



BELOW BASE OF STERNUM

TACKLE THE TUMMY

HKCR TACKLE HEIGHT DOMESTIC LAW VARIATION

Q&A HANDBOOK



1. Why is HKCR changing the tackle height?

Following consultation with community rugby stakeholders, HKCR's Board of Directors approved a lower maximum tackle height law trial of **below the base of sternum** for implementation across the community game, beginning in the 2023/24 season.

This change has been led by World Rugby endorsed research which has proven there to be positive outcomes when lowering the tackle height and on the reduction of head-to-head contact in game.

2. What does the new tackle height look like?

A maximum tackle height below the base of sternum, also known as the 'tummy tackle', applies to the first tackler.

Any subsequent tacklers can attempt to tackle the ball carrier by making contact below the line of the armpits.



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3. What does Second tackler look like?

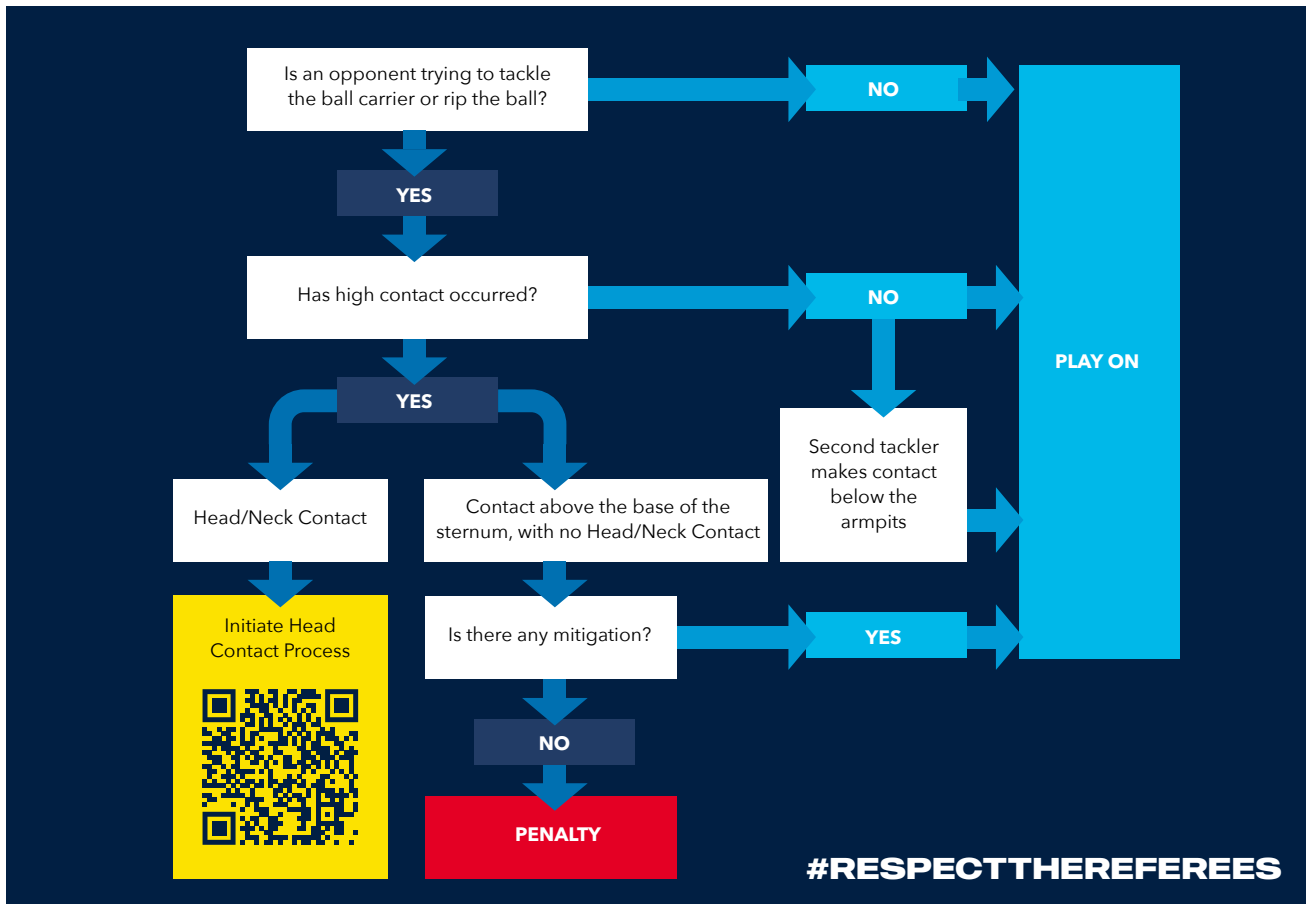


SUBSEQUENT TACKLERS

TACKLE OR ATTEMPT TO TACKLE, ANYWHERE BELOW THE ARMPITS



4. Law Trials Decision Making Framework



5. Tackle Height law trials

(Recommendations for the community game)



5.1- Max Tackle Height (First Tackler)

- Initial contact below the base of the sternum (tummy tackle).
- Tackles made by the first tackler above the base of the sternum are liable to sanction.



1ST TACKLER

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2ND TACKLER

BELOW THE ARMPIT LINE

5.2 - Second Tackler

- Permitted: Initial contact below the line of the armpits.
- Arriving players
 - can target the ball, but must not make contact with the head/neck area.
 - A maul can be formed.



5.3 - Ball Carrier

- No change to current law
- Reckless play to be sanctioned (e.g leading with head) where the ball carrier put themselves or the defender at risk of a head-on-head contact.
- Encouraged to evade



5.4 - Pick and Go

- Permitted
- Acknowledge that tackles may be higher due to body position of ball carrier = lower risk area.

6. Who will this change affect?

The law trial will apply to:

- All levels of the male and female, adult, and youth community rugby, up to and including the men's and women's Championship.
- All alternative formats including 7s and 10s for community rugby, including tertiary and schools.

7. What has World Rugby said?

World Rugby's Executive Board has recommended that Unions participate in an opt-in global trial of lowering the tackle height in the community game to below the sternum (also known as a "tummy tackle"). This follows extensive analysis and consultation with unions over a period of six months.

8. Which Unions have already commenced trials?

Argentina, Australia, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa and Wales.

9. What does the research say about reducing the tackle height?

