



Community Rugby Game Priorities

2019

Purpose:

This document is provided to assist Coaches, Referees and Players in understanding NZ Rugby's technical priorities for the playing of the game at the Community level in 2019. Familiarity with this document will enable us to better understand the priorities for coaches, referees and players, and complying with these priorities will help make the game more enjoyable for all.

Critical Few:

A. PLAYER SAFETY

Mouthguards

- The wearing of a mouth guard in all NZ Domestic Rugby is compulsory. This NZ Rugby directive is to be strictly applied and enforced.
- Escalated sanctions apply in 2019.

Blue Card Concussion Initiative

- In provinces applying the Blue Card Concussion Initiative (BCCI), implementation must be in accordance with NZR Protocols and Procedures
- The issuing of a Blue Card formalises the Graduated Return To Play (GRTP) protocols.

NB: A player who has sustained a concussion injury but has not been issued with a Blue Card, must still adhere to the GRTP protocols.

- A Blue Card can only be issued on the field, by a referee who has been trained in the BCCI process.

Foul Play/Contact to the Head

- The World Rugby Law Application Guidelines relating to Contact to the Head are to be strictly applied to all NZ Domestic rugby. The guidelines were introduced in 2016 and reinforced in 2018 to limit contact with the head.
- A player who commits foul play must either be cautioned or temporarily suspended or sent from the field, foul play includes:
 - Obstruction; Unfair Play; Cynical and/or Repeated Infringements; Dangerous Play, Tackling a player in the air, Neck rolls



B. GAME FUNDAMENTALS

a) Kick offs and restarts

- For all restarts at half way and 22m drop-outs advancing players must be behind the kicker

C. POSITIVE SET PHASES

a) Scrum

- 3 calls requires 3 actions: “Crouch” / “Bind” /” Set” sequence. Stable and balanced between each call.
- A small gap **MUST** be maintained between the front rows on the call of “bind”. This is to create balance by both teams before the “set” call.
- Half backs are required to put the ball in straight without undue delay, with part of the ball landing on the middle line and the ball must be hooked.

b) Line Outs

- Throwers to stay on mark and lineout gap to be a clear ½ m either side of the Line Of Touch
- Players must not interfere with jumpers in the air (including their lifters) in a lineout
- Any player movement in the lineout must occur by a player moving outside-the lineout, not down the middle.
- Lineout maul must be formed legally and defenders must be able to make contact with ball carrier.

c) The Breakdown (Tackle/Ruck/Maul)

- Tacklers must exit east/west immediately and not interfere with ball release.
- Ball carrier must release the ball immediately by placing, passing or pushing the ball in any direction except forward.
- Players are required to stay on their feet and enter the tackle through “the gate” including the tackler - new Law 2019.
NB: “the gate” = widest point of the bodies of the players involved in the tackle.
- Players must support their own body weight (cannot place hands or knees on ground). Players who go to ground must immediately roll out or get back on feet.
- Clearing out players and tackling players to the ground beyond a one metre radius around the ball is not acceptable.
- The player clearing the ball (normally the half back) may not be challenged at rucks & mauls until the ball is lifted and cleared from bodies. The ball is out when it is clear of bodies.



Space for the Game to Operate

- Maintain the defensive offside lines at Set Piece
- Defenders must have all parts of their body behind the offside line (feet and hands). This is extremely important near the goal line.
- Players must **STOP** when ahead of the kicker at kicks in general play until they are put onside.
- All players in the lineout must remain there until the lineout has ended.

Management & Communication

- It is not acceptable for players to yell and wave arms at referees and/or AR's demanding a decision in their team's favour. Such actions will be treated as dissent. The values of rugby must be firmly enforced.
- Team Captains are expected to be the main communicators with referees during games
- Communication should be conducted in a manner that displays empathy and respect towards the roles of all involved in the game.