Heads Present) to allow the ball to be recycled.

Not applicable.

Law 18. Mark:

Not applicable.

Law 19. Touch and Lineout:

Definitions:

'Kicked directly into touch': Not applicable.

'The 10' is the area between the goal line and the 10-metre line, including the 10-metre line but excluding the goal line.

The ball is in touch when, it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touchline or anything or anyone on or beyond the touchline.

The ball is in touch when a player carrying it and the ball carrier (or ball) touches the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline. The place where the ball carrier (or ball) touched or crossed the touchline is where it went into touch.

19.1 Throw-in:

Not applicable.

19.2 Quick Throw-in:

Not applicable.

19.3 Other throw ins:

Not applicable.

19.4 Who throws in:

Not applicable.

19.5 Player with foot in touch:

(a) If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was stationary within the playing area, that player has picked up the ball in the playing area and thereby that player has taken the ball into touch (or touch-in-goal).

(b) If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was in motion within the playing area, that player is deemed to have picked up the ball in touch (or touch-in-goal).

19.6 How the throw-in is taken:



Not applicable.

19.7 Incorrect throw-in:

Not applicable.

Lineout:

Not applicable.

Law 20. Scrum:

Definition:

The purpose of the scrum is to restart play quickly, safely and fairly, after a minor infringement or a stoppage.

A scrum is formed in the field of play when five players from each team, bound together in three rows for each team, close up with their opponents so that the heads of the front rows are interlocked. This creates a tunnel into which a scrum half throws in the ball so that front row players can compete for possession by hooking the ball with either of their feet.

The middle line of a scrum must not be within 5 metres of the goal line. A scrum cannot take place within 5 metres of a touchline.

The tunnel is the space between the two front rows.

The player of either team who throws the ball into the scrum is the scrum half.

The middle line is an imaginary line on the ground in the tunnel beneath the line where the shoulders of the two front rows meet.

The middle player in each front row is the hooker.

The players on either side of the hooker are the props. The left side props are the loose head props. The right side props are the tight head props.

The two players in the second row who push on the props and the hooker are the locks.

20.1 Forming a scrum:

(a) **Where the scrum takes place.** The place for a scrum is where the infringement or stoppage happened, or as near to it as is practicable in the field of play, unless otherwise stated in Law.

(b) If this is less than 3 metres from a touchline, the place for the scrum is 3 metres from that touchline. A scrum can take place only in the field of play. The middle line of a scrum must not be within 5 metres of the goal line when it is formed.

(c) If there is an infringement or stoppage in in-goal, the place for the scrum is 5 metres from the goal-line. The scrum is formed in line with the infringement or stoppage.

(d) **No delay.** A team must not intentionally delay forming a scrum.

- Sanction: Free Kick.



(e) **Number of players: five.** A scrum must have five players from each team. All five players must stay bound to the scrum until it ends. Each front row must have three players in it, no more and no less. Two locks must form the second row.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

Exception: When a team is reduced to fewer than fifteen for any reason, then the number of players of each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced. Where a permitted reduction is made by one team, there is no requirement for the other team to make a similar reduction. However, a team must not have fewer than five players in the scrum.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(f) **Front rows coming together.** First, the referee marks with a foot the place where the scrum is to be formed. Before the two front rows come together they must be standing not more than an arm's length apart. The ball is in the scrum half's hands, ready to be thrown in. The front rows must crouch so that when they meet, each player's head and shoulders are no lower than the hips. The front rows must interlock so that no player's head is next to the head of a team-mate.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(g) The referee will call "crouch" then "touch". The front rows crouch and using their outside arm, each prop touches the point of the opposing prop's outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms. The referee will then call "set" when the front rows are ready. The front rows may then engage. The "set" call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together.

(h) A crouched position is the extension of the normal stance by bending the knees sufficiently to move into the engagement without a charge.

