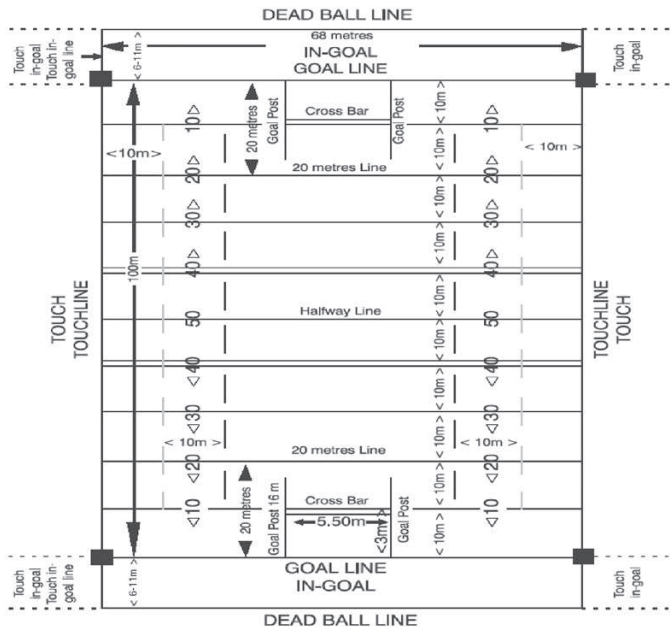


**NEW ZEALAND  
RUGBY LEAGUE®**

**THE NEW ZEALAND  
RUGBY LEAGUE  
LAWS OF THE GAME**

# THE PLAYING FIELD



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# THE NEW ZEALAND RUGBY LEAGUE - LAWS OF THE GAME

## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

- Object:** 1. The object of the game shall be to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal to score tries and to kick the ball over the opponents' cross bar to score goals (see Section 8).
- Start of Play:** 2. The captains of the two teams shall toss a coin in the presence of the referee. The captain winning the toss shall decide to either kick off or choose which end of the field his/her team will defend. The losing captain shall take the other of the alternatives.
- Mode of Play:** 3. Once play has commenced any player who is onside or not out of play can run with the ball, kick it in any direction and throw or knock it in any direction other than towards his/her opponents' dead ball line (see Section 5).
- Tackling:** 4. A player, who during play is holding the ball may be tackled by an opposing player or players in order to prevent him/her from running with the ball or from kicking or passing it to one of his/her own team (See Section 3).
- Obstruction:** 5. A player who is not holding the ball shall not be tackled or obstructed.

## SECTION 2 – STARTS OF PLAY

### 2.1 The Kick Off

2.1.1 Play is started from the centre of the halfway line with a place kick (See Section 1 Start of Play). Play is recommenced in the second half by the team who did not start play kicking off. When points have been scored, the team against which the points have been scored shall kick off to restart the game.

2.1.2 If a person other than a player is invited to kick off, after the ball has been kicked, the play is restarted from the centre of the halfway with another kick in the normal manner.

### 2.2 Restarts of Play

#### Halfway Line

2.2.1 After points have been scored, the non-scoring team will restart play with a place kick from the centre of the halfway.

#### 20 Metre Line (Optional Kick)

The game is restarted with an optional kick at the centre of the 20 metre line in the following circumstances:

2.2.2 An attacking player last touches the ball before it crosses the dead ball line or touch-in-goal line except when it is from a penalty kick or kick off from the halfway line.

2.2.3 The ball crosses the dead ball line or touch-in-goal line after accidentally striking a defending player.

2.2.4 When an attacking player accidentally infringes in-goal (e.g. knock on).

2.2.5 When a player is in his/her own in-goal catches an opposition kick from general play on the full.

#### 20 Metre Line (Drop Kick)

The game is restarted with a drop kick at the centre of the 20 metre line in the following circumstances:

2.2.6 When the ball crosses the dead ball or touch-in-goal line from a penalty kick, which may not necessarily be a kick at goal.

#### Goal Line

The game is restarted with a drop kick at the centre of the goal line in the following circumstances:

2.2.7 The ball crosses the dead ball line or touch-in-goal line, other than on the full, from a kick off from the centre of the halfway line.

- 2.2.8 The ball goes over the dead ball line or touch-in-goal line off a defending player, after he/she deliberately plays at the ball.
- 2.2.9 A player commits an accidental breach in his/her own in-goal area.
- 2.2.10 A player forces the ball in his/her own in-goal area.
- 2.2.11 A player kicks the ball into touch on the full from his/her own in-goal area other than from a restart of play.
- 2.2.12 The ball or a defending player carrying the ball touches the referee, a touch judge, or a spectator in the in-goal area and irregularly affects play.
- 2.2.13 A defending player in possession is tackled in the in-goal area.

### **2.3 Requirements at Starts and Restarts**

- 2.3.1 Kick offs from the halfway line and drop outs from the goal line and 20 metre line are required to travel at least 10 metres forward and must land in the playing field to be in play. Should the ball hit/ricochet off the goal posts from the kick and travel in to touch, touch in goal or over the dead ball line the infringement is not neutralised. (See Section 2.4.5).
- 2.3.2 Opposing players are to retire at least 10 metres from where the kick is being taken, however if they have not had adequate opportunity to retire the 10 metres they may be penalised if they willfully interfere with play, however if the interference is accidental a scrum shall be formed.
- 2.3.3 At a 20 metre optional kick restart, the ball does not have to be released, but must come into contact with the foot and the ball may be kicked in any manner or direction.
- 2.3.4 If the ball enters touch other than on the full after travelling the prescribed distance from a kick off, restart of play after points have been scored, 20 metre drop kick, 20 metre optional kick restart or goal line drop-out, the kicking side has the loose head and feed to the scrum. If after a restart of play the ball bounces dead in-goal, then a goal line drop-out restarts play.

### **2.4 Penalties at Starts and Restarts of Play**

- 2.4.1 A penalty kick from any offence at the kick off will be taken from the centre of the halfway line.
- 2.4.2 Any penalty kick from the restarting of play from the 20 metre line will be taken from the centre of the 20 metre line.
- 2.4.3 A penalty kick from the drop-out from the goal line shall be taken 10 metres out from the centre of the goal line.

**A player who kicks off, takes a 20 metre drop-out, or goal line drop-out will be penalised if he/she:**

- 2.4.4 Moves in front of the appropriate line before kicking the ball.
- 2.4.5 Kicks the ball on the full over the touch line, touch-in-goal, or over the dead ball line.
- 2.4.6 Fails to kick the ball 10 metres forward in the field of play.
- 2.4.7 Kicks the ball in a way which is contrary to that required, i.e. not a place kick at the kick off or not a drop-kick from a drop-out.

**Any player shall be penalised if he/she:**

- 2.4.8 Moves in front of the appropriate line before the ball has been kicked.
- 2.4.9 Is within 10 metres of the line and willfully interferes with play when the opposition is kicking off or dropping out. Accidental interference shall result in a scrum set within the provisions of Section 6.
- 2.4.10 Intentionally touches the ball before it has travelled 10 metres forward from a kick off or drop-out.

## SECTION 3 – THE TACKLE

### 3.1 The Tackle

- 3.1.1 A player in possession may be tackled by any number of opposing players.
- 3.1.2 It is illegal to tackle or obstruct a player who is not in possession.
- 3.1.3 (a) A player in possession is tackled when he/she is held by one or more opposing players and the ball or the hand or arm holding the ball, comes into contact with the ground.
- (b) When he/she is held by one or more opposing players in such a manner that he/she can make no further progress and cannot part with the ball. (eg: Upright tackle)
- (c) When being held by an opponent and the tackled player makes it evident he/she has succumbed to the tackle and wishes to be released in order to play the ball.
- (d) When he/she is lying on the ground and an opponent places a hand on him/her.
- 3.1.4 (a) A tackle is not affected if the hold on the player in possession is broken before he/she is grounded.
- (b) The referee should be sure in his/her own mind that the tackle was indeed broken and the tackler had not released the player having thought the tackle was completed.
- 3.1.5 A tackler must not use any special holds or throws which are likely to cause injury.
- 3.1.6 Bringing a player to ground by pulling him/her over the outstretched leg is permissible provided both arms make contact with the opponent before the leg.
- 3.1.7 A tackler must not use his/her knees in making a tackle.
- 3.1.8 If two players are running side by side near to and towards the ball, it is permissible for one to charge the other with the shoulder.
- 3.1.9 Where opponents, whilst making a tackle, attempt to push, pull or carry the player in possession, the tackled player's colleagues may lend their weight in order to avoid losing ground. If this happens, the referee should call 'held' immediately.
- 3.1.10 Once a player in possession has been tackled, it is illegal for any player to move or try to move him/her from the point where the tackle is affected.



3.1.11 If an attacking player in possession is brought down near the goal line and the ball, or hand or arm holding it, is not grounded it is permissible to place the ball over the line for a try. In this case, the tackle has not been completed. (See diagram No:2 - Page 8)

3.1.12 When a player is tackled within easy reach of the goal line, he/she should be penalised if he/she makes a second movement to place the ball over the line for a try. (See diagram No:1 - Page 8)

3.1.13 A player in possession shall not deliberately or unnecessarily allow himself/herself to voluntarily fall to the ground when not held by the opponent.

3.1.14 If a player drops on a loose ball, he/she shall not remain on the ground waiting to be tackled if he/she has time to regain his/her feet and continue play.

3.1.15 If a tackled player slides along the ground because of his/her momentum, the tackle is effected where his/her slide ends.

3.1.16 If any doubt arises as to a tackle, the referee should give a verbal instruction to "play on" or call "held" as the case may be.

3.1.17 If there is no acting half-back, it is permissible for a player to dive behind the tackled player to drop on the ball after the ball has been played it. He/she should then immediately try to regain his/her feet and play on.

