

**FEDERATION
INTERNATIONAL
TOUCH
(INCORPORATED)**



PLAYING RULES

**with
EXPLANATIONS
and
INTERPRETATIONS**

3rd Edition

Playing Rules with Explanations and Interpretations of the FIT Playing Rules of Touch, Third Edition

This publication combines the Law of International Touch with the explanations given on how to handle many of the various situations that occurred in the game of Touch.

As various situations occur throughout the game the referee sometimes "appears" to make decisions which others may consider difficult to understand or interpret. Therefore, this publication contains a series of explanation (Situations and Decisions) based on the various Rules. These Situations and Decisions are referred to as Explanatory Notes and Interpretations.

These Explanations are not just an attempt to clarify or interpret an existing rule; they are supplementary to the current Rules or what the past Rule Books contained at the time.

The various situations mentioned in these Explanations are the ones most commonly asked by officials, players and referees. It is hoped, it will be easier for all Touch people to refer to and understand what interpretation is being applied on various situations and why.

The information contained here is not new. It is merely the Explanatory Notes issued by the federation, in one document. As more interpretations are issued, they will be added to the Explanation section pertaining to the relevant rule.

As the contents of this document are subject to Copyright (C), no part of this document may be copied or duplicated in any way without the written permission of the Author. Enquiries should be made to Secretary General, F.I.T. P.O. Box 487 Curtin ACT 2605

Cary Thompson
President
Federation International Touch
1 September 2003

CONTENTS

Rule 1.	Definitions	1
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	2
Rule 2.	The Field and the Ball	3
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	4
Rule 3.	Player Eligibility and Attire	4
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	5
Rule 4.	Mode of Play, Duration and Scoring	6
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	9
Rule 5.	Team Composition and Substitution	12
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	13
Rule 6.	Commencement/Recommencement of Play	16
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	17
Rule 7.	Possession	17
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	18
Rule 8.	Passing	19
	<i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	19
Rule 9.	The Rollball	20
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	22
Rule 10.	The Touch	27
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	29
Rule 11.	Ball on or over Sideline/Scoreline	31
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	33

CONTENTS (Continued)

Rule 12.	Ball touched in flight	35
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	36
Rule 13.	Offside	37
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	37
Rule 14.	Obstruction	38
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	39
Rule 15.	The Penalty	40
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	42
Rule 16.	Advantage	44
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	44
Rule 17.	Discipline and Player Conduct	45
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	46
Rule 18.	The Referee, Line Judges and Touchdown Zone Officials	48
	➤ <i>Explanations and Interpretation</i>	49

RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Unless the contrary intention appears, the following definitions and terminology apply to the game of Touch:

- 1 Advantage** is that property or part of play, which gives one team the potential to improve its position to score relative to the other team.
- 2 Attacking Team** is the team, which has possession or is gaining possession of the ball.
- 3 Attacking Scoreline** is the line on or over which a team has to place the ball to score a touchdown.
- 4 Behind** means in a position or direction towards a team's defending scoreline.
- 5 Dead Ball** means when the ball is out of play and includes the period following a touch until the ball is brought back into play at a Rollball, the period following a touchdown or penalty, until the match is recommenced, and when the ball goes to ground and/or outside the boundaries of the field of play.
- 6 Defending Scoreline** is the line, which a team has to defend to prevent a touchdown.
- 7 Defending Team** is the team without possession of the ball.
- 8 Deliver** means to part with the ball.
- 9 The Half** is the player who takes possession of the ball behind the player who performs the Rollball.
- 10 Field of Play** is the playing area bounded by the sidelines and Touchdown Zone lines, both of which are out of bounds.
- 11 Forward** means in a position or direction towards a team's own attacking scoreline.
- 12 Full Time** occurs at the expiration of the normal time allowed for play.
- 13 Interchange Area** is a rectangle measuring twenty (20) metres long by no more than five (5) metres wide, marked on both sides of the field, extending ten (10) metres either side of the half way line and being one (1) metre from the sideline.
- 14 Mark (For a Touch)** is the position where the attacking player in possession of the ball is at the time of the touch.
- 15 Mark (For a Tap)** is the centre of the halfway line for the commencement or recommencement of play, or the position where a tap is awarded as a result of an infringement.

- 16 Offside means** in a position forward of the ball for an attacking player and in a position liable to penalty for a defending player.
- 17 Onside means** in a position whereby a player may legitimately become involved with play.
- 18 Penalty is** the action by the referee in awarding a tap when a player or team infringes the rules of the game.
- 19 Rebound** occurs when the ball deflects from or makes contact with a player other than the player who first had possession.
- 20 Rollball is** the normal act of bringing the ball into play following a touch or a change of possession.
- 21 Ruling is** the decision made by the referee as a result of particular circumstances. It can result in a play on, a tap or a change of possession.
- 22 Scorelines** are the lines separating the Touchdown Zone from the field of play.
- 23 Sidelines** are the side boundaries of the field of play.
- 24 Tap is** the method of commencing the match, recommencing the match after half time and after a touchdown has been scored. It is also a method of recommencing play when a penalty is awarded.
- 25 Touch is** contact on any part of the body between a player in possession of the ball and a defending player. A touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and may be made by a defending player or by the player in possession.
- 26 Touchdown is** the result of an attacking player, except the half, placing the ball on or over the team's attacking scoreline.
- 27 Touchdown Zone is** the area bounded by the sideline, scoreline and Touchdown Zone Line.
- 28 Touchdown Zone Line is** the line joining the sidelines extending no less than five (5) metres and not more than ten (10) metres past the scoreline.

