

# The Rugby League European Championship 2018



## Interpretations of the International Laws of the Game

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The Rugby League European Championship 2018 will be adjudicated in accordance with the 'Tournament Manual' and the 'International Laws of the Game with Notes on the Laws as approved by the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF) with the following interpretations:

## **SECTION 6 – SCORING – TRIES AND GOALS**

### **Section 6.3**

#### **Try – How scored**

A try is scored when:

- a. A player first grounds the ball in the opponents in goal
- b. Opposing players simultaneously grounds the ball in the in goal area
- c. A tackled player's momentum carries them into the opponents in goal where the player grounds the ball

#### **Grounding**

Grounding the ball includes:

- a. Placing the ball on the ground with hand or hands, wrist or forearm
- b. Exerting a downward pressure on the ball in contact with the ground
- c. Dropping on the ball and covering it with the front part of the body above the waist and below the neck

A player who has had possession or touches/touched the ball and knocks the ball forward must regain possession (catch, hold or grip) prior to the ball hitting the ground, another player, goalpost or cross bar.

For the ball to be deemed grounded, pressure must be applied by the player's fingers, hand, wrist, forearm or torso so as to create a reasonable influence on the plane of the ball including the spin, rotation, momentum or bounce.

### **Section 6.3(d)**

#### **Penalty try**

Further, if circumstances warrant it:

*'The Referee may award a penalty try if, in their opinion, a try would have been scored but for the unfair play of the defending team. A penalty try is awarded between the goalposts irrespective of where the offence occurred'*

#### **Grounding the ball in own in goal**

The ball will be deemed grounded by a player if it is done so intentionally and grounded in the circumstances described in the section above on grounding.

## **SECTION 8 – RESTARTS OF PLAY**

### **Section 8.1**

#### **Kick-off**

A kick off is to be taken in compliance with Section 8.1 of the 'International Laws of the Game with Notes on the Laws'.

A kick off may only be taken when all officials are in position. The referee will call time off when all officials are in position if a team is not ready to kick off.

### **Section 8.2**

#### **20 metre restart**

A 20 metre optional kick is to be taken in compliance with Section 2 and Section 8.2 of the 'International Laws of the Game with Notes on the Laws'.

The 20 metre optional kick must only be taken when all officials are in position and the whistle is blown. A team wishing to take a quick restart can do so providing that the player who collected the ball after it went dead takes the ball to the centre of the 20 metre line and takes the restart himself. The initial tackle affected on the team taking the 20 metre optional re-start shall be a zero tackle.

### **Section 8.3**

#### **Goal line drop out**

- a. The defending team is required to recommence play with a goal line drop out in a timely manner of it being signalled by the referee
- b. The referee will call time off once the touch judges are in position for the restart
- c. If, in the opinion of the referee, the restart is being delayed due to the circumstances of the game, the referee may call "time-off"
- d. A drop out may be taken as soon as all officials are in position and the referee has blown his whistle

### **Section 8.8**

#### **Penalty or free kick**

A Penalty or Free Kick is to be taken in compliance with Section 13.1 and Section 13.4 of the 'International Laws of the Game with Notes on the Laws'.

The restart must only be taken when all officials are in position and the referee has indicated the mark both physically and verbally. Play will be allowed to commence when the referee has moved to a position from which the referee can officiate.

#### **40/20 kick**

Where a player kicks the ball in general play bounded by their own dead ball line, 40 metre lines and touchlines and the ball finds touch, otherwise than on the full, at a point on the touchline between the opponents 20 metre line and the goal line, the kicking team shall recommence play with a tap kick.

The tap kick will be taken 20 metres in from the touchline and in line with where the ball first crossed the touchline but no closer than 10 metres from the goal line.

The tap kick may only be taken when the referee blows his whistle to restart play.

Prior to blowing the whistle, the referees will give the defending team a 'reasonable time' to get into position. This will only occur when all match officials are in position and ready to officiate.

## **SECTION 9 – TOUCH AND TOUCH IN-GOAL**

The ball is touch in goal when it touches the corner post, in goal line or any object on or outside the touch in goal line. A player is NOT considered to be an 'object'.

Where the ball which is stationary in the in goal area comes into contact with a player in touch in goal or over the dead ball line, the ball is deemed to have been made dead by that player.

The ball must have bounced on the ground either on or over the dead ball line/touch in goal line for a 20m restart to be awarded. Should the non-kicking team touch the ball whilst playing at it before this happens, then a drop out will be awarded.

Should a kick be made dead by a defending player straddling the dead ball line or touch in goal line, play will restart with a goal line drop out.

