



***SCOTTISH  
RUGBY***

Community Rugby Memorandum  
2010/11

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the intention that the 2010/11 Community Rugby Memorandum will guide how the game is to be officiated during the coming season. It is not intended to change the Laws of the Game which remain the definitive guide to playing the game but it is intended to offer further guidance to areas of law which are open to interpretation.

To reflect recent directives from the International Rugby Board, this season Scottish Referees will place particular emphasis on:

- Obstruction by the team in possession when forming a maul
- Management of the scrum cadence
- Tackle and post-tackle management
- Dangerous Play – charging in to rucks and mauls without binding.
- Offside at breakdown
- Offside at kicks

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The 2009/10 season Code of Conduct is still the working document for the forthcoming season and is available on the Who's the Ref ([www.whostheref.net](http://www.whostheref.net)) and Scottish Rugby ([www.scottishrugby.org](http://www.scottishrugby.org)) websites

The following outlines specific areas to re-emphasise:

- It is paramount that the reputation of game is promoted and not brought into disrepute.
- Referees are accountable and this process is helped when coaches send in referee review forms.
- Referees will make mistakes, which will be reviewed by the Referee coaching group. There are set periods in the season where Match Officials will be promoted or demoted.

### **Problem Areas**

- Touchline outbursts
- Press comments on match officials quoting club officials

### **What Is Needed**

- Continual shouting by club officials during matches referring to Match officials is unacceptable.
- It should be emphasised that public comments by club officials on match officials, must not refer to or infer bias on the part of the match officials against the club.
- The National Referee Manager is available to discuss refereeing issues with Premier club coaches. Clubs in National 1 and below should contact their RRDM in the first instance.



## FOUL PLAY

There is no place in Scottish Rugby for foul play. A clear act of foul play must not be ignored. Referees will adjudicate on degree of sanction.

### **High and Dangerous Tackles**

- Use of shoulder leading is unacceptable. Players must grasp an opponent when attempting a tackle.
- Spear tackle: Once a player has been lifted off the ground it is the tackling player's responsibility to ensure that the lifted player is safely returned to ground. If a spear tackle is committed then referees will issue a red card
- High Tackle: Players must not tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders (this includes tackles that start legally but "ride up").

### **Dangerous Play**

- Law 10.4.J – Players must not charge into a ruck or maul without binding (with a full arm) onto a player in the ruck or maul
- Referees **must** be vigilant to players who clear out opponents not involved in rucks and mauls

### **Feet on Bodies**

- Players must not stamp or trample on an opponent.
- Players must not kick an opponent.
- Law 16.3.F – A player rucking for the ball must not intentionally ruck players on the ground. A player rucking for the ball tries to step over players on the ground and must not intentionally step on them. A player rucking must do so near the ball.
- Feet on heads, limbs and joints – the referee should start thinking red card and move down to yellow card (as well as issuing a penalty).

### **General**

- Unfair play should be sanctioned. Deliberate, cynical offences should lead to a YC.
- Repeat offences can be for infringing in one area or over a number of laws.
- If required, referees are to produce YC sooner rather than later in game.
- Accuracy and consistency is paramount.
- Off the ball offences are unacceptable and should lead to a YC.
- Tipping in line out to be closely scrutinised.



## SCRUM

### Engagement

- Referee to make a mark
- Both Hookers at the mark
- Ensure players in a crouch position either side of mark and no more than an arms length apart
- Both teams should be “flat” i.e. semi crouch is not acceptable
- Essential that both teams are at the same height before engage
- Teams that refuse to go immediately into the crouch are liable to be free kicked, unless for safety reasons they are not ready
- Timing by referee imperative when calling ‘‘crouch, touch, pause, engage’’ and referees will ensure that the cadence is slower down than in previous seasons
  - These are instructions that players must react to when the referee calls them – not when they feel like doing it
  - Referees will not move on to the next instruction until the previous action has been completed
- Once players “touch”, they will be given time to return themselves to a position of strength and settle before the “pause” instruction is given.
- Players not to engage until referee calls “engage”
- Players who stand up or try to engage prematurely are liable to sanction
- Players who fail to engage once the call has been made render themselves liable to sanction
- Number 8 to be bound correctly on “crouch” and remain bound until scrum ends

### Offside Lines at Scrums – Scrum Half

- Referees should be particularly vigilant of the following offside lines for a scrum half:
  - Law 20.12.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
  - Law 20.12.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 of the offside line. For that scrum half, that runs through the hindmost foot of that player’s team in the scrum