Explanations and Interpretation – Rule 1

SITUATION 1:1

When is a defending player put onside?

DECISION

A defending player is onside when the player takes up a position whereby they may legitimately become involved in play and not liable to a penalty: i.e. five (5) metres from the mark for a Rollball and ten (10) metres from the mark for a tap or both feet on or beyond the scoreline. Rule 1.16, Rule 13.3.

RULE 2 - THE FIELD AND THE BALL

- 1 Field of Play.** The Field of play is rectangular in shape and measures seventy (70) metres in length from scoreline to scoreline and fifty (50) metres in width.
- 2 Markings.** Line Markings defining the field of play are to be at least 2.5 cm. in width are to be laid out as shown in the diagram. (See Figure 1 - The Field of Play). Sidelines are to be extended at least five (5) metres beyond the scorelines and joined by the Touchdown Zone line.

Interchange Areas measuring twenty (20) metres in length by no more than five (5) metres in width shall be marked on both sides of the field of play, extending ten (10) metres either side of the halfway line and one (1) metre from the sideline.

- 3 Markers.** Suitably sized markers of a distinguishing colour and made from a safe and pliable material are to be positioned at the intersections of the sidelines and scorelines: and at the intersections of the halfway line with the sidelines (See Figure 1 - the Field of Play).
- 4 Playing Surface.** The playing surface is normally grass. However, other surfaces approved by the Federation of International Touch may be used. Ground surfaces, which may cause injury, are to be avoided.
- 5 The Ball.** The game is to be played with an oval, inflated ball of a shape, colour and size approved by the Federation of International Touch. The ball shall be inflated to the recommended air pressure and if applicable it will be the officially sanctioned ball endorsed by the Federation as at that time. The approved ball size is 36cm long and 55 cm in circumference.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. A defending player must have both feet ON or behind the defending scoreline to be onside, if a Rollball is within five (5) metres or a tap within ten (10) metres of the scoreline.
- B. Team captains have the right to lodge a complaint regarding field conditions and dimensions or environmental conditions (e.g. weather or state of the ground or field markings) prior to the commencement of a match.
- C. The ball must not be hidden under player attire.

REFEREE NOTES

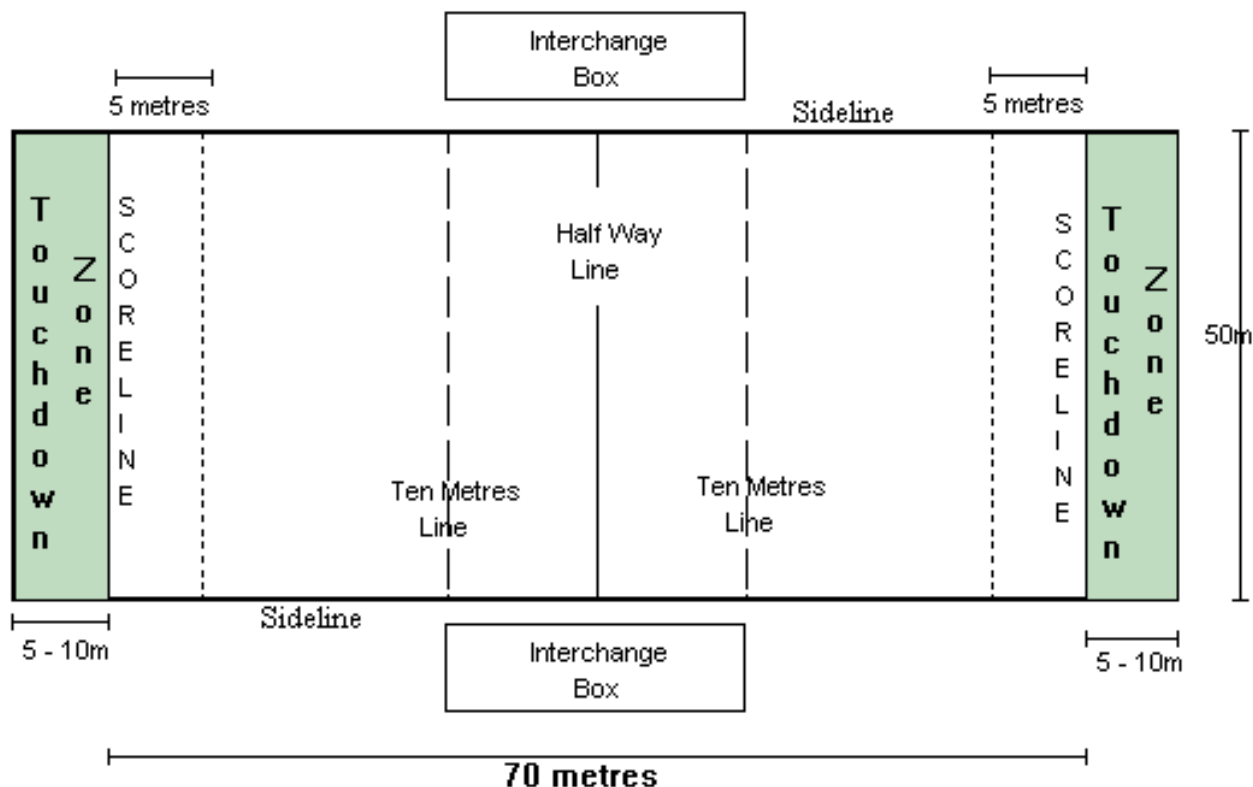
- A. The Referee is to inspect the boundaries and markers for clarity and safety, prior to the commencement of the match.

