



To: Secretaries/Chief Executive Officers of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership of the IRB

**From: David Carrigy
Head of Member Services**

Date: May 16, 2008

Re: IRB Council Decision – Global Experimental Law Variations

Council at a Special Meeting held at the time of the Annual Meeting 2008 approved a set of Experimental Law Variations (ELVs) for application for a twelve month period from August 1, 2008, which are attached to this correspondence.

The ELVs will be reviewed by Council at a Special Meeting which is likely to be held in July 2009.

Those Unions who are trialling other ELVs e.g. Australia, New Zealand and South Africa (Rugby Super 14 etc) may continue to do so in the competitions that are currently being played. Those Unions who have competitions operating under current Law that go beyond August 1, 2008 may continue under current Law until the next occasion that the competition begins at which time the ELVs would apply.

The IRB Game Analysis Unit (GAU) will be undertaking video analysis of the ELVs in action so that a detailed report can be prepared for consideration by Council. The GAU will utilise the major televised matches where available and will make contact with the respective Unions where they have not been able to obtain copies of the televised matches. Unions are asked to ensure that where possible, DVDs of matches not covered by National television companies be sent to Rhys Jones, IRB Game Analysis Unit at Huguenot House, 35-38 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2, Ireland. Statistics produced from the video analysis will be circulated on a regular basis to all Unions.

A Web based feedback process will be set-up to enable players, coaches and match officials to feedback their views. Questionnaires will be provided to all Unions in 2008/2009 so that the views of all Unions can be collated before the Interim (November) Meeting of Council 2009.



Educational tools to support the roll out of ELVs are currently being produced. This provision will include downloadable PDFs, a dedicated ELV section of www.irb.com with video examples of each ELV and a DVD which will be distributed to each Union. The ELV educational material will be available in 7 languages: English, French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Russian. These tools will be available by mid June.

If there are any queries related to these matters please contact Steve Griffiths at steve.griffiths@irb.com.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Carrigy', with a horizontal line extending from the end.

David Carrigy
Head of Member Services



Experimental Law Variations

For Application August 1 2008

Experimental Law Variations

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Experimental Law Variations Summary

Law Description	
1	Assistant Referees able to assist Referees in any way which the Referee requires.
Maul	
2	Remove reference to heads and shoulders not to be lower than hips.
3	Players are able to defend a Maul by pulling it down.
Lineout and Throw	
4	If a team puts the ball back into their own 22 and the ball is subsequently kicked directly into touch there is no gain in ground.
5	A quick throw may be thrown in straight or towards the throwing teams own goal line.
6	There is no restriction on the number of players from either team who can participate in the Lineout.
7	The receiver at the Lineout must be 2 metres back away from the Lineout.
8	The player who is in opposition to the player throwing in the ball may stand in the area between the 5 metre line and touch line but must be 2 metres away from the Lineout.
9	Lineout players may pre-grip a jumper before the ball is thrown in.
10	The lifting of Lineout jumpers is permitted.
Scrum	
11	Introduction of an offside line five metres behind the hindmost feet of the Scrum.
12	Scrum Half Offside Lines
Corner/Flag Posts	
13	The corner posts are no longer considered to be in touch in-goal except when the ball is grounded against the post.

The IRB Council agreed that the ELVs outlined above will be implemented from August 1 2008. They will be reviewed by Council at the Interim Meeting of Council 2009 and therefore effective until the ELVs have either been confirmed, modified or rejected at that meeting.

Law 6 Match Officials

DEFINITIONS

Every match is under the control of **match officials** who consist of the referee and two touch judges or **assistant referees**. **Additional persons**, as authorised by the match organisers may include the referee, reserve touch judge and/or **assistant referee**, an official to assist the referee in making decisions by using technological devices, the time keeper, the match doctor, the team doctors, the non-playing members of the teams and the ball persons.

A touch judge may be appointed by a match organiser or a team involved in a match and is responsible for signalling, touch, touch in-goal and the success or otherwise of kicks at goal.

An assistant referee may be appointed by a match organiser and is responsible for signalling, touch, touch in-goal, the success or otherwise of kicks at goal and indicating foul play. An assistant referee will also provide assistance to the referee in the performance of any of the referee's duties as directed by the referee.

6.A. REFEREE *BEFORE THE MATCH*

6.A.1 APPOINTING THE REFEREE

The referee is appointed by the match organiser. If no referee has been appointed the two teams may agree upon a referee. If they cannot agree, the home team appoints a referee.

6.A.2 REPLACING THE REFEREE

If the referee is unable to complete the match, the referee's replacement is appointed according to the instructions of the match organiser. If the match organiser has given no instructions, the referee appoints the replacement. If the referee cannot do so, the home team appoints a replacement.

6.A.3 DUTIES OF THE REFEREE BEFORE THE MATCH

(a) **Toss.** The referee organises the toss. One of the captains tosses a coin and the other captain calls to see who wins the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick off or to choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick off and vice versa.

