



Mini Rugby Newsletter – October 2011

Peter Hudson – HKMRFU Coaching and Refereeing Coordinator

Dear Chairman,

Welcome to the October Issue of Mini Rugby Newsletter. In this issue I would like to seriously address the issue of 'Referee Abuse', then move on to clarifying some common questions in regard to the Lineout – contested versus non-contested, the start/restart law variations and Knock-on's/Throw forward law variations.

Referee Abuse!

The HKMRFU Committee has received a letter from HKSFRFUR President MR John Findlay, regarding an incident of referee abuse during the U12 Rugby World Cup Tournament at Kings Park. I am aware of the circumstances surrounding this incident but would like to again reiterate the message from the Chairman of the HKRUFU, Mr. Trevor Gregory, that any form of referee abuse will not be tolerated by the HKRUFU. The warning shots have now been fired and we are on notice! If I could ask everyone at this point to put down the handbags and let's address this issue once and for all! Please set a good example to the players, at no stage should you enter the field of play to question the match official, if you have a concern please raise the issue with the onsite referee manager, or myself. As a coach you have the right to approach the referee at the end of the game to clarify interpretations and rulings to help you coach your players. BUT, please do this in an appropriate manner and with respect! If you feel there is a **safety issue**, then for those age groups that have coaches on the field with the players then please communicate your concern to the coach/referee officiating the game. For those age groupings that do not have coaches on the field, if you have a safety concern, please wait for the next breakdown and then attempt to address your concern with the on field coach/referee. If your age group is being refereed by a HKSFRFUR member, then please approach the on site referee manager, or myself, **DO NOT ENTER THE FIELD OF PLAY**. I certainly hope this is the first and last occurrence this season! Enough said!

Lineout – Contested versus Non-Contested, Receiver Options!

At the recent U9s Head Coaches meeting, there was much debate over the definitions of contested and uncontested lineout's and the progression that currently are allowed from U9s to U10s. To help in clarifying these options, I have included the definition of the variations below for your information.

U9 - Non-Contested Lineout, Receiver Options

iRB Law 19 (HKMRFU Variation)

Touch:

The ball is in touch when:

- it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touch-line or anything or anyone on or beyond the touchline,
- the ball-carrier touches the touch-line or the ground beyond the touch-line,
- a player catches the ball and that player has a foot on the touchline or the ground beyond the touch-line,
- and a lineout follows.

If the ball crosses the touch-line or touch-in-goal line, and is caught by a player who has both feet in the playing area, the ball is not in touch or touch-in-goal. Such a player may knock the ball into the playing area.

Throw-in:

No throw-in is permitted until the referee has indicated that a lineout has been formed – penalty: **free kick**.

The throw-in is taken where the ball went into touch and is taken by an opponent of the player who last held or touched the ball before it went into touch.

The thrower must not step into the field of play as the ball is thrown. The ball must be thrown straight, so that it travels at least 3 metres and no more than 10 metres along the line of touch before it first touches the ground or a player – penalty: **the opposing team has a choice of throwing in at a lineout or at a scrum**.

After the throw-in the thrower may

- stay within 3 metres of the touch-line behind the off-side line, or
- retire to the 5-metre offside line for non-participating players.

Lineout:

The receiver is the player in position to catch the ball when lineout players pass or knock the ball back from the lineout. Any player may be the receiver but each team may have only one receiver at a lineout.

On receiving/collecting the ball the receiver must pass the ball.

The receiver must not move into the lineout – penalty: **the opposing team has a choice of throwing in at a lineout or a scrum.**

The 3/10-metre line is 3/10 metres in field and parallel with the touchline.

Any scrum ordered because of an infringement or stoppage at the lineout is on the 10-metre line, on the line of touch.

Forming a lineout:

Four players from each team must form a lineout – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

Players must not leave the lineout nor change position in the lineout once they have taken a position in the lineout until the lineout has ended – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The front of the lineout is not less than 3 metres from the touchline. The back of the Lineout is not more than 10 metres from the touchline – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The line-out players must keep a clear space between their inside shoulders – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The opposing team may position an additional player between the touch-line and the three-metre line. This player must not participate in the line-out and is subject to the same off-side line as the line-out players – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free-kick on the 10-metre line.**

The line of touch must not be within 5 metres of the goal line.

Beginning and Ending a lineout:

The lineout begins when the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing it in.