3.1.18 A tackled player shall not intentionally lose the ball.

3.1.19 If after being tackled a player accidentally loses possession, a scrum shall be formed, except after the fifth play the ball.

3.1.20 A player in possession brought to his/her knees or brought to the ground on his/her back may still pass the ball provided he/she has not made it evident he/she has succumbed to the tackle and ball carrying arm is not on the ground.

3.1.21 A player who is held and wishes to play the ball can make it evident that he/she has succumbed to the tackle by grounding the ball. This can be to his/her advantage to avoid the possibility of another opponent attempting to complete the tackle.

3.1.22 The tackler who is on the opponents side of the player in possession should remove him/herself as quickly as possible so as not to interfere with the heel. The tackler should be penalised in this instance if he/she interferes.

### Diagram No:1

Second movement after tackle



When an attacking player is tackled within easy reach of the goal line he/she should be penalised if he/she makes a second movement to place the ball over the line for a try.

### Diagram No: 2

If an attacking player in possession is brought down near the goal line and the ball is not grounded it is permissible to place the ball over the line for a try. In this case the tackle has not been completed.



## 3.2 Sixth Tackle

3.2.1 A team in possession of the ball shall be allowed five successive play the balls. A handover shall occur after the fifth play the ball in the following circumstances.

- The team is tackled in possession a sixth time except if tackled in his/her own in goal.
- The team in possession commits an accidental breach for which a scrum would normally be set.
- A player is held up in his/her opponents in goal.
- The ball is kicked directly into touch on the full.

3.2.2 The play the ball following the hand over will not be counted in the tackle count.

3.2.3 If the ball is kicked out on the full after the fifth tackle, the hand over takes place at the point from where the ball was kicked.

3.2.4 If, following a kick, the ball bounces into touch after the fifth tackle, a scrum will be formed. The scrum shall be formed 20 metres in from where the ball crosses the touch line and no closer than 10 metres to the goal line.

3.2.5 The referee will indicate the fifth tackle by raising one arm vertically with fingers and thumb outstretched.

3.2.6 He/she will indicate the sixth tackle by blowing his/her whistle and signalling the player to release the ball for his/her opponents to play the ball.

3.2.7 If, after the fifth play the ball, the player in possession is tackled into touch or the ball is passed other than forward into touch, the hand over will be given 10 metres in the field of play opposite the entry into touch and not closer than 10 meters to the goal line.

### 3.3 Zero Tackle

3.3.1 Following an infringement, e.g. knock on or forward pass, and if an opponent gathers the ball, he/she may run, pass or kick the ball and if he/she or a member of his/her team is tackled, the play the ball following that tackle shall not count as part of the tackle count.

### 3.4 Stealing the Ball

3.4.1 Once a tackle has been completed, no player shall take or attempt to take the ball from the tackled player.

3.4.2 If a player or players make no effort to complete a tackle of the player in possession but simply hold him/her so that a colleague can steal the ball, they should be penalised.

3.4.3 In tackles involving only one tackler, it is permissible to steal the ball prior to the tackle being effected and play should be allowed to continue.

3.4.4 In tackles involving 2 or more tacklers, the ball cannot be intentionally stolen, irrespective of whether all but one tackler “drops off” the tackle and the ball is subsequently taken from the tackled player. A penalty will be awarded against the player/s effecting the tackle unless the tackled player is attempting to ground the ball for a try.

### 3.5 Dangerous Tackles

3.5.1 **“Mid Air tackles”**. Any player from the non-kicking team who leaps into the air to retrieve a kick must not be tackled until he/she has returned to the ground. It is considered misconduct for players to dive at the legs of a kicker after the ball has been kicked.

3.5.2 **“Grass Cutters”**. Any defender who runs at a ball carrier and without attempting to tackle, grab or hold the ball carrier and notwithstanding use of the arms throws him/herself to make direct contact with the lower leg and ankle region of the ball carrier is guilty of a dangerous tackle.

3.5.3 **“Shoulder Charge”**. The use of a shoulder charge in effecting a tackle is not permitted and offenders will be penalised.

## SECTION 4 – THE PLAY THE BALL

### 4.1 Playing the Ball

4.1.1 The tackled player shall be immediately released and shall not be touched until the ball has been played.

4.1.2 If any doubt arises as to which player should play the ball (disputed possession), the referee should nominate the team in possession.

4.1.3 If a player is holding the ball with a hand or arm to some part of his/her person, then he/she is "in possession".

4.1.4 The tackled player shall, without delay, regain his/her feet where he/she was tackled.

4.1.5 No part of the tackled player's person other than his/her feet should be in contact with the ground when he/she releases the ball.

4.1.6 One opponent may take up a position immediately opposite the tackled player known as "the marker".

4.1.7 The tackled player shall lift the ball clear off the ground, face his/her opponent's goal line and drop or place the ball in front of his/her foremost foot.

4.1.8 The ball must be played backwards with the foot and it is clear of the play the ball when it passes behind the heel of the tackled player.

4.1.9 The marker is not allowed to strike for the ball. Also, if the marker at the play the ball dives behind the tackled player to drop on the ball as it is heeled, he/she is guilty of a voluntary tackle and should be penalised.

4.1.10 A player from each team, to be known as the acting half-back, may stand immediately and directly behind his/her own player taking part in the play the ball.



- 4.1.11 The acting half-back must remain in this position until the ball has been heeled backwards by the tackled player.
- 4.1.12 Players of the side not in possession other than the marker and the acting half-back are off side if they fail to retire 10 metres from the point at which the ball is played or to their own goal line. They should only be penalised if they intentionally interfere with the play, actively or passively.
- 4.1.13 Players of the side in possession other than the player playing the ball and the acting half-back are out of play if they fail to retire behind the point at which the ball is played or to their own goal line.
- 4.1.14 If the interference with play is accidental, a scrum should be formed in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.
- 4.1.15 Having retired the 10m distance required, a defensive player may not advance until the ball has cleared the heel of the tackled player. (Refer Section 4.1.8)
- 4.1.16 A player who is out of play may take part in the game when the next phase of play commences.
- 4.1.17 The play the ball must be performed as quickly as possible.
- 4.1.18 Any player who intentionally delays the bringing of the ball into play shall be penalised.
- 4.1.19 If part of the tackled player is on or over the goal line, but the ball is in the field of play, the tackled player shall play the ball where the ball lies.
- 4.1.20 If a player is tackled in an upright position bestriding the goal line, he/she is deemed to be tackled in the in-goal area.
- 4.1.21 If a marker does not take up the position opposite the tackled player and there is no acting half back (dummy half) present, then the ball is deemed clear immediately it is heeled by the tackled player, who may immediately regain possession and play on.

## **SECTION 5**

### **- THE KNOCK ON AND FORWARD PASS**

#### **5.1 Knock On**

- 5.1.1 Play shall stop after a knock on and a scrum formed, except after the fifth play the ball.
- 5.1.2 The referee should allow play to proceed long enough after a knock on to allow the opposing team the advantage of gaining possession.
- 5.1.3 An opponent may charge down a kick by blocking the path of the ball with the hands, arm or body. This is not a knock on, but nullifies the tackle count.
- 5.1.4 A player shall be penalised if he/she deliberately knocks-on.
- 5.1.5 If after an accidental knock on, the player knocking-on re-gathers or kicks the ball before it hits the ground, goal post, or an opponent, play shall be allowed to proceed.
- 5.1.6 If a player knocks-on in the field of play and the ball goes into the in-goal area before being touched down by that player or a team mate, play is restarted with a scrum except after the fifth play the ball.

#### **5.2 Forward Pass**

- 5.2.1 A player shall be penalised if he/she deliberately passes the ball forward.
- 5.2.2 If the ball is passed correctly and then bounces forward or is blown forward by the wind, there is no infringement and play should continue.
- 5.2.3 The direction of a pass is relative to the player making it and not to the actual path relative to the ground.
- 5.2.4 A player running towards his/her opponent's goal line may pass the ball to a colleague who is behind him/her, but because of his/her own momentum the ball travels forward relative to the ground. This is not a forward pass as the player has not passed the ball forward in relation to himself/herself. A good example is a high lobbed pass made by a running player.
- 5.2.5 If the referee forms the opinion a forward pass was not deliberate he/she will restart play with a scrum.
- 5.2.6 It is illegal to head the ball in a forward direction.

## SECTION 6 – THE SCRUM

### 6.1 Formation of Scrum

6.1.1 A scrum is formed to restart play when play is not being restarted with a kick off, 20 metre restart, goal line drop kick, 20 metre drop kick, penalty kick, or play the ball.

6.1.2 A maximum of six forwards will be used to form a scrum in a 3-2-1 formation if however, the team is depleted by injury or suspension, the back three forwards may be withdrawn to give a 3-2-0, 3-1-0 or 3-0-0

6.1.3 A minimum of three forwards can form a scrum if a team is depleted.

6.1.4 It is an infringement resulting in a penalty if there are more than seven backs when a scrum is formed.

6.1.5 The front row is made up of three forwards who interlock arms and bend forward from the hip. The forward in the centre (hooker) must bind with his/her arms over the shoulders of the prop and front row forward. Hookers must ensure that they do not pack the scrum with a loose arm. Referees will penalise hookers guilty of this offence.

6.1.6 Two second row forwards bend from the hip, interlock arms and place their heads in the gaps between the front row forwards.

6.1.7 The lock forward bends from the hip and places his/her head in the gap between the second row forwards.

6.1.8 All forwards with their bodies bent brace themselves and interlock against the opposing team's forward pack. This forms a tunnel between the front row forwards.

6.1.9 Scrums shall be formed where an infringement occurs, but no closer than 20 metres to the touch line or 10 metres to the goal line.