### **Corner post**

If a player makes contact with a corner post, the player will not be deemed to be out of play unless any part of their body made contact with either the touch-in-goal or the touch line or the ground beyond.

If the ball is not in possession of a player and it makes contact with the corner post (e.g. from a kick) the ball will be deemed to be touch-in-goal as per section 9.2.

## **SECTION 10 – KNOCK-ON AND FORWARD PASS**

### **Section 10.3**

#### **Charge-down**

Charging down is blocking the path of the ball with hands, arms or body as it rises from an opponent's kick.

Indicators of a charge down are:

- a. Jumping in the air;
- b. Raising hands or arms to block the path of the ball;
- c. Deliberately running through the path of the ball

It will not be considered a charge down if a player:

- a. Elects to cease from continuing to charge the ball down prior to it striking them;
- b. The ball accidentally strikes them

When the ball is kicked, all players from the kicking team who are in front of the ball are immediately placed onside when an opponent charges the ball down, provided they were not downtown or out of play.

## **SECTION 11 – THE TACKLE AND PLAY-THE-BALL**

A player in possession is tackled when:

### **Section 11.2(a)**

#### **Grounded**

*'when the player is held by one or more opposing players and the ball or the hand or arm holding the ball comes into contact with the ground'*

### **Section 11.2(b)**

#### **Upright**

*'when the player is held by one or more opposing players in such a manner that the player can make no further progress and cannot part with the ball'*

### **Section 11.2(c)**

#### **Succumbing**

*'when, being held by an opponent, the tackled player makes it evident that they had succumbed\* to the tackle and wishes to be released in order to play-the-ball'*

\*Succumb includes a player in possession being lifted off the ground and resulting in the calling of held by the referee.

### **Section 11.2(d)**

#### **Hand on player**

*'when the player is lying on the ground and an opponent places a hand on them'*

A player in possession of the ball lying on the ground (and not tackled) cannot have the ball stripped from their possession.

### **Methods that impede the immediate release of the player in possession**

- a. Flop onto the player in possession who is grounded
- b. Working the player in possession
- c. Leg pulls
- d. Leaving or placing the hands or arms on the ball or the arms of the player in possession once the tackle is complete
- e. Spinning on the player in possession once the tackle is complete
- f. Defenders 'peeling off' the player in possession
- g. Climbing over the player in possession once the tackle is complete
- h. Crowding the player in possession once the tackle is complete using their knees, arms or body
- i. Pulls the player in possession to the ground once the tackle is complete

### **Section 11.10(a)**

#### **At the completion of the tackle;**

The player in possession 'shall be immediately released' by the defender and/or defenders.

### **Section 11.10**

#### **Defenders responsibilities**

At the completion of the tackle, the defender must take up a position as a marker or retire the 10 metres.

A marker must take up a position directly 'opposite the tackled player' and not float or be too deep from the play the ball.

The marker 'must not kick the ball' whilst it is being played.

The second marker 'must stand immediately and directly behind' the first marker.

#### **Surrender tackle**

Occurs when the player in possession surrenders their run in or at the line.

Defender(s) are permitted to work the player on the ground, move to a bear hug position, lay on the player in possession or spin to the front of the tackle.

A defender cannot work or lift the tackled player into touch, touch in-goal or into an in-goal area.

It is the sole responsibility of the referee to identify this tackle.

#### **Shoulder charge**

Is where a defender does not use or attempt to use, their arm (including their hands) to tackle or otherwise take hold of the opposing player and the contact is forceful.

It will be considered misconduct, if any player affects a tackle in the manner as defined. The indicators will include:

1. Rotation of the defenders hips and shoulders
2. Defender has 'tucked' their arm into their body
3. No genuine attempt to make a tackle.

Where there is contact with the head, the player may be dismissed from the field of play.

#### **Dangerous contact to legs**

Regardless of the point of impact, a player can be penalised for any 'forceful, dangerous or

unnecessary contact' at the legs that involves an unacceptable risk of injury to the player in possession.

### **Tackling a kicker**

When affecting a tackle on a kicker, the defender must make a genuine attempt to tackle which is not:

1. Late
2. High or
3. Dangerous

### **Responsibilities of the player in possession**

The tackled player shall:

- a. 'without delay regain their feet where they are tackled'
- b. Lift the ball clear of the ground
- c. Face the opponent's goal line
- d. Place the ball on the ground
- e. Make a genuine attempt to play the ball with the foot and maintain their balance.

If in the process of playing the ball, the ball is accidentally kicked forward, then a lost ball will be adjudicated.(scrum awarded)

### **Player in possession returning to the mark**

If the player in possession simultaneously offloads the ball or continues to run after the tackle is complete, the referee will direct the player in possession back to the original position to play the ball.