ADMINISTRATOR NOTES

A. Federation officials should ensure that all grounds used for competition matches are marked as shown in Figure 1 - The Field of Play. As a minimum, it is essential that scorelines, sidelines, touchdown zone lines and the halfway line are correctly marked.

B. Any decision or variation to dimensions or on playing rules or conditions rests with the Federation Executive or other Federation officials assigned to the Tournament.

FIGURE 1. - Field of Play



Explanations and Interpretations – Rule 2

SITUATION 2:1

A player has both his heels on the scoreline while defending. Are they onside?

DECISION

Yes, as both feet, (heels being part of the feet), are on or beyond the scoreline.

RULE 3 - PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND ATTIRE

- 1 Eligibility.** All participating players are to be registered with the member they represent and authorised to play by other members with whom they may also be registered. Teams playing unregistered or unauthorised players will forfeit such matches.

- 2 Uniforms.** All participating players are to be correctly attired in team uniforms approved by the Federation of International Touch. Uniforms consist of upper apparel, shorts (or briefs for female players) and socks with footwear.
- 3 Footwear.** Shoes with screw-in studs or cleats are not to be worn by any player. Light leather or synthetic boots with soft moulded soles are permitted, provided individual studs are no longer than thirteen millimetres (13 mm) in length, the measurement being taken from the sole of the boot.
- 4 Identification Numbers.** All Players are to wear an identifying number, not less than sixteen centimetres (16 cm) in height, clearly displayed on the front OR rear of the upper garment. Numbers may be positioned on both sleeves as an alternative providing the numbers are not less than eight (8) centimetres in height. No two players of the same team may wear the same number.
- 5 Jewellery and Fingernails.** Players are not to participate in any match while wearing any item of jewellery, which might prove dangerous. Long or sharp fingernails are to be trimmed or taped.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Players may, in conditions of cold weather, wear additional clothing providing colours and numbers are displayed, subject to approval of the Tournament Director.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees are not to allow players to participate in any match unless the above dress requirements are met.
- B. Referees are to inspect team clothing and footwear prior to matches. Fingernails and jewellery of all competitors are to receive specific inspection.

ADMINISTRATOR NOTES

- A. Identification numbers of participating players should be in numerical order. However, this is not mandatory.
- B. Minor dress variations may be approved by the Tournament Director.

Explanations and Interpretations – Rule 3

SITUATION 3:1

The rules only define jewellery, long fingernails or long studs as matters that need attending to prior to a game commencing. What about items such as sunglasses, knee braces, tongue studs, belly rings and other body piercing etc., can players wear these?

DECISION

At all level of Touch, the competition organisers have a duty of care to all the participants. This includes the player themselves, their teammates and opponents, as well as spectators who at park level are always close to the action.

Any item – even if a doctor’s certificate has been provided which is considered by the competition organisers as dangerous, has to be removed, otherwise the player cannot participate.

RULE 4 - MODE OF PLAY, DURATION AND SCORING

- 1 **Object.** The object of the game of Touch is for each team to score touchdowns and to prevent the opposition from scoring.
- 2 **Mode of Play.** The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between onside players of the attacking team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial advantage and score. Defending players prevent the attacking team from gaining a territorial advantage by touching the ball carrier, either defending or attacking players may initiate touches upon which, play stops and is restated with a Rollball, unless other rules apply.
- 3 **Duration.** The match is fourth five (45) minutes duration, consisting of two (2) twenty (20) minute halves. There is a five (5) minute halftime break. The duration may only be extended for exceptional circumstances.
- 4 **End of Play.** When time expires play is to continue until the ball next becomes dead. Should a penalty be awarded during this period, the penalty is to be taken.
- 5 **Scoring.** A touchdown is awarded when a player (without being touched and other than the half) places the ball on the ground on or over the team's attacking scoreline and within the boundaries of the Touchdown Zone. A touchdown is worth one (1) point.
- 6 **The Winner.** The team who at the end of play has scored the most touchdowns is declared the winner. In the event of neither team scoring, or in the event of both teams scoring the same number of touchdowns, a draw is declared.
- 7 **Competition Points.** Points are awarded in competition matches as follows:

WIN	- 3 POINTS
BYE	- 3 POINTS
DRAW	- 2 POINTS
LOSS	- 1 POINT
FORFEIT	- 0 POINTS
- 8 **Extra Time for Drawn Matches.** The following procedure will be utilised to establish a single winner.