6.1.10 Scrums shall be formed parallel to the touch line.

6.1.11 The forwards take the weight and hold the scrum on the mark until the ball has been put in.

6.1.12 The non-offending team will have the loose head and put in except when a mutual infringement occurs, in this case the attacking team have the loose head and put in. If the infringement occurs on the halfway line the last team in possession shall have the loose head and put in.

6.1.13 The ball must be held horizontally and put into the scrum on the referee's side by rolling it along the ground between the outside feet of the two prop forwards. The outside feet must also be the forward most foot of the two props.

6.1.14 The ball should be put into the tunnel without delay when the scrum has been formed correctly. When the ball is in the scrum it can only be played with the foot.

6.1.15 The non-feeding half-back shall retire behind the last row of forwards. The rest of the non-feeding team shall retire at least 5 metres behind their last row of forwards. The backs of the team feeding the scrum shall retire at least 5 metres behind their last row of forwards.

6.1.16 The feeding half-back shall not hesitate or dummy and will retire behind his/her own last row of forwards after feeding the scrum.

6.1.17 When the ball is in the scrum, it can only be played at with the foot.

6.1.18 The hooker can strike for the ball with either foot once the ball is in the tunnel.

6.1.19 The prop must keep both feet on the ground and may only strike for the ball after the hooker.

6.1.20 No player shall willfully collapse a scrum or have any part of his/her body on the ground other than feet. No player shall willfully delay the formation of a scrum.

6.1.21 The ball is out of the scrum when it emerges from between and behind the inner feet of the second rowers.

6.1.22 Any forward can detach himself/herself from the scrum to gather or kick the ball when the ball has emerged from the scrum correctly, even if the scrum has wheeled, provided that the player who detaches from the scrum is not in front of a team mate who last touched the ball.

6.1.23 Forwards must not head butt violently when coming together to form a scrum.

6.1.24 If a ball is kicked by a player in general play from within his/her own 40 metre area and finds touch in his/her opponent's 20 metre area, other than on the full, the kicking side will have the loose head and feed at the scrum. Note: When adjudicating 40/20 kicks, only accredited and official Touch Judges are the sole judge of fact on touch. In all other cases (e.g. where club Touch Judges are used), the referee has final decision on touch.

6.1.25 If the ball emerges correctly from the scrum, it is in play even though the scrum may have "wheeled". Any forward can detach him/herself from the scrum to gather or kick the ball. Any back can similarly play the ball provided he/she remained behind the scrum until the ball emerged.



## 6.2 Held Up In-Goal

6.2.1 If an attacking player is held up in his/her opponent's in-goal and is unable to ground the ball, play is restarted with a play the ball 10 metres from the goal line opposite where the player was held up and the tackle count will continue.

6.2.2 If the player is held up in his/her opponent's in-goal after the fifth tackle, play will restart with a handover 10 metres out from the goal line in line with the tackle.

## SECTION 7 – THE PENALTY

### 7.1 When Penalties are Awarded

7.1.1 A penalty shall be awarded against a player who deliberately breaks the rules, provided that the awarding of the penalty will not disadvantage the opposing team.

7.1.2 The advantage to the opposing team must be apparent if the referee is to allow play to proceed.

7.1.3 Any player can ask the referee the reason why a penalty has been awarded, provided he/she does so respectfully.

### 7.2 Where Penalties are Awarded

7.2.1 Unless stated, the mark is where the offence occurred.

#### **The mark is moved in the following circumstances:**

7.2.2 If misconduct occurs in-touch, the penalty is awarded 10 metres in-field opposite where the offence occurred.

7.2.3 Where a kicker is interfered with after a kick, the mark is where the ball lands or is caught in the field of play. If the ball crosses the touch line on the full, or crosses the goal line on the full, the penalty is awarded 10 metres in-field from where the ball crossed the line.

7.2.4 Any offence in the in-goal which results in a penalty being awarded, the penalty is awarded 10 metres in the field of play opposite where the offence occurred.

### 7.3 Breaches by the Kicker's Team

7.3.1 In cases of a breach by the kicker's team, a scrum is formed where the penalty kick was awarded [see also rule 8.18.1].

### 7.4 Breaches by Opposing Team

7.4.1 In cases of a breach by the opposing team, another penalty shall be awarded opposite where the breach occurred by advancing the mark 10 metres once only.

## **7.5 How Penalty Kicks are Taken (Including Differential Penalty)**

7.5.1 A player may take a penalty kick by punting, drop-kicking or place-kicking the ball from the mark or behind the mark, provided it is parallel with the touch line.

7.5.2 The ball may be kicked in any direction after which it is in play, (except when kicking for goal -See Section 8.18.1).

7.5.3 A penalty from a scrum is a differential penalty from which a goal cannot be directly scored. If the penalty is for foul play or offensive and obscene language a normal penalty is awarded.

7.5.4 The differential penalty applies to all players in the team including those outside the scrum.

## **7.6 Position of Players**

7.6.1 All players from the kicker's team must remain behind the ball when it is kicked from a penalty kick.

7.6.2 The opposing players shall retire to their own goal line or at least 10 metres from the point where the penalty was awarded.

7.6.3 Opposing players who have not retired 10 metres at a penalty kick should only be penalised if they interfere with play, either actively or passively.

7.6.4 Opposing players shall not interfere with or distract the attention of the kicker at a penalty kick.

7.6.5 Opposing players may only advance after the ball has been kicked.

7.6.6 When the ball is taken back, other than for a kick at goal, the defending players must remain 10 metres from the original mark.

7.6.7 When the ball is kicked downfield in general play, the players from the kicking team cannot pass the point of the play the ball until the ball has passed them. If they are in front of this point, then they are deemed to be offside.

## **7.7 Finding Touch**

7.7.1 From a penalty kick, if the ball is kicked into touch without being touched by another player, the kicking team shall restart play with a free kick 10 metres in the field of play opposite where the ball crossed the line.

7.7.2 If the ball is touched by an opposing player and goes into touch, a scrum shall be packed.

7.7.3 If the ball accidentally touches an opposing player and goes into touch, a free kick will be taken by the kicking team in the normal manner.

7.7.4 Play is restarted with a 20 metre drop kick if the ball is kicked dead or touch-in-goal in the opponent's in-goal from a penalty kick.

## 7.8 Free Kick

7.8.1 The ball may be kicked in any direction in any manner when bringing it into play after finding touch.

7.8.2 Opposing players shall retire 10 metres from the free kick.

7.8.3 In the event of a breach by the opposing team, a penalty kick shall be awarded opposite where the breach occurred and 10 metres from the kick or as near to the goal line as possible.

7.8.4 In the event of a breach by the kicker's team, a scrum shall be packed 20 metres from the touch line opposite where the free kick was to be taken.

## 7.9 No Delay

7.9.1 No player shall deliberately delay the taking of a penalty kick

## 7.10 Infringement on Scoring Player (Potential 8 Point Try)

7.10.1 If a player fouls an opponent who is touching down for a try, a penalty kick at goal shall be awarded and taken from in front of the posts after the attempt to convert the try. For the purposes of this rule "touching down for a try" means in the act of scoring.

7.10.2 After the penalty kick at goal, play is restarted with a kick off from the centre of the halfway line, irrespective of the outcome of the kick.

## 7.11 Field Goal Foul Play on Kicker

7.11.1 If a player attempting a field goal is fouled, a penalty kick shall be awarded in front of the goal posts, 10m out from the goal line.

7.11.2 If he/she is successful with the field goal, a kick at goal must be taken from the penalty kick. Play is then restarted from the centre of the halfway line, irrespective of the outcome of that penalty kick.

7.11.3 If the field goal is unsuccessful, the penalty kick can be taken in any manner provided for in the laws and play is restarted according to the outcome of that kick.

## 7.12 The Mark

7.12.1 As the mark cannot be marked on the ground, a player who punts, tap kicks or drop-kicks may deviate slightly from it, provided no advantage is gained from it.

7.12.2 Where a player is taking a kick at goal and moves the ball back from the point where the penalty was awarded, the point where the kick is taken becomes the new mark. Opposition players must be at least 10 metres from where the kick is being taken from.

## **SECTION 8 – SCORING POINTS**

### **8.1 Points Value**

- 8.1.1 A try is worth four points.
- 8.1.2 A conversion or penalty goal is two points.
- 8.1.3 A field goal is one point.

### **8.2 Winning the Game**

8.2.1 The game shall be won by the team scoring the higher number of points. If both teams have the same number of points, or both fail to score, the game is drawn. Finals games – (See Appendix F No:13)

### **8.3 How a Try is Scored**

- 8.3.1 A try is scored when a player grounds the ball in his/her opponent's in-goal. The ball must be grounded before the player or the ball touches the dead ball or touch-in-goal lines or beyond.
- 8.3.2 A player may pick up the ball in his/her opponent's in-goal, in order to ground it in a more advantageous position.
- 8.3.3 A try is scored when opposing players ground the ball simultaneously in the in-goal area.
- 8.3.4 A try is scored when a tackled player's momentum carries him/her into the opponent's in-goal where he/she grounds the ball.
- 8.3.5 A try is scored by grounding the ball on or over the goal line. A try is not scored by grounding the ball at the foot of the goal posts in the field of play.
- 8.3.6 When the ball is not grounded correctly, play is allowed to continue unless stopped for some other reason (eg: the ball has been knocked on or has gone dead).
- 8.3.7 A referee should not disallow a try because a player who correctly grounds the ball fails to retain it.
- 8.3.8 The referee should not disallow a try because he/she was not in a position to see the grounding of the ball.
- 8.3.9 When the ball is in the scrum, a try cannot be scored by grounding it.
- 8.3.10 When the ball is at the base of the scrum, it is permissible for a player to pick it up and bore through his/her own forwards to ground the ball for a try.

