



*USARUGBY*



**2015**

**HIGH SCHOOL  
GAME MANAGEMENT  
GUIDELINES**



***USA RUGBY***

© 2015 USA Rugby

Content by Richard Every and Ed Todd

Edited / Reviewed by

Peter Watson, Brittany Jacobs & Kurt Weaver.

For more information visit [www.USARugby.org](http://www.USARugby.org)

## INTRODUCTION

USA Rugby Referees' management has established guidelines to refereeing at the high school level in the USA. These guidelines enable players and referees to have a clearer approach to the game and to be more consistent in Law application throughout the country. They also reflect directives from World Rugby.

These guidelines are to be distributed and applied nationally to all referees, referee performance reviewers, referee coaches, players/teams, coaches and administrators for 2015.

**Richard Every**  
**High Performance Referee Manager**  
**USA Rugby**

**Brittany Jacobs**  
**Referee Manager**  
**USA Rugby**

## CONTENTS

## PAGE

The Principles of the Game	2
Referee Abuse	2
The Breakdown	3
Scrum	7
Lineout	10
Maul	12
Advantage	13
General Play	13
Foul Play	14
Restarts & Open Play	16
Ball Out	16
Kick at Goal	17
Penalty Try	17
Suspension	18
Concussion	18
Injuries	18
Contacts	19

**SAFETY GUIDELINES ARE IN GREEN**



## PRINCIPLES OF THE GAME

“It is through discipline, control and mutual respect that the spirit of the game flourishes and, in the context of a game as physically challenging as rugby, these are the qualities which forge the fellowship and sense of fair play so essential to the game’s ongoing success and survival.” - World Rugby: Laws of the Game 2015

It is essential that we, as a community, stand together and work together to develop rugby in the United States. It will be through mutual respect and support that we grow the game.

Match officials, players and team administrators should work together and refrain from verbal abuse toward each other, nor make any derogatory public remarks or comments, including on social media, as this behavior is not beneficial to the development and growth of the game.

It is important that officials, players, coaches, etc. share their thoughts and experiences with one another for the betterment of all.

### REFEREE NOTES

Be professional and open to discussion with players and coaches, and supportive of colleagues. Promote the game. You are accountable for your actions on and off the field. Refrain from discussing any issues with performance reviewers or referee coaches during halftime, unless they feel the need to communicate an issue regarding safety. Refrain from discussions with coaches, etc. during the match, at halftime, and immediately after the match if a “cooling off” period would be the better option.

## REFEREE ABUSE

Verbal abuse by team coaches, team staff or team substitutes directed at match officials or players should not be tolerated and the following process should be followed:

1. The referee will ask the identified person to refrain from their behavior.
2. On the second occasion the referee will EJECT the person from the grounds.
3. Zero tolerance approach should be applied and if the person refuses to leave the referee should request that team’s captain to assist.
4. Failing compliance the referee may abandon the match.

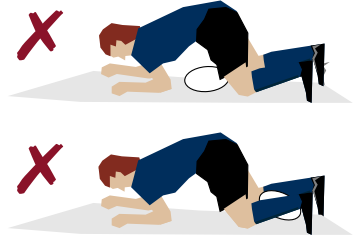
**NOTE: The referee must restart the game according to the latest stoppage and must NOT award a penalty due to the sideline behavior.**

## THE BREAKDOWN

### A. SAFETY

1. Tackled players may not use the “squeeze ball” technique (when the player positions their body over the ball and pushes the ball back between their legs) to recycle possession. **PK**
2. If a player falls in a position where they could be potentially injured the referee should stop play immediately and award a scrum to the team in possession.

*Squeeze Ball*



### B. THE TACKLE

1. Tacklers have to release the tackled player immediately, and move/roll away or get to their feet. **PK**
2. Tackled player must exercise their options immediately. **PK**
3. Players that slow down ball availability should be penalized immediately. **PK**
4. Referees should allow the contest and may instruct the players, i.e. “release the ball”, “roll away”, etc., as long as these players have not already slowed down ball availability. Referees should be aware that players in national competitions know their rights and it is not necessary for the referee to communicate verbally at the tackle.
5. Verbal communication should be used if there is a possibility that it could accommodate a team scoring from the advantage gained.

