



To: Secretaries / CEOs of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: David Carrigy, Head of Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee

Date: May 13, 2008

Ruling: 3: 2008

The NZRU has requested a ruling relating to Law 20.3

Law 20 was amended with effect from January 2007 - a four stage engagement process was introduced. This was promulgated to reduce the impact and the velocity of the engagement process. There are some teams who employ a practice whereby the Number 8 does not bind in accordance with Law prior to the scrum engagement. The Number 8 stands and pulls back on the locks shorts and then pushes the locks forward which would appear to increase the impact of the engagement process and can increase instability.

Law 20.3 (f) states - ***Binding by all other players.*** *All other players in a scrum, other than front-row players must bind on a lock's body with at least one arm. The locks must bind with the props in front of them. No players other than a prop may hold an opponent.*

The NZRU believe that this means that the Number 8 is obliged to bind in accordance with Law 20.3 (f) on engagement and if he does not do so renders himself liable to sanction with a penalty kick.

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

The Designated Members confirm that all players including the Number 8 are required to bind in accordance with Law 20.3 on engagement.



Additionally Law 20.7 heading states *WHEN THE SCRUM BEGINS* whilst 20.7 (a) states:

Play in the scrum begins when the ball leaves the hands of the scrum half

The word *play* within the body of the Law indicates the start of the contest for the ball rather than the engagement process. Players must therefore conform to the Laws from the time that the scrum is awarded including Law 20.3.

Yours sincerely,

David Carrigy
Head of Member Services



To: Secretaries / CEOs of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: David Carrigy, Head of Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee

Date: May 13, 2008

Ruling: 2: 2008

The ARU has requested rulings relating to Law 3.5.

Under Law 3.5 (a) a team is required to provide a specified number of suitably trained and experienced front row players depending on the number of players nominated for the *team*. Law 3.5 (c) specifies the requirements for front row replacements where teams are comprised of 19, 20, 21 or 22 players.

The Australian Rugby Union seeks a ruling in relation to the application of the above Law:

1. Where a team is unable to comply with the requirements of Law 3.5 (a) or (c), either at the beginning of the match or during a match (thus causing non-contested scrums to be played):
 - a. Can that team be prevented (by competition rule) from substituting or replacing **ANY** player who leaves the field (through injury) or from making substitutions during the match. [Therefore, in effect limiting the team to a maximum of 15 players]?
 - b. Can the opposing team be awarded a Free Kick (or the option of a scrum) where the team that is unable to comply with Law 3.5 causes the stoppage in play?
 - c. Can the match commence with non-contested scrums or should the teams be required to play contested scrums?
2. Where non-contested scrums are played, is it possible to prevent *back row moves*, [e.g. the No. 8 picking up the ball and linking with other players in a tactical move]?



ARU Comment:

ARU believes that the intention of the Law is for non-contested scrums to be played where one or both teams are unable to provide suitably trained or experienced players to play in the front row (either at the start of a match or during a match).

ARU is also strongly of the view that at the Community level of the game, the effect of introducing competition rules that provide a sanction or penalty (either prior to, during the match, or post match) for the teams that are unable to comply with Law 3.5 has the potential to lead to untrained or inexperienced players being placed in an unsafe situation by team officials who wish to comply with Law 3.5 in order to avoid the sanction or penalty imposed if they do not comply.

IRB Ruling 2:2003 in regard to Law 3.5 also refers in relation to teams that fail to comply with Law 3.5, including advice on sanctions.

In view of the ARU concerns in relation to safety issues can the IRB please advise in relation to the appropriateness of competition rules that require the following in situation where a team is responsible for non-contested scrums being played:

- a. that team be required to forfeit the match or have competition points deducted if they win the match;
- b. that team be fined by a competition manager for non – compliance with Law 3.5

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

- 1(a) No. The competition rule would contravene Law 3.4 which permits substitutions, 3.7 which permits permanent replacements and 3.10 which permits temporary replacements. The Union having jurisdiction over a match does have the power to decide how many replacements / substitutes can be nominated and to that end could state that in a match where there are not suitably trained front row players as required by Law



3.5 then there shall be no substitutions/replacements in that match. This would be the situation if it was known before the match that a team or teams did not have the required number of suitably trained and experienced front row players.

- 1(b) There is no provision within Law that permits the referee to award a Free Kick in this situation.
- 1(c) If a team states prior to the match that they do not have suitably trained and experienced front row players to comply with Law 3.5 the game **MUST NOT** commence with contested scrums. It is up to the Union having jurisdiction over the match or the match organiser (competition regulations) to decide whether a match commences with non-contested scrums or whether the match is cancelled or postponed.
2. There are no provisions in Law that would restrict how the game is played.

Individual competition rules are the responsibility of the Union or match organiser having jurisdiction for the match and the rules should be appropriate to the level of competition and environment in which competition matches are played. Competition rules should support compliance with the Laws of the Game and IRB and Union regulations whilst not encouraging any actions that could be deemed unsafe or that might encourage unsafe practices.

Yours sincerely,

David Carrigy
Head of Member Services



To: Secretaries/CEO's of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: David Carrigy, Head of Member Services

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee

Date: January 21, 2008

Ruling: 1: 2008

The RFU has requested rulings relating to IRB Ruling 14:2003.

Under IRB Ruling 14: 2003, the Designated Members ruled the following:

Ruling

If a player with one or both feet inside (presumably on or behind) the 22-metre line, picks up the ball which was stationary outside the 22-metre line, and kicks it directly into touch, then the player has taken the ball back inside the 22-metre line, and therefore the line-out is formed in line with where the ball was kicked.

If a player with one or both feet inside (presumably on or behind) the 22-metre line, picks up the ball which was in motion outside the 22-metre line, and kicks it directly into touch, then the player has not taken the ball back inside the 22-metre line, and therefore the line-out is formed in line with where the ball crossed the touch-line.

With this in mind, the RFU requests a ruling with regard to the following:

(In both the above and in our request, we have assumed that 'in motion' applies to both a ball in the air and to a ball rolling along the ground).

1. If a player with one or both feet on or behind the goal line, picks up the ball, which was stationary within the field of play, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball in the field of play and thereby that player has taken the ball into in-goal?
2. If a player with one or both feet on or behind the goal line picks up the ball, which was in motion within the field of play, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball within in-goal?



3. If a player with one or both feet on or behind the dead ball line, picks up the ball, which was stationary within in-goal, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball in in-goal and thereby that player has made the ball dead?
4. If a player with one or both feet on or behind the dead ball line picks up the ball, which was in motion within in-goal, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball outside the playing area?
5. If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was stationary within the playing area, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball in the playing area and thereby that player has taken the ball into touch (or touch-in-goal)?
6. If a player with one or both feet on or beyond the touch-line (or touch-in-goal line), picks up the ball, which was in motion within the playing area, is that player deemed to have picked up the ball in touch (or touch-in-goal)?

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

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. Yes

Yours sincerely,

David Carrigy
Head of Member Services