

# GAME MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES



**SEASON 2024**

*discipline. respect. integrity. passion. teamwork..*

# THE 5 KEY AREAS

Rugby AU has defined 5 KEY AREAS of the game. These areas have the greatest impact on the quality of experience for all participants. Within these areas, we highlight changes to Law or areas of focus for the 2024 Community Rugby Season.

Each aspect is summarized below and detailed within the document.

## 1.SAFETY

TACKLE HEIGHT GLOBAL LAW TRIAL  
HEAD CONTACT PROCESS

## 2.SPEED

TACKLE HEIGHT  
SPEED OF BREAKDOWN  
JACKLER POSITIVE ACTION  
“USE IT” CALL

## 3.SPACE

TACKLE & BREAKDOWN OFFSIDE  
KICK IN GENERAL PLAY

## 4.SET-PIECE

SCRUM SET UP  
POST CONTEST MANAGEMENT  
DEFENSIVE #9 OFFSIDE LAW  
LINEOUT SET UP  
CONTEST IN AIR  
MAUL FORMATION

## 5.INTERACTIONS

COACH/REFEREE RELATIONSHIP  
CAPTAIN/REFEREE RELATIONSHIP  
FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITY

## OTHER

RUGBY AUSTRALIA  
3 STRIKES POLICY

The implementation of the GMG and the game Focus Areas is the responsibility of all participants. A collaborative approach and willingness to engage in proactive discussions will allow a greater understanding of the different roles and practical implementation. This will drive a more enjoyable environment.

# 1.SAFETY

## TACKLE HEIGHT GLOBAL LAW TRIAL

### New law - 9.13

“A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerous. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the sternum even if the tackle starts below the line of the sternum.”

The primary aim of the Tackle Height GLT is to decrease the instances of direct head-to-head collisions and concussions. So, how can coaches adequately prepare players for various tackle situations, and how can referees effectively handle these diverse scenarios?

Coaches should ensure that proper techniques are taught in both controlled and game-like training environments.

Referees should enforce the laws with the principle that violations need to be “clear and obvious”; otherwise, they should “Play ON” and allow play to continue.



**FOUL PLAY**

**SANCTION FRAMEWORK**

**RC**

**YC**

**PK**

**HEAD/NECK CONTACT**

**DIRECT HIGH FORCE**

**INDIRECT HIGH FORCE**  
**DIRECT LOW FORCE**

**INDIRECT LOW FORCE**

### IS THERE MITIGATION?

- Sudden/significant drop in height or change in direction from ball carrier
- A late change in dynamics due to another player in the contact
- An effort to wrap / bind and having no time to adjust
- Passive tackler: Feet planted, zero forward movement, falls backwards

### FACTORS AGAINST MITIGATION

- Mitigation will not apply for intentional or highly reckless acts of foul play
- Open space and time to make a decision

Please be aware the ruck will be officiated under the Head Contact Process and not the Tackle Height Trial.



## 2.SPEED

### 1.TACKLER

#### Tackle Height

No impact on ball delivery - roll east/west immediately

### 2.TACKLE ASSIST

#### Clear Release

Supporting Body Weight - hands on ground allowing winning the ball or slowing the delivery should be penalised.

### 3.TACKLED PLAYER

'Extra roll' and 'squeeze ball' to delay the release of the ball when under pressure.

The ball must be available immediately for play.