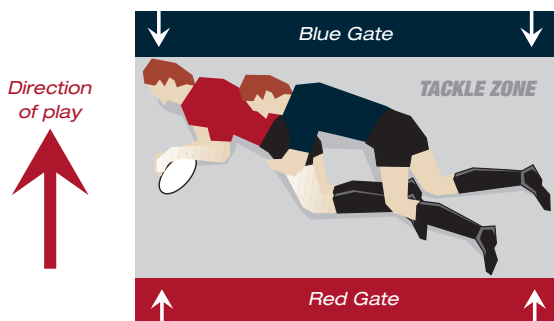
Referees are to approach a low tolerance level at the breakdown and should penalize early in the match to establish compliance.

### C. TACKLER ASSIST

1. Defending players that remain on their feet, but assist in bringing the ball carrier to the ground (Tackler Assist), must release the tackled player and the ball, and may only then play the ball from their side and through the gate. These players, even if they remain on their feet, must clearly release the tackled player before they may attempt to play the ball.

## D. THE GATE

1. All arriving players must enter the tackle zone through their gate. No part of a player's body (including the arms), may enter the tackle through any other area. **PK**



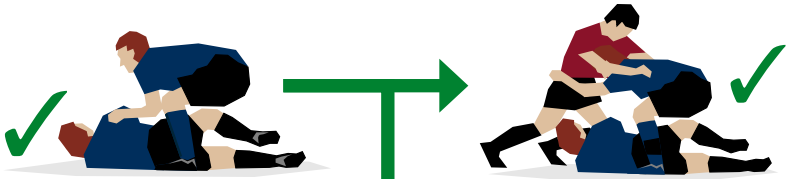
*Overhead view, Blue tackled Red. Players are only allowed entry through their gate.*

## E. ARRIVING PLAYERS

1. Players who enter the tackle area or zone must stay on their feet. **PK**
2. At a tackle, arriving players are allowed to play the ball with their hands after an opposition player binds onto them, if they:
  - a. Arrive at the tackle legally;
  - b. Remain on their feet, and;
  - c. Have possession of the ball prior to the contact occurring (i.e. was grasping/holding the ball - this should be a positive action to gain possession of the ball, not merely putting one's hands/arms on/over the ball).

NOTE: Thus, a ruck has not yet formed.

3. At a tackle, arriving players that put themselves over the ball with their weight supported by their hands, and then sweep their arms back to play the ball, should be penalized for going to ground. **PK**
4. Players may grasp or hold onto their tackled player who is on the ground, as long as they have their weight firmly on their feet and are not using the player on the ground to support their weight. **PK**
5. If the player grasps onto their teammate, the tackled player is still required to place the ball away from their body to ensure its availability. **PK**
6. Players that have grasped/are holding onto their player on the ground may not lower their shoulders below their hips or lean with their weight on their player that is on the ground to prevent the contest when an opponent makes contact with them. They may continue to hold onto their player on the ground after contact. **PK**



Red tackled Blue, Blue player arrived at the tackle on their feet, through the gate, and is grasping/holding onto their tackled player on the ground to maintain possession.

The Blue player may not seal prior/upon contact to prevent the opposition from contesting for the ball.



7. Players who are SEALING, secure the ball without their weight fully on their feet (i.e. leaning on the tackler/tackled player on the ground) OR who go to ground head first, OR dive over players on the ground, OR dive over players on the ground with the ball between them should not be tolerated and penalized as they are preventing a contest. **PK**

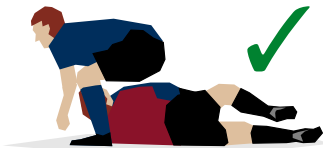


Blue tackled Red, Red player has secured possession by SEALING. This is NOT allowed.

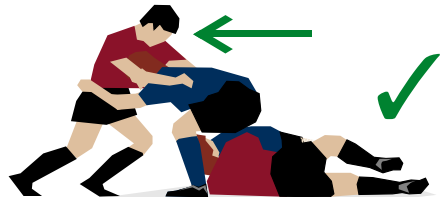
8. Players may position themselves at the tackle to prepare for contact with opposition players, however they have to be near/over the ball. They may not be too far ahead of the ball, i.e. “flooding” and taking away space in front of the ball. **PK**



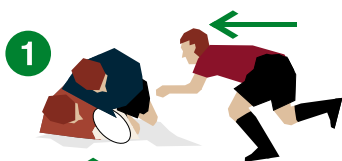
Being too far ahead of the ball, ‘flooding’, and taking away space in front of the ball.