The lineout ends when the ball or a player carrying it leaves the lineout. This includes

- *when the ball is thrown, knocked out of the lineout.*
- *when the ball or a player carrying the ball moves in to the area between the 3-metre line and the touchline.*

Options available in a line-out:

A lineout player must not be offside. The offside line runs through the line of touch until the lineout ends – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

Lineout players from the throwing team can attempt to catch the ball provided that in doing so they do not close the gap between the two lines – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The feet of a line-out player must not leave the ground in attempting to catch the ball – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

A receiving player catching the ball in the lineout must pass the ball to the receiver – penalty: **the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

Offside at the lineout:

Until the line-out has ended the off-side line for participating players, including the receiver, is the line of touch – penalty: **free kick on the 10-metre line.**

For non-participating players the offside line until the lineout has ended is 5-metres behind the line of touch or their goal-line, if that is nearer – penalty: **free-kick on the 10-metre line.**

U10 - Contested Lineout, Receiver Options

iRB Law 19 (HKMRFU Variation)

Touch:

The ball is in touch when:

- it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touch-line or anything or

- anyone on or beyond the touchline.
- the ball carrier touches the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline.
- a player catches the ball and that player has a foot on the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline.
- and a lineout follows.

If the ball crosses the touch-line or touch-in-goal line, and is caught by a player who has both feet in the playing area, the ball is not in touch or touch-in-goal. Such a player may knock the ball into the playing area.

Except for a penalty kick, if the ball is kicked directly into touch the throw-in is taken opposite where the player kicked the ball.

Throw-in:

No throw-in is permitted until the referee has indicated that a lineout has been formed – penalty: **free kick**.

The throw-in is taken where the ball went into touch and is taken by an opponent of the player who last held or touched the ball before it went into touch. **However, if the ball was kicked into touch from a penalty kick, the throw-in is taken by the team awarded the penalty.**

The thrower must not step into the field of play as the ball is thrown. The ball must be thrown straight, so that it travels at least 3 metres and no more than 10 metres along the line of touch before it first touches the ground or a player – penalty: **the opposing team has a choice of throwing in at a lineout or at a scrum.**

After the throw-in the thrower may

- stay within 3 metres of the touch-line behind the off-side line, or
- retire to the 5-metre offside line for non-participating players.

Lineout:

The receiver is the player in position to catch the ball when lineout players pass or knock the ball back from the lineout. Any player may be the receiver but each team may have only one receiver at a lineout.

On receiving/collecting the ball the receiver must pass the ball. (Note: If the catching player decides to move out of the line out towards his/her team mates, or a ruck/maul forms, then the receiver may run or pass the ball).

The receiver must not move into the lineout – penalty: **the opposing team has a choice of throwing in at a lineout or a scrum.**

The 3/10-metre line is 3/10 metres in field and parallel with the touchline. – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

Any scrum ordered because of an infringement or stoppage at the lineout is on the 10-metre line on the line of touch.

Forming a line-out:

Minimum: At least two players from each team must form a lineout – penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

Maximum: The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players in the lineout.

The opposing team may have fewer lineout players but they must not have more – penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

When the ball is in touch, every player who approaches the line of touch is presumed to do so to form a lineout. Players who approach the line of touch must do so without delay. Players of either team must not leave the lineout once they have taken up a position in the lineout until the lineout has ended – penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

If the team throwing in the ball put fewer than the usual number of players in the lineout, their opponents must be given a reasonable time to move enough players out of the lineout to satisfy this law – penalty: the opposing team receives a free-kick on the 10-metre line.

These players must leave the lineout without delay. They must move to the offside line, 5-metres behind the line of touch. If the lineout ends before they reach this line, they may rejoin play – penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

The front of the lineout is not less than 3 metres from the touchline. The back of the Lineout is not more than 10 metres from the touchline – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The receiver must stand at least 2-metres towards that player's goal line from that player's team mates who are lineout players and between 3 and 10-metres from the touchline until the lineout ends – penalty: the opposing team

receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

The opposing team may position an additional player between the touch-line and the 3-metre line. This player must not participate in the line-out and is subject to the same off-side line as the line-out players – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free-kick on the 10-metre line.**

Participating players in a lineout may change places before the ball is thrown.

The lineout players of both teams must form two single parallel lines each at right angles to the touchline – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free-kick on the 10-metre line.**

Opposing players forming a lineout must keep a clear space between their inside shoulders. This space is determined when players are in an upright stance – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

Each line of players must be half a metre on their side of the line of touch – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The line of touch must not be within 5 metres of the goal line.

Beginning and Ending a lineout:

The lineout begins when the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing it in.

The lineout ends when the ball or a player carrying it leaves the lineout. This includes:

- when the ball is thrown and knocked out of the lineout.
- when the ball or a player carrying the ball moves in to the area between the 3-metre line and the touchline.

Options available in a line-out:

A lineout player must not be offside. The offside line runs through the line of touch until the lineout ends – **penalty: the opposing team receives a penalty-kick on the 10-metre line.**

Line-out players in both teams can attempt to catch the ball provided that in doing so they do not close the gap between the two lines – **penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.**

The feet of a lineout player may leave the ground in attempting to catch the ball.