### 4.JACKLER

#### Must support bodyweight

Go straight onto the ball **CLEAR LIFT. POSITIVE ACTION.**

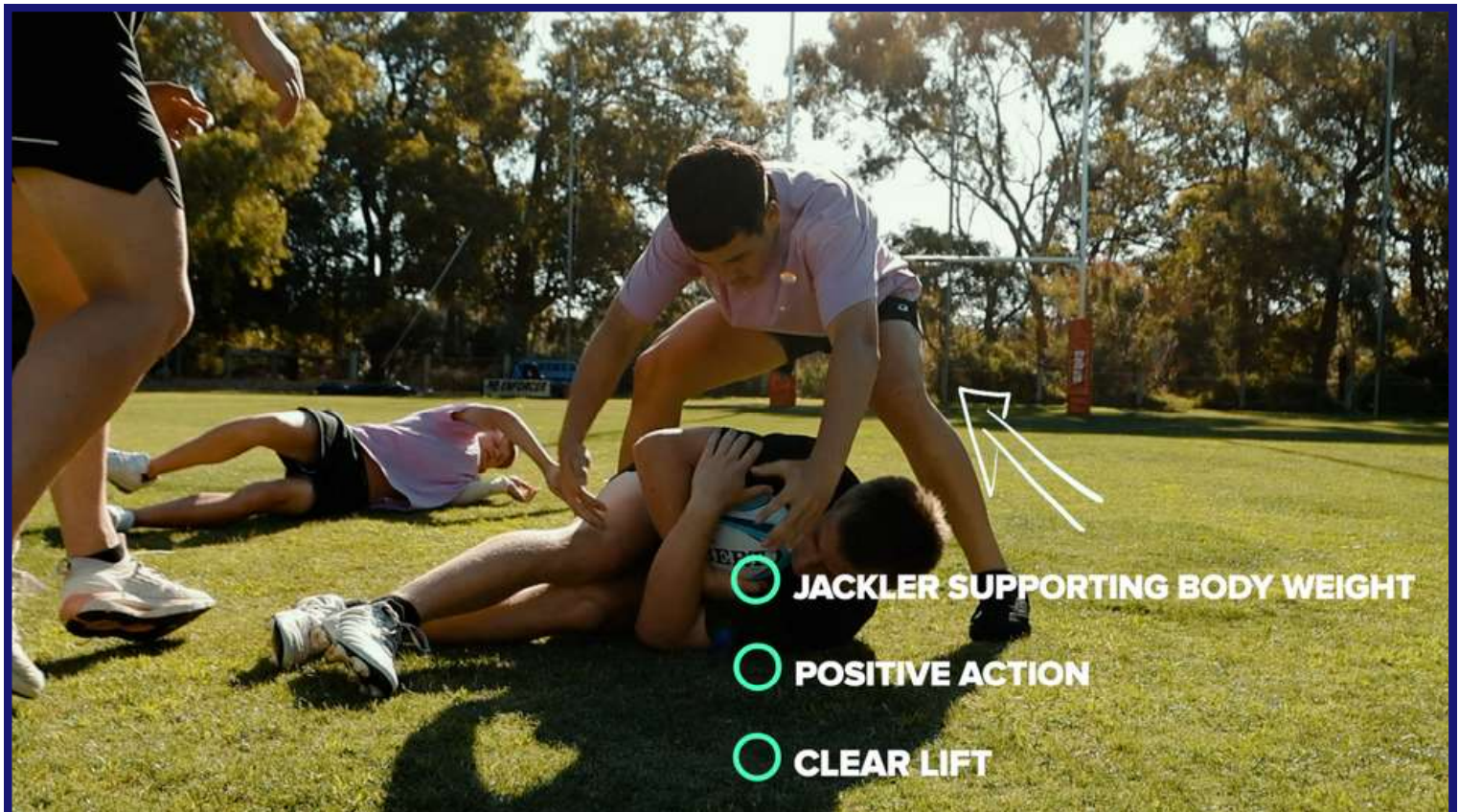
Player who shows clear lift and doesn't win the ball should be rewarded.

Where possible proactive management and advantage should be played to create continuity. If this is not possible.

**SANCTION - PK**

**"Use it!"** at ruck - When the ball has been clearly won by a team at the ruck, and the ball is available to be played immediately by the scrum-half or another player. The team has 5 seconds to play the ball.

**SANCTION- SCRUM**

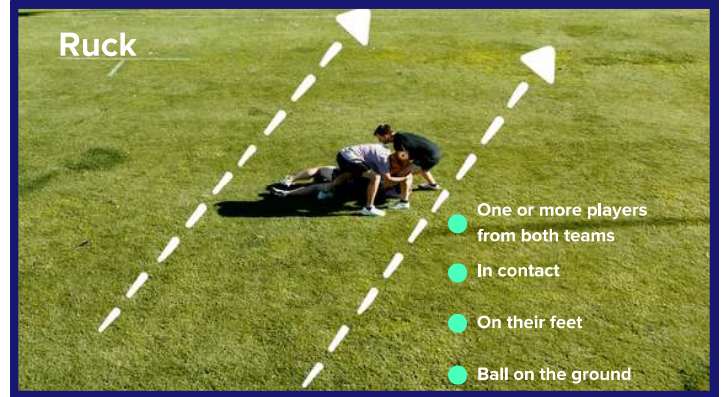


# 3.SPACE

## BREAKDOWN/MAUL

Players clearly onside.

Players should be encouraged to provide space between hindmost part of the breakdown/maul and their defensive line.

