

ON-FIELD POLICY GUIDELINES

TACKLE IDENTIFICATION

DOMINANT TACKLE DEFINITION

It is the sole responsibility of the referee to adjudicate on the tackle.

- When the ball carriers' momentum is propelled backwards towards his own goal line, then the tackle is **DOMINANT**.
- Tacklers are permitted to lever themselves up off the ball carrier.

Referees' Vocabulary – "Dominant Tackle"

NOTE: When defenders are required to move off the tackle the referee will call 'STAND UP'

NEUTRAL TACKLE DEFINITION

It is the sole responsibility of the referee to adjudicate on the tackle.

- If the ball carriers' momentum is still moving towards the opponent's goal line when a tackle is being performed, then the tackle is deemed neutral.
- The referee will allow more time for a low defender to release the legs of the ball carrier. This tackle is classified as neutral and the defender **MUST** release on the referee's call of **Movement**.

Referees' Vocabulary – "Movement or Move"

Note: When a referee calls on a defender/s to move, the intent of this movement is to immediately move away from the ball carrier. The defender/s cannot:

- a) Spin on the ball carrier to an advantageous defensive position.
- b) Peel off the ball carrier one by one.
- c) Climb back over the ruck.

SURRENDER TACKLE DEFINITION

It is the sole responsibility of the referee to adjudicate on the tackle.

- A **SURRENDER** tackle will be called if the ball carrier surrenders his run **IN** or **AT** the line.

If a **SURRENDER** tackle is called, the defender/s may:

1. Work the ball carrier on the ground, move to the Bear Hug position, lay on and/or spin to the front of the tackle.

When working the player on the ground defender/s are not permitted to do this by using the ball carriers' head or neck as a lever. This will be deemed a **GRAPPLE TACKLE**.

Referees' Vocabulary – "Surrender"

NOTE: When defenders are required to move off the tackle the referee will call 'STAND UP'

SPEARING OUT OF OWN IN-GOAL

- When a ball-carrier spears out of his in-goal into the field of play, the referee will:
 1. Allow the defence to place their hand/s on the ball-carrier constituting a tackle.
 2. If the ball carrier spears in or succumbs to the tackle the referee will identify the tackle as a **surrender** tackle.
 3. Call on the ball-carrier to regain his feet and continue his run. If the player fails to do so, the referee will adjudicate a voluntary tackle.

Note: The ball-carrier cannot be lifted or forced back into the in-goal.

PLAYER SAFETY

In the interest of player safety the following will attract penalties:

- Any high contact with the head or neck.
- Grapple or Crusher tackles.
- Chicken Wings.
- A late hit on the kicker.
- A hit on a kicker whilst in the air.
- Attacking the head of a player whilst on the ground.
- Late contact with a player when no longer in possession.

Note:

1. **A penalty try, eight point try, sin bin or penalty can be awarded against a player who slides in feet first attempting to prevent a try.**
2. **In cases of repeated grappling/wrestling offences, the referee may consider use of the sin bin.**

STANDING IN TACKLE

- Once the referee has called "HELD" the ball carrier is to be released immediately to play the ball.
- If the ball-carrier is then pulled to the ground or another tackler joins the tackle after the tackle has been called, a penalty is to be awarded.
- If the ball carrier offloads the ball after the tackle has been called, a penalty is to be awarded against the team in possession unless the referee deems it to be simultaneous, in which case a scrum will be formed with LHF to the non offending team.
- If the ball carrier has one leg off the ground and is LIFTED AND CARRIED the referee will call "Held" immediately.
- The referee will take momentum into account when the tackle consists of a Hit and Drive as opposed to a Lift and Carry.

Referees' Vocabulary – "Held or Release"

SUPPORTING BALL CARRIER

- It is permissible for player/s from the team in possession to lend weight to the ball-carrier with an objective of not losing ground. The referee will call Held when this occurs.
- It is **NOT** permissible for the player/s from the team in possession to impede any player from making a tackle. The referee will penalise if this occurs.

Note: The referee will take into account any momentum the tackle has generated after **HELD or RELEASED** has been called.

OFFSIDE

- A player is offside when he has one foot (either on or off the ground) in front of one of his own team who touches, is touched by, held or kicked the ball.

RUCK – ATTACK

- It is the responsibility of the tackled player to play the ball when he can in the correct manner where the tackle has been completed.
- The tackled player must stand up with balance and control, lift the ball clear of the ground and play the ball with the foot.
- The tackled player must play the ball when instructed by the referee.

Note: Player/s from the team in possession must not interfere with defender/s. ie. Dummy half physically pulling tackler/s off the tackled player.

RUCK – DEFENCE

- **A Penalty is required against a defender/s when:**
 - a) Flops late onto a tackled player on the ground.
 - b) Works the tackled player on the ground.
 - c) Leg pulls.
 - d) Places his hand on the ball once the tackle is complete.
 - e) Lever any part of the tackled player's body.
 - f) Crowds the play-the-ball by using his knee/s.
 - g) The markers are not square, float, go early or are too deep and become involved from that position.

TEN METRES

- All defenders must make it back to the marked 10 metres and remain there until the ball clears the ruck.
- The defensive line may only move forward once the ball has cleared the ruck.