DURING THE MATCH

6.A.4 THE DUTIES OF THE REFEREE IN THE PLAYING ENCLOSURE

- (a) The referee is the sole judge of fact and of Law during a match. The referee must apply fairly all the Laws of the Game in every match.
- (b) The referee keeps the time.
- (c) The referee keeps the score.
- (d) The referee gives permission to the players to leave the playing area.
- (e) The referee gives permission to the replacements or substitutes to enter the playing area.
- (f) The referee gives permission to the team doctors or medically trained persons or their assistants to enter the playing area, as and when permitted by the Law.
- (g) The referee gives permission to each of the coaches to enter the playing area at half time to attend their teams during the interval.

6.A.5 PLAYERS DISPUTING A REFEREE'S DECISION

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.

Penalty: Penalty Kick at the place of infringement or where play would next commence.

6.A.6 REFEREE ALTERING A DECISION

The referee may alter a decision when a touch judge has raised the flag to signal touch.

The referee may alter a decision when an assistant referee has raised the flag to signal touch or an act of foul play.

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6.A.7 REFEREE CONSULTING WITH OTHERS

(a) The referee may consult with assistant referees in regard to matters relating to their duties, the Law relating to foul play, or timekeeping and may request assistance related to other aspects of the referee's duties including the adjudication of offside.

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(b) A match organiser may appoint an official who uses technological devices. If the referee is unsure when making a decision in in-goal involving a try being scored or a touch down, that official may be consulted.

(c) The official may be consulted if the referee is unsure when making a decision in in-goal with regard to the scoring of a try or a touch down when foul play in in-goal may have been involved.

(d) The official may be consulted in relation to the success or otherwise of kicks at goal.

(e) The official may be consulted if the referee or assistant referees are unsure if a player was or was not in touch when attempting to ground the ball to score a try.

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(f) The official may be consulted if the referee or assistant referees are unsure when making a decision relating to touch-in-goal and the ball being made dead if a score may have occurred.

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(g) A match organiser may appoint a timekeeper who will signify the end of each half.

(h) The referee must not consult with any other persons.

6.A.8 THE REFEREE'S WHISTLE

(a) The referee must carry a whistle and blow the whistle to indicate the beginning and end of each half of the match.

(b) The referee has power to stop play at any time.

(c) The referee must blow the whistle to indicate a score, or a touch down.

(d) The referee must blow the whistle to stop play because of an infringement or for an offence of foul play. When the referee cautions or sends off the offender, the referee must whistle a second time when the penalty kick or penalty try is awarded.

(e) The referee must blow the whistle when the ball has gone out of play, or when it has become unplayable, or when a penalty is awarded.

(f) The referee must blow the whistle when the ball or the ball carrier touches the referee and either team gains an advantage from this.

(g) The referee must blow the whistle when it would be dangerous to let play continue. This includes when a scrum collapses, or when a front row player is lifted into the air or is forced upwards out of a scrum, or when it is probable that a player has been seriously injured.

(h) The referee may blow the whistle to stop play for any other reason according to the Laws.

6.A.9 THE REFEREE AND INJURY

(a) If a player is injured and continuation of play would be dangerous, the referee must blow the whistle immediately.

(b) If the referee stops play because a player has been injured, and there has been no infringement and the ball has not been made dead, play restarts with a scrum. The team last in possession throws in the ball. If neither team was in possession, the attacking team throws in the ball.

(c) The referee must blow the whistle if continuation of play would be dangerous for any reason.

6.A.10 THE BALL TOUCHING THE REFEREE

(a) If the ball or the ball carrier touches the referee and neither team gains an advantage, play continues.

(b) If either team gains an advantage in the field of play, the referee orders a scrum and the team that last played the ball has the throw in.

(c) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of an attacking player the referee awards a try where the contact took place.

(d) If either team gains an advantage in in-goal, if the ball is in possession of a defending player, the referee awards a touch down where the contact took place.

6.A.11 THE BALL IN IN-GOAL TOUCHED BY NON-PLAYER

The referee judges what would have happened next and awards a try or a touch down at the place where the ball was touched.

AFTER THE MATCH

6.A.12 SCORE

The referee communicates the score to the teams and to the match organiser.

6.A.13 PLAYER SENT-OFF

If a player is sent off the referee gives the match organiser a written report on the foul play infringement as soon as possible.

6.B. TOUCH JUDGES AND ASSISTANT REFEREES *BEFORE THE MATCH*

6.B.1 APPOINTING TOUCH JUDGES AND ASSISTANT REFEREES

There are two touch judges or two assistant referees for every match. Unless they have been appointed by or under the authority of the match organiser, each team provides a touch judge.

6.B.2 REPLACING A TOUCH JUDGE OR ASSISTANT REFEREE

The match organiser may nominate a person to act as a replacement for the referee, the touch judges or assistant referees. This person is called the reserve touch judge or reserve assistant referee and stands in the perimeter area.

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6.B.3 CONTROL OF TOUCH JUDGES AND ASSISTANT REFEREES

The referee has control over both touch judges or assistant referees. The referee may tell them what their duties are, and may overrule their decisions.

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If a touch judge is unsatisfactory the referee may ask that the touch judge be replaced. If the referee believes a touch judge is guilty of misconduct, the referee has power to send the touch judge off and make a report to the match organiser.

