



Law Rulings 2005

RULING 7: 2005

Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

25 October 2005

The ARU has requested a ruling with regard Law 20.12-Off side at the scrum

One of the changes that were made to the 2005 Laws of the Game was the deletion of the definition (in the box) under Law 20.12. The reason provided for this was that the provisions of the definition were covered elsewhere in the Laws. This now appears to be the case, with one exception. The definition in part provided that: "If the hindmost foot of a team is on or behind that team's goal-line, the off-side line is the goal-line."

Can you please clarify that it was the intention to remove this provision from the Law (thus changing the off-side line in this situation) or was this an oversight?

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

Law 22.6 indicates that a scrum can only take place in the field of play, and also covers the scrum moving across the goal-line and, that a defending player may legally ground the ball as soon as the ball reaches the goal-line.

In conjunction with the above statement, the scrum half is also a defending player and therefore can legally ground the ball. The off-side line must be the goal-line in the above situation otherwise the scrum half would not be able to physically get to the ball to ground it.

RULING 6: 2005

Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

30 September 2005

The ARU has requested a ruling with regard Law 3-Number of Players

On August 15, 2005 the IRB sent out a Law Ruling in response to a request from the Australian Rugby Union in relation to two scenarios relating to Law 3 - Numbers of Players. The ARU seek further clarification in relation to the ruling for Scenario 2.

The ruling provided by the IRB indicates that player 6 may return to the field at the end of the temporary suspension of player 3, but does not clearly indicate when player 3 can return to the field.

Can it be clarified when this player can return to the field? Is this at the end of his period of temporary suspension or when the temporary suspension for player 17 ends? Scenario 2 appears below.

Scenario 2

A front row player (No. 3) is temporary suspended. At the next scrum player No. 6 leaves the field to allow a replacement front row player (No. 17) to take the field. Player No. 17 is temporarily suspended (during the period of temporary suspension for player No. 3). At the next scrum player No. 7 leaves the field to allow a replacement front row player (No. 18) to take the field.

When can players No. 3 and 6 return to the field; at the end of the temporary suspension for player No. 3 or must they remain off the field until the temporary suspension period for player No. 17 ends?

Is there any difference if the team does not have any further front row replacements (for No. 17)?

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

Ruling on Scenario 2 (Ruling 4:2005)

Player No. 6 can return to the field of play at the end of the temporary suspension of player No. 3.

Player No. 17 cannot return to the field of play until his/her temporary suspension has ended.

The temporary suspensions of players 3 and 17 are not linked but are separate temporary suspensions.

If Player No. 3 is temporarily suspended and player No. 17 replaces him, and is temporarily suspended during



the period of player No. 3's temporary suspension, and the team has no further suitable replacements, then there will be uncontested scrums until player No. 3 returns to the field of play.

Ruling Clarification

Player No.3 and Player No.6 can return to the game after the 10 minute temporary suspension of Player No.3 has elapsed.

Player No.7 can return to the game after the 10 minute temporary suspension of Player No.17 has elapsed.

RULING 5: 2005 **Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee**

30 September 2005

The IRFU has requested a ruling with regard Law 10-Foul Play

Current Law prohibits the tackling of a player who is in the air, either in the line out or in open play. The Law is designed to protect players, and to prevent them landing on the ground, on their heads or upper body.

It appears a serious anomaly, therefore, that a player(s) can deliberately lift an opponent off his feet and then may drop (or 'spear') the opponent so that he lands head down or on his upper body.

1. 10 4(e) Foul Play - Dangerous tackling.

Does the action of deliberately lifting an opponent off his feet in a tackle so that he may then be dropped (or 'speared') so that he lands on his head or upper body constitute tackling 'dangerously' as defined in this Law.

2. Law 10 - Foul Play

Does the action described in 1. by definition contrary to the letter and spirit of the laws and constitutes, per se, an act of foul play should it occur in general play; e.g. a player, on the fringes of ruck or maul, so lifted.

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

Ruling

1. The act of lifting an opponent off his feet in a tackle AND dropping or 'spearing' that player so that his head and/or upper body comes into contact with the ground first, is a dangerous tackle.

2. The dangerous play described in 1. above is considered dangerous play no matter where it occurs in the game.

RULING 4: 2005 **Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee**

15 August 2005

The ARU has requested a ruling with regard Law 3-Number of Players

Scenario 1

A front row player (No. 3) is temporary suspended. At the next scrum player No. 6 leaves the field to allow a replacement front row player (No. 17) to take the field. During the time of the temporary suspension, player No. 7 leaves the field (blood, or injury). Can player No. 6 replace player No. 7 at this time or must he remain off the field until the temporary suspension period for player No. 3 ends?

Scenario 2

A front row player (No. 3) is temporary suspended. At the next scrum player No. 6 leaves the field to allow a replacement front row player (No. 17) to take the field. Player No. 17 is temporarily suspended (during the period of temporary suspension for player No. 3). At the next scrum player No. 7 leaves the field to allow a replacement front row player (No. 18) to take the field.