THE DROP OFF PROCEDURE

- i) When the match is drawn at the expiration of full time, the referee will wait until the ball is dead, halt play, then signal to each team to reduce their playing strength by one player. Teams do not have a break or leave the field instead they immediately take up a position as for the restart of play continuing to play in the same direction.
- ii) As soon as each team removes a player, the game continues with a tap from the centre of the halfway line by the team who won the toss at the commencement of the game. Substitutions of players is permitted at any time as per the normal interchange rules.
- iii) At the conclusion of two minutes of extra time, a hooter is sounded and the referee will stop play at the next touch or dead ball. Each team will drop off one player thus reducing their on field strength to four (4) players.
- iv) Play will recommence immediately after the players have left the field at the same point in the play where it was halted; (i.e. the team retaining possession at the designated number of touches, or a change of possession due to some infringement or it being the sixth touch).
- v) The clock does not stop when the hooter sounds at the two minute intervals, as there is no time off during the Drop Off.
- vi) At each subsequent two minute period a signal for another player to drop off, will be sounded.
- vii) Once the teams have been reduced to only three players each, no further drop off of players will occur, and the match will continue until a touchdown is scored. Should a player be sent off for the remainder of the match when teams have only three players each, the offending team will forfeit, and lose the match.
- viii) During the Drop Off, before a winner can be declared, both teams must have had possession. If a team scores before their opponents have had possession, the touchdown counts and the match commences as per normal after a touchdown is awarded. Once possession is lost the winner is then confirmed.
- ix) The decision on which player will drop off is entirely up to the team management, which is the captain, coach, etc.
- x) A player/team wasting time at a drop off will be penalised at the mark for recommencement of the match.

Notes for Players

- a) During the original match, if a player has been sent from the field of play for the remainder of the match, that player cannot participate in extra time.

- b) A team that had a player (or players) dismissed from the field of play for the remainder of the match will commence extra time with a reduced number of players. Thus the team will commence extra time with four (4) players if one (1) player had been sent off and three (3) if two players had been sent off.

At the drop off time, each team will still reduce their playing strength as per the rules, thus ensuring the one team will have the player advantage as per in the match. Once a team reaches only three players, no further drop off of players from either team, will occur. Injured players can be replaced at any time.

- c) Mixed Teams can drop off in any sequence provided Rule 5.2 applies and that there is a minimum on one (1) male and one (1) female player on the field at all times.

- 9 Abandoned Matches.** If a match is abandoned due to any circumstances, the controlling Association shall decide the result.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. If a player places the ball on the ground and releases it short of the scoreline, while attempting to score a touchdown, a touch is counted and the player is required to Rollball to restart play at the position of contact with the ground. However a touchdown results if an untouched player (other than the half) slides the ball along the ground to or beyond the scoreline. If a player does not release the ball from their hands, no touch is counted and the match continues.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. A Referee should be aware of players who commit "professional fouls" and should take appropriate action.
- B. If in attempting to score, a player either makes contact with the corner marker or crosses the extended sideline, no touchdown is awarded and the match is recommenced by the opposition with a Rollball five (5) metres from the scoreline and five (5) metres in from the sideline.

ADMINISTRATOR NOTES

- A. The Tournament Director should endeavour to provide official time keepers for all matches. Should time keepers not be appointed, the referee is to act as the sole time keeper and therefore is allowed to wear a watch.
- B. If extra time is to be played the Tournament Director will be responsible for the timing of the two minute Intervals.

Explanations and Interpretations - Rule 4

SITUATION 4:1

What is the definition of possession with specific reference to a team having possession in the drop off.

DECISION

Possession is where a team has control of the ball to the extent they are in a position to score a touchdown if no defending players were on the field.

SITUATION 4:2

A player in possession while attempting to score a touchdown places the ball on the ground (and releases it) short of the scoreline.

DECISION

The player retains possession and a touch is counted. Ball to be brought back into play with a Rollball. The player would lose possession only if it was the sixth touch or the player was half. - Rule 4; Player Note A.

SITUATION 4:3

Referee Note A uses the term 'appropriate action'. How is this defined?

DECISION

- (a) Caution on the run;
- (b) Penalty;
- (c) Dismissal for a period of time;
- (d) Dismissal for the remainder of the game;
- (e) Suggest to the Captain to remove constant offender. - Rule 17; Referee Note D).