DURING THE MATCH

6.B.4 WHERE THE TOUCH JUDGES OR ASSISTANT REFEREES SHOULD BE

(a) There is one touch judge or assistant referee on each side of the ground. The touch judge or assistant referee remains in touch except when judging a kick at goal. When judging a kick at goal the touch judges or assistant referees stand in in-goal behind the goal posts.

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Judge

(b) An assistant referee may enter the playing area when reporting an offence of dangerous play or misconduct to the referee. The assistant referee may do this only at the next stoppage in play.

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judge

6.B.5 TOUCH JUDGE SIGNALS

(a) Each touch judge or assistant referee carries a flag or something similar with which to signal decisions.

(b) Signalling result of kick at

goal. When a conversion kick or a penalty kick at goal is being taken, the touch judges or assistant referees must help the referee by signalling the result of the kick. One touch judge or assistant referee stands at or behind each goal post. If the ball goes over the cross-bar and between the posts, the touch judges or assistant referees raise the flags to indicate a goal.

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(c) **Signalling touch.** When the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch, the touch judge or assistant referee must hold up the flag. The touch judge or assistant referee must stand at the place of the throw in and point to the team entitled to throw in. The touch judge or assistant referee must also signal when the ball or the ball carrier has gone into touch-in-goal.

(d) **When to lower the flag.** When the ball is thrown in, the touch judge or assistant referee must lower the flag, with the following exceptions:

Exception 1: When the player throwing in puts any part of either foot in the field of play, the touch judge or assistant referee keeps the flag up.

Exception 2: When the team not entitled to throw in has done so, the touch judge or assistant referee keeps the flag up.

Exception 3: When, at a quick throw in, the ball that went into touch is replaced by another ball, or after it went into touch or it has been touched by anyone except the player who takes the throw in, the touch judge or assistant referee keeps the flag up.

(e) It is for the referee, and not the touch judge or assistant referee, to decide whether or not the ball was thrown in from the correct place.

(f) **Signalling foul play.** An assistant referee signals that foul play or misconduct has been seen by holding the flag horizontally and pointing infield at right angles to the touchline.

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6.B.6 AFTER SIGNALLING FOUL PLAY

A match organiser may give authority to the assistant referee to signal for foul play. If an assistant referee signals foul play, the assistant referee must stay in touch and continue to carry out all the other duties until the next stoppage in play. At the invitation of the referee the assistant referee may then enter the playing area to report the offence to the referee. The referee may then take whatever action is needed. Any penalty awarded will be in accordance with Law 10 – Foul Play.

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AFTER THE MATCH

6.B.7 PLAYER SENT-OFF

If a player has been sent-off following an assistant referee's signal and report to the referee, the assistant referee submits a written report about the incident to the referee as soon as possible after the match and provides it to the match organiser.

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6.C. ADDITIONAL PERSONS

6.C.1 RESERVE TOUCH JUDGE OR ASSISTANT REFEREE

When a reserve touch judge or assistant referee is appointed, the referee's authority regarding replacements and substitutions may be delegated to the reserve touch judge or reserve assistant referee.

6.C.2 THOSE WHO MAY ENTER THE PLAYING AREA

The match doctor and the non-playing members of the team may enter the playing area as authorised by the referee.

6.C.3 LIMITS TO ENTERING THE PLAYING AREA

In the case of injury, these persons may enter the playing area while play continues, provided they have permission from the referee. Otherwise, they enter only when the ball is dead.

Law 17 Maul

DEFINITION

A maul occurs when a player carrying the ball is held by one or more opponents, and one or more of the ball carrier's team mates bind on the ball carrier. A maul therefore consists of at least three players, all on their feet; the ball carrier and one player from each team. All the players involved must be caught in or bound to the maul and must be on their feet and moving towards a goal line. Open play has ended.

17.1 FORMING A MAUL

(a) **Where can a maul take place.** A maul can only take place in the field of play.

17.2 JOINING A MAUL

(a) A player must be caught in or bound to the maul and not just alongside it.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line in line with the place of infringement.

(b) Placing a hand on another player in the maul does not constitute binding.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line in line with the place of infringement.

(c) A player must not jump on top of a maul.

Penalty: Penalty Kick at the place of infringement.

17.3 OTHER MAUL OFFENCES

(a) Players must not try to drag an opponent out of a maul.

Penalty: Penalty Kick at the place of infringement.

(b) A player must not take any action to make the opposing team think that the ball is out of the maul while it is still in the maul.

Penalty: Free Kick at the place of infringement.

17.4 OFFSIDE AT THE MAUL

(a) **The offside line.** There are two offside lines parallel to the goal lines, one for each team. Each offside line runs through the hindmost foot of the hindmost player in the maul. If the hindmost foot of the hindmost player is on or behind the goal line, the offside line for the defending team is the goal line.

