
Match Official Development

Distribution List:

RFRU Secretary
Referee Society Secretaries
Federation Secretaries
Area Training Managers
Match Official Panel Managers

Welcome to the 3rd Match Official Development Send Out for the 2016-17 season, which is being distributed to coincide with the -



World Rugby Law Application Guideline - Contact To The Head

This will apply at all levels of the game from 3rd January 2017 introducing minimum on-field sanctions for reckless and accidental contact with the head, effectively lowering the acceptable height of the tackle.

The new measures to limit contact with the head;

- New law application guideline will codify **zero-tolerance to contact with the head**
- Approach informed by **largest-ever study** identifying most common situations leading to head injuries
- Players, coaches and match officials urged to be **proactive in changing culture**
- Latest step in proactive, **evidence-driven approach** to injury reduction

[Click Here - For Law Application Guidelines >>](#)

The approach, approved by the World Rugby Council after extensive expert, independent and union evaluation, combines with new disciplinary sanctions and a re-focus of match officials on dangerous play. It will provide a package of measures that aims to change culture in the sport **to ensure that the head is a no-go area.**

In addition, while striking or kicking an opponent is never acceptable, it is a more serious offence when it involves contact with the head or neck. **Ball-carriers must be careful that they fend off** tacklers legally and do not strike opponents.

The **RFU** provides comprehensive information and guidance for match officials on their role in the prevention and immediate management of concussion. All this and a short online training course is available in the match official area of the "**Don't Be a Headcase**" website.

[Click Here - For information in relation to England Rugby to concussion >>](#)

The information in this send out is provided for you to please action, distribute or circulate far and wide, to **include clubs, coaches, players etc.** to encourage and grow the relationships between **all** parties and to generate better understanding of what we are **all** trying to do. Although informal in nature this is a valuable piece in the communication jigsaw.

Contact us at: matchofficials@rfu.com

Yours in ref'ing,

Michael

Michael D Patz

RFU Match Official Development Manager

1 For Action

World Rugby Clarifications in Law



Clarification 4 – 2016
Union/HP Ref Manager Sevens HP Referee Manager
Law Reference Law 21
Date December 19, 2016

Request

Below is a link showing three players taking Penalty Kicks during the recent HSBC Sevens. They are doing so by dropping the ball onto their foot and then playing the ball: [PK Tap Clarification](#)

KICK- Definition. Law Book Page 6.

A kick is made by hitting the ball with any part of the leg or foot except the heel, from the toe to the knee but not including the knee ; a kick must move the ball a visible distance out of the hand or along the ground.

Law 21.3 (a) How Penalty and Free Kicks are taken.

Any player may take a penalty or free kick awarded for an infringement with any type of kick, punt, drop kick, or place kick. The ball may be kicked with any part of the lower leg from knee to the foot excluding the knee and the heel.

1.1 Law 21.4 (d) A clear kick.

The kicker must kick the ball a clear distance. If the kicker is holding it, it must clearly leave the hands, if it is on the ground it must clearly leave the mark.

Clarification of the Designated Members of the Rugby Committee

The Designated Members have reviewed this request for clarification and the below are the relevant responses.

Dropping the ball onto the foot does not constitute a correctly taken Penalty or free kick and Law 21.4 (d) must be complied with:

21.4 (d) A clear kick. The kicker must kick the ball a visible distance. If the kicker is holding it, it must clearly leave the hands. If it is on the ground, it must clearly leave the mark.

Sanction: *Unless otherwise stated in Law any infringement by the kicker's team results in a scrum at the mark. The opposing team throw in the ball.*

To be applied from: 1st January 2017

Clarification
Union/HP Ref Manager
Law Reference
Date
Request

5 – 2016
Rugby Football Union
Law 19 – Global Law trial
December 19, 2016

Seeking clarification that the changes to the touch definitions (Law 19) in the Global Law trials will also apply to the dead ball line.

This comes into effect from 1st July 2017 in the Northern Hemisphere.

Should you have any questions in relation to law clarifications or application, please contact our dedicated e-mail service: Laws@rfu.com

For action by - Society Training Officers to factor into training events and publication to all members

Continuous Match Official Development (CMOD)



In the first half of the season we have been busy delivering the revised match official cpd offer, both in societies and clubs, there have been well over 500 candidates who booked directly online.

1.2

Now's the time to book your next sessions, please contact your Area Training Manager or Match Official Development Officer to do so.

Also, look out for details of the next release of CMODs coming later this month.

Communication is a vital component in refereeing, now is a great time to check out our latest training video initially provided exclusively to our ERRA members on refereeing communication essentials.; [Click Here to Watch the Video >>](#)

For action by - Society Training Officers to arrange training events and publication to all members

England rugby launch young match official programme



England Rugby has launched a Young Match official (YMO) programme to encourage more young people aged 14-24 to get into rugby officiating. The programme's 2016-17 year ambition is to attract, train and retain 400 new young officiators to the game as part of England Rugby's long term legacy commitment.

The YMO programme is an evolution of our Keep Your Boots On initiative which remains focused on getting more officiators into the game. Looking at the current landscape, most referees are in the older age bracket and so, while recruiting from the ranks of former or retiring players is still essential, it is clear that the sport must find, train, mentor and retain referees aged 14 to 24 which is what this programme aims to do."