SITUATION 4:4

In Sudden Death Extra Time, when both teams must have possession before a result can be declared, what happens (what is the procedure?) when only one team has had possession and scores a touchdown?

DECISION

The referee awards the touchdown and play recommences with a tap at the half way mark by the team who was scored against. They have possession for six touches or until they lose possession. If they do not score before they lose possession the other team is declared the winner. - Rule 4.8 (ii).

SITUATION 4:5

In Sudden Death Extra Time, when both teams must have possession before a result can be declared, what happens when a team received "six again" and scores a touchdown before their opponents have possession.

DECISION

The referee awards the touchdown and play recommences with a tap at the half way mark by the team who was scored against. A team is allowed possession until the ball is dead, i.e. lose possession, as in general play. - Rule 4.8 (ii).

SITUATION 4:6

In Sudden Death Extra Time, when both teams must have possession before a result can be declared, the team tapping off scores within its first set of touches. The team scored against taps off and an opponent tries to intercept a pass but drops the ball. Is the ball therefore declared "dead" and the game ended?

DECISION

Yes as the team had possession and subsequently lost it

SITUATION 4:7

A team taps off in extra time and scores a touchdown. The other team then taps off and whilst attempting to score has the ball knocked to the ground (either deliberate knocked down or an attempt to intercept). Does this constitute as possession to the defending team and therefore a loss of possession to the attacking team thus ending the game.

DECISION

Yes as the team had possession and subsequently lost it

SITUATION 4:8

In Sudden Death Extra Time, when both teams must have possession before a result can be declared, the team tapping off has a pass intercepted. The player in possession when making a pass has it in turn intercepted resulting in a touchdown being claimed. What happens next ?

DECISION

The Touchdown is awarded and the game concludes as both have had possession. - Rule 4.8 (ii).

SITUATION 4:9

In Sudden Death Extra Time, when both teams must have possession before a result can be declared, what happens when both teams score with their first set of six touches and the team that recommences after the scores are level scores from the tap off.

DECISION

The game is concluded and the team that last scored is declared the winner.

SITUATION 4:10

A team taps off in extra time and whilst attempting to score has a defender infringe the rules thus allowing a penalty to be awarded to the attacking team. Does this action negate possession to the defending team for the purpose of declaring a winner if the attacking team with its next set of six touches scores a touchdown.

DECISION

No. The defending team was never in possession therefore they are allowed to tap off.

SITUATION 4:11

In the Drop Off when team numbers comes down to three (3) players only, what happens if the referee sends off a player from one of the teams for the remainder of the game ?

DECISION

The game is abandoned and the non-offending team is declared the winner. - See Rule 5 RN A applies. Three in the Drop Off is the minimum number allowed.

SITUATION 4:12

A team with only five players sustains an injury to one of their players and finishes the game with only four players. At the commencement of the Drop Off only four players from that team take the field, the injured player cannot recover. What happens after the first two minute segment has elapsed, does the team with four players have to drop off a player?

DECISION

The team with four players were “deemed” to have commenced the drop off with five players for the first two minutes; therefore after the two-minute segment they may retain the same number of players as their opponents.

SITUATION 4:13

A team with only five players sustains an injury to one of their players and finishes the game with only four players. At the commencement of the Drop Off only four players from that team take the field. If the fifth player sufficiently recovers, can they take the field before the first of the two-minute segments elapses?

DECISION

The injured player may take the field at any time provided the maximum number allowed for that team is not exceeded. In this case the player may take the field as no player from that team was dismissed for the remainder of the game and therefore both team can have equal numbers.

SITUATION 4:14

A team plays the whole game with only five players and at the conclusion of the game the score is drawn. A Drop Off is required to determine a winner. In what order does the team with only five players drop off a player? Do they wait until both teams have five players or do they have to go down to three before both teams have equal numbers?

DECISION

During the Drop Off the team with six players will drop a player off after the first period of time, while the team with five players will not drop off a player until the second period of time has elapsed.

SITUATION 4:15

A team with only five players for the whole game commences the Drop Off to determine the winner. The Rule states the referee will ...”*then signal to each team to reduce their playing strength by one player to five (5) onfield players...*” Does that means the team already with only five players has to reduce their number by one (1).

DECISION

See Situation 4:13 – the same principle must apply. The team does not have to reduce its playing numbers to commence the Drop Off. You can also see from the Rule itself that playing number at the commencement of the Drop Off (with all other things being equal) is five onfield players.

SITUATION 4:16

A team has only five players and has a player sent off for the remainder of the game. The scores are level at full time and a drop off is employed to decide the winner. How is the team affected that are now down to only four players?

DECISION

The team with only five players will play the drop off with one less player than their opponents, that is, four v five then three v four. At the completion of four minutes extra time the team with three players cannot reduce its number to two. So that the non-offending team is not penalised for the indiscretion of its opponents, the game will continue at three v four until a result is reached.