(i) **Charging.** A front row must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them. This is dangerous play.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(j) **Stationary and parallel.** Until the ball leaves the scrum half's hands, the scrum must be stationary and the middle line must be parallel to the goal lines. A team must not shove the scrum away from the mark before the ball is thrown in.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

20.2 Front-row players' position:

(a) **All players in a position to shove.** When a scrum has formed, the body and feet of each front row player must be in a normal position to make a forward shove.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) This means that the front row players must have both feet on the ground, with their weight firmly on at least one foot. Players must not cross their feet, although the foot of one player may cross a team-mate's foot. Each player's shoulders must be no lower than the hips.

- Sanction: Free Kick.



(c) **Hooker in a position to hook.** Until the ball is thrown in, the hooker must be in a position to hook the ball. The hookers must have both feet on the ground, with their weight firmly on at least one foot. A hooker's foremost foot must not be in front of the foremost foot of that team's props.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

20.3 Binding in the scrum:

Definitions

When a player binds on a team-mate that player must use the whole arm from hand to shoulder to grasp the team-mate's body at or below the level of the armpit. Placing only a hand on another player is not satisfactory binding.

(a) **Binding by all front row players.** All front row players must bind firmly and continuously from the start to the finish of the scrum.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Binding by hookers.** The hooker may bind either over or under the arms of the props. The props must not support the hooker so that the hooker has no weight on either foot.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) **Binding by loose head props.** A loose head prop must bind on the opposing tight head prop by placing the left arm inside the right arm of the tight head and gripping the tight head prop's jersey on the back or side. The loose head prop must not grip the chest, arm, sleeve or collar of the opposition tight head prop. The loose head prop must not exert any downward pressure.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) **Binding by tight head props.** A tight head prop must bind on the opposing loose head prop by placing the right arm outside the left upper arm of the opposing loose head prop. The tight head prop must grip the loose head prop's jersey with the right hand only on the back or side. The tight head prop must not grip the chest, arm, sleeve or collar of the opposition loose head prop. The tight head prop must not exert any downward pressure.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) Both the loose head and tight head props may alter their bind providing they do so in accordance with this Law.

(f) **Binding by all other players.** Not applicable.

(g) **Flanker obstructing opposing scrum half.** Not applicable.

(h) **Scrum collapse.** If a scrum collapses, the referee must blow the whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.

(i) **Player forced upwards.** If a player in a scrum is lifted in the air, or is forced upwards out of the scrum, the referee must blow the whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.

20.4 The team throwing the into the scrum:



- (a) After an infringement, the team that did not cause the infringement throws in the ball.
- (b) Scrum after ruck. Refer to Law 16.7.
- (c) Scrum after maul. Refer to Law 17.6.
- (d) **Scrum after any other stoppage.** After any other stoppage or irregularity not covered by Law, the team that was moving forward before the stoppage throws in the ball. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team throws in the ball.
- (e) When a scrum remains stationary and the ball does not emerge immediately a further scrum is ordered at the place of the stoppage. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage.
- (f) When a scrum becomes stationary and does not start moving immediately, the ball must emerge immediately. If it does not a further scrum will be ordered. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage.
- (g) If a scrum collapses or lifts up into the air without sanction a further scrum will be ordered and the team who originally threw in the ball will throw the ball in again. If a scrum has to be reformed for any other reason not covered in this Law the team who originally threw in the ball will throw the ball in again.

20.5 Throwing the ball into the scrum:

No Delay. As soon as the front rows have come together, the scrum half must throw in the ball without delay. The scrum half must throw in the ball when told to do so by the referee. The scrum half must throw in the ball from the side of the scrum first chosen.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

20.6 How the scrum half throws in the ball:

(a) The scrum half must stand one metre from the mark on the middle line so that player's head does not touch the scrum or go beyond the nearest front row player.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) The scrum half must hold the ball with both hands, with its major axis parallel to the ground and to the touchline over the middle line between the front rows, mid-way between knee and ankle.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) The scrum half must throw in the ball at a quick speed. The ball must be released from the scrum half's hands from outside the tunnel.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

20.7 When the scrum begins:

(a) Play in the scrum begins when the ball leaves the hands of the scrum half

(b) If the scrum half throws in the ball and it comes out at either end of the tunnel, the ball



must be thrown in again unless a free kick or penalty has been awarded.

(c) If the ball is not played by a front row player, and it goes straight through the tunnel and comes out behind the foot of a far prop without being touched, the scrum half must throw it in again.