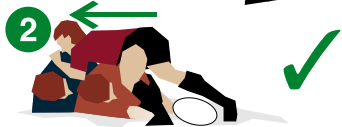
Red tackled Blue, Blue player arrived at the tackle on their feet, through the gate, is NOT binding on players on the ground, remaining on their feet and preparing for contact at the tackle area.



Red tackled Blue, both players that arrived at the tackle are on their feet, arrived through the gate, and are contesting for possession. A ruck has formed.



[1] Blue tackled Red. The RED player arrives, makes contact with the Blue tackler, and;



[2] subsequently goes to ground, AND HAS MADE THE BALL AVAILABLE TO BE PLAYED. Red players who arrive thereafter may;



[3] bind onto their players (that are on the ground) to maintain possession already secured.

9. If players enter the tackle in conformance with the required criteria and subsequently go to ground during the process of removing a tackler or because the opposition was unable to retain its position at contact, these players should not be penalized because they did not willfully go to ground. The ball should be available to be played. However, if these players then obstruct the ball from being available to be played, they should be penalized. **PK**
10. If players enter the tackle in conformance with the required criteria and make contact with the tackler or tackled player and subsequently go to ground during the process AND HAS MADE THE BALL AVAILABLE TO BE IMMEDIATELY PLAYED it will be allowed. Arriving players of the team who have secured the ball may either play the ball or bind onto their players, even if their players are on the ground, to maintain possession.

## REFEREE NOTES

Get to the tackle as quickly as possible. Know where the ball is at all times - create a presence at the breakdown and ensure that the breakdown is safe. Set your standard from the outset, and maintain consistency to enable ball availability. It is important to maintain a high work rate throughout the match.

## E. THE RUCK

1. The referee may use the term "Ruck" to indicate a ruck has formed. If a ruck has formed and players are still contesting for possession, the referee may use the term "No Hands, Ruck" to indicate to players that they should no longer use their hands. NOTE: Referees should allow the contest to develop at the breakdown, and should be aware not to call "Ruck" until a ruck has clearly been formed. If the ball is immediately won and a ruck is formed, the referee need not communicate "Ruck".



2. **Players are not allowed to dangerously charge into the ruck by not binding correctly upon contact. PK**
3. Once a ruck is formed, it continues even if all defenders leave or fall to ground, as long as the ball is still contained within the ruck.
4. Referees are to strictly apply the offside law to the fringes and the backlines.
5. Unsuccessful end to a ruck: Once the ball is clearly won and available to be played, the referee will call “use it”, once, after which the ball must be played within five seconds. If not, it is a turnover – scrum to the other team.