(b) A player must either join a maul, or retire behind the offside line immediately. If a player loiters at the side of a maul, the player is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

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Penalty: Free Kick¶
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Deleted: (d) **Keeping players on their feet.** Players in a maul must endeavour to stay on their feet. The ball carrier in a maul may go to ground providing the ball is available immediately and play continues.¶
Penalty: Penalty Kick¶
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(e) A player must not intentionally collapse a maul. This is dangerous play.¶
Penalty: Penalty Kick¶
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(c) **Players joining the maul.** Players joining a maul must do so from behind the foot of the hindmost team mate in the maul. The player may join alongside this player. If the player joins the maul from the opponents' side, or in front of the hindmost team mate, the player is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

(d) **Players not joining the maul.** All players in front of the offside line and who do not join the maul, must retire behind the offside line at once. A player who does not do so, is offside. If any player who is behind the offside line oversteps it and does not join the maul, the player is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

(e) **Players leaving or rejoining the maul.** Players who leave a maul must immediately retire behind the offside line, otherwise, they are offside. If the player rejoins the maul in front of the hindmost team mate in the maul, they are offside. The player may rejoin the maul alongside the hindmost team mate.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line

17.5 SUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

(a) A maul ends successfully when the ball or a player with the ball leaves the maul. A maul ends successfully when the ball is on the ground, or is on or over the goal line.

(b) A player may pull a maul to the ground providing that player does so by pulling down another player in the maul down from the shoulders to the hips.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

17.6 UNSUCCESSFUL END TO A MAUL

(a) A maul ends unsuccessfully if the ball becomes unplayable, collapses ~~or is pulled down and the ball does not emerge.~~ A scrum is ordered.

(c) **Scrum following maul.** The ball is thrown in by the team not in possession when the maul began. If the referee cannot decide which team had possession, the team moving forward before the maul stopped throws in the ball. If neither team was moving forward, the attacking team throws in the ball.

(d) When a maul remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for more than 5 seconds, but the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.

(e) When a maul has stopped moving forward it may start moving forward again providing it does so within 5 seconds. If the maul stops moving forward a second time and if the ball is being moved and the referee can see it, a

Deleted: (a) A maul ends unsuccessfully if it remains stationary or has stopped moving forward for longer than 5 seconds and a scrum is ordered.¶

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reasonable time is allowed for the ball to emerge. If it does not emerge within a reasonable time, a scrum is ordered.

(f) When the ball in a maul becomes unplayable, the referee does not allow prolonged wrestling for it. A scrum is ordered.

(g) If the ball carrier in a maul goes to ground, including being on one or both knees or sitting, the referee orders a scrum unless the ball is immediately available.

(h) **Scrum after a maul when catcher is held.** If a player catches the ball direct from an opponent's kick, except from a kick off or a drop out, and the player is immediately held by an opponent, a maul may form. Then if the maul remains stationary, stops moving forward for longer than 5 seconds, or if the ball becomes unplayable, and a scrum is ordered, the team of the ball catcher throws in the ball.

'Direct from an opponent's kick' means the ball did not touch another player or the ground before the player caught it.

If a maul moves into the player's in-goal, where the ball is touched down or becomes unplayable, a 5-metre scrum is formed. The attacking team throws in the ball.

Law 19 Touch and Lineout

DEFINITIONS

'Kicked directly into touch' means that the ball was kicked into touch without landing on the playing area, and without touching a player or the referee.

'The 22' is the area between the goal line and the 22-metre line, including the 22-metre line but excluding the goal line.

The line of touch is an imaginary line in the field of play at right angles to the touchline through the place where the ball is thrown in.

The ball is in touch when it is not being carried by a player and it touches the touchline or anything or anyone on or beyond the touchline.

The ball is in touch when a player is carrying it and the ball carrier (or the ball) touches the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline. The place where the ball carrier (or the ball) touched or crossed the touchline is where it went into touch.

The ball is in touch if a player catches the ball and that player has a foot on the touchline or the ground beyond the touchline. If a player has one foot in the field of play and one foot in touch and holds the ball, the ball is in touch.

If the ball crosses the touchline or touch-in-goal line, and is caught by a player who has both feet in the playing area, the ball is not in touch or touch-in-goal. Such a player may knock the ball into the playing area.

If a player jumps and catches the ball, both feet must land in the playing area otherwise the ball is in touch or touch-in-goal.

A player in touch may kick or knock the ball, but not hold it, provided it has not crossed the plane of the touchline. The plane of the touchline is the vertical space rising immediately above the touchline.

19.1 THROW IN

NO GAIN IN GROUND

(a) **Outside a team's 22, a team member kicks directly into touch.** Except for a penalty kick, when a player anywhere in the field of play who is outside the 22 kicks directly into touch, there is no gain in ground. The throw in is taken either at the place opposite where the player kicked the ball, or at the place where it went into touch, whichever is nearer that player's goal line.

(b) **When a team causes the ball to put into that team's 22..** When a defending player plays the ball from outside the 22 and it goes into that player's 22 or in-goal area without touching an opposition player and then that player or another player from that team kicks the ball directly into touch before it touches an opposition player, or a tackle takes place or a ruck or maul is formed, there is no gain in ground. This applies when a defending player moves back behind the 22 metre line to take a quick throw-in and then the ball is kicked directly into touch.

(c) **Defending team takes ball into that team's 22 at a scrum or lineout.** When a defending team throws the ball into a scrum or lineout outside that team's 22 and the ball then crosses into the team's 22 without touching an opposition player and then a player from the defending team kicks the ball directly into touch before it touches an opposition player, or a tackle takes place or a ruck or maul is formed, there is no gain in ground.

