

Guidance on Refereeing 7's

Law Variations

IRB Law variations are at the back of the law book. In brief they are:

- obvious changes for numbers
- all kicks at goal – conversions and penalties - are drop kicks and the time limits are reduced
- restart kicks after a score are taken by the team that has scored
- the sanction for offences relating to the kick off or restart kick (i.e. directly into touch, under 10 metres and not played by an opponent, into in-goal and immediately touched down by receiving team, players in front of the kick) is a Free Kick to the opposing team
- players in the scrum cannot kick the ball through the scrum towards their opponent's goal line
- suspension as a result of a yellow card is for 2 minutes.

There may also be local variations for the competition.

Practical pointers

Tackle

Arrive early and make your first priority to get the tackler to release the ball carrier and if necessary roll away. The ball should then be available quickly, if not, something is usually wrong. As 7's is a far more attacking game do not let the defending side slow the ball down at all. Apart from safety, tackle area should be main priority.

Also note that if the ball is slowed down it may be preferable to award the penalty straight away to allow the non-offending side the opportunity for a quick tap, forcing the offenders back 10 before they can be involved again.

Ruck/Maul

If either are formed, call early and manage as in 15's

Scrums

Difficult to manage but insist they follow your requests. Most forwards in 7's will not have much front row experience. Ensure the hooker independently binds on props and do not allow the props to bind on each other. Law 20.3 (b) allows the hooker to bind under or over the props arms. Do not allow hookers or props to kick the ball through. Penalise always. Get the ball away from the scrum quickly.

Lineouts

Establish receiver and make sure 2 meters away. Can join before or after ball thrown but not be in motion as ball is thrown. Make sure a player carrying a ball into touch releases quickly to allow quick throw.

Advantage

Usually shorter in 7's than 15's. Make sure you call advantage (and type "penalty" "scrum") and when over. Do not be afraid to play longer advantage if penalty advantage in scoring position.

Penalty/Free Kick

Make sure defending team is 10 meters and allow latitude in mark

Points to remember.

- Possession is paramount to most teams
- Tournament (groups and knock out) as opposed to single match format
- Most teams seek to avoid contact
- Penalties are usually taken as quick taps
- Lineouts are usually quick throw ins

There is a big difference in the make up of most 7's players. Most are athletes built on speed and there is no real positional play in 7's (all players play any position)

Open play is best refereed from the defensive line, as opposed to 15's where you would usually adopt a position in the attacking line. Use the pitch markings to assist with forward pass decisions.

There is always a real contest for the ball at restarts which are always drop outs. Be aware of foul play in the air. Many teams send one player past the ball to contest for the tap back. He is not likely to be offside.

Be sharp on your feet (nothing worse than being near the half way line to award a try) and in your decisions. Players will always attack indecision.

Use common sense and reward positive play.

Managing your day

7s competitions involve many games within a day. Managing your time through the day and between games is important.

Preparation/kit:

- Take a change of footwear for more comfort between games.
- Ensure you have track suit etc
- Think about what you are to do between games – watch, read a book?

Warm up before each game and always warm down after a game to prevent seizing up in the idle period.

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