Referees' Vocabulary – "Hold and Go"

Definition: Clear of the ruck is when the ball is positioned behind the foot of the player playing the ball.

DOWNTOWN CHASERS

- 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 players.

(This rule delays the movement of the offside players downfield in an attempt to encircle the ball receiver as he collects the ball.)

DISTRACTING GOAL KICKER

- It is illegal to attempt to distract the attention of a player who is kicking for goal.
- Players from the non-kicking side must position themselves as follows:
 1. KICK AT GOAL FOLLOWING A TRY: Outside the field of play (ie: Must be behind their own goal-line or outside the touch-line)
 2. PENALTY KICK AT GOAL: To their goal-line or not less than 10 metres from the mark.

STEALING THE BALL

- The referee must form an opinion there was an obvious **intent** to dispossess the ball carrier before penalising.
- Where a player steals the ball (1 on 1) from a player on whom he is effecting a tackle, play will be allowed to continue.
- Where two or more players are effecting the same tackle – irrespective of whether all but one ‘**drops off**’ the tackle and the ball carrier is subsequently dispossessed of the ball, a penalty will be awarded against the player or players effecting the tackle.

Note: A defender who merely places a hand on the ball carrier is not deemed to be affecting a tackle.

ATTACKING PLAYER HELD UP OVER TRY LINE

- When an attacking player is held up over the opponent’s goal line the referee will:
 1. Rule held up.
 2. Call time out.
 3. Instruct the ball-carrier to recommence the game with a play the ball 10 metres into the field of play adjacent to where he was held up.
 4. The referee will continue the tackle count.

BALL STRIPPING IN GOAL

- The ball may be stripped from the ball carrier if the ball carrier is attempting to ground the ball for a try.

Note: Defenders cannot deliberately hold the ball carrier up simply to strip the ball unless the ball carrier is clearly attempting to ground the ball.

Advantage applies to the attacking team.

DOUBLE MOVEMENT

- The attacking player must not promote the football from the position the ball or the arm carrying the ball has been grounded, in the process of scoring a try.
- If momentum carries a player in possession into the in-goal area, it will not be a double movement if the ball would have finished on or over the goal line regardless of any subsequent movement of the ball or the arm carrying the ball.

OBSTRUCTION

- There is to be no advantage gained by the team in possession.
- It is the responsibility of the decoy runner/s not to interfere with the defensive line.
- The ball carrier cannot run behind a decoy runner and gain an advantage.
- Players from the team in possession who loiter next to the play the ball can be interpreted as obstructing the defence.
- If in the process of scoring a try an attacking player dives through or into the legs of the player who has played the ball a penalty will be awarded to the defending team. This action will be interpreted as obstruction.
- Defensive decisions that commit defenders to decoy runners will not be considered obstruction.

BLOCKERS

- A player from the non kicking team shielding a catcher from chasers from the kicking team must position himself early. It will be interpreted as obstruction if the player/s shielding the catcher:
 1. Arrives at the same time as the chaser/s from the kicking team and deliberately obstruct/s the catching of the high ball.
 2. Deliberately run/s the chaser/s from the kicking team off the football.

RESTARTS OF PLAY

Kick off, goal line drop out and 20 metre:

- These restarts of play may be taken quickly if:
 1. All Officials are in position
 2. The referee has signalled to recommence play.
 3. The kick is to be taken in the centre of the ½ way line, goal line or 20 metre line.
 4. All players from the team taking the restart are onside.
- If in the opinion of the referee, he deems the kicking team is deliberately delaying the restart due to the circumstances of the game, the referee may call time off. The referee may take this action at any stage during the game if he believes time is being wasted to gain a tactical advantage.

Penalty

- A player may not take the quick restart from a penalty kick until the referee has indicated the mark by verbal instruction and has moved to a position to adjudicate the game.

SIN BIN

- There are four main areas for use of the sin bin:
 1. Repeated infringements;
 2. Deliberate break down of play, especially in try scoring positions;
 3. Cooling off; and
 4. Dissent

DISSENT

- A captain may approach the referee to clarify a ruling.
- Verbal abuse or casting aspersions on the referee's ability or integrity will not be tolerated.
- Referees are not to debate decisions with captains.
- Captains should not use the process to deliberately slow the opposing team's momentum. It will be at the discretion of the referee as to whether clarification of a decision is to be carried out immediately or at a later time in the match.
- Breaches may lead to advancing the mark or sin bin/dismissal.

SCRUMS

- The scrum is to be bound correctly and the OUTSIDE leg of BOTH open side props must be forward. The scrum is not to break until the ball is called "out" by the referee.
- The ball is to be fed into the tunnel with the halfback standing SQUARE AND the ball held in a horizontal position with BOTH hands.
- To be in play, the ball must emerge from the scrum BETWEEN AND BEHIND the inner feet of the second row forwards.
- Both teams must be 5 metres behind the last row of forwards and not move forward until the ball has cleared the scrum.
- If a team is bound and ready to contest a scrum, the referee will call time out. The scrum will then be contested when the opposing team is bound.
- The referee will hold up the game to replace a bleeding player and allow the bleeding player to be interchanged.

BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

- The Benefit of the Doubt rule should always apply to the attacking team in a try scoring situation.