20.8 Front-row players:

(a) **Striking before the throw-in ('foot up')**. All front row players must place their feet to leave a clear tunnel. Until the ball has left the scrum half's hands, they must not raise or advance a foot. They must not do anything to stop the ball being thrown in to the scrum correctly or touching the ground at the correct place.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **Striking after the throw-in**. Once the ball touches the ground in the tunnel, any front row player may use either foot to try to win possession of the ball.

(c) **Kicking-out**. A front row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel in the direction from which it was thrown in.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) If the ball is kicked out unintentionally, the same team must throw it in again.

(e) If the ball is repeatedly kicked out, the referee must treat this as intentional and penalize the offender.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(f) **Swinging**. A front row player must not strike for the ball with both feet. No player may intentionally raise both feet from the ground, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(g) **Twisting, dipping or collapsing**. Front row players must not twist or lower their bodies, or pull opponents, or do anything that is likely to collapse the scrum, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(h) Referees must penalize strictly any intentional collapsing of the scrum. This is dangerous play.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

(i) **Lifting or forcing an opponent up**. A front row player must not lift an opponent in the air, or force an opponent upwards out of the scrum, either when the ball is being thrown in or afterwards. This is dangerous play.

- Sanction: Free Kick.

20.9 Scrum – General restrictions:



(a) **All players: Collapsing.** A player must not intentionally collapse a scrum. A player must not intentionally fall or kneel in a scrum. This is dangerous play.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(b) **All players: Handling in the scrum.** Players must not handle the ball in the scrum or pick it up with their legs.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(c) **All players: Other restrictions on winning the ball.** Players must not try to win the ball in the scrum by using any part of their body except their foot or lower leg.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(d) **All players: When the ball comes out, leave it out.** When the ball has left the scrum, a player must not bring it back in to the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(e) **All players: No falling on the ball.** A player must not fall on or over the ball as it is coming out of the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(f) **Locks and flankers: Staying out of the tunnel.** A player who is not a front row player must not play the ball in the tunnel.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(g) **Scrum half: Kicking in the scrum.** A scrum half must not kick the ball while it is in the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(h) **Scrum half: Dummying.** A scrum half must not take any action to make the opponents think that the ball is out of the scrum while it is still in the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(i) **Scrum half: Holding opposing flanker.** A scrum half must not grasp an opposing flanker.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(j) **No push.** A team in a scrum must not push the scrum towards their opponents' goal line.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

(k) **Ball must be released from scrum.** A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the players' team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

20.10 Ending the scrum:



- (a) **The ball comes out.** When the ball comes out of the scrum in any direction except the tunnel, the scrum ends.
- (b) **Scrum in the in-goal.** A scrum cannot take place in the in-goal. When the ball in a scrum is on or over the goal line, the scrum ends and an attacker or a defender may legally ground the ball for a try or a touch down.
- (c) **Hindmost player unbinds.** The hindmost player in a scrum is the player whose feet are nearest the team's own goal line. If the hindmost player unbinds from the scrum with the ball at that player's feet and picks up the ball, the scrum ends.

20.11 Scrum Wheeled:

- (a) **No wheeling.** A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped. The same team throws in the ball.

- (b) This new scrum is formed at the place where the previous scrum ended. The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession at the time of the stoppage. If neither team win possession, it is thrown in by the team that previously threw it in.

20.12 Offside at the scrum:

- (a) When the scrum is set, the scrum half not throwing the ball into the scrum must take up a position either at the same side of the scrum as the scrum half throwing in the ball or behind the offside line defined for other players.

(b) **Offside for scrum-halves.** When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of that team is offside if both feet are in front of the midline of the scrum. If the scrum half has only one foot in front of the midline of the scrum, the scrum half is not offside.

– Sanction: Free Kick

- (c) When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of the opposing team is offside if that scrum half steps in front of the ball with either foot while the ball is still in the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

- (d) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move to the opposite side of the scrum and overstep the offside line. For that scrum half that runs through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick

- (e) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move away from the scrum and then remain in front of the offside line. For that scrum half that runs through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.