SITUATION 4:17

A team has only five players and has a player sent off for the remainder of the game. The scores are level at full time and a drop off is employed to decide the winner. How is the team affected that are now down to only four players?

DECISION

The team with only four players will play the drop off with two less players than their opponents, that is, three v five. At the completion of two minutes extra time the team with three players cannot reduce its number to two but their opponents must drop off a player so the situation is three on four. There will be no further drop off of player at this point. So that the non-offending team is not penalised for the indiscretion of its opponents, the game will continue at three v four until a result is reached.

SITUATION 4:18

In the wet a player in possession dives for the scoreline and lands about a metre short but his momentum carries him across the scoreline. Would a touchdown be awarded?

DECISION

Provided the player retained possession of the ball, a touchdown would be awarded. - See Rule 4 PN B.

RULE 5 - TEAM COMPOSITION AND SUBSTITUTION

- 1 Number of Players.** A Team consists of fourteen (14) players, no more than six (6) of whom are allowed on the field at any time.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified.

- 2 Mixed Competition.** In mixed competitions, the maximum number of males allowed on the field of play is three (3). The minimum male requirement on the field of play is one (1).

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified.

- 3 Substitution.** Players may substitute at any time in accordance with the interchange procedure. There is no limit to the number of times a player may interchange.
- 4 Interchange Procedure.** Substitute players must remain in their interchange area for the duration of the match. All interchanges must occur at or within the team's Interchange Area, and only after the substituted player has crossed the boundaries and entered the Interchange Area. All interchanges must be made on the one side of the field and without delay.

Physical contact does not have to be made between interchanging players, and players leaving or entering the field shall not hinder or obstruct play and must enter from an onside position. Following the scoring of a touchdown, players may interchange at will without having to wait for the substituted player to enter the interchange area.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team five (5) metres infield from where the substituted player left the field or where the substituting player entered the field, whichever is the greater advantage.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Although a team consists of fourteen (14) players, a minimum of four (4) is required for the match to continue. All players who are involved in the match both on and off the field of play are under the direct control of the referee.
- B. Female players in mixed competition may play in any team positions. Male players may interchange with female players providing Rule 5.2 applies.
- C. Attacking and defending players must interchange in accordance with Rule 5.4. Intending substitutes must not voluntarily remain off the field.

REFEREE NOTE

- A. Should the number of players on the field from one team fall below four (4), the match is finished and the non-offending team is declared the winner. This applies if players have been dismissed for the remainder of the match, but not for injuries or dismissals for a period of time.
- B. Players who arrive late may enter the field immediately, providing their team does not already have six (6) players on the field.

Explanation and Interpretations – Rule 5

SITUATION 5:1

A team has a player sent off for a period of time. The player moves to a position beyond his team's attacking scoreline. After a period of time, the referee signals to the dismissed player that he can return to the game. Instead, another player joins the team (irrespective of field position). Is such a substitution allowable?

DECISION

Yes. The dismissed player is not in the field of play and may be replaced at any time after being recalled to the game by the referee. Usual interchange procedures do not apply except with respect to replacing from an onside position.

SITUATION 5:2

A player in possession running downfield is touched with no team mate close by. The player effects a Rollball and is substituted as per the interchange rule. The substitute player takes the field and moves directly into the half position. Is such an interchange allowed and can the new player take on the role of half.

DECISION

Provided the interchange procedure is in accordance with the rules, the player taking the field can assume any position they like, including the half role. Although the substituting player is replacing the player who performed the Rollball (and the person performing the Rollball cannot pick up the ball), they are not the same person so the new player is entitled to go into half.

SITUATION 5:3

In a drop off when there are only three players per team, can a player in possession after being touched (with no team mate close by) effect a quick Rollball and immediately be substituted ? Can the substitute player take the field and move directly into the half position?

DECISION

The fact that this action happens in the Drop Off has no differing effect to the decision in 5:2. Provided the interchange procedure is in accordance with the rules, the player taking the field can assume any position they like, including the half.

SITUATION 5:4

In mixed team what is the minimum team composition for a game to commence ?

DECISION

There are several combinations:-

One (1) male and three (3) females

Two (2) males and two (2) females

Three (3) males and one (1) female

SITUATION 5:5

In mixed team what are the possible team compositions for the six players on the field?

DECISION

There are several combinations:-

One (1) male and five (5) females

Two (2) males and four (4) females

Three (3) males and three (3) females

SITUATION 5:6

In mixed team what are the possible team compositions for the twelve players in the team?

DECISION

There are many combinations, remembering always that only three (3) males are allowed on the field at any one time, and that a minimum of four (4) players must be on the field: - One (1) male and eleven (11) females and in any combination downwards to Eleven (11) males and one (1) female.

SITUATION 5:7

In a mixed game, a male player gets sent off for a period of time, thus leaving 3 females and two males. On the next interchange the coach replaces a female with a male player leaving two females and 3 males. When the referee calls the player back onto the field the coach then replaces that player with a female. Is this allowed?

