



To: Secretaries / CEOs of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership
From: David Carrigy, Head of External & Member Relations
Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee
Date: October 16, 2009
Ruling: 8 : 2009

Request for a Ruling from the SRU

At a lineout team A is throwing in and wins the ball. As the jumper returns to the ground and his supporting players bind onto him in accordance with Law. The ball is passed to the back man of the bound players with the expectation that team B will contest for possession of the ball and form a maul.

Team B at no time during the catching of the ball, or while team A form what they expect to be a maul, contest for possession of the ball. Once team A advance towards team B's goal line, team B makes contact with the front players of the advancing group of team A players but are denied an opportunity to make contact with the ball carrier as the ball is now at the back of the group.

Is this obstruction and are team A liable to penalty?

Ruling

The Designated Members have indicated that the Laws applying to obstruction need to be applied consistently whether they be at a lineout or in any other open play situation.

The Designated Members have ruled that in the situation described the original ball carrier is no longer in contact with the ball, it is not possible for the opposition to form a maul by contact with the ball carrier.

The Referee will award a penalty kick in accordance with Law 10.1 (c), (d) or (e) save for situations where the Referee considers the actions constitute



accidental offside in accordance with Law 11. 6(a) when a scrum is awarded with the throw in to the non-offending team.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'David Carrigy', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

David Carrigy
Head of External & Member Relations