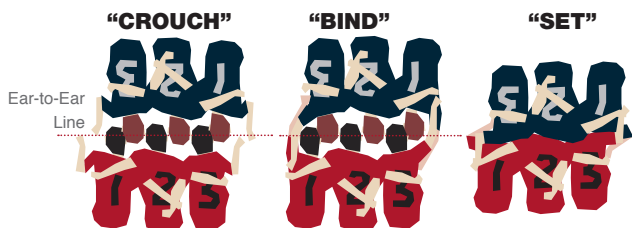
## SCRUM

### A. ENGAGEMENT

1. Engagement process is three separate instructions, “Crouch, Bind, Set”, and they require three separate actions from players. **FK**
2. The referee may be in front of the scrumhalves, but would preferably be either behind the scrumhalves or on the opposite side to the scrum.
3. Players may crouch when they are ready or they may be in a position ready to crouch. The referee will then call “Crouch”.
4. Ensure that all players are square (with feet facing forward) and all shoulders are in a straight line (loosehead’s shoulder not tucked under their hooker). Both front rows should be at the same height (level) to each other. Ensure that they are interlocked and there is no head to head contact. **FK**
5. **The referee will then call “Bind”. The props should bind with the hand of their outside arm on the opposing prop’s body (not on the arm or the shorts).**
6. **When the referee is satisfied that the front rows appear ready to engage, ARE STABLE AND SQUARE, the referee says “Set”. The front rows may then come together. This is not a command. It is permission to engage. The front rows must “set and hold”, and not “hit and chase”, so that the scrum is stationary. FK**
7. **Early engagement, failure to engage, and standing up should not be tolerated and be penalized, by Free Kick, or a Penalty Kick if the referee deems it to be deliberate, dangerous and/or a repeated infringement. FK / PK**
8. Props are allowed to change the bind on their opponents after engagement as long as it remains legal. **PK**
9. All backrow players are to bind on the locks’ body with at least one arm up to the shoulder prior to engagement - this is to prevent the “slingshot”.
10. #8 is required to bind between the locks.
11. If a team’s scrum has been reduced in numbers due to injury, suspension or a send off, the opponents have to comply so that both team’s have equal numbers in the scrum. Formation should be 3-4 for seven players, 3-2-1 for six players and 3-2 for five players.

NOTE 1: The engagement process has been implemented to maintain safety. If at any point, the process is not followed by players the referee should blow the whistle, and restart the engagement from the beginning OR penalize players if they repeatedly do not comply.

NOTE 2: FK's: On the second occasion that a team repeats the same infringement, the referee should escalate the FK to a PK, and on the third occasions a PK and Yellow Card, if appropriate. If there has been a significant period between the infringements the referee may choose not to escalate.



## REFEREE NOTES

Set your standard early at the scrum. Free kick early engagement immediately. Maintain a safe and fair environment.

### B. SET AND PUT-IN

1. Scrum is to remain square and stationary. **FK**
2. When the referee is happy that the scrum is square and stationary, the referee will instruct the scrumhalf to put the ball in by saying "Yes 9".
3. Scrum put-in must be straight and credible along the center line of the front rows. **FK**

### C. WHEEL

1. A scrum unintentionally wheels through 45° should immediately be reset. Original team putting the ball in again.
2. A deliberate wheel (pulling the scrum around) is not allowed. **PK**

### D. SCRUMHALVES

1. Scrumhalves are not to touch/push one another. **PK**
2. Defending scrumhalves are not to position themselves in the 'pocket' area between the flanker and #8. Manage first before penalizing. **PK**

3. Defending scrumhalves who decide to take up a defensive position on the last line of feet of their side of the scrum have to start next to their opponent at the put-in, and then move to the last line of feet once the scrum has commenced. Once behind the last foot, they may move laterally across the field and do not have to remain close to the scrum. If they choose not to be next to their opponent at the put-in, their offside line is the same as for players not participating in the scrum which is 5m behind the last line of feet of their scrum. **PK**
4. The scrumhalf whose team has possession of the ball after the scrum has commenced, must also remain onside. They may have one foot in front of the ball but not both. If they deliberately remain in front of the ball to obstruct the opposing scrumhalf, often to allow their #8 to play the ball, they should be penalized. **PK**
5. The offside line for the defending scrumhalf that follows the ball is on their side of the ball. **PK**
6. A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and has control of the ball at the base of the scrum. **FK**

## E. GENERAL

1. **Safety is paramount and an immediate whistle is required in any situation that could be dangerous, especially at a collapsed or popped scrum.**
2. **Dangerous play, i.e. collapse, pop, bore in, etc. should not be tolerated. PK and admonishment**
3. **Teams may not push the other team back more than 1.5m. FK**
4. **If the referee deems that the scrum is potentially dangerous/unsafe due to lack of players' skills, ability, size or injury, the referee will continue with uncontested scrums for the remainder of the game.**

## LINEOUT

### A. FORMATION

1. The defending team must have a player in the 5m area - if they do not, the referee will instruct them to do so before continuing - this player may not support a jumper in the lineout, and must be 2m from the line-of-touch and 2m from the five-meter line until the lineout commences. **FK**
2. If a team elects to have a player in the receiver (scrumhalf) position, the receiver must be 2m from the lineout at the moment of the throw. If this player decides to move into the lineout prior to the throw they have to be replaced by another player from the lineout before the ball is thrown in. **FK**
3. The team that is to throw the ball into the lineout determines the maximum number of players in the lineout. Referees should manage this rather than penalize, unless it continues to be an issue. **FK**