DECISION

Yes, A coach can vary the composition of his mixed team in any combination provide the maximum number of males and minimum number of females is not breached.

SITUATION 5:8

In a mixed game, a male player gets sent off for the remainder of the game, thus leaving 3 females and two males. On the next interchange the coach replaces a female with a male player leaving two females and 3 males. Is this allowed?

DECISION

Yes, A coach can vary the composition of his mixed team in any combination provide the maximum number of males and minimum number of females is not breached

SITUATION 5:9

A winger on the sideline is being guarded heavily, (man on man with blocked out style defence), by two defenders near the attacking scoreline. The winger steps out of the field of play, and runs around the witches hat back into the touchdown zone, and the player in possession passes the ball to the winger, who scores. Is this allowable

DECISION

Yes the referee would award a touchdown considering all other facts. The general rule from the past about players standing outside of the field then joining the play related to deliberate act of melding in with the substitute players walking up and down the sideline. With the interchange box this has somewhat been eliminated (except for the interchange box area) but the action in this situation is not deliberate in remaining outside the field of play.

RULE 6 - COMMENCEMENT AND RECOMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

- 1 The Toss.** Team captains are to toss the coin in the presence of the referee with the winning captain's team receiving possession for the commencement of the first half, the choice of direction for the first half and the choice of Interchange areas for the duration of the match, including extra time.
- 2 Attacking Team.** The attacking team is to start the match with a tap at the centre of the halfway line following the indication to commence play from the referee. All players of the attacking team are to remain in an onside position until the ball has been tapped.

RULING - A change of possession at the centre of the halfway line.

- 3 Method.** The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball with either foot a distance of not more than one (1) metre, and retrieving the ball cleanly. Any player of the attacking team may take the tap. Any onside player of the attacking team may retrieve the ball once the tap has been taken.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark for the tap.

- 4 Defending Team.** All players of the defending team are required to retire a distance of not less than ten (10) metres from the mark for the tap. Defending players may move forward of their positions once the ball has been tapped with the foot.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line ten (10) metres directly forward of the original mark.

- 5 Recommencement of Play.** For the recommencement of play following a half-time break, teams shall change directions and the team losing the toss is to start the match with a tap as described in Rules 6.2 and 6.3. For the recommencement of play following the scoring of a touchdown, the team against which the score was made is to recommence play as described in Rules 6.2 and 6.3.
- 6 Kicking.** The ball cannot be kicked or played with the foot except when taking a tap or a Rollball. The half may use the foot to control the ball.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position where the ball made contact with the foot.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. A player taking the tap may face any direction to take the tap and may be forward of the halfway line.

- B. The player taking the tap is to wait until the referee indicates the mark prior to tapping the ball.
- C. Players may take the ball behind the mark for a tap up to a maximum of ten (10) metres. No sideways movement from the mark is allowed.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees are to ensure that there is minimum delay between the scoring of a touchdown and the recommencement of play.
- B. Referees should penalise players who attempt to delay play following a touchdown. If the team scored against causes the delay, the penalty should be awarded from the centre of the halfway line. If the team who scored is causing the delay, the penalty should be awarded at a mark ten (10) metres forward of the halfway line.

Explanation and Interpretations – Rule 6

SITUATION 6:1

A team is awarded a penalty and decides to take the ball back ten (10) metres from the mark. How close to where the tap is being taken, can the defending team move?

DECISION

The defending team cannot move within ten metres of the MARK indicated by the referee, until the ball has been tapped (Rule 6.4). The fact the attacking team can move the ball up to ten metres behind the mark (Rule 6 Player Note C), does not allow the defence to move any closer than ten metres from the MARK as indicated by the referee.

RULE 7 - POSSESSION

- 1 General.** Providing other Rules do not apply, the team with the ball is entitled to six (6) touches prior to changing possession with the opposing team.
- 2 Changeover Procedure.** Following the sixth touch or the loss of possession due to any other means, players of the team losing possession are to hand, or pass the ball to the nearest opposition player, or place the ball on the ground at the mark without delay. Attacking players who request the ball are to be given the ball. Players are not to delay the changeover procedure.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team ten (10) metres forward of the mark for the change of possession or penalty.

- 3 Ball to Ground.** If the ball is dropped to the ground a change of possession results. The mark for a change of possession is where the ball first pitches or where the attacking player dropped or passed the ball, whichever is of greater advantage to the team gaining possession.
- 4 Mishandled Ball.** If a player mishandles the ball and providing the ball does not go to ground, play is to continue.

- 5 Intercepts.** Intercepts by onside defending players are allowed. Following an intercept, play continues until the first touch is effected, a touchdown is scored, or a stoppage occurs as a result of other actions.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Should a touch be effected on a player in possession while the ball may not be physically in the hands (e.g. while juggling or trying to maintain control), the touch is to count.
- B. Providing the same player retrieves the ball prior to it going to ground, any knock forward resultant from an intercept is allowed.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees are to be aware of players deliberately attempting to delay play during normal changeover procedures.
- B. If a ball contacts the ground while still under the control of a player (e.g. falling over) a change of possession DOES NOT result and play is to continue.
- C. Players may intercept behind the defending scoreline. If a player in possession is touched or effects a touch whilst on or behind their defending scoreline the touch counts and play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) metres forward of the scoreline from where the player was touched.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 7

SITUATION 7:1

A player in possession while attempting to score a touchdown touches the ground with the ball (but does not release it) short of the scoreline.