### **Binding and Throw In**

- All front rows must bind correctly for duration of scrum.
- If incorrect binding occurs, the player is liable to sanction. Material effect will be the decider as to the referee's action. Advantage should not be played for an offence of illegal binding by a front row player
- Scrum to be steady and parallel to touch line prior to throw in.
- Scrum half should be reminded to ensure a credible throw in to the scrum. This should be done prior to the scrum engagement procedure commencing.
- If scrums are working well then there is no excuse for the No. 9 not to put the ball in credibly.
- Referees are requested to back away from the scrum after the engagement.
- Referees to penalise if the scrum is steady and parallel and the No.9 delays the feed.
- All players in a scrum other than the front rows must bind on second row with at least one arm for duration of the scrum.
- Extra vigilance should be given to back row players binding at the scrum

### **Collapsed and Popped Scrum**

- Safety is paramount.
- The referee is more liable to reset a scrum which goes up on the mark as opposed to the retreating scrum, which is liable to sanction.
- Referees should not guess as to the cause of a collapse, reset if not sure. If sure be consistent and penalise appropriately.

### **Wheeled Scrum**

- Referees to be aware of wheeling prior to throw in.
- If a scrum wheels on its fulcrum, then it is likely a whip wheel is involved.
- Beware of tight heads pulling back.

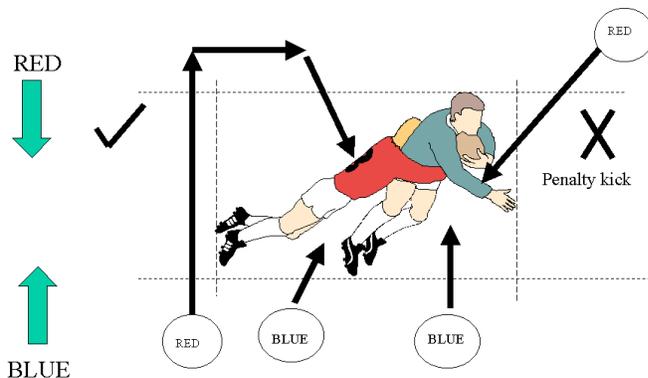
### **General**

- The scrum has to be a contest.
- Providing no safety issues are involved, a referee must not attempt to "de-power" a dominant scrum.



## TACKLE

### Law 15 7 (b) Tackle



Players who play the ball after a tackle must do so from the direction indicated in the diagram above i.e. from the direction of their own goal line and directly behind the tackled player or tackler nearest to their goal line.

#### **The Tackle**

- The referee will ensure the tackle is a fair contest.
- Preventative statements should not be used repeatedly by referee. If players do not respond immediately they are liable to sanction.
- Accuracy of referees and players decision making is paramount.
- Advantage will be played only if ball is quickly available.

#### **Tackler**

- This is the first priority for the referee once a tackle is complete.
- Tackler must immediately release tackled player and the ball
- Tackler must immediately get up or move away from tackled player and ball.
- Tackler must get to his feet before playing ball and then may play the ball from any direction.
- Referee to recognise importance of quick ball and strike a balance between quick and slow ball in relation to the contest.

#### **Players in opposition to the ball carrier**

- Law 15.6.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.

### Tackled Player

- Tackled player must attempt to make ball available immediately.
- Tackled player must immediately pass or release ball.
- **If opposition players who are on their feet attempt to play the ball the tackled player must release the ball.**
- Players are not allowed to crawl along ground in possession of ball.
- Players who adopt the squeeze ball position must recycle the ball immediately or become liable to penalty.
- A player lying on the ground must not prevent an opponent (who is on his feet) from gaining possession of the ball.

### Arriving Players

- Players **must** enter from behind the ball and directly behind the tackled player (i.e.: through the gate).
- Arriving players must stay on their feet, where possible, **and under no circumstances**, must players 'seal' the ball off i.e. prevent a fair contest for the ball.
- **Attackers to be dealt with in same way as defenders.**
- Players positively clearing out a player in the act of making a new tackle and/ or forming a Ruck is acceptable if arms and hands are used and not a shoulder only.

### General

- Accuracy and consistency by referee paramount.
- Unplayables have a place but can't be a cop out for the referees not refereeing the tackle.
- Balance consequences of quick ball, slow ball, penalty or scrum.
- Yellow cards can be given if a professional foul is committed even if team have not been warned. Referees are to be encouraged to give a technical yellow card earlier in game rather than allow slow ball from tackle and then card as a last resort.



