

To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: Hugh H. Penman-Head of Council and Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

Ruling: 3: 2003

Date: 7th June 2003

Number of pages (incl. cover):

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SRU has requested a ruling with regard to Law 15-Tackle & Law 17 Maul:

Team A win the ball in a line-out. The ball carrier is joined by several of his team mates and they move off the line of touch towards their opponents' goal-line. One player of team B on his own grasps the ball –carrier and brings him to ground.

1. Is the maul formed under Law 17 as soon as the player from Team B grasps the player from Team A and he then collapses the maul.
2. Is the player from Team B tackling the ball-carrier under Law 15 and play should therefore continue.

The Designated Members have ruled the following in answer to questions raised:

1. Is the maul formed under Law 17 as soon as the player from Team B grasps the player from Team A and he then collapses the maul?

Ruling

By definition, given the abovementioned scenario, a maul has formed. Therefore given this scenario, if the player from Team B collapses the maul, then he is liable to penalty.

2. Is the player from Team B tackling the ball-carrier under Law 15 and play should therefore continue?

Ruling

By definition, given the abovementioned scenario, a tackle has not occurred.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh H. Penman
Head of Council and Member Services

To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: Hugh H. Penman-Head of Council and Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

Ruling: 11: 2003

Date: 24th July 2003

Number of pages (incl. cover):

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NZRFU has requested a ruling with regard to Law 15 Tackle and Law 17

Maul:

The NZRFU is in receipt of Ruling 3:2003. The Union seeks further clarification on the interpretation implicit in Ruling 3. In order to bring further clarity to what is involved in forming a maul and collapsing a maul we would request answers to the following questions.

1. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line.

a. A defending player drives in low and wraps his arms around the legs (knee height) of the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him. The #8 still in possession of the ball is brought to ground.

By his actions is the defender:

- i. Forming a maul?
- ii. Collapsing a maul?

2. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line.

a. A defending player, while remaining on his feet, grasps his jersey (shoulder region) of the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him, and immediately brings him to ground.

By his actions is the defender:

- i. Forming a maul?
 - ii. Collapsing a maul?
3. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line
- a. A defending player, while remaining on his feet, drives into the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him, and binds on him in an effort to prevent their forward progress.
 - By his actions is the defender:
 - i. Forming a maul?

If the answer to 3.a.i. is yes, and the defender now drags the maul to the ground, is he:

 - ii. Collapsing a maul?

The Designated Members have ruled the following in answer to the question raised:

- 1. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line.
 - a. A defending player drives in low and wraps his arms around the legs (knee height) of the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him. The #8 still in possession of the ball is brought to ground.
 - By his actions is the defender:
 - i. Forming a maul?
 - ii. Collapsing a maul?

Ruling

The defender has not formed a maul, nor has he collapsed a maul.

- 2. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line.
 - a. A defending player, while remaining on his feet, grasps his jersey (shoulder region) of the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him, and immediately brings him to ground.
 - By his actions is the defender:
 - i. Forming a maul?
 - ii. Collapsing a maul?

Ruling

The defender, if he has not bound (by definition) to the ball-carrier #8, has not formed a maul, nor has he collapsed a maul.

3. Team A wins a 5m attacking scrum. The #8 detaches with the ball, and #6 binds on immediately and they drive towards the line.

a. A defending player, while remaining on his feet, drives into the #8, who still has his #6 bound to him, and binds on him in an effort to prevent their forward progress.

By his actions is the defender:

i. Forming a maul?

If the answer to 3.a.i. is yes, and the defender now drags the maul to the ground, is he:

ii. **Collapsing a maul?**

Ruling

The defender has formed a maul, and has collapsed a maul, and is therefore subject to penalty.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh H. Penman

Head of Council and Member Services

To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: Hugh H. Penman-Head of Council and Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

Ruling: 13: 2003

Date: 18th August 2003

Number of pages (incl. cover):

The SRU has requested a ruling with regard the tackler, in Law 15.

Under the definition of a tackle, "any opponents of the tackled player who go to ground are known as tacklers." Can a tackler stay on his feet?

If the answer to the above is yes, under 15.5 The Tackler it states in (a) that "when a player tackles an opponent and they both go to ground, the tackler must immediately release the tackled player."

Can a tackler who is on his feet hold on to the tackled player or must he release the tackled player?

The Designated Members have ruled the following in answer to the questions raised:

Ruling

By definition, any opponents of the tackled player who go to ground are known as tacklers. Therefore a player on his feet is not a tackler as defined by Law.