The programme aims to recruit young officials to the game and develop them as individuals, while also increasing the options they have to participate within the game and sustain the future of our sport.

1.3 Ambassador for the Young Match Official programme, 23 year old Christophe Ridley, who has been refereeing since he was 19, said: *"Refereeing gives you the best seat in the house; I'm still an athlete like the players, I have to train in the week, I have to analyse my games, but it also gives me the chance to develop my personal and interpersonal skills both on and off the field."*

"It's definitely taken me forward in a lot of aspects of my life and compliments and enhances my university studies. So far I've refereed four games in the championship and I've recently been given a full-time contract."

Click [HERE](#) to listen to a video message from Christophe on his role as a Young Match Official.

Linking into England Rugby's Young Rugby Ambassador (YRA) programme, which partners with vInspired, budding match officials will be rewarded for their time invested in developing rugby in their local community, logging hours in return for incentives.

Click [HERE](#) for a guide to developing Young Match Officials.

For action by - Society Training Officers and Executive

NatWest RugbyForce 2017

NatWest RugbyForce 2017 launches with new and improved programme

Now in its fifth year, NatWest RugbyForce 2017 launches following a very successful 2015/16 season.

The programme, which is a partnership between England Rugby and NatWest, is carefully crafted with the aid of experts to offer grassroots clubs across the country a wealth of advice and support to ensure that they thrive as strong and sustainable businesses away from just the on-pitch action.

This is a great opportunity for referee societies to team up with their local participating clubs.

[See how NatWest RugbyForce has made a lasting difference to thousands of clubs over the past five years >>](#)



This year's new and improved programme will offer clubs that register by 5 February 2017 a huge number of rewards, which includes:

- **200 clubs** will receive support packages of **£500**, along with the opportunity to attend NatWest RugbyForce workshops
- Up to **70** clubs will be invited to take part in a crowdfunding project following last season's successful crowdfunding pilot
- **60** pitch maintenance packages with Keith Kent or one of his team of pitch advisors
- The chance to bring the local community together for **NatWest RugbyForce weekend** on **24th** and **25th June 2017**. There will also be volunteering opportunities for RFU staff to get involved with more information to follow next year

...and a huge amount more. [Click here](#) to see the full list of benefits that NatWest RugbyForce offers to grassroots clubs.



For immediate distribution to all members

RFU Safeguarding

In light of recent media coverage around safeguarding in other sports, we wanted to remind you of the RFU's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The RFU is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children in rugby. We have worked closely with the Child Protection In Sport Unit (CPSU) within NSPCC to develop robust policy and procedures to safeguard children, achieving the CPSU's National Advanced Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport.

We work closely with all our clubs and statutory agencies to ensure that safeguarding children is prioritised. Any allegation, suspicion of harm or concern is taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.

[Read the RFU's safeguarding policy here>>](#)

2.2

- The RFU has a full-time professional Safeguarding Team including a Designated Lead Officer for safeguarding.
- The RFU works with Local Children Safeguarding Boards throughout England.
- The RFU has jurisdiction to deal with any allegation of abuse of a child, any breach of Safeguarding Policy and/or any breach of Regulation 21. [Find the regs here>>](#)
- Each club with a mini and/or junior section must have a Club Safeguarding Officer

REPORTING AN INCIDENT

Any person involved in rugby union, including all RFU employees, must report all safeguarding concerns of which they become aware to the RFU Safeguarding Team

- Kath Bennett, RFU Safeguarding Case Manager
kathbennett@rfu.com
0208 831 7479

The team is always happy to offer advice and chat through any areas of uncertainty.

For distribution to all members

3

For Information

Age Grade Rugby from the 2017-18 Season

- RFU Council endorses timetable for full Age Grade Rugby transition in 2017-18
- National Age Grade Playing Calendar released for 2017-18
- Competition and Rep Rugby Organisers in CBs, CSUs and Academies to localise National Calendar for their area together
- New National advisory group to listen to the views of Age Grade clubs.

3.1

RFU Council endorsed the timetable to fully implement changes to Age Grade Rugby from the 2017-18 season.

The changes, introduced from September 2016, are for all rugby played at Under 18 and younger. Based on four years of research, the wants and needs of all young people are at the heart of the Age Grade changes. They are designed to help more young people enjoy the game for longer and into their adult years.

So far this season, full compliance with the changes to the game and its regulations is developing. For the remainder of the 2016-17 season, proactive support will be given to those in genuine transition towards the new regulations and those resisting the change, as with any of the Union's Regulations, could face disciplinary action.

For the 2017-18 season onwards, full transition to the Age Grade changes and regulations will be the drive. This will ensure that across the country the Age Grade game is player-centred, development-driven and competition-supported.

The 2017/18 Age Grade Playing Calendar has been released. Organisers in CBs, CSUs and Academies will now work together to insert local competition, representative rugby and pathway activity by the start of February 2017. After this is signed off by the RFU, they will promote their local calendar and facilitate dialogue between clubs, schools, colleges, Academies and Representative rugby personnel to agree a balanced playing programme for all young players.

Council also backed the introduction early in 2017 of a national advisory group to represent the views of the Age Grade game in clubs. This will provide a channel from our clubs and Constituent Bodies to help shape the future of Age Grade rugby alongside education institutions.

For the information of all members