NOTE: Many aspects of lineout infringements, i.e. formation, closing the gap, ball not traveling 5m, early jump, etc. can be managed by referees by resetting rather than penalizing, unless the infringement substantially benefits the offending team, or is continually repeated. **FK**

### B. QUICK THROW-IN

1. Referees are to be more aware of quick throw-ins, within law, and that the throw does not have to be straight, but may not be forward, and has to travel 5m. The quick throw-in can be taken between the line-of-touch and the player's goal line.
  - a. Ball not thrown 5m = opponents' option scrum or lineout.
  - b. Ball prevented from traveling 5m or played before going 5m. **FK**
2. Players who hold onto the ball, or throw the ball away, when in touch, to prevent a quick throw-in should be penalized, on the line of touch, 15m line. This should not be tolerated. **PK**

### C. LINEOUT START & END

1. Once the lineout has started, referees may raise one arm to indicate that the lineout is still in progress, and players who are not part of the lineout need to remain 10m from the line of touch.
2. Players that are in the lineout have to remain between the line-of-touch and the 10m backline offside line, and between the 5m and 15m lines until the lineout is over. Players that cross the 15m line prior to the lineout being over, attackers to receive the ball or defenders, should be penalized. If it is not material the referee should manage it rather than penalizing. **PK**

## D. SUPPORT & OBSTRUCTION

1. The immediate players supporting the jumper may NOT position themselves in front of the jumper, obstructing the opposition. **PK**

## E. NO MAUL / MAUL

1. If defenders decide not to engage to form a maul at the lineout, referees should communicate to the team in possession to get the ball out, rather than penalize for obstruction unless they do not comply. Defenders' offside line is a line through the ball until the lineout ends. **PK**
2. If a maul forms those players who opt not to join the maul must retire to the maul offside line (last line of feet) and remain there. They are allowed to move laterally in the space between 5m and 15m from touch, however, they are not allowed to drop back away from the offside line. Referees are encouraged to manage this rather than just penalize. **PK**

## F. SACKING

1. If the ball carrier in the lineout has both feet on the ground, an opposition player may pull the ball carrier to the ground.
2. If they attempt this after a maul is formed it should be judged as collapsing the maul and be penalized. **PK**

## G. KNOCK-ON OR THROW FORWARD THAT GOES INTO TOUCH

1. If the ball is knocked-on or thrown forward into touch, the non-offending team may choose the lineout (where it crossed the touch line) or a scrum (where the throw-forward/knock-on occurred). If they take a quick throw-in, they have made their choice. NOTE This change is not applicable to a knock-on or throw-forward that goes into touch-in-goal (or across the dead ball line).

## H. PENALTY KICK OR FREE KICK AWARDED AT A LINEOUT

1. If a team is awarded a penalty/free kick at a lineout, they may choose to have a lineout instead of the kick. They may also choose a scrum.

## I. GENERAL

1. **Playing the opponent in the air, obstructing, barging, or interfering with the jumper's support players should be immediately penalized.**  
**PK and admonishment**

## REFeree NOTES

Always be aware of a quick throw-in - know your law. Communicate and manage early what is expected at the lineout - start at the front: numbers, gap, non-throwing hooker in position, backlines 10m, no early jumping, receiver 2m from the lineout, immediate formation with no delay, no dummy throw - keep the player that is throwing ball in, in your vision. There is no need to continuously talk to prevent disorder at the lineout as it can become white noise - players want to play rugby, not listen to the referee talk all day. Keep the backlines and players in the lineout onside for the duration of the lineout.

## MAUL

### A. PULLING THE MAUL DOWN / COLLAPSED MAUL

1. Pulling down the maul and/or collapsing the maul is NOT allowed. **Referees should increase their work-rate and communication at driving mauls to prevent players from collapsing the maul. PK**

### B. FORMING/JOINING/LEAVING / ENDING THE MAUL

1. When forming the maul players may not be in front of a player of their team that is in possession of the ball. This is obstruction. **PK**
2. A maul is not over when all the defenders leave the maul voluntarily. Defenders who then join the maul, should do so from the last line of feet.
3. If defenders leave the maul involuntarily or are unable to remain bound, and there are no more defenders attached to the maul, the maul is over and the team in possession should not continue to move forward with their players bound around the ball, as this may constitute obstruction. Referees are to communicate that the maul is over.