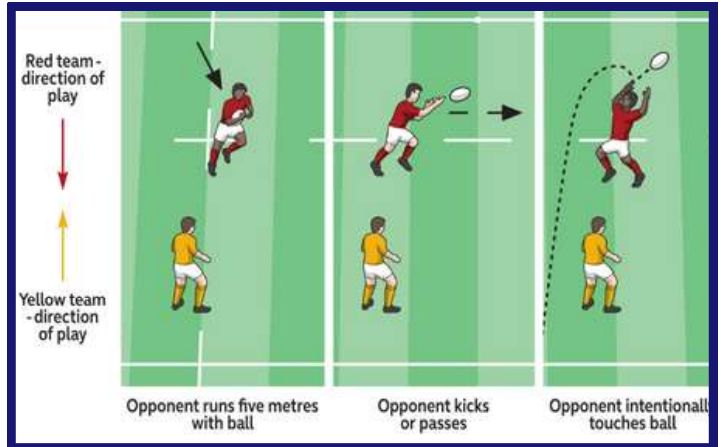
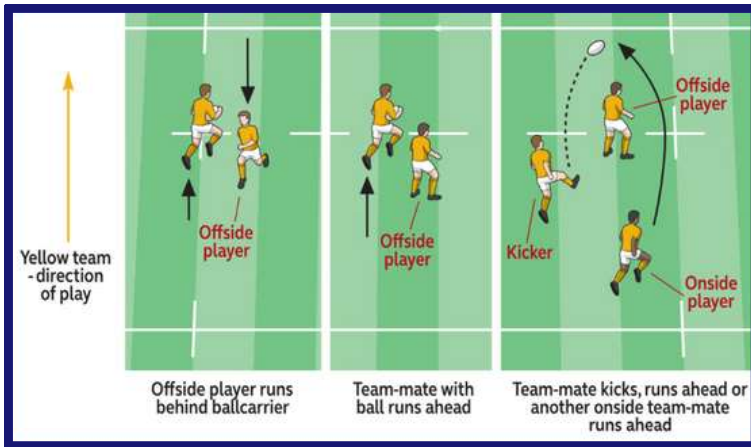


## KICKS

All players in front of kicker must stop/not advance until put onside.  
 Players not inside the 10 metres of where the ball lands can be put onside by;

**Kicker/onside players: run stationary or retreating players onside**

**Receiving player: Runs 5m, Passes or Kicks the ball.**



**MAINTAINING SPACE WITHIN THE GAME IS INTEGRAL TO CONTINUITY OF PLAY.**

**PLAYERS - SPACE ALLOWS TIME AND OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.**

**MATCH OFFICIALS - SPACE CREATES TIME BETWEEN EACH CONTEST WHICH PROVIDES GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR CLEARER DECISION MAKING.**



# 4.SET PIECE

## SCRUM

### CROUCH

Stability  
Square  
Height  
Breakfoot

### BIND

Balance-FK  
Space on bind-FK  
Breakfoot-FK  
Stability-FK

### SET

Hit and hold-FK  
Feed to hook-FK  
No delay feed-FK

### POST FEED CONTEST

Push straight - to be rewarded, a team needs to push straight and through the mark. **note - a team going backwards while staying square should not be penalised.**

Tight Head - bind on the body, not on the arm. Loose Head - elbow pointing to the sideline. **note - these are not penalisable offences if the scrum is stable but will be considered if the scrum collapses.**

Defensive Scrum Half - Is not permitted past the mid-line of the scrum. Defend at the mid-line (within 1m), at the hindmost foot (#8), or 5m back (with the backline).

## LINEOUT AND MAUL

### SET UP

Hooker on the mark  
Gap - 1m  
Receiver and non-throwing  
hooker (2x2m)  
No Walk-ins (clear stop)  
**SANCTION -FK**

### CONTEST

Contested throw = inside  
shoulder  
Non-contested throw = above  
head  
**SANCTION- OPTION**  
No throwing player across -PK  
No playing a player in the air-PK

### MAUL

**DEFENSE**  
No Early Drive -PK  
No sacking lifter-PK  
Side Entry/Collapse-PK  
**ATTACK**  
Lifters Obstructing-PK  
Ripper in contact with jumper - no  
slide back-PK

Where a defensive infringement has occurred, proactive management and advantage should be played to create continuity. If this is not possible, sanction appropriately.

An attacking infringement should be penalised immediately to avoid confusion.

## TOUCH LAW



# 5.INTERACTIONS

## PRE MATCH

We encourage dialogue between coaches, captain and referees prior to the match. Reasons for this;

- Front Row Chat
- Captain and Referee to establish working relationship.
- Provide clarity in Law
- Provide understanding of how the team may want to play and allow the referee the opportunity to facilitate this within the Laws.