## RUCK

### Forming and Entering a Ruck

- 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.
- Referees will endeavour to call “ruck” or “ruck, hands off” on those occasions where it is necessary/possible
- Joining players **must** do so from behind the hindmost foot of team-mate and through the “gate”
- Referees to be particularly vigilant on side entry.
- Players must bind with a whole arm around body of a team-mate

### The Ruck

- Players in the ruck **must** endeavour to stay on their feet
- Providing a player from either side on their feet after a tackle comply with all aspects of the Law 15 (Tackle) and have the ball in their hands prior to contact with an opposition player on his feet those players may continue with possession of the ball even if a player from the opposition makes contact with those players in possession of the ball (i.e. hands on the ball **before** a ruck is formed)
- Any players joining the two players contesting the ball must not handle the ball in accordance with Law 16.4.B. If the ball is not in possession of any player after a tackle and a ruck is formed, players may not use their hands in accordance with Law 16.4.B.
- Provided he comes from an on side position and through the “gate”, a player may drive through middle of a ruck. This is permissible as long as players observe correct binding and entry and stay on their feet
- If the scrum half / receiver has no hands on the ball he cannot be touched
- If the scrum half / receiver has hands on the ball he can be touched as long as the tackler was correctly bound, on side and on his feet when beginning the tackle. He must not kick the ball if it is in the scrum half’s hands. He must not deliberately knock the ball forward out of the scrum half’s hands.
- **Offensive and defensive pillars must respect offside lines.**
- If the ball is under a foot/ feet of a player bound and on his feet when the half back puts his hands on the ball then the ball is out.
- If the ball is clear of the bodies then it is out.

### Successful End to a Ruck

- When the ball is totally exposed or over goal line.
- When the acting scrum half clearly has possession of the ball and the ball is clear of the last feet of the ruck



## MAUL

### **Forming a Maul**

- Maul occurs when a player carrying ball is held by one or more opponents and one or more of his team mates bind on to the ball carrier.
- Side entry to be closely monitored.
- A ruck cannot be changed into a maul.
- Players must bind with a whole arm around body of a team-mate

### **The Maul**

- Players must not jump on top of a maul.
- Ball carrier may go to ground without penalty.
- A player must not take any action to make the opposition believe the ball is out of the maul when it is still in.
- Players can get on the “wrong” side of a maul legally.
- Offensive and defensive pillars must respect off-side lines.
- Only one player can sack a player who comes to ground with the ball in a lineout.
- Referees should be vigilant to obstruction by the team in possession of the ball when forming a maul

### **Successful End to a Maul**

- Maul ends successfully when the ball, or a player with the ball, leaves the maul.
- Maul ends successfully when ball is on the ground or over goal line.
- Referees to call ‘use it’ when maul becomes stationary for the second time.
- Maul moving sideways is considered stationary.
- Players must not intentionally collapse a maul. This is dangerous play.

### **Additional Information**

- Law 17.4.F – When players of the team who are not in possession of the ball in the maul voluntarily leave the maul such that there are no players of that team left in the maul, the maul may continue and there are two offside lines.
- Law 17.4.G – When players of the team who are not in possession of the ball in the maul voluntarily leave the maul such that there are no players of that team left in the maul, players of that team may rejoin the maul providing that the first player binds on the foremost player of the team in possession of the ball.



## LINE OUT

### Formation

- Referees encouraged to allow quick throw when law observed.
- If players fail to form a line out when opposition are at line of touch they render themselves liable to a free kick.
- If a team form a line away from line of touch and then move toward line of touch, the referee will ask them to stop until the metre gap is set and observed.
- Teams arriving late must not cross line of touch as they jump.
- Referees will have to monitor the number of participants in the lineout.

### The Lineout

- Referees should not slow the game down by trying to set every line out. Set the initial line-outs, set out your stall re gaps and if players don't respond thereafter – free kick
- Only one player can sack a player who comes to ground with the ball in a lineout

### Receiver Options

- Teams are not required to have a receiver at the lineout
- If a receiver exists, said player must be **2 metres** from the lineout.
- Once the lineout has started (i.e. when the ball leaves the throwing in player's hands) this player may join the lineout as normal

### After the Ball is thrown

- Players not to peel until ball leaves hooker's hands.
- Lineout participants should not peel down the middle of the lineout.
- Non participants must not encroach 10m until line out ends.
- Players on peel must remain within 5, 15 and 10 area and keep moving.
- Referee to control backs onside and signal end of line out.
- If players drift infield beyond 15m and the ball does not travel beyond 15m line, they render themselves liable to a penalty.
- Referees to be vigilant of jumpers being tackled in the air and support lifters being tackled illegally.



### **Maul formation from lineouts**

- Teams are entitled to defend a maul so the ball carrier must be bound by opponent at the start of a maul otherwise it is obstruction
- Referees must penalise clear and obvious offences
- Both the ball winning team and the defending team must be refereed equally at the maul

### **Managing the non-throwing in player**

- The defending team **must** have a player in immediate opposition to the player who is throwing in and that player must stay 2 metres away from the 5 metre line **and** 2 metres from the lineout (i.e. 2m x 2m)
- Once the lineout has started (i.e. when the ball leaves the throwing in player's hands) this player may join the lineout as normal.