### **8.4 Penalty Try**

- 8.4.1 The referee can award a penalty try if, in his/her opinion, a try would have been scored except for the unfair play of a defender.

8.4.2 A penalty try is awarded between the goal posts, irrespective of where the infringement occurred.

## **8.5 Touching Referee (etc.)**

8.5.1 If play is affected following an attacking player coming into contact with the referee, touch judge or spectator in the opposition in-goal area, a try is awarded.

## **8.6 Where Try is Awarded**

8.6.1 Where the ball is grounded as in rules 8.3.1, 8.3.2 and 8.3.3.

8.6.2 Where the ball first crosses the goal line if scored as per rule 8.3.4.

8.6.3 In between the goal posts if a penalty try is to be awarded.

8.6.4 Where contact took place if scored as per rule 8.5.1.

## **8.7 Referee is the Sole Judge**

8.7.1 A try can only be awarded by the referee. The referee can take advice from the touch judge before making a decision.

8.7.2 To award a try, the referee points to the spot where the ball was grounded and blows his/her whistle.

8.7.3 Before awarding the try, the referee should look at the two touch judges to ensure that they are not reporting a prior incident.

8.7.4 When approved by the controlling authority of any competition, in-goal judges and the use of audio/visual electronic aids may be used to assist the referee in the decision-making process.

## **8.8 How a Goal is Scored**

A goal is scored if the ball passes over the opponent's cross bar and between the uprights on the full after being kicked by a player (and not being touched in flight by any other player) in the following circumstances:

8.8.1 By a place kick after a try has been scored and counts as two points.

8.8.2 By a place kick or a drop-kick when a penalty kick has been awarded and counts as two points.

8.8.3 If, after completely passing over the cross bar, the ball is blown back, a goal is still allowed.

## **8.9 No Goal from Kick Off**

8.9.1 A goal cannot be scored from a kick off or drop out, or from a drop-kick when bringing the ball into play, or by a free kick, or from a differential penalty.

## **8.10 How a Field Goal is Scored**

8.10.1 By a drop-kick during general play from any position in the field of play by the ball passing over the cross bar and between the uprights. A field goal counts as one point.

8.10.2 If the ball is touched in flight by an opposition player and the ball still goes over the cross bar and between the posts, the field goal is scored.

## **8.11 Where Kicks at Goal are Taken**

8.11.1 A kick at goal after a try may be taken from any point opposite where the try is scored and parallel to the touch line.

8.11.2 A kick at goal from a penalty may be taken from the mark, or from any point behind the mark and parallel to the touch line.

8.11.3 A referee should ensure that a kick at goal is taken from the correct position. If the kick is taken from the incorrect position, no goal shall be allowed and the kick shall not be retaken.

## **8.12 Players' Positions**

8.12.1 When a kick at goal is being taken following a try, the opposing players shall stand within their own in-goal area, but not between the goal posts.

8.12.2 Players from the kicker's team must be behind the ball.

8.12.3 When a penalty kick at goal is being taken, the opposing players shall retire to their goal line, or not less than 10 metres from the mark.

## **8.13 Distracting the Kicker**

8.13.1 It is illegal to attempt to distract the attention of the kicker. In such cases, the referee may allow the kick to be retaken.

## **8.14 Goal Posts**

8.14.1 For the purpose of judging a kick at goal, the goal posts are assumed to extend indefinitely upwards.

## **8.15 Judging Kicks at Goal**

8.15.1 If a touch judge believes a goal has been kicked, he/she shall raise his/her flag above his/her head.

8.15.2 If a touch judge believes the kick at goal is unsuccessful, he/she shall wave his/her flag in front of him/her at waist level.

8.15.3 If both touch judges are in agreement, their decision shall be final.

8.15.4 In the event of a disagreement, the referee shall decide.

## **8.16 Wasting Time**

8.16.1 If a player wastes time when kicking at goal, or restarting play with a kick or forming a scrum the referee may caution that player or players. In the extreme case the referee may sin bin the player/s for misconduct (See Section 12.1.i).

## **8.17 Colleague Holds Ball**

8.17.1 When a place kick is being taken, it is permissible for a colleague of the kicker to hold the ball in position by placing a hand on it.

## **8.18 Pretending to Kick at Goal**

8.18.1 It shall be misconduct for a player to pretend to kick at goal from a penalty kick and then deliberately kick it elsewhere. Such misconduct shall result in a penalty being awarded against the kicker.

## SECTION 9 – OFFSIDE

### 9.1 When Players are Offside

9.1.1 A player is offside if he/she touches the ball after it is touched, held or kicked by one of his/her own team behind him/her.

9.1.2 A player cannot be offside in his/her own in-goal.

9.1.3 An offside player shall not take part in the game or attempt in any way to influence the course of the game.

9.1.4 "Downtown offside" refer Section 7.6.7.

### 9.2 Players to Retire 10 Metres

9.2.1 An offside player shall not encroach within 10 metres of an opponent who is waiting for the ball.

9.2.2 An offside player shall retire 10 metres from an opponent who first secures possession of the ball.

### 9.3 Player Placed Onside

**An offside player is placed onside in the following circumstances:**

9.3.1 An opposing player moves 10 metres or more with the ball.

9.3.2 An opposing player touches the ball, but does not retain it.

9.3.3 A team mate in possession of the ball runs in front of the offside player.

9.3.4 A team mate kicks or knocks the ball forward and takes up a position in front of his/her in the field of play.

9.3.5 If he/she retires behind the point where the ball was last touched by one of his/her team mates.

### 9.4 Catcher Claims Opponent Offside

9.4.1 A player who catches the ball near an offside opponent must not go out of his/her way to make interference by the offside player inevitable.

9.4.2 If the catcher deliberately and unnecessarily runs into the offside player, then play should proceed.

### 9.5 Accidental Offside

9.5.1 If the referee considers that any interference caused by an offside player is accidental, play should be restarted with a scrum except after the fifth play the ball when a handover will take place.

### 9.6 Out of Play

9.6.1 Players who are out of play at a play the ball, scrum, kick off, 20 metre restart,



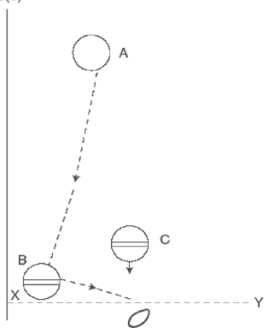
drop out, penalty kick or free kick are not put onside in the manner described in sections 9.3.1 to 9.3.5.

## 9.7 “Down Town” Chasers

9.7.1 Any player who is front of the kicker in general play is not permitted to advance beyond the point of the previous play-the-ball until the ball has gone past the offside player. This rule delays the movement of the offside players downfield in an attempt to encircle the ball receiver as he/she collects the ball.

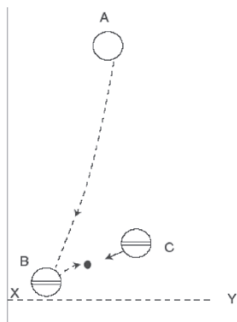
### Example of offside player retrieving the ball

3(e)



Player A kicks the ball and opponent B fails to catch it, the ball bouncing forward off his/her hands. Player C is off side if he/she plays the ball unless B advances in front of the ball before C reaches it, in which case a scrum would be ordered for a knock on.

Player A kicks the ball and opponent B attempts to catch it. He/she drops the ball which rolls behind him. His/her colleague C who was originally in front of him/her drops back to retrieve the ball. When he/she gets to it he/she is behind the point at which it was played by B, indicated by the XY, and is not off side



## SECTION 10 – TOUCH AND TOUCH IN-GOAL

### 10.1 Touch

10.1.1 The ball is in touch if:

- (a) it, or a player in contact with it, touches the touch line; and/or
- (b) it, or a player in contact with it, touches the ground outside the touch line.

10.1.2 The ball is out where it first crossed the touch or touch-in-goal line.

10.1.3 The ball is not in touch if a tackled player steps into touch as he/she regains his/her feet to play the ball.

10.1.4 Player Jumps

- (a) If a player jumps from in touch and makes contact with the ball while off the ground, the ball is in touch.
- (b) If a player jumps from the field of play and knocks the ball back into the field of play while off the ground, the ball is not deemed to be in touch and play should continue.

10.1.5 Play recommences with a scrum opposite where the ball went out subject to the requirements of Section 6.1.9.

10.1.6 If the ball is kicked or touched and propelled by a player in a forward direction into touch on the full, the scrum will be formed where the player made contact with the ball, subject to the requirements of Section 6.1.9.

10.1.7 If the ball accidentally strikes an opposition player from general play and goes into touch, the loose head and feed shall not be forfeited by the opposition player's team.

10.1.8 When the ball is kicked into touch from a penalty kick, the game is restarted by a free kick 10 metres infield opposite where it went out.

10.1.9 The ball is in touch-in-goal when it touches or crosses the touch-in-goal line, or touches the corner posts.

### 10.2 Touch-in-Goal

10.2.1 The ball is touch-in-goal when it touches or crosses the touch-in-goal line or touches the corner posts.

10.2.2 If a player has contact with the ball or touches the corner posts (not in the act of scoring a try).

10.2.3 If a player has contact with the ball and touches the touch-in-goal line, the ball is considered to be touch-in-goal.

10.2.4 If a ball which is stationary in the field of play or in the in-goal area, comes into contact with a player standing in touch, touch-in-goal or over the dead ball line, the ball is made dead by that player.

10.2.5 If the ball accidentally strikes an opposition player before crossing the touch-in-goal line or dead ball line, play is restarted according to whoever last deliberately played at the ball.

### **10.3 Corner Post**

In the act of scoring a try:

10.3.1 If a ball carrier makes contact with the corner post, he/she will not be deemed to be out of play, unless any part of his/her body has made contact with either the touch-line or touch-in-goal line, or the ground beyond the touch-line or touch-in-goal line.