Proactive and meaningful discussion will see greater clarity and better working relationships between all participants.

## DURING MATCH

2024 will see a firmer onfield stance to;

- back chat,
- protesting decisions and
- non sportsperson like conduct amongst players.

Referees will be encouraged to manage each scenario with context but have the following management tools at their disposal depending on severity.

- warning - quiet word with player or captain
- PK
- PK & YC - repeat behaviour or severity
- RC - abuse, discrimination etc.

## POST MATCH

Referees are not to be approached immediately after the match for comment on the game. Please allow at least 15 minutes before any discussion takes place.

2024 will see Premier Rugby Competitions have the ability to provide post match feedback via a formal link provided by the competition.

The feedback will be aligned to the 5 Key Areas outlined in this document.

The purpose;

- feedback opportunity
- development opportunity
- build better relationships between coaches, players and referees.

If positive, this will be rolled out to other grades.

### 3 STRIKES POLICY

The Three Strike Policy in Community Rugby is designed to promote a positive and respectful environment within the sport. Its primary goal is to eliminate poor or abusive behaviour, especially targeting match officials, players, coaches, and spectators, that undermines the spirit of the game. The policy holds clubs accountable for the conduct of their members and supporters both on and off the field.

The determination of if/when to apply the Three Strike Policy is at the absolute discretion of the Member Union, or their delegate, and is summarised as follows:

#### Strike 1:

- The offending club receives a Show Cause Notice outlining the allegations.
- The club has 14 days to respond and demonstrate measures that will be taken to address the issue.
- If the response is inadequate, the Member Union may issue a strike.
- In addition to the strike, the specific team(s) involved may face a points deduction penalty.
- The club remains on Strike 1 for 12 months, unless Strike 2 is issued within that period.

#### Strike 2:

- This is a similar process to Strike 1 but with more severe penalties, including fines (up to \$5,000) and additional point deductions for each competitive team at the club.
- The club may face further oversight and requirements as part of the process.
- The club remains on Strike 2 for 12 months, unless Strike 3 is issued within that period.

#### Strike 3:

- This is a similar process to Strike 2 but with even more severe penalties, including possible termination of affiliation with the Member Union/Association/Rugby Australia.
- The club/teams may face removal from competitions, fines (up to \$10,000), and other penalties.
- The club remains on Strike 3 for 12 months, unless further instances of poor or abusive behaviour require to be addressed.



## MEMBER UNION CONTACTS



Brumbies Rugby  
Sam Norton-Knight  
Coach Development Manager  
P: 0459 349 796  
E: s.nortonknight@brumbies.com.au



NSW Rugby  
Owain Roberts  
Coach Development and Education Manager  
P: (02) 9323 3300  
E: owain.roberts@nsw.rugby

NSW Rugby  
Alex Richards  
Referee Manager  
P: (02) 9323 3300  
E: alex.richards@nsw.rugby



Reds Rugby  
Kris Burton  
Regional Rugby Manager - Coach  
Development  
P: 1300 753 733  
E: kris.burton@redsrugby.com.au



Rugby Union South Australia  
Rob Sadler  
Coach Education Manager  
P: 0469 028 850  
E: Rob.Sadler@sa.rugby



TAS Rugby Union  
Chris Noble  
Director of Coaching  
E: Chris.Noble@tasrugby.com.au



Rugby Victoria  
Greg Fergus  
Coach Education Manager  
P: (03) 9221 0735  
E: greg.fergus@rugbyvic.com.au



NT Rugby Union  
Paul Healy  
Manager Pathways & Participation  
P: (08) 8945 1444  
E: pathways@ntrugby.com.au



Rugby WA  
Grant Lazarus  
Education Coordinator  
P: 0483 877 500  
E: grant.lazarus@rugbywa.com.au

## RUGBYAU CONTACTS



Rugby Australia  
Michael Magriplis  
Head of Community Coaching  
E: Michael.Magriplis@rugby.com.au



Rugby Australia  
Graham Cooper  
Head of Community Match Officials  
E: graham.cooper@rugby.com.au

## GMG WORKING PARTY

Graham Cooper - Head of Community Match Officials  
Michael Magripilis - Head of Community Coaching  
Rohan Hoffmann - Match Official Manager, Workforce  
Brendan McKibbin - Match Official Manager, Development  
Drew Crozier - Match Official Manager, NT/SA/TAS  
Pete Garden - Competitions Manager  
Tom Halliday - Head of Game Development