### **10 metres**

All defending players, except those who have taken up a position as Marker(s) must 'retire 10 metres from the point at which the ball is played or to their own goal line'.

All defending players are required to be level with or behind the front of the referee. If the defensive line is within 10 metres of their own goal line, the following applies:

- a. Defenders must be touching the goal line with a foot
- b. Defenders cannot place their front foot past the centre of the ruck
- c. Defenders cannot slap at the arm or ball of the dummy half as the ball is being picked up

### **Out of play**

A player from the team in possession is out of play if the player does not "retire behind their own players involved in the play the ball or to their own goal line".

An 'out of play' player(s) may again participate in the play if the player retreats to a position where they have both feet behind the point where the ball was placed on the ground in the prior play the ball.

Where an 'out of play' player becomes involved in the ensuing play, the player is to be penalised with the penalty being awarded in line with the previous play the ball, at the point where the player became out of play.

## **Section 11 – Notes 9**

### **Ball stolen in goal**

If the ball is stolen in the oppositions in goal area and there is more than one defender in the tackle, a penalty will be awarded ten metres out opposite where the offence took place. A penalty try will not be awarded and players will not be sin binned.

## **SECTION 12 – THE SCRUM**

### **Section 12.2**

#### **A scrum is to be formed and decided by:**

1. The front row 'interlock(ing) arms and heads and creating a tunnel'
2. The second row forwards 'interlock(ing) arms and placing their heads in the two spaces between the hooker and their front row forwards'
3. The loose forward (lock) 'shall pack behind their second row forwards by placing their head in the space between them and wrap their arms around the second row forwards'
4. All players outside the scrum, other than the scrum halves, shall retire ten (10) metres or more behind the mark where the scrum is formed and shall remain until the ball has emerged correctly from the scrum
5. The ball is to be fed on the same side as the referee into the tunnel by the scrum half who must stand square with both hands on the ball

### **Section 12.9**

'The ball must emerge from the scrum after first emerging from between and behind the inner feet of the second row forwards'. This will be indicated by the referee calling 'out'

#### **Time off at scrums**

If a team is properly formed and ready to contest a scrum, the referee will call 'time-off'. Players have to remain in position and if the other team form their scrum, time will be called back on.

## **SECTION 13 – PENALTY KICK**

### **Section 13.9**

#### **Possible eight point try**

If a player fouls an opponent who is touching down for a try, a penalty kick at goal shall be taken in front of the goal posts after the attempt to convert the try (Section 13.9)

Touching down includes:

- a. In the act of scoring; and
- b. Until the try scorer regains their feet

#### **Player safety**

A penalty try, an eight point try, a sin-bin or penalty can be awarded against a player who slides in feet first (or knees first) attempting to prevent a try.

## **SECTION 14 – OFFSIDE**

A player is offside, except in their own in-goal, if the ball touches, is touched, held or kicked by one of their own team behind them.

#### **Kicking Team**

An active offside player shall not encroach within ten metres of the ball, when there is an opponent waiting for the ball.

Active or Passive:

Active is: An offside player who takes part in and/or influences the course of the game.

Passive is: An offside player who does not influence the course of the game.

#### **Waiting for the ball**

A player from the non-kicking team who is moving in the direction of the ball and who can

actively participate in play.

Where an onside player takes possession of the ball, an offside team mate who is within ten (10) metres of opponents(s) 'waiting for the ball' may participate in the play when the onside player and/or ball itself travel ten (10) metres or more (this includes if the ball is kicked a second time).

### **Downtown chasers**

A downtown player is a player from the team in possession who is in front of the kicker in general play who intentionally advances beyond the point of the previous play the ball before the ball has gone past them.

## **SECTION 15 – PLAYER'S MISCONDUCT**

### **Obstruction**

Main consideration: 'Is the defensive team materially disadvantaged?'

The following indicators will be considered, in the opinion of the referee, for an obstruction to include:

Offensive consideration:

- 1) a) 'Block'\* of 'Flat' runner(s) (who do not receive the ball) must not stop in the middle of the defensive line.
  - b) It is the responsibility of 'Block' or 'Flat' runner(s) (who do not receive the ball) to avoid contacting or impeding defenders.
  - c) The Referee can determine the significance of contact initiated by the 'Block' or 'Flat' runner(s) (who do not receive the ball) in impeding a defender's involvement in a try scoring play.
- 2) Ball carriers must not run behind an active 'Block' or 'Flat' runner(s) and disadvantage the defensive line.
- 3) Attacking players who run a 'sweep'\*\* line and catch the ball on the inside shoulder of the lead runner and there is sufficient depth to the defensive line and the defenders are not impeded, play should be allowed to continue.
- 4) Defensive decisions that commit defender(s) to initiating contact with an attacking player(s) will not be deemed obstruction.
- 5) Defensive decisions which commit defender(s) to change their defensive line will not be deemed obstruction.

