



21 December 2017

Dear All,

Please find attached the following documents:

- The new sanction table for the Adult game applicable as of **1 January 2018** (please note that the link on the RFU website will be updated on 1 January 2018); and
- The new World Rugby Simplified Law Book.
- A 'crib sheet' to assist with cross-referencing.

As you may be aware, Unions recently took part in a consultation process by World Rugby on the existing Laws of the Game and the sanctions table. The RFU contributed to the consultation and a decision has been made by the World Rugby Council that the new, simplified Laws of the Game and revised sanction tables will come into force globally as of **1 January 2018**.

The key changes to be aware of are as follows:

1. Foul play is now under Law 9 rather than Law 10.
2. The following offences have transferred across to the 2018 Law Book with the new law reference numbers and the applicable sanctions listed below:

Law Reference in 2017 Law Book	Law Reference in 2018 Law Book	Reference in 2018 Sanctions Table					
<p><b>10.4(a) – Punching or striking</b> A player must not strike an opponent with the fist or arm, including the elbow, shoulder, head or knee(s).</p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to:</b></p>					
		Punching	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 4 weeks	Top-end: 8+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	A punch to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction
		Striking with hand or arm (including stiff-arm tackle)	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 4 weeks	Top-end: 8+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	A strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction
		Striking with the elbow	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	A strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction
		Striking with shoulder	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	A strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction
		Striking with head	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 10 weeks	Top-end: 16+ weeks	Max: 104 weeks	

		Striking with knee	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	A strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction						
<p><b>10.4(b) – Stamping or trampling</b> A player must not stamp or trample on an opponent.</p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Stamping or Trampling</td> <td>Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 6 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 12+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> <td>Stamping/trampling on the head shall result in a top-end entry point sanction</td> </tr> </table>						Stamping or Trampling	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	Stamping/trampling on the head shall result in a top-end entry point sanction
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<p><b>10.4(c) – Kicking</b> A player must not kick an opponent.</p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Kicking</td> <td>Low-end: 4 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 8 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 12+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> <td>Kicking the head shall result in a top-end entry point sanction</td> </tr> </table>						Kicking	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	Kicking the head shall result in a top-end entry point sanction
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<p><b>10.4(d) – Tripping</b> A player must not trip an opponent with the leg or foot.</p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Tripping</td> <td>Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 4 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 8+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>						Tripping	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 4 weeks	Top-end: 8+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	
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<p><b>10.4(e) - Dangerous tackling</b> A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously.</p> <p>A player must not tackle (or try to tackle) an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders. A tackle around the opponent's neck or head is dangerous play.</p>	<p><b>9.13</b> A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.</p>	<p><b>9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 253 1543 371"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 253 759 371">Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="759 253 1011 371">Mid-range: 6 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1011 253 1203 371">Top-end: 10+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1203 253 1543 371">A dangerous tackle which results in a strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	A dangerous tackle which results in a strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction
Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	A dangerous tackle which results in a strike to the head shall result in at least a mid-range entry point sanction			
<p>A 'stiff-arm tackle' is dangerous play. A player makes a stiff-arm tackle when using a stiff-arm to strike an opponent.</p> <p>Playing a player without the ball is dangerous play.</p> <p>A player must not tackle an opponent whose feet are off the ground.</p>	<p><b>9.14</b> A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.</p>	<p><b>9.14 A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 869 1543 929"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 869 847 929">Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="847 869 1062 929">Mid-range: 6 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1062 869 1286 929">Top-end: 10+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1286 869 1543 929">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(f) - Playing an opponent without the ball</b> Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push or obstruct an opponent not carrying the ball.</p>	<p><b>9.15</b> Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.</p>	<p><b>9.15 Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 1509 1543 1547"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1509 842 1547">Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="842 1509 1070 1547">Mid-range: 4 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1070 1509 1331 1547">Top-end: 6+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1331 1509 1543 1547">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 4 weeks	Top-end: 6+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(g) - Dangerous charging</b> A player must not charge or knock down an</p>	<p><b>9.16</b> A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without</p>	<p><b>9.16 A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="555 1951 1543 2011"> <tr> <td data-bbox="555 1951 847 2011">Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="847 1951 1126 2011">Mid-range: 6 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1126 1951 1318 2011">Top-end: 10+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1318 1951 1543 2011">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p>opponent carrying the ball without trying to grasp that player.</p>	<p>attempting to grasp that player.</p>					
<p><b>10.4(h)</b> A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without use of the arms, or without grasping a player.</p>	<p><b>9.20</b> Dangerous play in a ruck or maul. a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul. b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders. c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul.</p>	<p><b>9.20</b>     <b>Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.</b>  i. <b>A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.</b>  ii. <b>A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.</b>  iii. <b>A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 459 1527 519"> <tr> <td data-bbox="557 459 849 519">Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="849 459 1069 519">Mid-range: 4 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1069 459 1278 519">Top-end: 8+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1278 459 1527 519">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 4 weeks	Top-end: 8+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(i) - Tackling the jumper in the air</b> A player must not tackle nor tap, push or pull the foot or feet of an opponent jumping for the ball in a lineout or in open play.</p>	<p><b>9.17</b> A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.</p>	<p><b>9.17</b>     <b>A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 1043 1551 1104"> <tr> <td data-bbox="557 1043 849 1104">Low-end: 4 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="849 1043 1102 1104">Mid-range: 8 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1102 1043 1308 1104">Top-end: 12+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1308 1043 1551 1104">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(j)</b> Lifting a player from the ground and dropping or driving that player into the ground whilst that player's feet are still off the ground such that the player's head and/or upper body come into contact with the ground is dangerous play.</p>	<p><b>9.18</b> A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.</p>	<p><b>9.18</b>     <b>A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 1424 1544 1456"> <tr> <td data-bbox="557 1424 849 1456">Low-end: 6 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="849 1424 1091 1456">Mid-range: 10 weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1091 1424 1321 1456">Top-end: 14+ weeks</td> <td data-bbox="1321 1424 1544 1456">Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 6 weeks	Mid-range: 10 weeks	Top-end: 14+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(k) - Dangerous play in a scrum, ruck or maul</b> The front row of a scrum must not</p>	<p><b>9.19</b> Dangerous play in a scrum. a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance</p>	<p><b>9.19</b>     <b>Dangerous play in a scrum.</b>  i. <b>The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them.</b>  ii. <b>A front-row player must not pull an opponent.</b>  iii. <b>A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.</b></p>				