10.3.2 If the ball is not in the possession of a player and it makes contact with the corner post (eg. from a kick), the ball will be deemed to be touch-in-goal as per the existing rule.

10.3.3 All other rules relating to the corner post and restarts of play remain unchanged.

## SECTION 11 – OBSTRUCTION

11.1 A player is guilty of misconduct if he/she deliberately obstructs another player who is not in possession (refer rule 12.1.j).

11.2 A player who is not in possession, or is off-side, cannot be obstructed even after a knock on or forward pass.

11.3 If a player is deliberately obstructed after kicking the ball and the referee deems that the defender was not committed to the tackle before the kick, a penalty should be awarded as described in rule 7.2.3.

11.4 A player in possession cannot be guilty of obstruction. He/she can use the goal posts to avoid tackle. An Acting Half Back may dodge behind a ruck of his/her own players, or bore a way through his/her own pack.

11.5 If the referee deems that obstruction has occurred accidentally and play has been irregularly affected, the game should be stopped and recommenced with a scrum.

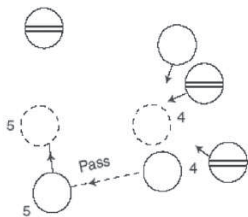
The player in possession has delayed kicking the ball until the tackler has commenced to dive. The tackler should not be penalised.



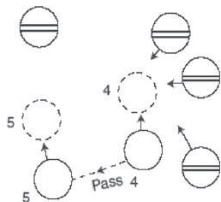
The ball has been kicked before the opponent commits himself/herself to the tackle. He/she should be penalised if he/she obstructs the kicker.

## Obstructing Passing Movement

Obstruction sometimes occurs in a passing movement as follows:



It is permissible for player 4, after passing the ball, to slow down in order to position himself/herself for a return pass from player 5. He/she must give 'right of way' to opponents who are running across in front of him/her to tackle player 5 but is not guilty of obstructing opponents who are coming from behind him.



Player 4 passes to player 5 but continues to run in front of him/her in order to obstruct opponents who are running across to tackle. Player 4 should be penalised.

## Accidental Obstruction

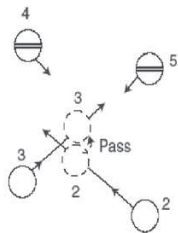
Obstruction can be either active, passive or accidental. Passive obstruction is where a player impedes an opponent by deliberately remaining in his/her path although he/she has had the opportunity to remove himself. If a player is in a position which is likely to cause obstruction and he/she feels that any movement by him/her may aggravate the situation he/she should raise his/her hands above his/her head and thus indicate to the referee that he/she is taking no part in the play.

Examples of accidental obstruction in tactical moves are shown on page 28. Where accidental obstruction irregularly affects the play, the game should be stopped and restarted with a scrum. If play is not affected then the game should not be stopped.

## 'Scissors' Move

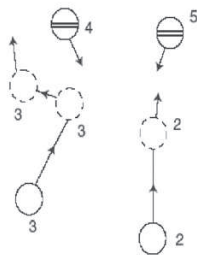
Player 3 is in possession and veers towards the wing bringing his/her opposite number, player 4, across with him, and opponent 5 in towards him.

His/her player 2 runs across and when just behind him/her receives a back pass. After giving the pass, player 3's momentum carries him/her in the direction in which he/she was running. It is quite easy to see that he/she may collide with opponent 5. It would not be fair to penalise him/her for deliberate obstruction and a scrum should be formed for accidental obstruction only if player 5 is actually prevented from tackling player 2.



## 'Dummy'

Player 3 is in possession and veers towards the wing. This time he/she dummies to pass to colleague 2 but sidesteps to the left and runs in-field. Player 2, expecting the pass, has his/her eye on the ball and his/her momentum carries him/her forward. He/she can easily collide with player 5 without being guilty of obstruction, and once again the referee will allow play to proceed unless player 5 was actually prevented from making the tackle, in which case a scrum will be ordered.



## Obstruction - Off Side Player, - After Knock On

It is illegal to obstruct any opponent not in possession, even one who is off side or one who is endeavouring to get to the ball after it has been knocked on or thrown forward.

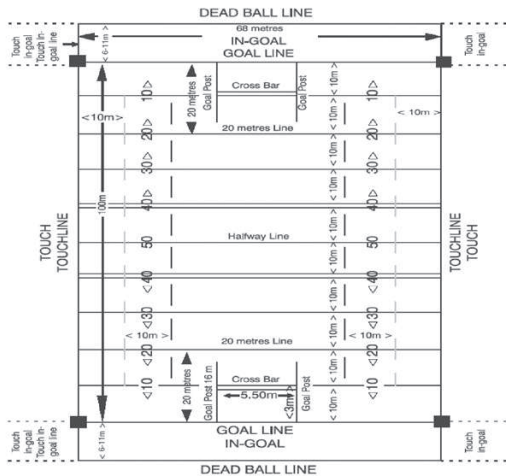
## SECTION 12 – PLAYERS’ MISCONDUCT

- 12.1 A player is guilty of misconduct if he/she:
- (a) deliberately trips, kicks or strikes another player;
  - (b) when effecting or attempting to effect a tackle, makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent intentionally, recklessly or carelessly;
  - (c) drops knees first on to an opponent who is on the ground;
  - (d) uses any dangerous throw when effecting a tackle;
  - (e) deliberately breaks the laws of the game;
  - (f) uses offensive or obscene language;
  - (g) disputes a decision of the referee or touch judge;
  - (h) re-enters the field of play without the permission of the referee or touch judge having previously temporarily retired from the game;
  - (i) behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game;
  - (j) deliberately obstructs an opponent who is not in possession;
  - (k) intentionally dives at the non-kicking leg of an opponent;
  - (l) tackles a player who leaps into the air to retrieve a kick and whose feet have not returned to the ground;
  - (m) makes an attempted act of reckless or intentional conduct, e.g. raised elbow, swinging arm.

## APPENDIX A - PLAYING FIELD

1. The touch lines are in touch, the touch-in-goal lines are touch-in-goal, the goal lines are in the in-goal area, and the dead ball line is beyond the in-goal.
2. A corner post is placed at the intersection of each goal line and touch line. A corner post is touch-in-goal.
3. The goal posts are considered to extend indefinitely upwards. It is required that the bottom two metres of each upright be padded. U-shaped goal posts are permissible provided the relevant dimensions are observed.
4. For adult games, the dimensions should be as near to the maximum as possible. Minimum dimensions should be laid down in the rules of the competition in which the match is played.
5. The broken lines in the plan shall consist of marks or dots on the ground not more than two metres apart. Transverse broken lines 10 metres from the goal lines, 20 metre lines and half way lines are to be marked across the full width of the field.

**The PLAN and markings thereon and the Notes relating thereto are part of these Laws.**





## **APPENDIX B - THE BALL**

### **Shape and Construction**

The game shall be played with an oval air inflated ball, the outer casing of which shall be leather or other material approved by the NZRL and nothing shall be used in its construction which might prove dangerous to the players.

### **Size and Weight**

The dimensions of the ball shall be those approved by the NZRL.

### **Ball Colour**

The ball should be light in colour so that it can be more easily be seen by the spectators.

### **Ball Deflated**

The referee shall blow his/her whistle immediately he/she notices that the size and shape of the ball no longer comply with the laws of the game.

### **Ball Bursts**

If the ball bursts as a player is taking a place kick at the goal, he/she should be allowed another kick. If a player grounds the ball for a try and then it is noticed that the ball has burst, the try should be allowed. Otherwise, if the ball bursts, play is stopped, the ball is replaced and a scrum is formed to restart play at the point where the ball bursts. The team in possession or last in possession shall have the loose head and put in.

### **Kicking Tees**

Approved kicking tees are permitted for starts of play, restarts after scoring and attempts at goal.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **- PLAYERS AND PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT**

#### **Team Numbers**

1. The game shall be played by two teams each consisting of not more than 13 players from each team being on the field at any one time.
2. A team must have a minimum of ten (10) players to commence a game, should that number through injuries fall below nine (9) then the referee must abandon the game.
3. A team may nominate a maximum of four (4) replacements before the start of the game.

#### **Substitutions**

1. Twelve (12) substitutions can be made from the 17 named players. In domestic competitions, other substitutions/interchanges laws can be implemented if approved by the governing body.
2. Substitutions may only occur during general play (i.e. whilst the ball is in motion, after any scoring has been completed, or if play has been temporarily suspended by the referee (i.e. injury or caution). Interchanges are not to be made at scrums as this tends to slow play dramatically.
3. A replaced player must have left the field of play prior to the interchange player taking his/her place on the field (in an onside position).
4. If a substitution is made when a kick at goal is being taken, the substitute shall not be allowed to take the kick however, a player who is returning from the Blood Bin may take the kick.

#### **Replacements**

##### **Blood Bin**

When a player is bleeding, the referee shall direct him/her to leave the field for attention on the side line and when treated he/she may return to the field. If the player is replaced whilst receiving attention that replacement will count as one of the twelve (12) interchanges.

##### **Foul Play**

In the event of a player being forced to leave the field as a result of foul play and the offending player being dismissed from the field, sin binned, placed on report or penalised by the match referee a free interchange shall be allowed. If the fouled player returns to the field, this shall count as an interchange.

## Extra Time

In the event of extra time being played an additional two interchanges will be added to the teams interchanges not already used at the conclusion of normal time. (eg): if a team had four remaining interchanges not used at the conclusion of normal time, they may make up to six interchanges in the extra time period.