In World Rugby endorsed trials conducted in France and South Africa, lowering the tackle height has been shown to reduce the number of head-on-head contacts and concussions. Lowering the tackle height has also shown positive outcomes regarding increased ball-in-play time and offloading.



10. What does research tell us about the tackler, tackle area and tackle height above the sternum?

74%

of all concussions come from the tackle area.

Approximately

70%

of concussions at the tackle area relate to the tackler.

The risk of concussion is

4.2 times more likely when the tackler's head is above the ball carrier's sternum.*

*Tucker et al WR Study 2017

The position of the head is the risk factor, only by bringing the contact height to the navel and below will result in the tackler's head being below the highest risk zone and into an area of safest proximity, near the ball carrier's lower torso.

11. Conclusion

Based on expert opinion and all the available evidence provided, HKCR believes that tackle height below the base of the sternum should be trialled for the 2023/24 season. This is the height required to ensure a large enough change of behaviour to produce a significant reduction in risk of contact between tacklers and ball carriers' heads.



12. What happened during the consultation period?

Following World Rugby's decision to trial the lower tackle height, at the HKCR Board of Directors meeting in May, it was agreed to trial the lower tackle height below the base of sternum to include all community rugby up to Championship level.

A steering group was set up to work on the introduction and implementation for the upcoming 2023/24 domestic season. Consultations were held with community rugby stakeholders, messages were sent out to the rugby community via these groups and Club Chairs were informed on the proposed changes.

HKCR has engaged with World Rugby throughout the consultation period, utilising World Rugby endorsed research during the decision-making process.

What happens next?

Hong Kong China Rugby will now be engaging players, coaches and match officials in a series of workshops, webinars and courses, with specially created resources to help them prepare for the changes this season.

For now, you can view our Tackle Height resources and read our Tackle Height Law variation document via the links below.

More information on the Tackle Height resources will be circulated over the next few weeks.





13. For more information

Our Coach Ed Dept. is already using the WR Tackle ready program and plans to introduce the tackle licence for younger age groups;

Tackle Ready Programme



HKCR Tackle Licence



HKCR Player Welfare Page



HKCR Tackle Height Domestic Law Variation



Should you require any further clarification/information, please contact
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