*\*Block runners run lines towards an opposition goal line and are committed to receiving the ball close to the defensive line.*

*\*\*Sweep runners run lines in an arc across the field behind a block runner.*

### **Escorts**

A player is not to 'deliberately obstruct an opponent who is not in possession'

It will be interpreted to be an obstruction in regards to a player catching the ball from a kick if:

1. A player arrives at the same time as an opponent and obstructs them deliberately; or
2. Deliberately runs an opponent off the ball.

This applies to both the kicking and non-kicking teams.

It will NOT be considered an obstruction in regards to a player catching the ball from a kick if:

1. A defending player moves directly towards the ball; and
2. Takes up a position prior to the ball being caught.

### **Diving through the ruck**

If, in the process of scoring a try an attacking player dives through the ruck or into a teammate including the player who played the ball and impacts on the defence, they will be penalised for an obstruction.

### **Sleeper**

An attacking player who loiters next to the play the ball area and who causes an obstruction will be penalised.

### **Lending weight**

It is permissible for a player to 'lend weight to a teammate in possession in order to avoid losing ground'. It is not permissible for the player lending weight to impede a defender from making the tackle. The referee will take into account any momentum the tackle has already generated.

### **Mid-air tackle**

The mid-air tackle applies to both attacking and defending teams. Any player who tackles another player who is attempting to field a kick on the full and is off the ground should be penalised.

### **Misconduct**

A player is guilty of misconduct if the player:

- a. 'Trips, kicks or strikes another player'
- b. 'When affecting or attempting to affect a tackle makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent intentionally, recklessly or carelessly'
- c. 'Uses any dangerous throw when affecting a tackle'
- d. Applies any unnecessary pressure or twists including grapples, crushers or performs a chicken wing on a player in possession
- e. Unnecessarily contacts a player not in possession or a kick (see Tackle and Play the ball)
- f. Forcefully spears at the legs of a player in possession exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury
- g. Shoulder Charge (see Tackle and Play the ball)
- h. 'Disputes a decision of the Referee or Touch Judge'

In these circumstances:

'A penalty kick shall be awarded against any player who is guilty of misconduct (Section 15) provided that this is not to the disadvantage of the non-offending team'. Additionally, a referee may at his discretion, caution, temporarily suspend for ten minutes (sin-bin), or dismiss the player'

## **SECTION 16 – DUTIES OF REFEREE AND TOUCH JUDGES**

### **Section 16.6**

#### **Sin-bin**

The main reasons for a player to be temporarily suspended for ten minutes are:

1. Repeated infringements
2. Deliberately breaking down play and denying a try scoring opportunity
3. Cooling off period for a player
4. Dissent

## 5. Striking

### **Captain's communication**

1. A captain may approach the referee to clarify a ruling
2. It will be at the discretion of the referee if the clarification is required immediately or at a later stage of the match
3. In speaking to the referee, a player must not question or refer to the referee's ability or integrity
4. The referee will not debate decisions with the captain

### **OTHER INTERPRETATIONS**

#### **Section 16 – Notes 8**

##### **Advantage**

When an accidental breach occurs (i.e. knock-on, "zero tackle", forward pass) and possession changes hands, the following tackle will be a zero tackle, notwithstanding that the team gaining possession may have gained a territorial advantage.

The referee is the sole judge of what constitutes an advantage be it tactical or territorial.

An infringement is not 'negated' simply because the ball touches or is touched by an opponent. The opponent must have adequate opportunity to take advantage and endeavour to do so before play is allowed to proceed.

Application of the advantage laws does not deprive the referee of subsequently dealing with an offending player.

For the avoidance of doubt, there will be no free play.  
(*Section 16 – Notes 8*)

##### **Shadowing**

Is the intentionally shielding of the ball from an opponent.

Where the ball contacts a player shadowing the ball, the ball will be deemed to have been touched by the player shadowing regardless of any intent to do so.

In cases where a player knocks or kicks the ball into a defender who was shadowing the ball, the player shadowing shall not be deemed to have played at the ball unless the player makes a deliberate action to do so.

In instances where the player shadowing the ball is intentionally pushed into the ball, a penalty will be awarded for the push.