When can players No. 3 and 6 return to the field; at the end of the temporary suspension for player No. 3 or must they remain off the field until the temporary suspension period for player No. 17 ends?

Is there any difference if the team does not have any further front row replacements (for No. 17)?



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

Rulings Ruling 1

Player No. 6 can return to the field of play before the temporary suspension period for player No. 3 ends, providing the team has only 14 players on the field.

Ruling 2

Player No. 6 can return to the field of play at the end of the temporary suspension of player No. 3. Player No. 17 cannot return to the field of play until his/her temporary suspension has ended. The temporary suspensions of players 3 and 17 are not linked but are separate temporary suspensions. If Player No. 3 is temporarily suspended and player No. 17 replaces him, and is temporarily suspended during the period of player No. 3's temporary suspension, and the team has no further suitable replacements, then there will be uncontested scrums until player No. 3 returns to the field of play.

**RULING 3: 2005
Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee**

30th June 2005

The FPR has requested a ruling with regard Law 21-Penalty & Free Kicks

Black team are penalised for a tackle infringement 30 metres from their goal line.; Blue team opt for a kick at goal, placing the ball on the mark and informing the referee as to this intention. Black team gather behind their goal posts. Blue team kicks (chips) the ball forward a few metres from the mark, allowing for an on-side team member to gather the ball and run unhindered across the goal line to score a try.

1. Law 21.5(b) states that 'If the kicker indicates to the referee the intention to kick at goal, the kicker must kick at goal. Once the kicker has made the intention clear, there can be no change of the intention. The referee may enquire of the kicker as to the intention.' Does this mean that the abovementioned scenario is illegal, and if so how would the referee restart the match? Can the interpretation of Law 21.5(b) be that once the kicker has made his intention to kick at goal clear, he may not then change his intention by then kicking to touch, taking a tap kick and passing or running with the ball himself? If this is correct then the abovementioned situation is legal and the referee should award a try.

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

Rulings

The abovementioned scenario is illegal, and the referee would order a scrum at the place of the original penalty, with the put in to the black team.

**RULING 2: 2005
Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee**

April 2005

The FFR has requested a ruling with regard Law 6-Match Officials

Law 6 A.12 stipulates for "a ball in the in-goal touched by a non player". In such situation, the referee considers what would have had occurred after this incident and will blow for a try or a touch in goal where the ball would have been grounded.

However, nothing is stipulated in the event of a person who is not a player touching the ball, intentionally or not, in the field of play or hinders the ball carrier or any other player who is in the position to intervene in the play. Would you please rule on the following scenarios.

1. A person from the technical staff (coach, physio, doctor, water carrier) unintentionally touches the ball or unintentionally hinders the ball carrier or a player in a position to play the ball.
2. A person from the technical staff (coach, physio, doctor, water carrier) intentionally touches the ball or intentionally hinders the ball carrier or a player in a position to play the ball.
3. An exterior element (spectator) unintentionally or intentionally touches the ball or unintentionally or



intentionally hinders the ball carrier or a player in a position to play the ball.

4. An exterior element (animal) touches the ball or hinders the ball carrier or a player in a position to play the ball.

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

Rulings

1. The referee shall judge what would have happened next. If either team gain an advantage, play will be brought back for a scrum with the team in possession at the time of the event to have the throw-in.

2. The above scenario in 1. is applied whether it was intentional or unintentional.

3. The referee shall judge what would have happened next. If either team gain an advantage, play will be brought back for a scrum with the team in possession at the time of the event to have the throw-in.

4. The above scenario in 3. is applied.

RULING 1: 2005 Law Ruling by Designated Members of Laws Committee

April 2005

The IRFU has requested a ruling with regard Law 16-Ruck

1. To paraphrase the definition, it basically states that rucking can occur as long as players are not in contravention of Law 10 Foul Play. In 16.3(f) it states that 'a player rucking for the ball must not ruck players on the ground'. It also states that 'a player must not intentionally step on players who are on the ground, and that 'a player rucking must do so near the ball'.

Is this then taken to mean that there are no exceptions or qualifications to the Law, and that rucking which is directed at a player to remove him as an obstruction or impediment to securing possession of the ball is illegal?

2. Can the Law also be taken to mean that so called 'mountain climbing' where a player is using his boots to climb on a players back/body, is illegal?

3. Can the Law also be taken to mean that rucking can only occur when a player is in a ruck and bound correctly {Law 16.2(b)} and that any player not caught in or bound in the ruck cannot be rucking for the ball and is therefore liable to penalty for Dangerous Play and Misconduct under Law 10.4(b) and/or (c) and/or 10.4(k).

4. Additionally, would inadvertent or unintentional contact with players in a ruck as an incident of legitimate rucking for the football (reckless and patently dangerous rucking apart) be considered legal and within the Laws of the Game?

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

Rulings

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Yes