<p><b>10.4(m) - Biting</b></p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 197 1522 297"> <tr> <td>Biting</td> <td>Low-end: 12 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 18 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 24+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 208 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Biting	Low-end: 12 weeks	Mid-range: 18 weeks	Top-end: 24+ weeks	Max: 208 weeks
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<p><b>10.4(m) – Contact with the eye(s)</b></p>	<p><b>9.12 - A player must not physically abuse anyone.</b></p>	<p><b>9.12 - A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 779 1551 880"> <tr> <td>Contact with the eye(s)</td> <td>Low-end: 12 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 18 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 24+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 208 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Contact with the eye(s)	Low-end: 12 weeks	Mid-range: 18 weeks	Top-end: 24+ weeks	Max: 208 weeks
Contact with the eye(s)	Low-end: 12 weeks	Mid-range: 18 weeks	Top-end: 24+ weeks	Max: 208 weeks			
<p><b>10.4(m) – Contact with the eye area</b></p>	<p><b>9.12 - A player must not physically abuse anyone</b></p>	<p><b>9.12 - A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 1021 1543 1117"> <tr> <td>Contact with Eye Area</td> <td>Low-end: 4 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 8 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 12+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Contact with Eye Area	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
Contact with Eye Area	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks			
<p><b>10.4(m) – Verbal abuse of Match Officials</b></p>	<p><b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles), shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.</p>	<p><b>9.12 A player must not verbally abuse anyone. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 1294 1551 1357"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 6 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 12 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 18+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 6 weeks	Mid-range: 12 weeks	Top-end: 18+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks	
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<p><b>10.4(m) – Threatening Actions or Words at Match Officials</b></p>	<p><b>9.27</b> Players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee's</p>	<p><b>9.27 A player must not use threatening actions or words towards Match Officials.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="557 1877 1527 1939"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 12 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 24 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 48+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 260 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 12 weeks	Mid-range: 24 weeks	Top-end: 48+ weeks	Max: 260 weeks	
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	decisions. They must stop playing immediately when the referee blows the whistle to stop play.									
<b>10.4(s)/(m) – Physical Abuse of Match Officials</b>	<b>9.27</b> Players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee’s decisions. They must stop playing immediately when the referee blows the whistle to stop play.	<p><b>9.27 A player must not physically abuse Match Officials.</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 24 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 48 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 96+ weeks</td> <td>Max: Life</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>9.27 A player must not make incidental physical contact with Match Officials.</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 6 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 12 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 18+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 24 weeks	Mid-range: 48 weeks	Top-end: 96+ weeks	Max: Life	Low-end: 6 weeks	Mid-range: 12 weeks	Top-end: 18+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks
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<b>10.4(n) - Misconduct while the ball is out of play</b> A player, must not, while the ball is out of play, commit any misconduct, or obstruct or in any way interfere with an opponent.	<b>9.26</b> A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship.	<p><b>9.26 A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>Low-end: 4 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 8 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 12+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Other	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks			
Other	Low-end: 4 weeks	Mid-range: 8 weeks	Top-end: 12+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks						
<b>10.4(o) - Late-charging the kicker</b> A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.	<b>9.25</b> A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.	<p><b>9.25 A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 2 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 6 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 10+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 2 weeks	Mid-range: 6 weeks	Top-end: 10+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks				
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<b>10.4(s)/(m)</b> All players must respect the authority of the referee. They must not dispute the referee’s decisions. They must stop playing at once when the referee blows the whistle except at a kick-off or at a penalty kick following	<b>9.12</b> A player must not physically or verbally abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, biting, punching, contact with the eye or eye area, striking with any part of the arm (including stiff-arm tackles),	<p><b>9.12 A player must not verbally abuse anyone. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Low-end: 6 weeks</td> <td>Mid-range: 12 weeks</td> <td>Top-end: 18+ weeks</td> <td>Max: 52 weeks</td> </tr> </table>	Low-end: 6 weeks	Mid-range: 12 weeks	Top-end: 18+ weeks	Max: 52 weeks				
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admonishment, temporary suspension, or send-off.	shoulder, head or knee(s), stamping, trampling, tripping or kicking.	
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- All changes in the adult sanction table are replicated in the new Age Grade table in Appendix 6.
- There is a new act of dangerous play under Law 9.11 in the 2018 Law Book which is “players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others”. World Rugby have explained their rationale for introducing this “catch-all” act of dangerous play:

*This was considered a useful addition to the Laws and Sanction Table as a “catch-all” solution to ensure that a Referee/Citing Commissioner/Judicial Committee has a solution if faced with an infringement that does not easily fit into one of the other existing offences. An example: jumping into a tackle is not captured under any of the existing offences but may in some cases be reckless or dangerous.*

**This new offence should only be used where the offence does not fit into one of the other offences listed in Law 9.**

- There is no corresponding reference in the sanctions table to new Laws 9.21-9.24. This is intentional from World Rugby as they are of the view that none of these offences will lead to a red card or a citing and therefore are for on-field use by the match officials only.
- Please note that there is no separate law or sanction table entry for verbal or physical abuse of a match official. Any verbal abuse of another person (including an opposition Player/Spectator/Match Official etc) should be charged under **Law 9.12** and any physical abuse/incidental physical contact of a match official (including the use of threatening words/actions) should be charged under **Law 9.27**.
- Please note that all updated forms (including short judgment forms/citing report forms/red card reports/yellow card reports and match official abuse forms) will be circulated to everyone before the first round of fixtures in 2018. The RFU handbook will be updated online as of the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and should be used for all hearings.

If you have any questions in relation to the changes, please do not hesitate to contact one of the Discipline Department Team.

Kind regards  
Beccy

**BCC to**

Andrew Rogers and Phil Winstanley, PRL – please would you send on to all Premiership Clubs

Geoff Irvine and Ian Connell, Championship Club Representatives – For information

Chris Burns and Tom Price, RFU – please would you send on to all Championship Clubs

Brian Vincent, Norman Robertson & Alan MacCreadie, NCA – please send on to all National League Clubs

Dr Tim Miller, RFU Referees Union Council Representative – For information

Constituent Body Discipline Secretaries – please send on to all clubs within your CB and all CB

Discipline Panel Members

RFU Judicial Officers and Panel Members – for information

RFU Citing Commissioners – for information



Nathan Martin, RFU – please would you kindly forward to all RFU Team Managers  
Tony Spreadbury, Steve Leyshon, Chris White, Gareth Thomas – for information  
Kate Saddler and Alice Lawson, RFU – for information  
Paul Kaminski, Paul Astbury, David Clarke, Mike Gee, Divisional Organising Committees – for information  
Ian Skillen and Chris Davy, Schools Discipline – please circulate to all schools  
Mark Saltmarsh, Chris Sigsworth, RFU – for information  
Patricia Mowbray, RFU – for inclusion in the next edition of Touchline magazine