A player on his feet in the situation described is not a tackler as defined by Law. That player is not part of the tackle, as he has not gone to ground. He can only therefore be described as an 'Other Player' in Law 15.7 Other Players. Specifically Law 15.7(c) would apply, where that player can only play the ball if he approaches from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players' goal-line.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh H. Penman

Head of Council and Member Services

To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: Hugh H. Penman-Head of Council and Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

Ruling: 3: 2004

Date: 20th February 2004

Number of pages (incl. cover):

The JRFU has requested a ruling with regard Law 15 Tackle

The players of Team A hold on to the ball carrier of Team B. The players from Team A drive the ball carrier towards the Team B's goal line (i.e. Team A players are going forward). After the ball carrier goes to the ground, one of the players of Team A holding on to the ball carrier also goes to the ground whilst the other player of Team A is still on his feet holding on to the ball and the opposition's arm. By definition, a tackle occurs with the ball carrier being the tackled player and the player of Team A on the ground being the tackler.

In this situation,

- (1) Should the Team A's player still on his feet retire to the position behind the ball to approach from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to his goal-line ?
- (2) Should that standing player in retiring to the position as aforementioned release the ball in the tackled player's hands?
- (3) Does the tackled player have to release the ball immediately?

If the answer to the 1) and 2) are yes, it may seem as though as far as the contest for the ball is concerned, it would be advantageous to go to the ground.

Our view is that the player on his feet in the above case should be allowed to continue to play as he is involved in the tackle from the beginning of the tackle without being defined as a tackler. It is not appropriate to define him as the other player.

In order to codify the spirit of the fair contestability of the ball in the Playing Charter, the concept and definition of an "arriving player" should be introduced to avoid such anomalous treatment of a player endeavouring to stay on his feet.

The Designated Members have ruled the following in answer to the question raised:

Ruling

The answers to the abovementioned questions are:

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes

To recon firm the position stated in Ruling 13:2003:

By definition, any opponents of the tackled player who go to ground are known as tacklers. Therefore a player on his feet is not a tackler as defined by Law.

A player on his feet in the situation described is not a tackler as defined by Law. That player is not part of the tackle, as he has not gone to ground. He can only therefore be described as an 'Other Player' in Law 15.7 Other Players. Specifically Law 15.7(c) would apply, where that player can only play the ball if he approaches from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players' goal-line.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh H. Penman

Head of Council and Member Services

To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: Hugh H. Penman-Head of Council and Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

Ruling: 8: 2004

Date: 1st September 2004

Number of pages (incl. cover): DRAFT

The JRU has requested a ruling with regard Law 15-Tackle

Team B ball carrier ("B-player") is "held" (not tackled) by two Team A players ("A1-", "A2-player") and A1-player held on to the legs of B-player while A2-player held on to the ball and the arm(s) of B-player. By momentum, B-player and A2-player (held on the ball and B-player's arms) changed/rotated the position with each other, as the result, A2 player is closer to the Team-B's goal line than B-player. Then B-player went to the ground on his knee(s) as well as A1-player, which by definition forms a "tackle". After this tackle, A2-player is still on his feet, playing the ball and is about to gain the possession of the ball from the tackled B-player.

Law 15.7(b) provides, "After a tackle any players on their feet may attempt to gain possession by taking the ball from the ball carrier's possession." A2-player, by this law, can still continue to play the ball or to attempt to gain the possession. The JRFU Ruling said a player in A2-player's position should "release the ball in the tackled player's hands". However, no part in Law 15.7 states that such player must "release the ball." Clarification is sought whether a player in A2-player's position, who is on his feet and playing the ball while a tackle occurs without involving such player, could still play the ball.

For the purpose of this analysis, also assume that such player is not merely holding on to the part of ball carrier's body, just pulling an arm etc.

If the Ruling previously given on a request from the JRFU is applied to the above scenario, A2-player, who had been already playing the ball at the time when the tackle was made, has to release the ball and retire in order to play the ball again pursuant to Law 15.7(c) which result is also consistent with Law 15.8(b) prohibiting all players from preventing the release of the ball by the tackled player. A player on his feet could only play by virtue of Law 15.7(b), which applies "After a tackle", if and only if, he retires first in accordance with Law 15.7(c), which deals with "other players" "at or near to a tackle" (which is earlier in point of time than "after a tackle").

The Designated Members have ruled the following in answer to the question raised:

Ruling

The Annual Meeting of Council in 2004 agreed to approve changes to Law 15-Tackle. This related to the Definition which now reads:

“ A tackle occurs when the ball-carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to ground. A ball-carrier who is not held is not a tackled player and a tackle has not taken place. Opposition players who hold the ball-carrier and bring that player to ground, and who also go to ground, are known as tacklers. Opposition players who hold the ball-carrier and do not go to ground are not tacklers.”

The players who are not tacklers are covered by Law 15.7(c) specifically, and those players can only play the ball if they approach from behind the ball and from the directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players' goal-line.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh H. Penman

Head of Council and Member Services