## Player Identification

For ease of identification, players' jumpers must bear the numbers "1" to "13" with additional numbers for the substitutes. The numbers relate to the positions of the players in their teams. The numbers and their position are outlined below:

1. **Fullback**
2. **Right Wing**
3. **Right Centre**
4. **Left Centre**
5. **Left Wing**
6. **Stand Off**
7. **Halfback**
8. **Prop**
9. **Hooker**
10. **Prop**
11. **Second Row**
12. **Second Row**
13. **Lock / Loose Forward**

Different numbering may be used with approval of the local governing body.

## Players Equipment

1. A player shall not wear anything that is dangerous to other players.
2. A player's normal gear shall consist of a jersey, shorts, a pair of socks and approved boots.
3. Mouth guards are compulsory.
4. Protective clothing may be worn provided it contains nothing of a rigid nature.
5. The referee shall order a player to remove any part of his/her gear which might be considered dangerous. The player shall leave the field to remove the equipment if the start or restart of the game would be delayed.
6. Studs on boots shall be no less than 8mm diameter at the apex and, if made of metal, shall have rounded edges.

7. Referees should inspect players' gear before the start of the game or delegate this duty to the touch judge. This does not relieve the player of his/her responsibility of ensuring that his/her gear meets the requirements.
8. On Field Trainers — only two trainers are permitted on the field at one time when their team is in possession of the ball and must enter the field from behind their own team. If both teams obtain permission from the referee prior to the commencement of the game, then another trainer will be allowed for that match if playing conditions would require, e.g. heat.

## **Mouth Guard Replacements**

1. If during the course of a match the referee finds a player who is not wearing a mouth guard and does not have one in his/her possession (due to having it dislodged as a result of a tackle), the referee shall direct him/her to leave the field and not be replaced. On obtaining a replacement mouth guard the player may re-enter the field of play after reporting to a touch judge. In the event of the player being unable to obtain a replacement mouth guard, he/she shall take no further part in the game, but may be replaced with that replacement counting as one of the twelve (12) interchanges.
2. During the course of a match, any player found not to have a mouth guard in their mouth, but to have one in their possession (in their sock or pocket) will be penalised and sin binned for ten (10) minutes.
3. Referees are advised to use common sense in enforcing this rule in regard to players approaching a scrum with a mouth guard in their hand or other such incidents where there is a break in play.

## **APPENDIX D - DUTIES OF REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES**

1. In all games, a referee and two touch judges shall be appointed, or mutually agreed upon by the contesting teams.
2. The referee is responsible for ensuring that the rules of the game are adhered to. The referee is the sole judge of fact except for touch and touch-in-goal. Note: When adjudicating 40/20 kicks, only accredited and official Touch Judges are the sole judge of fact on touch. In all other cases (e.g. where club Touch Judges are used), the referee has final decision on touch.
3. He/she shall be the sole judge of time except where this duty has been delegated to another person.
4. The referee can temporarily stop or call a match off due to weather conditions, spectators invading the field or the bad behaviour of players. The decision is at the discretion of the referee.
5. The referee shall only allow those with authority to enter the field.
6. If a referee is injured during the course of a game, a substitute should be appointed by the referee. If the referee is not able to appoint a substitute, the respective captains should mutually agree, failing which the touch judge with the greater experience should take control of the game. If the referee has not been able to blow his/her whistle to stop play, then play is deemed to be stopped when the injury occurred.
7. The referee may consult with either or both of the touch judges before making decisions.
8. Before players enter the field, having temporarily left it, they must report to the touch judge or referee.
9. If misconduct has taken place by a player, the referee can either caution, place in the sin bin (temporarily suspend) for 10 minutes, or dismiss the player.
10. The referee may caution the whole team. Each player is considered to have received an individual caution. When administering a final caution to a player who has persistently committed breaches of the laws, the referee shall advise the player's captain so that the latter may, if he/she so wishes, change the player's position in the team.
11. A sin binned player is allowed to re-enter the game after the completion of 10 minutes and when the referee allows him/her to. This time shall be kept by either a timekeeper or the referee. The time will commence from when the player crosses the touch line or dead ball line.

12. If a player is dismissed from the field, he/she can take no more part in the game and shall leave the playing area.
13. The referee is in control of the players whenever they are in the playing area and environs of access and changing areas.
14. The referee uses a whistle to commence and terminate each half of the game, and to temporarily stop play.
15. The whistle is also blown in the following circumstances:
  - (a) when points are scored
  - (b) when the ball is out of play
  - (c) when the rules of the game have been broken
  - (d) when play is interrupted by a spectator, touch judge, etc.
  - (e) When a stoppage is necessary in order to enforce the laws or for any other circumstance (eg: mutual infringement).
  - (f) when restarting play, other than a scrum
16. If the whistle is blown by accident, play is restarted with a scrum. The team last in possession has the feed and loose head.
17. The referee is solely responsible for determining what an advantage is. Advantage can be applied to all parts of play excluding restarts of play.
18. If an opposing player is touched or touches the ball, any infringement is not negated. Opposing players must be given every opportunity to take the advantage. The use of the advantage does not mean that the offending player cannot be dealt with at a later time.
19. When the referee makes a decision on matters of fact, he/she shall not change that decision unless prior foul play is brought to his/her attention by a touch judge.
20. The decisions of the touch judge in relation to touch, touch-in-goal and kicks at goal are to be accepted by the referee.
21. Touch judges are to stay on their touch line unless they are reporting to the referee or are judging a kick at goal.
22. When a touch judge intends to report an incident to the referee, he/she must notify the referee as soon as possible, so that play does not continue any longer than necessary. The touch judge may use his/her flag to mark the spot where the offence occurred. The penalty is awarded where the offence occurred notwithstanding a kicker being fouled (See Section 7.2.3)

23. When the ball goes into touch, the touch judge raises his/her flag at the point where the ball crossed the line. If the ball goes out on the full from general play, the flag is waved above the head and accentuated in the direction of the kicker's goal line.
24. The touch judge should not raise his/her flag immediately the ball in flight crosses the touch line in case the ball swerves or is blown back into the playing field before hitting the ground.
25. If the ball crosses the touch-in-goal line, the touch judge waves his/her flag up and down and points to where the play is to restart.
26. When a penalty kick is being taken other than for the goal, the touch judge shall mark 10 metres for the offending team, unless alternatively advised by the referee.
27. A touch judge must not unduly interfere with the referees' control of the game by reporting incidents which have obviously been seen by the referee.
28. A touch judge is at all times under the control of the referee and may be dismissed and replaced if, in the opinion of the referee, that touch judge can no longer be considered to be neutral. In this case, any decision made by that touch judge leading to his/her dismissal may be disregarded. Any misconduct by a touch judge should be reported by the referee to the appropriate authority.

## APPENDIX E - REFEREE'S SIGNALS

### Signal Nature of Offence

1. When the referee is required to give a decision, he/she shall, whenever possible, indicate the nature of his/her decision by making the appropriate signal.

### Indicate How Play Restarts

2. When he/she wishes to stop the game temporarily, he/she shall, after blowing his/her whistle, indicate the nature of the decision, point to the offending player and then signal as to how the game is to be restarted.

### Signals

1. **Scrum:** With bent arms, palms of hands facing each other at shoulder level, fingers together and slightly bent, bring tops of the fingers together with a slight downward movement, and then point to the team awarded the loose head and put in.
2. **Penalty Kick:** Face the non-offending team and extend the right arm forward with the hand slightly higher than the shoulder level and the palm of the hand at right angles to the ground.
3. **Differential Penalty:** Extend the arm for an ordinary penalty, then move the arm to the upright position. Perform this action twice with the whole movement being continuous and decisive.
4. **Drop Out:** Point to the place from which the drop kick is to be taken.
5. **Try:** Point to where the try is to be awarded. Instruct the touch judge to stand on this point temporarily as a guide to the player who is to take the goal kick.
6. **Penalty Try:** Point to midway between the posts and take up position temporarily on the point as a guide to the kicker.
7. **Eight Point Try:** This term is used to indicate that a penalty kick has been awarded for foul play against a try scorer. Instruct a touch judge to take up a position in front of the posts 10 metres from the goal line before retiring behind the goal posts to judge on the conversion attempt.
8. **Goal:** Raise hand above head.
9. **Try Disallowed:** Wave hands, palms facing downwards across and in front of the body below the waist.
10. **Play On:** Wave the hands chest high, palms facing away from the chest, across and in front of the body.



11. **Ball Touched in Flight:** Raise one hand above the head and tip the top of the fingers with the fingers of the other hand.
12. **Count of Tackles is Cancelled:** Raise clenched fist above head and wave from side to side.
13. **Player "Held" and to Play the Ball:** Indicate that players not concerned with the play the ball must retire by making a signal chest high, similar to the breast stroke in swimming.
14. **Knock On:** With hands in front of the body, below the waist, slightly apart, palms facing forward and fingers pointing towards the ground, make two or three forward movements of the hands.
15. **Forward Pass:** Make a forward movement with the straight arm indicating the line of flight of the ball.
16. **Halfback Feeds Incorrectly:** With hands and arms mime the action of the halfback incorrectly putting the ball into the scrum.
17. **Halfback Fails to Retire:** Make a movement with the hand indicating the direction the halfback should have taken.
18. **Hooker Strikes Prematurely:** Raise a foot from the ground in front of the body with the leg straight.
19. **Hooker Packs a Loose Arm:** Raise one arm sideways with elbow bent so that the hand hangs downwards.
20. **Prop Strikes for the Ball:** Raise a foot from the ground by extending the leg sideways from the body.
21. **Handling in the Scrum:** Make a backward scooping action with the hand.
22. **Collapsing the Scrum:** Make a lifting motion with the hand.
23. **More than Seven Backs:** Point to one of the players who is detached from the scrum and who normally is in the pack and then hold up seven fingers.
24. **More than Six Players Pushing in the Scrum:** Point to the player who is pushing and who is not normally in the scrum and then hold up six fingers.
25. **Tackled Player Delays Regaining His/her/Her Feet:** Flick the hand in an upward direction.
26. **Tackled Player "Dummies" When Dropping the Ball:** Mime the action of the offending player exaggerating the upward withdrawing movements of the hands.
27. **Tackled Player Fails to Drop the Ball Correctly:** If the ball has been dropped between the player's legs, point backwards with one arm between the legs. If the ball has been dropped to the side, point with one hand to the side.

