



HKRU
香港欖球總會

HONG KONG REFEREES
GAME MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
2016/17

Produced by the HKRU Referee Department and HKSRFUR

This Game Management document forms the basis on how the rugby laws shall be interpreted and applied in Hong Kong across all levels of the game. It is a document for the whole rugby community to assist all to better understand how Laws are applied and to avoid misunderstanding. It is hoped that across the board it will assist in communicating to all on how the game should be played and adjudicated and create more consistency from referees and better cooperation from players and coaches.

1. It is on this document that you should base your referee decision making and it is on this document that CMO's will base your skill level.
2. Most information in this document should be applied with *materiality* in mind. Does it have a significant impact on the continuity of the game? If you believe so, then you must take action. If not, play on.
3. If something is considered dangerous or foul play, then it must always be acted upon.
4. With a wide variety of abilities and ages playing the game at community level in Hong Kong, a large part of the referee's role is to have *empathy* for the game.
5. Let the game breath! Communicating clearly and effectively during the game is key to this. Use Preventative Communication before you blow your whistle and explanation after you have blown your whistle.
6. What is also important is the use of *advantage*. In the vast majority of situations, the referee can play advantage and there is no better feeling than calling "advantage over" or better still, your advantage leading to a try! Whenever playing advantage, communicate effectively to the players what the advantage is for and when it is over.

TACKLE

'a tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to ground.'

Referees priority at a tackle

1. Tackler
2. Assist Tacklers
3. Tackled Player
4. Arriving Players

TACKLER - A player who goes to ground in the act of making a tackle

- The tackler must **clearly release** the tackled player
- **The tackler must get up or move away towards the side (not towards the opposition halfback - think east/west) from the tackled player and the ball – 2016/17 priority**
- The tackler **on their feet** may play the ball from any direction **before** the ruck forms
- The tackler may continue to compete for the ball if they have a *firm* grasp on the ball before ruck forms

ASSIST TACKLERS - Players who did not go to ground in the act of making a tackle

- Assist tacklers must **clearly release** the tackled player
- Assist tacklers must come **through the gate before** playing the ball
- Assist tacklers must stay **on their feet** to play the ball

THE TACKLED PLAYER - Ball carrier who is held and brought to ground

- Tackled Player must **make the ball available immediately** to be played
- Tackled Player must not prevent the opposition from playing the ball
- **U19 rugby – no squeeze ball. Apply materiality in this situation.**

ARRIVING PLAYERS - Other players not involved in the tackle

- Players approaching the tackle must come '**through the gate**'
- Players must show positive intent to **stay on their feet** and support body weight
- Players who have a firm grasp of the ball before the ruck forms, can continue to play the ball providing they are on their feet
- Players must **not deliberately go to ground** to seal possession or deny a contest
- Players going to ground in the tackle **must roll away or get to their feet**

SUMMARY - PRIORITY AT TACKLE AREA:

- Tacklers - clear release and roll
- Assist Tacklers - clear release and through the gate
- Tackled Player - make the ball available quickly
- Arriving players - through the gate and stay on their feet

RUCK

'A ruck forms when at least one player from each team on their feet are in (physical) contact over the ball.'

Referees priority at ruck

1. Clearly identifying when a ruck forms is crucial
2. Ball available is KEY
3. Players can use their hands only if they have a firm grasp on the ball prior to ruck forming
4. Players entering the ruck must come through the gate
5. Offside lines at the hindmost foot of each side of the ruck

TECHNICAL

- Arriving players must join through the gate and remain on their feet
- If they do go off their feet, they must not disrupt the availability of the ball or prevent the opposition from winning the ball
- No player may use their hands in a ruck unless they legally have a firm grasp on the ball before the ruck formed. In this situation, they can continue to play the ball
- Players cleaning out must not go past the 1 meter area

OFFSIDE

- **Offside players near the ruck must be managed – 2016/17 priority**
- Zero tolerance for players cutting down space for the attacking team. Referee should take action with players who are constantly in offside positions

BALL OUT

- Ball must be clearly lifted off the ground and clear of bodies to be considered out of the ruck
- Scrum half is allowed to free the ball if it is trapped
- Opposition must not play any player who is not involved in the ruck

SAFETY

- Players must not charge into rucks without binding. This is foul play and must be dealt with accordingly
- Feet on bodies in a vertical motion (stamping) is not acceptable and should be dealt with severely
- **Players must not clear out around opposition's neck area, referees must penalise dangerous play and deal with it severely – 2016/17 priority**

SUMMARY - PRIORITIES FOR RUCK:

Players must enter through the gate
Players must attempt to stay on their feet
No hands once the ruck has formed
Ball out when lifted and clear of the ruck, or when past the last foot
Scrum half not to be interfered with
Offside players should be managed

MAUL

'A maul begins when a player carrying the ball is held by one or more opponents, and one or more of the ball carrier's team mates bind on the ball carrier.'