GAIN IN GROUND

(d) **Player takes ball into that team's 22.** When a defending player plays the ball from outside the 22 and it goes into that player's 22 or in-goal area and it touches an opposition player, or a tackle takes place or a ruck or maul is formed and then the ball is kicked by a player of that team directly in touch, the throw in is where the ball went into touch.

(e) **Ball put into a player's 22 by the opposition.** When the ball is put into a team's 22 by the opposition, without having touched (or been touched by) a player of the defending team before crossing the 22 and the ball is then kicked into touch by the defending team, the throw in is where the ball went into touch.

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(f) **Kicks indirectly into touch.** When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks indirectly into touch so that the ball bounces in the field of play the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

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When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks the ball so that it touches or is touched by an opposition player and then goes indirectly into touch so that the ball bounces in the field of play the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

When a player anywhere in the playing area kicks the ball so that it touches or is touched by an opposition player and then goes directly into touch the throw in is taken in line with where the opposition player touched the ball or where the ball crossed the touchline if that is nearer the opposition player's goal line.

TOUCH & THROW IN

PENALTY KICK

(g) Penalty kick. When a player kicks to touch from a penalty kick anywhere in the playing area, the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

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FREE KICK

(h) Outside the kicker's 22, no gain in ground. When a free kick is awarded outside the 22 and the ball goes directly into touch, the throw in is in line with where the ball was kicked, or where it went into touch whichever is near the kicker's goal line.

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(i) Inside the kicker's 22 or in-goal, gain in ground. When a free kick is awarded in the 22 or in-goal and the kick goes directly into touch, the throw in is where the ball went into touch.

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19.2 QUICK THROW IN

(a) A player may take a quick throw in without waiting for a lineout to form.

(b) For a quick throw in, the player may be anywhere outside the field of play between the place where the ball went into touch and the player's goal line

(c) A player must not take a quick throw in after the lineout has formed. If the player does, the quick throw in is disallowed. The same team throws in at the lineout.

QUICK THROW IN

(d) For a quick throw in, the player must use the ball that went into touch. If, after it went to touch and was made dead, another ball

is used, or if another person has touched the ball apart from the player throwing it in, then the quick throw in is disallowed. The same team throws in at the lineout.

(e) At a quick throw in, if the player ~~throws~~ the ball ~~in the direction of the opposition's goal line or if the ball does not travel at least five metres~~ along ~~or behind~~ the line of touch before it touches the ground or a player, or if the player steps into the field of play when the ball is thrown, then the quick throw in is disallowed. The opposing team chooses to throw in at either a lineout where the quick throw in was attempted, or a scrum on the 15-metre line at that place. If they too throw in the ball incorrectly at the lineout, a scrum is formed on the 15-metre line. The team that first threw in the ball throws in the ball at the scrum.

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(f) ~~At a quick throw in a player may throw the ball in straight along the line of touch or towards that player's goal line.~~

(g) At a quick throw in, a player may come to the line of touch and leave without being penalised.

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(h) At a quick throw in, a player must not prevent the ball being thrown in 5 metres.

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Penalty: Free Kick on 15-metre line

(i) If a player carrying the ball is forced into touch, that player must release the ball to an opposition player so that there can be a quick throw in.

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Penalty: Penalty Kick on 15-metre line

19.3 OTHER THROW INS

On all other occasions, the throw in is taken where the ball went into touch.

19.4 WHO THROWS IN

The throw in is taken by an opponent of the player who last held or touched the ball before it went into touch. When there is doubt, the attacking team takes the throw in.

TOUCH & THROW IN

Exception: When a team takes a penalty kick, and the ball is kicked into touch, the throw in is taken by a player of the team that took the penalty kick. This applies whether the ball was kicked directly or indirectly into touch.

19.5 HOW THE THROW IN IS TAKEN

The player taking the throw in must stand at the correct place. The

player must not step into the field of play before or as the ball is thrown.
The ball must be thrown straight to the lineout, so that it travels at least 5 metres along the line of touch before it first touches the ground or touches or is touched by a player.

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HOW THE THROW IN TAKES PLACE

19.6 INCORRECT THROW IN

(a) If the throw in at a lineout is incorrect, the opposing team has the choice of throwing in at a lineout or a scrum on the 15-metre line. If they choose the throw in to the lineout and it is again incorrect, a scrum is formed. The team that took the first throw in throws in the ball.

(b) The throw in at the lineout must be taken without delay and without pretending to throw.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(c) A player must not intentionally or repeatedly throw the ball in not straight.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

LINEOUT

DEFINITIONS

The purpose of the lineout is to restart play, quickly, safely and fairly, after the ball has gone into touch, with a throw in between two lines of players.

Lineout players. Lineout players are the players who form the two lines that make a lineout.

Receiver. The receiver is the player in position to catch the ball when lineout players pass or knock the ball back from the lineout. Any player may be the receiver but each team may have only one receiver at a lineout.

Players taking part in the lineout known as participating players. Players taking part in the lineout are the player who throws in and an immediate opponent, the two players waiting to receive the ball from the lineout and the lineout players.

