



MEMORANDUM

To: State/Territory Unions; Rugby Australia Affiliates
Cc/ James Selby, General Manager, Community Rugby
From: Jamie McGregor, Match Officials Manager, Community Rugby
Date: Monday 25th February, 2019
Subject: 2019 Law Issues

Dear all,

This Memo covers four topics:

- A. Notification of World Rugby Law changes for 2019.
- B. Distribution of the Game Management Guidelines for 2019.
- C. A reminder of replacement and uncontested scrum variations which continue in 2019.
- D. A request for Unions and Affiliates to submit any local Law Variations they may seek to play in 2019 to the Laws Advisory Group (LAG).

A. WORLD RUGBY LAW CHANGES 2019

With 2019 being a World Cup year, World Rugby has not made any major changes in Law. There are however a couple of minor changes since the 2018 Australian season.

The ruck definition returns to its 2017 language and offside lines now form at a tackle when one player arrives over the ball. This results in no change of Law application by referees from 2018. In addition, the phrase “hindmost foot” has become “hindmost point”, which clarifies that where an offside line forms includes players on the ground.

In addition, players supporting teammates who are contesting the ball in the air in open play are required to safely bring those teammates back to ground (Free Kick). This brings the Law in line with similar provisions at the lineout.

Any other minor changes in wording or interpretation are covered in the Game Management Guidelines document for 2019.





B. GAME MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 2019

Please find attached the Game Management Guidelines for 2019. The Game Management Guidelines are an amalgam of outcomes of various conferences and workshops held over the past few years. They have been adapted to reflect the playing, coaching and refereeing of the game at community levels in Australia for 2019.

It is recommended that State Unions distribute this document immediately to all stakeholders to ensure all participants in the game are aware of the changes in emphasis and Law application for 2019. A supporting PowerPoint will be distributed at the end of February, and an online course will be available on the Rugby Learning Centre during March.

C. REMINDER OF REPLACEMENT AND UNCONTESTED SCRUM VARIATIONS

Several Law Variations have been implemented at Community level by Rugby Australia since 2010. The first is mandatory replacement Law across all forms of the Game in Australia.

1. Rolling Replacements

World Rugby Law 3.34 is mandatory across all domestic Rugby played in Australia:

- a) Unlimited rolling replacements applies for all rugby aged U14s and below.
- b) Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 12 movements applies for all U19 rugby aged U15 and above.
- c) Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 8 movements applies for all senior rugby, except the lowest grade of any division/competition where the maximum number may, at the discretion of the local Union, be 12.

Note: Unions may submit a request to the LAG to play standard Law 3 (at any level of the game). Law 3 allows for a maximum of 8 replacement players, with tactically replaced players not able to return (except in certain circumstances).

2. Mechanisms to Discourage Uncontested Scrums

World Rugby Law 3.17 allows Rugby Australia to implement, at its discretion, a mechanism to discourage uncontested scrums by having a team play short if they cause uncontested scrums.

Any Union or Affiliate planning to implement this Law must use in their Competition Rules the approved language found in Appendix A to this Memo.





D. REQUEST FOR LOCAL LAW VARIATIONS IN 2019

In 2010, Rugby Australia began a process of managing applications for Local Law Variations. It is highly important that a thorough process be undertaken by Rugby Australia to ensure we have an understanding of local issues, can cover off on any insurance matters and ensure the Law variations are consistent with the ethos and principles of Rugby.

Those Unions that have been granted formal dispensations will be allowed to continue those arrangements into 2019. All other Unions seeking Law Variations should submit a request to LAG using the attached form.

Competition Rules

Please note that the LAG does **not** wish to consider competition rules that affect the conduct of various competitions. These arrangements remain localised.

Rather this request is for **any variation that affects the conduct of the on-field game** in a way that adds to or alters any existing World Rugby International, U19 or 7-per-side Law, or any existing Rugby Australia U19 Law Variation or approved Kids Rugby Pathway Laws at ages U6 to U12 (including replacement rules).

If you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Jamie McGregor
Match Official Manager, Community Rugby





Appendix A

Any Union or Affiliate planning to implement World Rugby Law 3.17 in 2019 must use in their Competition Rules the following approved language:

For competitions where teams are allowed to nominate 22 players

When 22 players are nominated in a team there must be five players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, and on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Should a team not be able to meet this obligation for any reason during a game, or should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, then the team concerned must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.

If, subsequently, a qualified front rower becomes available so that scrums can be contested then that player will be allowed onto the field and the team may return to the appropriate complement of players.

If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

For competitions where teams are allowed to nominate 23 players

When 23 players are nominated in a team there must be sufficient front row players to play at hooker, tight-head prop and loose-head prop who are suitably trained and experienced to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement in each front row position is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Should a team not be able to meet this obligation for any reason during a game, or should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, then the team concerned must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.

If, subsequently, a qualified front rower becomes available so that scrums can be contested then that player will be allowed onto the field and the team may return to the appropriate complement of players.

If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