28. **Tackled Player does not Lift the Ball Clear of the Ground:** Make a lifting movement with the hand.
29. **Tackled Player does not Face Opponent's In-Goal:** Standing at the angle offending player adopted and then turn to face the opponent's in-goal.
30. **Tackled Player Passes when He/She Should Have Played the Ball:** Mime the gesture of playing the ball.
31. **Tackled Player Obstructs or Butts with His/her/Her Head after Playing the Ball:** Mime his/her action.
32. **Voluntary Tackle:** Make a lifting movement with hand.
33. **Player Marking the Tackled Player Kicks or Strikes at the Ball:** Make a kicking movement with the foot.
34. **Player Marking Retains His/her/Her Hold on Player Playing the Ball:** Make a decisive backward movement with the hand. This signal applies to any interference by the player marking when the ball is actually being played other than kicking prematurely or dangerously.
35. **Tackler Delays Releasing Tackled Player:** Make a downward movement with the hands in front of the body below the waist.
36. **Offside at Play the Ball:** With a backward movement of the hand indicate that the player should be further back.
37. **Stealing the Ball from the Tackled Player:** Mime the action in snatching the ball from the opponent.
38. **Dragging Tackled Player after Tackle is Effective:** Mime the action of dragging.
39. **Team is Tackled Five Successive Times:** Raise arm vertically above head with fingers and thumb outstretched.
40. **Team is Tackled Six Successive Times:** Blow the whistle, raise the arm vertically above the head, then point to the side which is to gain possession and mime the gesture of playing the ball. The surrendering of the ball is referred to as the "handover".
41. **Kicker Fails to Bring Foot into Contact with the Ball:** Tap the foot with one hand.
42. **Offside:** Indicate player should have been further back.
43. **Player in Possession Touches Official:** Point to the player in possession and tap the chest with one hand.
44. **Obstruction:** Mime the offending player's action.
45. **Tripping:** Extend one foot forward as if to trip.

46. **Stiff Arm Tackle:** Raise an arm in front of the body with fist clenched and as the arm is moved forward, tap the forearm with the other arm.
47. **Disputing Decisions:** Place one hand on the mouth.
48. **Ball in Touch:** Point to appropriate touch judge.
49. **Extra Time:** Raise both arms vertically above head.
50. **Ending Extra Time for Stoppage:** Wave one arm over head.
51. **Player Dismissal:** Point to player and point to sideline.
52. **Temporary Suspension of a Player:** Raise both arms with fingers outstretched for 10 minutes suspension.
53. **Player Directed to Leave the Field to Receive Attention for Bleeding:** Draw the hand across the chest from side to side.

## Touch Judge Signals

The touch judge cannot stop the play for any infringement however, he/she may signal the nature of an infringement if the referee is unsighted and seeks his/her guidance.

1. **Touch:** Flag raised above head at point of entry.
2. **Ball Back:** Flag waved above head accentuating backward movement.
3. **Touch-In-Goal:** Flag waved up and down and then point to goal posts or centre of 20 metre line, depending on how game is to be restarted.
4. **Successful Kick at Goal:** Raise flag above head.
5. **Unsuccessful Kick at Goal:** Wave flag across and in front of the body at waist height.
6. **Players not Retiring 10 Metres when Kick is being Taken:** Wave flag vertically in front of body.

## APPENDIX F - TIMEKEEPING

1. The game shall normally be 80 minutes long.
2. The length of the game may be altered with the consent of the teams and the governing body.
3. The half-time break shall be 5 minutes long. This period may be reduced or extended by the governing body
4. A timekeeper may be used to signal to the referee half-time and full-time. The timekeeper may also be used for the timing of temporary suspensions.
5. The team shall defend one end of the field for the first half and change ends for the second half.
6. If time expires when the ball is out of play, or a player is tackled, the referee shall blow the whistle to indicate that play is finished. If the ball is in play when time expires, the referee shall not terminate play until the ball is out of play or a player is tackled. Time is extended to allow a player to take a penalty kick or conversion attempt. Play is terminated when the ball is next out of play unless a further penalty is awarded.
7. If a team kicks the ball into touch from a penalty kick, time shall be extended to allow the free kick to be taken.
8. If a scrum has been set and fed before the bell, play shall be allowed to continue until the ball is out of play.
9. Additional time shall be added to each half for time lost due to injury or any other time lost. Extra time is the discretion of the referee.
10. When the referee stops the game due to injury, the game is restarted with the player who was last in possession playing the ball. Otherwise play is restarted with a scrum, the loose head and put in going to the team last in possession before the stoppage.
11. If a player in possession is injured in a tackle and is unable to play the ball and play has been stopped, a team mate shall play the ball at the point where the tackle took place.
12. If a player is injured in a tackle and the referee is of the opinion that play should not be stopped, another player shall be directed to play the ball five metres in field from the injured player. If the ball cannot be released by the injured player, a scrum shall be formed five metres infield from the injury with the opponents of the team of the injured player having the loose head and put in.

13. For all finals games, in the event of a draw at full time, following the coin toss by the referee, extra time (5 mins each way) will be played in which the golden point rule will apply; (ie: the game will conclude when the first team to score any type of points has been awarded and that team shall be declared the winner). If no team scores after the period of extra time play, the referee will restart play with a kick off by the team who kicked off at the commencement of extra time. Play will then restart under the golden point rule and continue until the next score which will determine the winner. (See Note).

Note:

Under the terms and conditions of the Health and Safety Act 1992 and considering the welfare of the players all play will conclude after 100 minutes of "running time". If the game is still drawn at this time the winner of the game, depending on the level of competition, (ie: Club, District, Zone) will be decided at the discretion of the local or national governing Rugby League Body. (Possible suggestions are that the declared winner will be: the team that was penalised the least, or the team that

## APPENDIX G - GLOSSARY

The terms set out below shall have the meanings assigned to them:

**Accidental Strike:** means when a ball strikes a player who makes no attempt to play at the ball.

**Advantage:** means allowing play to proceed if it is to the advantage of the team which has not committed an offence or infringement.

**Attacking Team:** Is the team that has the territorial advantage. If a scrum is to be formed on the halfway line, the team which last touched the ball before it went out of play is the attacking team.

**Back:** means a player who is not taking part in the scrum.

**Ball Back:** means to form a scrum where the ball was kicked from after it has entered touch on the full.

**Behind:** means, when applied to a player, unless otherwise stated, that both feet are behind the position in question. Similarly, "in front of" means nearer to one's opponent's goal line.

**Blindside:** means the side of the scrum or of the play the ball nearer to touch.

**Breach:** means any accidental or deliberate noncompliance with the rules.

**Charging Down:** is blocking the path of the ball with hands, arm or body as it rises from an opponent's kick.

**Converting a Try:** is the act of kicking a goal following the scoring of a try.

**Corner Post:** means the post surmounted by a flag placed at the intersection of each touch line and goal line. The post shall be of nonrigid material and shall be not less than 1.25m high. The corner posts are touch-in-goal.

**Dead Ball:** means that the ball is out of play.

**Defending Team:** means the team without territorial advantage.

**Differential Penalty:** differs from a penalty kick in one respect, in that a goal cannot be scored from it.

**Drop Goal:** means a goal or field goal scored by propelling the ball over the cross bar by drop kicking it (and is sometimes referred to as a "Field Goal").

**Drop Kick:** means a drop kick whereby the ball is dropped from the hands (or hand) and is kicked immediately it rebounds from the ground.

**Drop Out:** means a drop kick from between the goal posts or from the centre of the 20m line, when bringing the ball back into play.

**Dummy:** is the preference of passing or otherwise releasing the ball while still retaining possession of it.

**Field of Play:** is the area bounded by, but not including, the touch lines and goal lines.

**Forward:** means in a direction towards the opponent's dead ball line. As applied to a player, it means one who is at the time packing down in the scrum.

**Forward Pass:** means a throw towards the opponent's dead ball line.

**Foul Play:** means to the types of misconduct specified in rule 12.1.

**Free Kick:** means the kick awarded to the team which kicks into touch from a penalty kick. The kick is taken 10 metres in from touch, opposite the point of entry into touch. The ball may be kicked in any manner in any direction, but a goal cannot be scored from it, nor can ground be gained by kicking into touch on the full.

**Full-Time:** means the end of the game (also referred to as no-side).

**General Play:** means all aspects of play after a match has been started or restarted by a place kick, drop out, penalty kick, free kick or scrum.

**Goal:** see Section 8

**Grounding the Ball:**

- (a) means placing the ball on the ground with hand or hands; or
- (b) means exerting downward pressure on the ball with hand or arm, the ball itself being on the ground; or
- (c) means dropping on the ball and covering it with the part of the body above the waist and below the neck, the ball itself being on the ground.

**Half-Time:** means the end of the first half of the game.

**Handover:** means the surrendering of the ball to the opposition after a team has been tackled the statutory number of successive times (See Section 3.2).