All other players. All other players who are not taking part in the lineout must be at least 10 metres behind the line of touch, on or behind their goal line if that is nearer, until the lineout ends.

15-metre line. The 15-metre line is 15 metres infield and parallel with the touchline.

Scrum after lineout. Any scrum ordered because of an infringement or stoppage at the lineout is on the 15-metre line on the line of touch

19.7 FORMING A LINEOUT

(a) **Minimum.** At least two players from each team must form a lineout. A team must not voluntarily fail to form a lineout.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(b) **Maximum.** There is no restriction to the number of players from each team participating in the lineout. Each team can decide how many players participate in the lineout and there is no requirement for there to be an equal number of participants from each team.

(c) When the ball is in touch, every player who approaches the line of touch is presumed to do so to form a lineout. Players who approach the line of touch must do so without delay. Players of either team must not leave the lineout once they have taken up a position in the lineout until the lineout has ended.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(d) **Where the lineout players must stand.** The front of the lineout is not less than 5 metres from the touchline. The back of the lineout is not more than 15 metres from the touchline. All

Deleted: (b) **Maximum.** The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players in the lineout.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(c) The opposing team may have fewer lineout players but they must not have more.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

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Deleted: (e) If the team throwing in the ball put fewer than the usual number of players in the lineout, their opponents must be given a reasonable time to move enough players out of the lineout to satisfy this Law.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(f) These players must leave the lineout without delay. They must

move to the offside line, 10 metres behind the line of touch.

If the lineout ends before they reach this line, they may rejoin play.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(g) **Failure to form a lineout.**

Deleted: A team must not voluntarily fail to form a lineout.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

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lineout players must stand between these two points.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(e) **The receiver must stand.** The receiver must stand at least two metres towards that player's goal line from that player's team-mates who are lineout players and between five and fifteen metres from the touchline.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15 metre line

(f) **Player between touch and five metres.** The team not throwing in must have a player standing between the touchline and the 5-metre line on that team's side of the line of touch when the lineout is formed. That player must stand at least two metres from the five metres line.

(g) **Two single straight lines.** The lineout players of both teams form two single parallel lines each at right angles to the touchline.

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(i)

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(h) Opposing players forming a lineout must keep a clear space between their inside shoulders. This space is determined when players are in an upright stance.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(i) **Metre gap.** Each line of players must be half a metre on their side of the line of touch.

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Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(j) The line of touch must not be within 5 metres of the goal line.

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(k) After the lineout has formed, but before the ball has been thrown in, a player must not hold, push, charge into, or obstruct an opponent.

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Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

19.8 BEGINNING AND ENDING A LINEOUT

(a) **Lineout begins.** The lineout begins when the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing it in.

(b) **Lineout ends.** The lineout ends when the ball or a player carrying it leaves the lineout.

This includes the following:

When the ball is thrown, knocked or kicked out of the lineout, the lineout ends.

When the ball or a player carrying the ball moves into the area

between the 5-metre line and the touchline, the lineout ends.

When a lineout player hands the ball to a player who is peeling off, the lineout ends.

When the ball is thrown beyond the 15-metre line, or when a player takes or puts it beyond that line, the lineout ends.

When a ruck or maul develops in a lineout, and all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul move beyond the line of touch, the lineout ends.

When the ball becomes unplayable in a lineout, the lineout ends. Play restarts with a scrum.

19.9 OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN A LINEOUT

(a) **Offside.** A lineout player must not be offside. The offside line runs through the line of touch until the ball is thrown in. After the ball has touched a player or the ground, the offside line is a line through the ball.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(b) Players jumping for the ball may take a step in any direction providing they do not step across the line of touch.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(c) **Levering on an opponent.** A lineout player must not use an opponent as a support when jumping.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(d) **Holding or shoving.** A lineout player must not hold, push, charge, obstruct or grasp an opponent not holding the ball except when a ruck or maul is taking place.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(e) **Illegal charging.** A lineout player must not charge an opponent except in an attempt to tackle the opponent or to play the ball.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(f) **Lifting and supporting.** Players may assist a team mate in jumping for the ball by lifting and supporting that player providing that the lifting and/or supporting players do not support the jumping team-mate below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

Deleted: (f) **Levering on a team mate.** A jumping lineout player must not use a team mate as a support to jump.
Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

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(g) Pre-gripping is permitted. Players who are going to lift or support a team mate jumping for the ball may pre-grip that team mate providing they do not pre-grip below the shorts from behind and below the thighs from the front.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(h) Jumping, supporting or lifting before the ball is thrown. A player must not jump or be lifted or supported before the ball has left the hands of the player throwing in.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(i) Lowering a Player. Players who support a jumping team mate must lower that player to the ground as soon as the ball has been won by a player of either team.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(j) Blocking the throw in. A lineout player must not stand less than 5 metres from the touchline. A lineout player must not prevent the ball being thrown in 5 metres.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(k) When the ball has been thrown beyond a player in the lineout, that player may move to the space between the touchline and the 5-metre line. If the player moves into that space the player must not move towards that player's goal line before the lineout ends, except in a peeling off movement.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

(l) Catching or deflecting. When jumping for the ball, a player must use either both hands or the inside arm to try to catch or deflect the ball. The jumper must not use the outside arm alone to try to catch or deflect the ball. If the jumper has both hands above the head either hand may be used to play the ball.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line

