

Summary of Global Law Trials (GLTs)

Twitter Q&A with Matthew Carley

Thursday 3rd August 2017

Q: Which level of rugby will the Global Law Trials 2017 apply to?

A: These Law Trials will be applied to all levels of the game across England from 1 August 2017.

Note: This includes age-grade rugby.

Law 3: Number of Players. The Team

Q: Numbers of players in an uncontested scrum. Does this also apply at U19s where we could see 7v7?

A: As referees we'd need to apply common sense here. If a game starts with 7v7, or 7v8 and uncontested scrums are ordered, I'd suggest we'd stay with 7v7/7v8, etc. I'd recommend covering this off with captains/coaches before the game.

Note: When teams start with less than fifteen players the referee may take a different approach following discussions with both captains. For example, a team starting a game with thirteen players and not able to provide a fully trained front row from the outset would not be expected to play with eight forwards and five backs at each scrum.

Law 5: Time

Q: Defending team has a penalty within their own 22m and they kick directly through their in-goal over the dead-ball - what will the outcome be?

A: No change in the Law here. However, if time is up and this happens, the game will now be over, unlike a kick to touch.

Law 15: Tackle

Q: Under new Law Trial, can a "jackler" who is legal and first over the ball at a tackle keep hands on after an opposition player joins?

A: In short – YES. There's no change to the Law here. Referee interpretation for rewarding or managing this player is required.

Law 16: Amended Ruck

Q: One-man "ruck": defenders retiring from off-side position, but its fast ball and the attacking team pass the ball into them deliberately to "milk" a penalty. How to manage please?

A: Players in an offside position are liable to giving away penalties, but we need to manage deliberate "milking" of penalties.

Q: Assume the GLT regarding the ruck is a way of preventing teams "doing an Italy", would you agree?

A: Potentially, yes. It's a way of ensuring that the attacking team can create their own space around the tackle as well as the ruck.

Q: Do you think they should add Law to stop players joining a Ruck just to protect box kicking? Seems like an exploitation of Laws?

A: It's within the current Law which would make it difficult to stop, but the "use it" Law can help speed up the game and reduce this tactic.

Law 18: Definition Touch

Q: How can we best explain new Touch Law Trials to club touch-judges?

A: In a nutshell - the emphasis is now on players' feet, rather than the ball, although it is important whether the ball has reached the plane of touch. It should be simpler for all to understand and apply.

Note: More information on the Global Law Trials can be found on the [@worldrugby](#) website.

Q: What do you see as the biggest challenge for match officials in terms of Laws relating to position of ball versus position of player?

A: The biggest challenge could be lack of understanding of the changes by people and thus having to sell this to all stakeholders during the game.

Q: Do the amendments mean you can no longer call a "Mark" with both feet off of the ground?

A: In short - no they don't. As long as the player's actions are all within the 22.

Law 20: Scrum

Q: As there is no tap or indication from the ref to the scrum-half for when the ball must be put in the scrum, how long does the nine have? [#timewasting](#)

A: The scrum-half has full control. We will still want a stationary scrum before the put-in and can sanction any [#earlypush](#)."

Q: Does the change to scrum and no signal from the referee mean that it's totally up to the scrum-half to decide when? [#earlypush](#)

A: Yes, the scrum-half has full control. We will still want a stationary scrum before the put-in and can sanction any [#earlypush](#).

Note: Referees are encouraged to discuss with scrum-halves before the game about safety being the priority at scrums. Early pushes can be sanctioned.

Q: With new scrum-half alignment, there's nothing stopping the put in at the Loose-Head's feet? Zero scrum competition? Will this help the game?

A: Hopefully with the new Law Trials we'll see more ball played away from the scrums and a better spectacle.

Note: The ball must be fed straight.

Q: Scrum Law and "strike for the ball": If you attempt to strike, but miss and the ball stays in the tunnel, is that an offence?

A: Great question. A genuine attempt to strike should not be sanctioned.

Note: It is only a player from the team who put the ball in who must strike for the ball.

Q: The Law Trail about the ball must be hooked = very positive. Agree? By anyone in the front row? Right? Safe?! Have I misunderstood?

A: Yes I agree - very positive. Any front row player can strike for the ball and hopefully this won't lead to any injuries.

Note: There must be an "attempt" to strike the ball by anyone in the front row. If at any point the referee feels safety is a concern, they should blow the whistle immediately.

Q: Scrum: ball comes in, but due to pressure no member of the front row can "strike" for the ball. Do you have to free kick the putting-in side?

A: Yes you do, as the strike must happen immediately after the ball is put in. The scrum-half put-in timing is important here.

Note: Safety is paramount. If there is no genuine attempt to strike the ball by any member of the front row of the side putting the ball in to the scrum immediately (note that immediately can be interpreted differently at different levels/age-groups/experience, then that team is *liable* to sanction. If at any point the referee thinks safety is an issue, they should blow the whistle. Remember also that the scrum-half can now align towards his front row.

Q: At my community level, one word; "liability". How can we force a hooker to strike at the risk of a collapse?

A: You never "force" a player to do anything. No genuine attempt to strike = free-kick or blow whistle to reset if safety a concern.

Note: Any player in the front row can attempt to hook the ball.