

REFEREE AIDE MEMOIRE, AS AT NOVEMBER 2006

The Aide Memoire that follows reflects the outcomes from the Referee Panel and Referee Assessor workshops in 2003 and has been updated following Elite Referee Seminar's in 2004/2005/2006, which assisted the groups in agreeing a consistent approach to refereeing certain aspects of the Game where there has been some perceived inconsistencies. The outcomes reinforce that the Law Book is the only on the field Game Management Document.

UNFAIR PLAY/REPEATED INFRINGEMENTS

It was recognised there was a need for extreme **accuracy** when adjudging Unfair Play

The referee was required to judge intent, the action taken by the player(s) and the effect.

Cynical play requires a caution and temporary suspension (without warnings save for team repeated infringement as per Law), this can be

- One cynical offence by a player
- A player who re-offends
- Team re-offends

Consistency in tolerance levels of referees is required and this should be linked to the cynical nature of the offences. If it is clearly cynical the player requires a caution and temporary suspension

Repeated team infringements can be

- A number of similar offences in a short period of time
- A pattern without time limit e.g. offences occurring close to the goal line throughout the match

Repeated infringements by the individual are without time limit.

When admonishing a player the word caution should not be used.

If a penalty try is awarded the referee must adjudge first if the offence requires:

- An admonishment
- A caution and temporary suspension
- An ordering off

Depending upon the severity of the incident. If a "yellow card" offence results in a penalty try the player must still be temporarily suspended

When a player returns to the field of play after a temporary suspension that player should be reminded of his obligations

If advantage is played after foul play the very least that should happen is an admonishment.

- There are still too many unnecessary stoppages for injury.
- Referees are to be more proactive in playing on
- Having front row players going down with injury at lineout time is no reason for delaying the lineout.

PLAYERS DISPUTING OF REFEREES DECISIONS

Player questioning of refereeing decisions, at times bordering on abuse, will not be tolerated by the IRB. Referees who take action against these players will have the IRB's support. Referees should remind players of their responsibilities during down time and should not hesitate in advancing the penalty ten metres.

TACKLE

The protocol agreed at the Conference on the Game 2001 is still valid

- Tackler
- Tackled Player
- Arriving Players

Although arriving players require observation before tackled players on occasion. Referees need to be aware of who won the collision when starting their checklist.

Accuracy in decision-making is vital as this is an area of high penalty count and can affect the outcome of matches.

Ball must be available immediately irrespective of body position of the tackled player.

Zero tolerance to be applied to tacklers who do not move away.

It has been recognised that the tackler is becoming a problem and that the tackled player has been penalised for not releasing the ball when he has been prevented from doing so by the tackler.

Where there is a "double tackle" the role of the upper tackler may be of consequence as that player is more likely to impede the playing of the ball

A tackler who regains his feet is obliged to release the tackled player before he attempts to play the ball.

Please note that players on their feet may not be playing the ball (Hands on the ball pulling it back into the tackled player) looking for a penalty they are not

allowing the ball to be played. They should be penalised for not allowing the ball to be played

Zero tolerance to be applied to players who do not enter through “the gate” and who have a material effect on play.

“Gate is as wide as the last person at the end of each side of the tackle or ruck”.

Unplayables are acceptable if the referee is in doubt as to the offender or there is no offence. Unplayables should be whistled quickly. A number of unplayables should indicate there is a problem.

The following analogies apply to arriving players

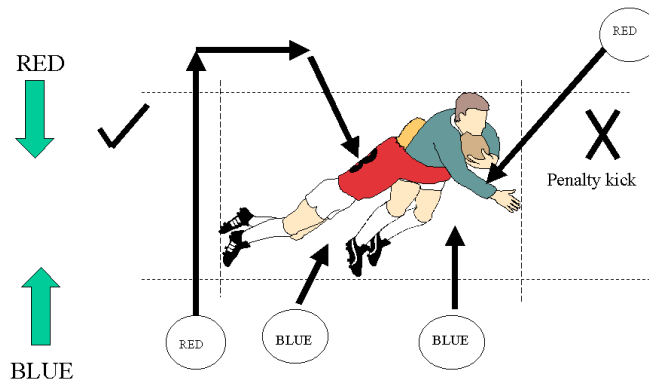
- Plane taking off is acceptable
- Plane landing is not acceptable
- Fork Lift truck when moving players is acceptable
- If not using fork lift technique, players are planes landing and this is not acceptable
- **Zero tolerance** to players who charge into rucks and mauls, without binding
- **Zero tolerance** to players who clear out opponents not involved in ruck or maul

Question whether advantage will work at the tackle unless it is obvious.

After a tackle when a player is on his feet and attempts to pick up the ball and is then joined by an opposition player, if the player has the ball off the ground play would continue according to Law. If the ball is still on the ground when the opposition player makes contact the referee will say “Ruck” and “Hands Off”, in accordance with the communication protocol, and the player will be expected to release the ball

Players who play the ball after a tackle must do so from the direction indicated in the diagram below i.e. from the direction of their own goal line and directly behind the tackled player or tackler nearest to their goal line. The heading should read Law 15 7 (c).