Deleted: (g) **Lifting.** A lineout player must not lift a team mate.¶

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line¶

(h) **Support before jumping.** A player must not support a team mate before the team mate has jumped.¶

Deleted: (i) **Jumping or supporting before the ball is thrown.** A player¶ must not jump for the ball or support any player before the ball¶ has left the hands of the player throwing it in.¶

Deleted: (j) **Pre-grip below the waist.** A player must not pre-grip any team¶ mate below the waist.¶

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line¶

(k) **Support of a player.** A player must not support a jumping team¶ mate below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the¶ front.¶

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15 metre line¶

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19.10 OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO PLAYERS NOT IN THE LINEOUT

In general, a player not taking part in a lineout must stay at least 10 metres behind the line of touch, or on or behind that player's goal line if that is nearer, until the lineout ends.

There are two exceptions to this:

Exception 1: Long throw in. If the player who is throwing in throws the ball beyond the 15-metre line, a player of the same team may run forward to take the ball. If that player does so, an opponent may also run forward.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line, opposite the place of infringement but not less than 15 metres from the touchline.

Exception 2: The receiver may run into the gap and perform any of the actions available to any other player in the lineout. The receiver is liable to penalty for offences in the lineout as would be other players in the lineout.

19.11 PEELING OFF

DEFINITION

A lineout player 'peels off' when leaving the lineout to catch the ball knocked or passed back by a team mate.

(a) **When:** A player must not peel off until the ball has left the hands of the player throwing it in.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line, in line with the line of touch.

(b) A player who peels off, must stay within the area from that players' line of touch to 10 metres from the line of touch, and must keep moving until the lineout has ended.

Penalty: Free Kick on the 15-metre line, in line with the line of touch.

(c) Players may change their positions in the lineout before the ball is thrown in.

19.12 OFFSIDE AT THE LINEOUT

(a) When a lineout forms, there are two separate offside lines, parallel to the goal lines, for the teams.

(b) **Participating players.** One offside line applies to the players taking part in the lineout (usually some or all of the forwards, plus the scrum half and the player throwing in). Until the ball is thrown in, and has touched a player or the ground, this offside line is the line of touch. After that, the offside line is a line through the ball.

(c) **Players not taking part.** The other offside line applies to the players not taking part in the lineout (usually the backs). For them, the offside line is 10 metres behind the line of touch or their goal line, if that is nearer.

The lineout offside Law is different in the case of a long throw in, or in the case of a ruck or maul in the lineout.

19.13 OFFSIDE WHEN TAKING PART IN THE LINEOUT

(a) **Before the ball has touched a player or the ground.** A player must not overstep the line of touch. A player is offside, if, before the ball has touched a player or the ground, that player oversteps the line of touch, unless doing so while jumping for the ball. The player must jump from that player's side of the line of touch.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(b) If a player jumps and crosses the line of touch but fails to catch the ball, that player is not penalised provided that player gets back onside without delay.

(c) **After the ball has touched a player or the ground.** A player not carrying the ball is offside if, after the ball has touched a player or the ground, that player steps in front of the ball, unless tackling (or trying to tackle) an opponent. Any attempt to tackle must start from that player's side of the ball.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(d) The referee must penalise any player who, intentionally or not, moves into an offside position without trying to win possession or tackle an opponent.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(e) No player of either team participating in the lineout may leave the lineout until it has ended.

Deleted: DEFINITIONS
 A lineout player 'peels off' when leaving the lineout to catch the ball.
 knocked or passed back by a team mate.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

19.14 PLAYER THROWING-IN

There are four options available to the player throwing in:

- (a) The thrower may stay within 5 metres of the touchline.
- (b) The thrower may retire to the offside line 10 metres behind the line of touch.
- (c) The thrower may join the lineout as soon as the ball has been thrown in.
- (d) The thrower may move into the receiver position if that position is empty.

If the thrower goes anywhere else, the thrower is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

Deleted: (and the thrower's immediate opponent)

19.15 OFFSIDE WHEN NOT TAKING PART IN THE LINEOUT

(a) **Before the lineout has ended.** The offside line is 10 metres behind the line of touch, or the player's goal line, whichever is nearer. A player who is not taking part in the lineout is offside if that player oversteps the offside line before the lineout has ended.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line opposite the place of infringement, at least 15 metres from the touchline.

(b) **Players not yet onside when the ball is thrown in.** A player may throw in the ball even if a team mate has not yet reached the offside line. However, if this player is not trying to reach an onside position without delay, this player is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offending team's offside line opposite the place of infringement, at least 15 metres from the touchline

Exception: Long throw in. There is an exception to the Law of offside at the lineout. It applies if the ball is thrown beyond the 15-metre line. As soon as the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing in, any players of the thrower's team may run for the ball. This means that a player taking part in the lineout may run infield beyond the 15-metre line, and a player not taking part in the lineout may run forward across the offside line.

If this happens, an opponent may also run infield or run forward. However, if a player runs infield or runs forward to take a long throw in, and the ball is not thrown beyond the 15-metre line, this player is offside and must be penalised.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

For players taking part in the lineout: penalty kick is on the 15-metre line.