– Sanction: Free Kick.

- (f) Any player may be scrum half, but a team can have only one scrum half at each scrum.



- Sanction: Free Kick on the offside line.

(g) **Offside for players not in the scrum.** Players who are not in the scrum and who are not the team's scrum half, are offside if they remain in front of their offside line or overstep the offside line which is a line parallel to the goal lines and 5 metres behind the hindmost player of each team in a scrum.

- Sanction: Free Kick on the offside line.

(h) If the hindmost foot of a team is on or behind that team's goal line, the offside line for scrum halves and non-participants is the goal line.

(i) **Loitering.** When a scrum is forming, players not taking part in it must retire to their offside line without delay. If they do not, they are loitering. Loiterers must be penalized.

- Sanction: Free Kick on the offside line.

20.13 Under 19 Variations in adult matches:

A Union may implement the Under 19 Scrum Law Variations at defined levels of the game within its jurisdiction.

Law 21. Free Kicks:

Definitions:

Free kicks are awarded to the non-offending team for infringements by their opponents.

21.1 Where free kicks are awarded:

Unless the Law states otherwise, the mark for a free kick is at the place of infringement.

21.2 Where free kicks are taken:

(a) The kicker must take the free kick at the mark or anywhere behind it on a line through the mark. If the place for a free kick is within 5 metres of the opponents' goal line, the mark for the kick is 5 metres from the goal line, opposite the place of infringement.

(b) When a free kick is awarded in in-goal, the mark for the kick is in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line, in line with the place of infringement.

- Sanction: Any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum 5 metres from the goal line in line with the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.

21.3 How the free kicks are taken:

(a) Any player may take a free kick awarded for an infringement with a tap kick. The ball may be tapped with any part of the lower leg from knee to the foot, excluding the knee and the heel.

(b) Bouncing the ball on the knee is not taking a kick.

- Sanction: Any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.



(c) The kicker must use the ball that was in play unless the referee decides it was defective.

- **Sanction: Any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.**

21.4 Free kick options and requirements:

(a) **Scrum alternative.** A team awarded a free kick may choose a scrum instead. They throw in the ball.

(b) **No delay.** The kick must be taken without undue delay.

(c) **A clear kick.** Not applicable.

(d) **Place kicking for touch.** Not applicable.

(e) **Kicker's freedom of action.** Not applicable.

(f) **Kick taken in the in-goal.** Not applicable.

(g) **Out of play in the in-goal.** Not applicable.

(h) **Behind the ball.** All the kicker's team at a free kick must be behind the ball until it has been tapped.

(i) **Kick taken quickly.** Not applicable.

(j) Not applicable.

(k) Not applicable.

21.5 Scoring a goal from a penalty kick:

Not applicable.

21.6 Scoring from a free kick:

Not applicable.

21.7 What the opposing team must do at a penalty kick:

Not applicable.

21.8 What options the opposing team has at a free kick:

(a) **Must run from the mark.** The opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least 5 metres away from the mark for the free kick, or until they have reached their goal line if that is nearer the mark. If the free kick is in a defending team's in-goal area, the opposing team must immediately run towards their own goal line until they are at least 5 metres away from the mark and not nearer than 5 metres from the goal line.

(b) **Must keep running.** Even if the free kick is taken and the kicker's team is playing the ball, opposing players must keep running until they have retired the necessary distance. They must not take part in the game until they have done so.



(c) **Kick taken quickly.** If the free kick is taken so quickly that opponents have no opportunity to retire, they will not be penalized for this. However, they must continue to retire as described in 21.8(b) above or until a team-mate who was 5 metres from the mark has run in front of them, before they take part in the game.

(d) **Interference.** The opposing team must not do anything to delay the free kick or obstruct the kicker. They must not intentionally take, throw or kick the ball out of reach of the kicker or the kicker's team mates.

(e) **Charging the free kick.** Once they have retired the necessary distance, players of the opposing team may charge and try to prevent the kick being taken. They may charge the free kick as soon as the kicker starts to approach to kick.

(f) **Preventing the free kick.** If the opposing team charge and prevent the free kick being taken, the kick is disallowed. Play restarts with a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throws in the ball.