Law 15 7 (b) Tackle



DANGEROUS PLAY AND MISCONDUCT

Dangerous Tackles – **To be treated at the upper end of foul play scale (red card, and work down, not the reverse)**

- High
- No Arms
- Spear
- Tackle on the collar
- Any player who puts a player in the air or caused a player to be put in the air has a responsibility to ensure that the player is brought to the ground safely

Tackles could be

- “Late”
- “Early”
- “Late and Dangerous”
- “Early and Dangerous”

Referees to judge on fact/law, not intent. Intent is for the judiciary to rule on, not the referee.

Stamping/Trampling

- More severe action needs to be taken re acts of stamping and trampling
- Red card is probably the correct sanction for deliberate stamping / trampling on joints.
- Referees need to deal more firmly with retaliators while also dealing with the initial offender.

ADVANTAGE

The referees' judgement associated with the timing of advantage was be sharpened in 2002 (that is as to when it is either finished or still continues) without being prescriptive to reduce the amount of time a team is under pressure.

Advantage has to be real and clear rather than an opportunity.

If a team messes up after a clear and/or tactical advantage has been achieved and the referee has indicated advantage over then play on (the effects of the original incident are over).

SCRUM

Following Checklist to assist:

- Indicate the mark
- Scrum assembles off the mark
 - Feet of front rows an arms length from the mark
 - Both hookers over the mark i.e. not off-set
 - Ball available
- Height – referee to ensure there is a pause after both teams are crouched at the same height – pause is essential.
- Engagement sequence is: CROUCH (same height) - HOLD – ENGAGE
- Angle of engagement (hit) square and steady before throw in
- Front row must bind on engagement and on the body
- Scrum to be square
- No lateral movement before throw in
- Pre scrum engagement scrum half to be at the centre of the scrum and ready to put ball in as soon as the scrums have engaged and are square/stationary.
- Scrum feed must be credible and referees are expected to both manage and sanction when necessary.
- Non-feeding scrum half is getting too much latitude and too often disrupting ball clearance unfairly.
- Check binding and angles of front row
- Back row binding (no early release or binding on front row)
- Ball out

Referees to consider:

- Alignment of players
- Height of players
- Stability on engagement
- Referees to stay out of the tunnel
- Referees not to talk, except for “crouch, hold, engage”
- Zero tolerance to early and late engage

There was a collective agreement that scrum throw ins would be credible – that the scrum halves would be briefed prior to the match and reminded of their obligations at the scrum itself. No compliance would then be penalised and referees would be supported in their actions.

There was confirmation at the Elite Referee Seminar held in November 2006 that the above statement would be adhered to.

Performance Reviewers to mark non-compliance against the referees.

LINEOUT

Referees should not be slowing down every lineout in order to set gaps etc.

Referees need to be more aware of the non-throwing team controlling the line-of touch prior to the throw in and therefore slowing down the throwing team.

If players do not form a lineout when the opposition are at the line of touch they are voluntarily not forming the lineout and render themselves liable to penalty.

If a team form a line away from the line of touch and then move or run towards the line of touch the referee will ask them to stop so that the metre gap is set and maintained.

Be aware of early jumping and the possible cause which could be delayed throw.

Referees need to better monitor and sanction the defending lineout that drives the jumper and/or his supports early.

If a player wins the ball the player cannot be played until he lands on the ground.

The receiver at a lineout must be a **VISIBLE** distance from the lineout and must be **IDENTIFIABLE**.

If players drift in-field beyond the 15 and the ball does not go beyond the 15 metre line those players render themselves liable to penalty.

RUCK AND MAUL

Referees need to be more aware of attacking players joining the ruck other than through the gate.

Referees need to be aware that the team in possession can equally be offside in front of the back foot creating a barrier.

A "clear out" at a ruck can only take place within a metre circle of the ball and arms must be used in this situation.

Detached players from a maul are at best accidentally offside unless they are taking actions which would indicate obstruction.

Both the ball carrying side and defending side need to be refereed equally in the maul.

TIME

The TMO will also act as timekeeper for 6 Nations Championship (see separate briefing note). Important for there to be a briefing.

Referees encouraged to minimise injury time and to play on if at all possible whilst players are being attended to by medical personnel including the replacement of contact lenses.

COMMUNICATION

See Match Official Communication Protocol

Communication Protocol is a guideline to Referees and Performance Reviewers. Common sense to be applied to enforcing the spirit of the protocol.

TOUCH JUDGING

See Touch Judge element of the Match Official Communication Protocol

TJ's need to be briefed on the assistance the referee requires. These briefing needs to be planned and a meeting held if possible 24 hours prior to the game.

Everyone needs to be clear on their role within the game

For all games the touch judges need to be at hotel by lunch time the day before the game.

Touch Judges need to focus foremost on their primary roles – Touch / Foul Play / Kicks at Goal.

In regard to foul play, touch judges need to lower their tolerance levels while referees need to take more responsibility in applying the correct sanctions.

BLOOD INJURY

Cross Arm as a signal

QUICK TAPS

Quick taps can be taken following scrum collapse providing the kick is taken either through the mark or in a line through and behind the mark – the mark will normally be in the centre of scrum along the middle line.

All quick taps at scrums/rucks/mauls/tackle must be taken in accordance with the above

Touch Judges discouraged from indicating not ten when there is no offence

Players who look for the second penalty deserve what happens to them

TECHNICAL ZONE

Effective from 01 November, 2006

Both medical personnel can roam – one on either side of the field

Both waters carriers to remain in their own technical area