### **Throwers Foot in the field of play**

- Referees will manage this by asking for compliance before penalising.
- No specific players are required for line-outs. If injured players are far enough away, play should continue

### **General**

- Referee to ensure correct formation before ball is thrown.
- Referees to warn transgressors early before resorting to sanction.
- Delayed throw liable to sanction.
- Hookers and scrum halves to comply with law.
- One metre gap to be obtained and maintained.
- Referees to ensure defenders do not disrupt timing of throw by closing gap or early lifting.

## ADVANTAGE

Playing advantage should have a reason, to help the non offending side. It is recognised that playing advantage is an acquired referee skill but it is important to be consistent within the game.

### **Quick Whistle**

- When a scrum collapses or pops up.
- When a player kills a ball on the ground the referee should stop the game immediately and award a penalty unless in his judgement an obvious advantage is likely. Players who intentionally kill or slow down the ball must either be admonished or cautioned.

### **Delay Whistle**

- For a technical offence, possession without being under pressure is sufficient advantage (the gain line is not important).
- If no real gain in territory or clear tactical advantage, then referee should return for the full penalty
- Referee to recognise importance of a kickable position and the tactical advantage gained from a kick to the corner and a possible try.
- Teams will not be allowed to take a quick tap if the ball is deliberately thrown away.
- If a team do not want to use the advantage (in order to take a quick tap), they should be encouraged to ask the referee for the penalty or free kick rather than deliberately throwing the ball away.
- It is imperative referees are allowed to exercise their judgement.
- The referee will immediately signal when he is playing advantage and continue to signal while he is walking/ slow jogging. Once he begins to run, he will drop his arm even if advantage is continuing. He will verbally indicate advantage over.

## **KICK OFF, KICKS IN OPEN PLAY AND RESTARTS**

### **Kick Offs**

- **Receiver being taken in the air and defending team blocking to be penalised.**
- Kick from behind the line and players behind the kicker both need to be picked up by referees.
- Referees need to be aware of clear and obvious obstruction when forming a maul at kick offs.

### **Offside at kicks in open play**

- From a kick from maul or scrum, it is important to check the offside line of the chasing players
- **If the ball is kicked for touch, players who are offside must not advance until either they are put onside or when the ball has been confirmed as out by the AR/Touch Judge/Referee**
- The only person that can stop a quick throw in is a player who is onside at the time the ball went out.
- Players can't advance before the ball is dead otherwise they will liable to sanction.
- Assistant Referees (where appointed) will assist the referees in this area.

### **Tap Kicks**

- Kick should not be taken in front of the mark- has to be on or behind the mark.
- Quick tap kick must be on the mark or behind. Quick tap - if the players are on the ground and the player takes the kick legally then play on (except from a scrum collapse which requires the tap to be on the mark).
- Referees should be more aware of the ball being thrown away or not releasing and subsequently stopping the quick tap.
- If a player inside the 10 metres interferes in the case of a quick tap, then that player is liable to penalty but beware of player "milking" 10 metres.

## THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT REFEREE

- Consistency between match officials is vital.
- Consistency between both Assistant Referees is imperative, especially when yellow and red cards are involved.
- Ultimate responsibility rests with referee.
- Referee will not over rule an Assistant Referee without prior consultation.
- Referee may confirm close touch down awards with Assistant Referees

### **Primary Responsibilities of an Assistant Referee**

- Touch
- Touch in goal
- Kicks at goal except drop kicks.
- Foul play.

### **Secondary Responsibilities of an Assistant Referee**

- Advise referee of trends at stoppages in play.
- Offer any other assistance which does not intrude upon primary duties.
- Assist in preventative management of offside at scrums and lineouts.

### **Assistant Referees Shall**

- Signal any incident of foul play regardless of whether or not this was seen by referee.
- Report player's number, team and offence on request of referee.
- Offer a recommended sanction **if requested** by referee to do so.

### **Assistant Referees Shall Not**

- Shout, signal or gesture to players at tackle, ruck and maul. **This is the referee's duty only.** The AR can tell the referee that a player is offside but will not tell the players directly.
- Communicate to referee off side, knock on, or forward pass when referee is in position to make such a decision but can advise if the referee is clearly unsighted.



## **GENERAL**

- There will be a zero tolerance as regards players questioning the referee (including the captain).
- Captains will not be allowed to approach the referee at penalties or free kicks to “discuss” decisions. Clarification can be given, if necessary, at “downtime”.
- Questioning of a referee’s decision at a penalty/free kick – could result in a team being marched back 10metres.
- Referees must not give lengthy explanations when giving decisions.
- Referees should only stop for injuries when it is deemed unsafe to play on.
- If referee requires to leave the field then No1 Assistant Referee (if appointed) should take over immediately. If referee can return within 15 minutes then he can.