(g) **Free kick taken in the in-goal.** If a free kick has been awarded and the player retires into in-goal to take it and the opponents charge and prevent the kick from being taken, a 5-metre scrum is ordered. The attacking team throws in the ball. If a free kick is taken in the in-goal, an opponent who legitimately plays it there can score a try.

(h) **Charged down.** Not applicable.

21.9 Contrived infringements at the penalty kick:

Not applicable.

21.10 Contrived infringements at the free kick:

(a) The kicker must not pretend to kick. As soon as the kicker makes a move to kick, the opponents may charge.

(b) If the referee believes that the kicker's team has contrived an infringement by their opponents, the referee does not award a further free kick but allows play to continue.

Law 22. In-goal:

Definitions:

In-goal is part of the ground as defined in Law 1 where the ball may be grounded by players from either team.

When attacking players are first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the attacking players score a try.

When defending players are first to ground the ball in in-goal, the defending players make a touch down.

A defending player who has one foot on the goal line or in the in-goal who receives the ball is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

22.1 Grounding the ball:



There are two ways a player can ground the ball:

(a) **Player touches the ground with the ball.** A player grounds the ball by holding the ball and touching the ground with it, in in-goal. 'Holding' means holding in the hand or hands, or in the arm or arms. No downward pressure is required.

(b) **Player presses down on the ball.** A player grounds the ball when it is on the ground in the in-goal and the player presses down on it with a hand or hands, arm or arms, or the front of the player's body from waist to neck inclusive.

22.2 Picking up the ball:

Picking up the ball from the ground is not grounding it. A player may pick up the ball in the in-goal and ground it elsewhere in the in-goal.

22.3 Ball grounded by an attacking player:

(a) **Try.** When an attacking player who is onside is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, the player scores a try. This applies whether an attacking or a defending player is responsible for the ball being in the in-goal.

(b) When an attacking player who has possession of the ball grounds the ball in in-goal and simultaneously contacts the touch-in-goal line or the dead-ball-line (or anywhere beyond), a 10M tap is awarded to the defending team.

22.4 Other ways to score a try:

(a) **Grounded on the goal line.** The goal line is part of the in-goal. If an attacking player is first to ground the ball on the opponents' goal line, a try is scored.

(b) **Grounded against a goal post.** Not applicable at this age group.

(c) **Pushover try.** A ruck cannot take place in the in-goal. If a ruck is pushed into the in-goal, an attacking player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches or crosses the goal line and a try is scored.

(d) **Momentum try.** If an attacking player with the ball is tackled short of the goal line but the player's momentum carries the player in a continuous movement along the ground into the opponents' in-goal, and the player is first to ground the ball, a try is scored.

(e) **Tackled near the goal line.** If a player is tackled near to the opponents' goal line so that this player can immediately reach out and ground the ball on or over the goal line, a try is scored.

(f) In this situation, defending players who are on their feet may legally prevent the try by pulling the ball from the tackled player's hands or arms, but must not kick the ball.

(g) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If an attacking player is in touch or in touch-in-goal, the player can score a try by grounding the ball in the opponents' in-goal provided the player is not carrying the ball.

(h) **Penalty try.** A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team.



- (i) A penalty try is awarded at the centre of the goal line.

22.5 Ball grounded by a defending player:

(a) **Touch down.** When defending players are first to ground the ball in their in-goal, it results in a touch down.

(b) **Player in touch or touch-in-goal.** If defending players are in touch-in-goal, they can make a touch down by grounding the ball in their in-goal provided they are not carrying the ball.

(c) **Grounded against a goal post.** Not applicable.

22.6 Scrum, ruck or maul pushed into in-goal:

A ruck, can take place only in the field of play. As soon as a ruck is pushed across the goal line, a player may legally ground the ball. This results in a touch down or try.

22.7 Restarting after a touch down:

(a) When an attacking player sends or carries the ball into the opponents' in-goal and it becomes dead there, either because a defender grounded it or because it went into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, a 10M Tap Kick is awarded.

(b) If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponents' in-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock-on or throw forward happened.