NOTE 1: If the team in possession does not comply with the referee's request that the maul is over they should be penalized. **PK**

NOTE 2: If a maul is moving towards the goal line, and the defenders drop off the maul, prior to the maul reaching the goal line, and the maul then immediately enters the in-goal area due to the momentum gained from the drive and the attacking team grounds the ball, award the try.

4. If a maul becomes stationary OR is moving parallel to the goal lines OR is moving backwards, referees will instruct players to "USE IT ONCE", and give that team ample opportunity to comply within Law. If the maul again becomes stationary, the referee will instruct the team in possession to "USE IT".
5. If the defenders collapse a static maul to force the turnover scrum decision they should be penalized. **PK**
6. **Players are not allowed to dangerously charge into the maul by not binding correctly upon contact. PK and admonishment**

### REFeree NOTES

Work both sides of the maul to prevent players joining from the side and collapsing the maul.

## ADVANTAGE

### A. COMMUNICATION & SIGNALS

1. Referees should only play advantage when there is the possibility that advantage may accrue.
2. When an infringement occurs, referees will indicate that they have seen it, and verbalize, i.e. “Knock-on + team color”. Then they will either blow the whistle for the infringement, or play advantage, signal and verbalize: **“Scrum Advantage + team color”**; OR **“Penalty Advantage + team color”**  
The team mentioned is the team you are playing advantage for. It is not required to indicate a secondary signal or a Penalty Kick signal.
3. When advantage is gained, the referee will call “Advantage Over” - there is no signal for advantage over. Advantage over can only be called during play and not after the ball is dead.

### B. NO ADVANTAGE

1. If the scrum collapses, pops up, or players are lifted off their feet, an immediate whistle is required to prevent injury, whether for penalty or reset.
2. If a player deliberately kills the ball on the ground, no advantage should be applied, unless a clear scoring opportunity or an obvious advantage is likely.

### REFEREE NOTES

When you have blown for an infringement, always indicate the primary signal first, then secondary.

## GENERAL PLAY

### A. OFFSIDE AT KICKS

1. Players in front of the kicker from their team are to remain stationary until they are put outside, or must retreat toward their goal line if they are within ten meters between where the ball lands and their goal line. Referees are responsible to create space and should place little value to the materiality of offside at kicks and demand higher compliance. **PK or SCRUM OPTION**
2. No attempt to retreat must be penalized. Offside players advancing at a kick ahead should be instructed “STOP + COLOR (+ NUMBER, if possible)”. Players who continue to move forward must be penalized. **PK or SCRUM OPTION**
3. Players that are offside but not within 10m of where the ball lands may move laterally across the field.
4. Players that are offside when a kick goes into touch continue to be offside and must not advance if a quick throw-in is an option UNLESS they are put outside by players of their own team. Manage rather than over-reacting. **PK or SCRUM OPTION**

## FOUL PLAY

**FOUL PLAY IS NOT WITHIN THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME AND HAS NO PLACE IN RUGBY. IT SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED.**

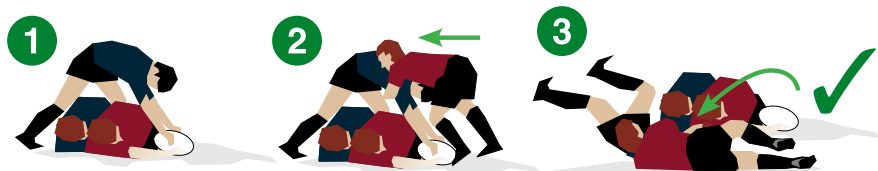
### A. TACKLING

The following are NOT acceptable practices:

- 1. Tackling should not be above the armpits.**  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- 2. Leading with the shoulder (making deliberate contact with the shoulder first), and then wrapping with the arm(s) or swinging the arm(s) into contact. PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- 3. Aiming a shoulder first, no-wrap tackle at the knees (e.g. football style).**  
**PK and suspension**
- 4. Failing to wrap while tackling. PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- 5. Spear tackle or tip tackle. Lifting a player from the ground, turning the body horizontal or beyond, and either driving the player into the ground or dropping the player without regard for the player's safety. PK and Red Card.**
  - When a player is lifted, there is an obligation on the tackler to get the player to the ground safely.
  - If the tackler lowers the player such that the lower body contacts the ground first there is no offense.
  - If the tackler attempts to lower the player safely, but is unsuccessful.  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- 6. High tackle (including a chest high tackle where the arm eventually makes contact above the shoulders).**  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**  
NOTE: If a player bends forward/down, and is then tackled above the shoulders due to this action, the tackler should be given the benefit of the doubt if their intent was not to tackle high/dangerously.
- 7. Tackling a player in the air, whether intentional or not should be dealt with severely. Merely having your "eyes on the ball" is not sufficient.**
  - At a kick ahead where players may jump to catch the ball, the chasing player is responsible for the safety of the receiving player, as in a tackle. **PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
  - If both players jump to the same height with a clear intention of playing the ball, play on.
  - If the chasing player jumps in a clear attempt to play the ball and jumps into a stationary player, play on.



8. At a tackle, if a player is on their feet with their hands on the ball, an opposition player (if they enter through the gate) may legally bind onto them and roll the player to expose the ball and/or tackle the player. They may not lift the player off the ground and they may not grab the player above the shoulders and/or around the neck. **PK and admonishment and/or suspension**



## B. FEET ON BODIES

1. **Players may not stamp, trample, or kick opponents.**  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension/RED CARD**

## C. GENERAL

- Deliberate offenses should result in a suspension. This can be a first offense without prior warning, a player that re-offends or a team that re-offends.  
**PK and suspension**
- Repeated offenses can be team and/or individual, and should be addressed sooner rather than later. Repeat infringement patterns, i.e. offenses close to the goal line, AND repeated infringements by an individual player are both without time limit. Repeat team infringements in particular aspects (e.g. tackle), may warrant another admonishment rather than moving up to a suspension if sufficient time has passed without infringement.  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- 'Cheap shots'/off the ball offenses are unacceptable and should result in a suspension. PK and suspension**
- Holding/obstructing players off the ball.**  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- Perpetrators and retaliators are responsible and are to be dealt with - the last offence penalized will be the restart of play.**  
**PK and admonishment and/or suspension**
- Players disputing the referees decision should not be tolerated. Awarding a PK or advancing an already awarded PK/FK 10m is appropriate.  
**PK and admonishment**
- Players that deliberately prevent a quick tap penalty/free kick from being taken, especially close to their goal line, should be considered deliberate and penalized. **PK and admonishment and/or suspension**

## RESTARTS & OPEN PLAY

1. Players are expected to remain behind the ball at all kick-offs and drop-outs (except quick drop-outs as the Law allows). Referees are to manage this phase, however, players are aware that they need to comply.
2. Players who obstruct the opposition from getting to the ball carrier or the receiver should be penalized. **PK**
3. Players who bind onto their own player (that has possession of the ball), and so position themselves between their player and the opposition, are obstructing and should be penalized. **PK**

### REFeree NOTES

At all restarts, signal with your arm, and communicate verbally to players to remain behind the ball. Be reasonable, and manage these phases.

## BALL OUT

### A. RUCK

1. The ball is out when it is totally exposed and clear of bodies (of players in the ruck).
2. While the competition for the ball in a ruck is ongoing, hands by players in the ruck, are NOT allowed. **PK**
3. Once the ball has been clearly won, pushing the ball back by using the hand, by a player of the team that have won possession of the ball is permissible,
4. Digging for the ball, by the player of the team who has won possession of the ball, who is in the scrumhalf position and not part of the ruck, is permissible and the BALL IS NOT OUT.
5. If a player in the scrum half position is not retrieving (digging for) the ball, but holding the ball, with one or two hands, the BALL IS NOT OUT, picking up the ball is OUT.
6. Players in the ruck may under no circumstance slap the ball out of the scrumhalf's hands or interfere with the scrumhalf. **PK**

### B. MAUL

1. Players in the maul may under no circumstance slap the ball out of the scrumhalf's hands or interfere with the scrumhalf. **PK**

### C. SCRUM

1. The ball is out when it is totally exposed and clear of bodies (of players in the scrum).
2. If the hindmost player detaches from the scrum (both shoulders) with the ball at the feet, and attempts to pick up the ball, the BALL IS OUT.