For players not taking part in the lineout: penalty kick is on the offending team's offside line at the place of infringement, at least

15 metres from the touchline.

19.16 OFFSIDE AT RUCKS OR MAULS IN THE LINEOUT

(a) When a ruck or a maul develops in a lineout the offside line for a player taking part in the lineout no longer runs through the ball. The offside line is now the hindmost foot of that player's team in the ruck or maul.

(b) However, for players not taking part in the lineout, the offside line is still 10 metres behind the line of touch. For these players, the lineout does not end when a ruck or maul develops.

(c) It ends when the ruck or maul leaves the line of touch. For this to happen, all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul must have left the line of touch.

(d) A player taking part in the lineout must either join the ruck or maul, or retire to the offside line and stay at that line, Otherwise that player is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(e) The rest of the Law of ruck or maul applies. A player must not join the ruck or maul from the opponents' side.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15 metre line

Players must not join it in front of the offside line. If they do, they are offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the 15-metre line

(f) **Players not taking part in the lineout.** When a ruck or maul develops in a lineout, the lineout has not ended until all the feet of all the players in the ruck or maul have moved beyond the line of touch. Until then, the offside line for players not taking part in the lineout is still 10 metres behind the line of touch, or the goal line if that is nearer. A player who oversteps this offside line is offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line at least 15 metres from the touchline

Law 20 Scrum

20.12 OFFSIDE AT THE SCRUM

(a) When the scrum is set, the scrum half not throwing the ball into the scrum must take up a position either at the same side of the scrum as the scrum half throwing in the ball or behind the offside line defined for other players.

(b) **Offside for scrum-halves.** When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of that team is offside if both feet are in front of the ball while it is still in the scrum. If the scrum half has only one foot in front of the ball, the scrum half is not offside.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

(c) When a team has won the ball in a scrum, the scrum half of the opposing team is offside if that scrum half steps in front of the ball with either foot while the ball is still in the scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

(d) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move to the opposite side of the scrum and overstep the offside line. For that scrum half that runs running through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

(e) The scrum half whose team does not win possession of the ball must not move away from the scrum and then remain in front of the offside line. For that scrum half that runs running through the hindmost foot of that player's team in the scrum.

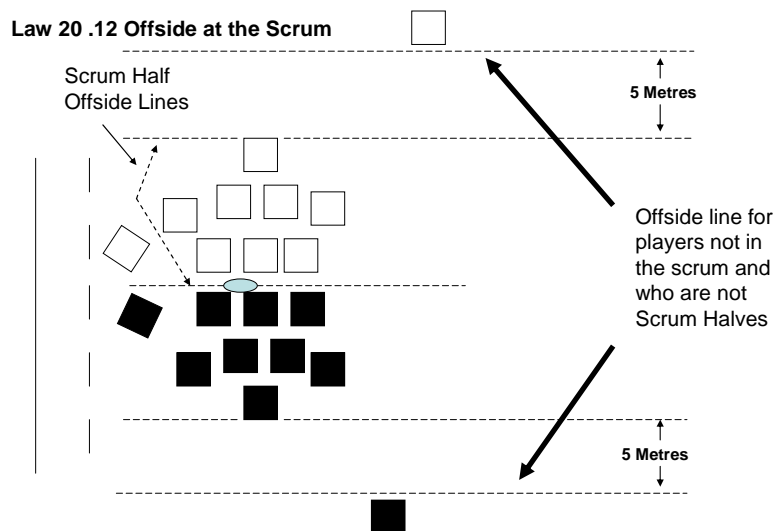
Penalty: Penalty Kick

(f) Any player may be scrum half, but a team can have only one scrum half at each scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line

(g) **Offside for players not in the scrum.** Players who are not in the scrum and who are not the team's scrum half, are offside if they remain in front of their offside line or overstep the offside line which is a line parallel to the goal lines and 5 metres behind the hindmost player of each team in a scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line



(h) **Loitering.** When a scrum is forming, players not taking part in it must retire to their offside line without delay. If they do not, they are loitering. Loiterers must be penalised.

Penalty: Penalty Kick on the offside line

Law 22 In-Goal

22.11 BALL DEAD IN IN-GOAL

(a) When the ball touches the touch-in-goal line or the dead ball line, or touches anything or anyone beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was played into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was played into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.

(b) When a player carrying the ball touches the touch-in-goal line, the dead ball line, or touches the ground beyond those lines, the ball becomes dead. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the attacking team, a drop out shall be awarded to the defending team. If the ball was carried into in-goal by the defending team, a 5-metre scrum shall be awarded and the attacking team throws in the ball.

(c) When a player scores a try or makes a touch down, the ball becomes dead.

New

22.12 BALL OR PLAYER TOUCHING A FLAG OR FLAG (CORNER) POST

If the ball or a player carrying the ball touches a flag or a flag (corner) post at the intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the goal lines or at the intersection of the touch-in-goal lines and the dead ball lines without otherwise being in touch or touch-in-goal the ball is not out of play unless it is first grounded against a flag post.

Renumber 22.12 to 22.16 as 22.13 to 22.17