(c) If, at a kick-off, the ball is kicked into the opponents' in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player and a defending player grounds it there or makes it dead without delay, the defending team have two choices:

- To have a scrum formed at the centre of the line from which the kick was taken and they throw in the ball; or
- To have the other team kick off or drop out again.

(d) If a defending player threw or took the ball into the in-goal, and a defending player grounded it, and there has been no infringement, play is restarted by a 5-metre scrum. The position of the scrum is in line with where the ball has been touched down. The attacking side throws in the ball.

(e) When a player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal so that the player cannot ground the ball, the ball is dead. A 5-metre scrum is formed. The attacking team throws in the ball.

22.8 Ball kicked dead through in-goal:

Not applicable.

22.9 Defending player in in-goal:

(a) A defending player who has part of one foot in in-goal is considered to have both feet in in-goal.

(b) If a player with one or both feet on or behind the goal line, picks up the ball, which was



stationary within the field of play that player has picked up the ball in the field of play and thereby that player has taken the ball into in-goal.

(c) If a player with one or both feet on or behind the goal line picks up the ball, which was in motion within the field of play, that player has picked up the ball within in-goal.

(d) If a player with one or both feet on or behind the dead ball line, picks up the ball, which was stationary within in-goal that player deemed has picked up the ball in in-goal and thereby that player has made the ball dead.

(e) If a player with one or both feet on or behind the dead ball line picks up the ball, which was in motion within in-goal, that player has picked up the ball outside the playing area.

22.10 Ball held-up:

When a player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal so that the player cannot ground the ball, the ball is dead. A 5-metre scrum is formed. The attacking team throws in the ball.

22.11 Ball dead in in-goal:

(a) When the ball touches the touch-in-goal line or the dead ball line, or touches anything or anyone beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was played into in-goal by the attacking team, a 10-metre tap shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was played into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre **scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.**

(b) When a player carrying the ball touches the touch-in-goal line, the dead ball line, or touches the ground beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the attacking team, a 10-metre tap shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre **scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.**

(c) When a player scores a try or makes a touch down, the ball becomes dead.

22.12 Ball or player touching a flag or flag (corner) post:

If the ball or a player carrying the ball touches a flag or a flag (corner) post at the intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the goal lines or at the intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the dead ball lines without otherwise being in touch or touch-in-goal the ball is not out of play unless it is first grounded against a flag post.

22.13 Attacking infringement with scrum sanction:

If an attacking player commits an infringement in in-goal, for which the sanction is a scrum, for example, a knock-on, play is restarted with a 5-metre **scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the defending team throws in the ball.**

22.14 Defending infringement with scrum sanction:

If a defending player infringes in in-goal, for which the sanction is a scrum, for example, a knock-on, play is restarted with a 5-metre scrum. The scrum is formed in line with the place of the infringement and the attacking team throws in the ball.

22.15 Doubt about grounding:



If there is doubt about which team first grounded the ball in the in-goal, play is re-started by a 5-metre scrum, in line with the place where the ball was grounded. The attacking team throws in the ball.

22.16 Infringements in in-goal:

All infringements in the in-goal are treated as if they had taken place in the field of play.

A knock-on or a throw forward in the in-goal results in a 5-metre scrum, opposite the place of infringement.

- Sanction: For an infringement, the mark for a free kick cannot be in the in-goal. When a free kick is awarded for an infringement in the In-goal, the mark for the kick is in the field of play, 5 metres from the goal line, opposite the place of infringement.

22.17 Misconduct or unfair play in in-goal:

(a) **Obstruction by the attacking team.** A try is disallowed and a free kick awarded if a try would probably not have been scored but for foul play by the attacking team.

(b) **Foul play by the defending team.** The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team. The referee awards a penalty try if a try would probably have been scored in a better position but for foul play by the defending team. A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts. The defending team may charge the conversion kick after a penalty try. A player who prevents a try being scored through foul play must either be cautioned and temporarily suspended or sent off.

(c) **Any other foul play.** When a player commits any other foul play in the in-goal while the ball is out of play, the penalty kick is awarded at the place where the game would otherwise have re-started.

- Sanction: Free Kick.