### REFeree NOTES

When in doubt if the ball is out, the benefit should go to the team in possession.

## KICK AT GOAL

1. When a try is scored, the scoring team has one and a half minutes (90 seconds) FROM THE TIME THE TRY IS SCORED to take the conversion kick.
2. If a player indicates a kick at goal at a penalty kick, they have one minute (60 seconds) to take the kick from when the kicking tee/sand arrives or when the player makes a mark on the ground.

NOTE: On both occasions, it is playing time, so if there is an injured player who has to be treated or removed before the kick, time should be stopped.

## PENALTY TRY

1. A penalty try should be accompanied by either a severe admonishment, a yellow card or a red card to the offender. A penalty try should only be awarded if foul play by a defender prevents a try from being scored or prevents a try from being scored in a better position.
2. If the offense that prevented the try is a deliberate offense, a yellow card should be issued to the offender.

## SUSPENSION

### A. YELLOW CARD

Players that have been shown a Yellow Card are to leave the field of play for 10 minutes of playing time, or the time of suspension utilized in the local HS league.

### B. RED CARD

Players that have been shown a Red Card are to leave the field of play immediately and may not continue playing in that match.

## CONCUSSION

### A. COMMON EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

If players display any of the signs and symptoms below they should not be allowed to continue playing in that match, and may not return at a later stage unless cleared by a doctor.

INDICATOR	EVIDENCE
Symptoms	Headache, dizziness, “feeling in a fog”
Physical signs	Loss of consciousness, vacant expression, vomiting, inappropriate playing behaviour, unsteady on legs, slowed reactions
Behavioural changes	Inappropriate emotions, irritability, feeling nervous or anxious
Cognitive impairment	Slowed reaction times, confusion/disorientation, poor attention and concentration, loss of memory for events up to and/or after the concussion

## INJURIES

### A. SAFETY

The referee has the authority to instruct a team to remove any player from the field if they feel the player is too injured to continue or has suffered a head injury. This instruction overrules the team coach, parent or trainer.

### B. DURING PLAY

1. If there is a minor injury the referee should continue with play.
2. If the referee deems the injury to be serious they should, within reason, immediately stop play and call for medical assistance. When play commences the team in possession prior to the stoppage should be awarded a scrum where the ball was when play was stopped.

## C. DURING STOPPAGES

1. If there is a minor injury the referee should continue with play, unless the game is to restart with a scrum and the injured player is part of the scrum.
2. If there is a more serious injury the referee should wait until the player is ready to continue or has been substituted.

## USA RUGBY REFEREES

### **RICHARD EVERY** **HIGH PERFORMANCE REFEREE MANAGER**

773-895-6013  
revery@usarugby.org

### **BRITTANY JACOBS** **REFEREE MANAGER**

720-508-8003  
bjacobs@usarugby.org

### **ED TODD** **CONSULTANT & REFEREE COACH MANAGER**

etodd@usarugby.org

### **FRED THOMAS** **APPOINTMENTS**

fred.thomas.cl01@statefarm.com

### **MIKE COBB** **TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**

mcobb@usarugby.org

## REFEREE ZONE MANAGERS

### **MIKE COBB** **EASTERN**

864-907-1869  
mcobb@usarugby.org

### **MARC NELSON** **WESTERN**

303-519-2062  
mnelson@usarugby.org

## REFEREE & LAWS COMMITTEE

### **BRUCE CARTER** **CHAIRMAN**

831-521-1643  
rugbyrefmd@aol.com

### **CHARLIE HAUPT** **SECRETARY**

303-725-7595  
charles.w.haupt@ulalaunch.com

### **STEVE PARRILL** **TRAINING**

985-974-1134  
sparrill@usarugby.org

### **PETER WATSON** **LAWS**

781-405-6932  
peter.watson@mailgw.com

### **PETER SIMPSON** **EVALUATIONS**

201-390-0436  
whitelightusa@gmail.com