However, the lifting of players is not permitted – **penalty: the opposing team receives a Free kick on the 10-metre line.**

A receiving player catching the ball in the lineout must either pass the ball, move out of the lineout towards his/her teammates, form a ruck or maul. Peeling Off (iRB Law 19.12) is not permitted – penalty: the opposing team receives a free kick on the 10-metre line.

Offside at the lineout:

Until the line-out has ended the off-side line for participating players, including the receiver, is the line of touch – **penalty: penalty kick on the 10-metre line.**

For non-participating players the offside line until the lineout has ended is 5 metres behind the line of touch or their goal-line, if that is nearer – **penalty: penalty kick on the 10-metre line.**

Start/Restarts – Law Variations U9s/U10s

iRB Law 13 (HKMRFU Variation)

Kickoff and Restart Kicks:

The kick-off occurs at the start of the match.

Restart kicks occur after a score or a touch down.

A kick-off is taken with a drop/punt kick at the centre spot.

After a score the losing team restarts play with a drop/punt kick.

All the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, then a scrum is formed at the centre with the receiving team throwing-in the ball.

All the opposing team must stand on or behind the 7-metre 'line' until the ball is kicked.

If they are not, the kick is taken again.

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 7-metre 'line' but is played by an opponent, play continues.

If the ball does not reach the opponent's 7-metre 'line', then the opposing team has two choices:

- to have the ball kicked off again, or
- to have a scrum at the centre. Non-offending team throw-in the ball.

If the ball is kicked directly into touch, then the opposing team has three choices:

- to have the ball kicked off again, or
- to have a scrum at the centre. Non-offending team throw-in the ball.
- to accept the kick and to have the throw-in at the lineout on the halfway line.

If the ball is kicked in to the in-goal without having touched or been touched by a player,

then the opposing team has two choices:

- to ground the ball, or
- to make it dead, or
- to play on.

If the opposing team grounds the ball, or they make it dead, or if the ball becomes dead by going into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line, they have two choices:

- to have the ball kicked off again, or
- to have a scrum at the centre. Non-offending team throw-in the ball.

If they opt to ground the ball or make it dead, they must do so without delay. Any other action with the ball by a defending player means the player has elected to play on.

Drop-out:

A dropout is used to restart play after an attacking player has put or taken the ball into the in-goal, without infringement, and a defending player has made the ball dead there or it has gone into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead ball line.

- A drop-out takes the form of a tap kick by the defending team *10 metres* from the goal line.
- All the defending team must be behind the ball – **penalty: a scrum is formed at the centre of the 10-metre line from goal with the opposing team throwing-in the ball.**
- The opposing team must retreat at least 5 metres from the ball – **penalty: *penalty kick at a point 5 metres forward from the 10-metre line.***

Note: If the game deteriorates into a one-sided affair, the on-field coaches can consult with the coach/referee to revert to non-scoring team tap restarts. The ultimate decision for this option to be taken is the on-field referee.

Knock-on and Throw Forward

To help coach/referees officiate the Kickoff or Restart phase of the game in a consistent manner, they must have a good understanding of iRB Law 12, Knock-on or Throw Forward. At the U9s and U10s level, as players develop there will be situations from the start/restart where the receiving team will fumble the ball. A good understanding of the Knock-on and Throw Forward Law will help in facilitating this area of play.

iRB Law 12 (HKMRFU Variation)

Definition: Knock-on

A knock-on occurs when a player loses possession of the ball and it goes forward, or when a player hits the ball forward with the hand or arm, or when the ball hits the hand or arm and goes forward, and the ball touches the ground or another player before the original player can catch it.

'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

Definition: Throw Forward

A throw forward occurs when a player throws or passes the ball forward. 'Forward' means towards the opposing team's dead ball line.

Outcome of a Knock-on or Throw Forward:

- Unintentional knock-on or throw forward: A scrum is awarded at the place of infringement.
- Unintentional knock-on or throw forward at a lineout: A scrum is awarded 10-metres from the touchline.
- Knock-on or throw forward into the in-goal: If an attacking player knocks-on or throws forward in the field of play and the ball goes into the opponent's in-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock-on or throw forward happened.
- Knock-on or throw forward inside the in-goal: If a player of either team knocks-on or throws-forward inside the in-goal, a 3-metre scrum is awarded in line with the place of infringement not closer than 3 metres from the touchline.

We have covered a lot of ground in this newsletter. However, it is important that the variations are understood and that we achieve a common understanding of play progression. As always we are open to feedback and comment.

Until next time, have fun.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hudson
HKMRFU – Coaching and Refereeing Coordinator