Referees priority at maul

- 1. Clearly identifying when a maul forms**
- 2. Locate the ball**
- 3. Communicate to allow play to continue immediately if possible**

- Referees should clearly communicate to players when a maul has been formed
- The priority for the referee at the maul is to locate the ball. This will allow you to make the best decision
- Players must not collapse a maul
- Grabbing a player around the head or neck in a maul is dangerous play and should be treated accordingly

PLAYERS JOINING THE MAUL

- All players must join from the hindmost foot of their team
- **Players bound on the side of the maul may not slide forward or 'swim' around the maul. These players are not remaining bound and should be managed first or penalised – 2016/17 priority**

UNPLAYABLE AND COLLAPSED MAULS

- If the ball is not playable immediately when the maul collapses, then an early whistle will be required to prevent a prolonged fight for the ball
- If the ball can be located and available, try and **manage** to allow it to be played if possible
- Players must not intentionally collapse a maul, this is dangerous play and referee must penalise

SCRUM

Safety is our overall objective, aiming for a quick and fair restart to the game. The referee MUST control the engagement process, using slow, clear calls, each one followed with an action by the players. This will lead to STABILITY, which will in turn lead to a safe, quick and fair restart.

PRIOR TO THE CALLS

- Fully bound
- Square shoulders, hips and feet
- No slingshot from No.8

CROUCH

- Head and shoulders above hips
- Clear gap
- Square hips and shoulders

BIND

- Side or back - not on arm or shorts. Loosehead props must bind under the tight head props arm
- Clear gap - don't allow a pre engage
- Adjustment of feet is OK, allow stability

SET

- Don't call set if you don't have stability
- **No hit and chase – 2016/17 priority**
- Ball in when there is stability - wait for it
- Please ensure the ball is fed through the centre - look for the scrumhalf(s) shoulders being square and standing on the centre line

POST ENGAGEMENT

- Ensure players are bound and square throughout the scrum
- If you can identify any issues that cause a scrum to collapse and the ball cannot be cleared or it is unsafe, you may need to penalise. If you cannot identify any issues, a reset may be required. Don't guess!
- If the scrum becomes stationary and the ball is available at the back, the referee should call "use it"
- Legal wheel is when both props push past the mark as the scrum wheels
- Look at the speed of the wheel. Look at the team walking around. An illegal wheel will move quickly on the mark

Remember objective for the scrum is for a safe, quick and fair restart.

Lineout

- The throwing team must not delay the formation of a lineout - no huddle away from the line of touch. They must set their numbers giving the defending team a reasonable opportunity to match
- **Referees must set a clear gap at the first lineout - work with the front player of each team to have them and their team half a metre from the mark and for them to manage it for the rest of the game. Teams should be sanctioned for closing the gap – 2016/17 priority**
- Jumpers must not be interfered with in the air. Competing for the ball is allowed but the opposition must not obstruct the jumper in the air
- Sacking is legal but can only be done immediately after the ball carrier has returned to ground. Sacking is the act of bringing the **ball carrier** to ground before the maul forms
- Receivers must not join until after the ball is thrown. A receiver may only join before the ball is thrown if another lineout player takes the receiver position - i.e. they switch

Foul Play

- Repeated Infringements - A referee must warn a team through the captain about **repeated** infringements prior to taking further action.
 1. Identify trend.
 2. Give the captain or player the 'heads up'.
 3. Time off and a final chat with captain.
 4. Intervention for a change in behavior
- Deliberate Infringements - Can result in a Penalty Kick and a yellow card without any warning, depending on the cynical nature of the infringement particularly around the goal line
- **Dangerous Tackles - The onus is always on the tackler to complete a tackle safely. Dangerous tackles include tackles that are above the line of the shoulders or using the collar of the jersey. If contact is made with the neck or head after initial contact below the line of the shoulders, then the tackle is still considered dangerous – 2016/17 priority**
- When tackling, a player must always be attempting to wrap with the arms. Players who charge with the shoulder should be penalised and sanctioned
- Any time a tackled player's hips are lifted above horizontal it should result in a yellow card as a minimum. If the tackled player is lifted and lands on his shoulder or head area it should result in a red card. A tackled player placing a hand down to stop a head or shoulder area landing should not influence this sanction. Dropping or throwing tackled players once they are in a dangerous position is to be strongly sanctioned
- When there is a contest in the air, both players must be in a realistic position to compete for the ball. Is it a fair challenge? If **YES**, play on. If **NO**, PK? YC? RC? How do we decide if it's clear foul play or not?

PENALTY ONLY: it's not a fair challenge with wrong timing – No pulling down. Must be reasonable.

YELLOW CARD: it's not a fair challenge, there is no contest and the player lands on his back or side. **OR:** it's not a deliberate foul play action but the player lands in a dangerous position.

RED CARD: It's not a fair challenge, there is a deliberate action and no contest and the player lands in a dangerous position.