**Heel:** means when a player propels the ball behind him/her with the sole or heel of his/her foot.

**Hook:** means the act of the hooker when he/she strikes with a foot for the ball in the scrum.

**In-Goal:** means the area bounded by the goal line, touch-in-goal lines and dead ball line (see Appendix A).

**In Possession:** means to be holding or carrying the ball.

**Kick:** means imparting motion to the ball with any part of the leg (except the heel) from the knee to toe inclusive.

**Kick Off:** means the method of starting each half of the game (see Section 2.1).

**Knock On:** means to knock the ball towards the opponent's dead ball line with hand or arm.

- Loose Arm:** means an offence by the hooker if he/she does not pack into the scrum with both arms around the neck of the prop and front row forward.
- Loose Ball:** means when the ball, during play the ball, is not held by a player and not being scrummaged.
- Loose Head:** means the front row forward in the scrum who is nearest to the referee.
- Mark:** means the point at which the penalty kick or free kick is awarded or a scrum formed.
- Mutual Infringement:** means the reason for the stoppage in play is not the fault of either team.
- Obstruction:** means the illegal act of impeding an opponent who does not have the ball.
- Off Side:** means when applied to a player, that he/she is temporarily out of play and may be penalised if he/she joins in the game (see Section 8).
- On Side:** means that a player is not off side.
- Open Side:** means the side of the scrum or the play the ball furthest from touch.
- On the Full:** means the ball is kicked over a given line, or is caught by a player, without first coming into contact with the ground or a player.
- Optional Kick:** means the kick is to restart the game is to be taken from the 20m line. The kick can be taken in any manner and kicked in any direction. It is the play from the moment it is kicked.
- Out of Play:** means a player out of play at a restart of play.
- Pack:** refers collectively to the forwards of any one team. To pack down means to form a scrum.
- Pass:** means a throw of the ball from one player to another.
- Penalise:** means to award a penalty kick against an offending player.
- Penalty Kick:** see Section 7.
- Place Kick:** means to kick the ball after it has been placed on the ground for that purpose.
- Playing Area:** means the area enclosed by the fence, or other such line of demarcation, which prevents encroachment of spectators.
- Playing Field:** means the area bounded by, but not including, the touch lines and dead ball lines.
- Play the Ball:** means the act of bringing the ball into play after a tackle (see Section 3).



**Prop:** means the front row forward nearest to the halfback putting the ball into the scrum.

**Punt:** means a kick whereby the ball is dropped from the hand or hands and is kicked before it touches the ground.

**Put In:** (also known as “feeding the scrum”) means the rolling of the ball into the scrum.

**Ruck:** means the area at the play-the-ball between the player playing the ball and the marker.

**Scrum:** (or “scrummage” or “scrimmage” – see Section 6) means where a team loses the advantage of a “Loose Head” and “Put In”, the scrum is said to be awarded against that team.

**Strike:** means as applied to the foot, an attempt to secure possession of the ball, usually by heeling it, in a scrum.

**Tackle:** see Section 3.

**Tap Kick:** means holding the ball and touching with the foot.

**Touch Down:** means the grounding of the ball by a defending player in his/her own in-goal.

**Touch-in-goal:** see Section 10.

**Touching the Ball:** means in all aspects of play, to deliberately play at the ball.

**Try:** see Section 8.

**20 Metre Restart:** means a kick taken at the centre of the 20 metre line to restart play, the ball may be kicked in any manner and in any direction.

**Upright Tackle:** means where the player in possession is effectively tackled without being brought to the ground - see Section 3.

**Voluntary Tackle:** means where the player in possession voluntarily stops play when not effectively tackled -see Section 3.

**Zero Tackle:** means the tackle is not counted in that set of six tackles.

# SAFE PLAY CODE

## THE CODE FOR PLAYERS IN TEAMS AGED 15 YEARS AND UNDER

### 1. Tackle Zone

**The Code:** 1 Tackles above the armpit are not permitted.

#### Application

- 1a. When the ball carrier is running with an upright posture, any tackle in which the defenders arm(s) make contact above the armpit constitutes an infringement.
- 1b. It is an infringement for a defender/tackler to set upon the head or neck region of the ball carrier.
- 1c. A defender, in front of a ball-carrier who is diving or running with a "stooped or burrowing" posture, is permitted to come into contact with the ball carriers shoulders provided the defender's arm(s) extend down the shoulder and trunk i.e. underneath the ball-carrier.

### 2. Dangerous Tackles

**The Code:** 2.1 The tacklers legs cannot be used to trip or to throw.

**Application:** The use of the legs in a tackle is not permissible. Using the legs (even if the defender has a handhold on the ball carrier) to trip or throw constitutes an infringement.

**The Code:** 2.2 Adopting a crotch hold is misconduct.

**Application:** Adopting a crotch hold i.e. by placing either a hand or arm in the crotch region is an infringement.

**The Code:** 2.3 No vertical lift in a tackle is permitted.

**Application:** Vertical lifting in a tackle is an infringement. No defender(s) during the course of a tackle is/are permitted to vertically lift the ball carrier. If the possibility of a vertical lift occurs i.e. one or both feet of the ball-carrier have been lifted off the ground, the referee must immediately blow the whistle to prevent the tackle from continuing. (This is not to be confused with a tackle that in the same motion knocks a player off his/her feet).

**The Code:** 2.4 Ball-Carrier cannot be lifted and driven.

**Application:** A tackle that results in a ball-carrier being lifted and remaining off the ground while the tackler takes two (2) or more steps to drive the player (in any direction and while the ball-carriers feet are off the ground) is an infringement.

**The Code:** 2.5 The additional following action(s) by a tackler will also incur an immediate penalty.

**Application:** When a player in possession is running, it is an infringement for a defender chasing from behind to lift or attempt to lift (hitch up) the trailing foot of the ball-carrier.

### 3. Shoulder Charge

**The Code:** A defender cannot “shoulder charge” a ball-carrier to effect a tackle.

**Application:** A defender who runs at a ball-carrier and without attempting to tackle, grab or hold the ball-carrier, charges to make contact with the shoulder or with the upper arm (tucked into the side) is guilty of an infringement.

### 4. Vicious Palm

**The Code:** An attacking player cannot thrust out an arm to contact the defender above the shoulder.

**Application:** Any attacking player who violently punches or thrusts out an arm or uses an outstretched stiff arm so that the hand or fist contacts the neck, face or head of a defender commits an infringement. (This section does not state that a player cannot legitimately “palm” the head neck or face).

### 5. Slinging

**The Code:** The use of the ball-carriers arm, or jersey to sling or swing a player is prohibited.

**Application:** A defender who uses the arm or jersey of the ball-carrier to sling or swing the player in a tackle commits an infringement.

### 6. Flopping

**The Code:** A defender cannot drop or fall on a prone player.

**Application:** It is an infringement for a defender to drop, dive or fall on a player in possession of the ball who is prone or stationary on the ground and not attempting to play-on. (A simple hand-on completes the tackle).

## 7. Surrender (in the tackle)

**The Code:** Ball-carriers may surrender in the tackle. When small and or inexperienced player are involved in a “surrender” tackle situation, defenders must not complete the tackle.

**Application:** This rule is designed to protect beginners and small players by minimising risk and eliminating excessively robust play. The referee, not the players, call “held”. Players who are at an obvious disadvantage because of low levels of experience, are of a small nature or show a lack of skill are to be protected when in possession of the ball and being tackled. A halt to play is called (by the referee) when these players submit to the tackle or are held or subdued or their progress is halted by bigger or more experienced players. Failure by a tackler to respond to the referee’s call is an infringement.

## 8. Verbal Abuse / Foul Language

**The Code:** The use of obscene expletives, threatening or denigrating words is not permitted.

**Application:** Verbal abuse, obscene language and sledging, including comments or words that threaten or denigrate an opponent, referee or supporter is an infringement. (If the individual cannot be identified, the team should be cautioned through the captain).

## 9. Scrums

**The Code:** Pushing or pulling in, or rotating a scrum is not permitted.

**Application:** All scrums are to be de-powered. Scrums will form as per the following instructions. Form, engage & hold. A team that deliberately pushes or pulls in, or rotates a scrum is guilty of an infringement. Once the ball has been fed into the scrum, hookers only may strike for the ball. Second row players can lift a foot to rake the ball out of the scrum, but cannot step forward over the ball to cause the ball to come out of the scrum.

### Important Note

It is mandatory that any act that transgresses the Safe Play Code be followed by a penalty, plus caution & instruction to the offender. The sin bin does not apply to mini-mod football, any additional action to a penalty is temporary suspension with a replacement of the offender for the remainder of that period of play. A player returning to the field after suspension and who is guilty of further misconduct is to be dismissed without replacement. For players aged 13-15 years, International Law will apply for misconduct.

## ADVANTAGE PLAY & THE SAFE PLAY CODE

A penalty kick must follow any infringement:

1. If no advantage occurs, the penalty is to be awarded immediately:
2. If an advantage occurs, the penalty is to be awarded either at the breakdown in play immediately after the misconduct occurred (unless a try is imminent) or where the act of misconduct occurred, whichever is to the greater advantage to the non-offending team.
3. If a try has been scored in the same play in which the act of misconduct occurred or in the immediate play thereafter (the imminent factor) the penalty, additional to the conversion, will be awarded in front of the goal posts. A kick at goal must be taken from the penalty kick (place or drop) and play is restarted from the centre on the half-way line irrespective of the outcome of the kick.

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**Rule changes will be posted to the NZRL website  
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NEW ZEALAND  
RUGBY LEAGUE

*More than just a game*

# THE RUGBY LEAGUE PLEDGE

- I am committed to growing Rugby League in New Zealand.
- I will do my best to improve the image of our game, as such I am committed to only positive behaviours on our fields and sidelines.
- The safety and enjoyment of all who participate in our game is my first priority.
- I will respect the traditions of our game, I will play hard and I will play fair in any role that I have, and I will always act with honour both on and off the field.



## INTEGRITY

## RESPECT

## LEADERSHIP

## COURAGE

## PASSION



Integrity in  
everything we do



Earning and  
giving respect



Leadership from  
the top down, will make  
us winners from the  
ground up



We will have  
the courage to  
think differently



Nothing great gets  
accomplished  
without passion



*More than just a game*