DECISION

No touch count: Play on. - Rule 7; Referee Note B.

SITUATION 7:2

After a player scores a touchdown should they have to pick up the ball and give it to the opposition?

DECISION

It is not compulsory for the scorer to pick up the ball and hand it to the opposition. If directed to do so by the referee the player must comply BUT this direction should only be given if the opposition players have not chased and are near halfway waiting for the restart.

SITUATION 7:3

A 'dead-heat' for say a defender attempting an intercept and an attacking player trying to catch the ball. Who gets possession ?

DECISION

Unless the defender clearly has their hands on the ball first then the attacking team is deemed not to have lost possession.

RULE 8 - PASSING

- 1 General.** A player in possession may pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any other onside player in the attacking team.
- 2 Forward Pass.** A player in possession is not to pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise propel the ball in a forward direction (See Player Notes to Rule 7).

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the ball was passed, flicked, knocked, thrown or otherwise propelled forward.

- 3 Passing into Opposition.** A player who passes the ball at or towards a defending player and thereby causes the ball to go to ground shall lose possession. However, if the defending player attempts to catch the ball or play at the ball and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession. Play is restarted at the mark where the ball goes to ground or at a position of best advantage to the non-offending team. The touch count is restarted.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. A player who, in attempting to control the ball, juggles or knocks the ball forward, is not to be penalised, provided the player regathers the ball. (See Player Notes to Rule 7).

REFEREE NOTES

- A. A Penalty is to result from a forward pass even if the receiver was in an onside position prior to the pass.
- B. Referees are to be aware of players who make any deliberate passes at an opposing player, especially on the fifth (5th) touch.
- C. Forward passes are to be penalised even if the ball goes to ground or if it is the last touch.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 8

SITUATION 8:1

Player in possession juggles the ball forward. It goes from the original player to a team mate who was onside. Is this allowed?

DECISION

Forward pass. - Rule 8.2

SITUATION 8:2

A player overruns a pass made to him by a team mate. The pass was in a backward direction but the player who is now forward of his team mate has to stretch back to retrieve the ball.

DECISION

Player receiving the pass is not offside. Rules 8.1 and 13.1 do not apply.

SITUATION 8:3

A player in possession fumbles the ball forward. It hits a defending player and rebounds back to the possession of another attacking player.

DECISION

Possession goes to the defending team. Rule 8; Player Note A.

RULE 9 - THE ROLLBALL

- 1 When Required.** A player is to perform a Rollball under the following circumstances:
 - (a) When a touch has been effected;
 - (b) When possession changes due to the sixth touch;
 - (c) When possession changes due to the ball going to ground;
 - (d) When possession changes due to an infringement by an attacking player at a penalty or a tap;
 - (e) When possession changes when the half is touched (or places the ball on or over the scoreline) whilst in possession of the ball;
 - (f) When possession changes due to a player in possession of the ball running across the sideline, or
 - (g) When so directed by the referee.

- 2 Method.** The attacking player is to position on the mark, face the opponent's (defending) scoreline, stand parallel to the sidelines, and roll the ball backwards along the ground between the feet a distance of not more than one (1) metre. Once the ball is placed on the mark, the attacking player may step over the ball.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark.

- 3 (a) Attacking Team.** Any other player of the attacking team may receive the ball from the Rollball and thus become the half. The half may pass or run with the ball. However, if touched, loses possession.

RULING - A change of possession.

(b) The half is not to delay picking up or gathering the ball. The player who performs the Rollball is not permitted to obstruct or otherwise prevent the defending team from gaining possession or effecting a touch on the half.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the infringement occurred.

- 4 Defending Team.** All Players of the defending team are to retire a distance of not less than five (5) metres from the mark for a Rollball. Players of the defending team are not permitted to move forward of the five (5) metre position until the half has made contact with the ball.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line five (5) metres forward of the mark for the Rollball and nearest the infringement.

- 5 Actions Without Half in Position.** When the player in possession is required to Rollball without a half in position, players of the defending team may move forward of the five (5) metre positions as soon as the ball leaves the hand/s of the player in possession. Should a defending player gain possession, the match is recommenced with a Rollball at the same mark.

- 6 Voluntary Rollball.** A player in possession is not to perform a Rollball unless a touch has been effected.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the Rollball occurred.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. The ball must touch the ground in a Rollball but does not necessarily have to be rolled. The foot may be used to control the ball.
- B. The player performing the Rollball must be stationary and will not be penalised if the Rollball is performed while balancing on one foot providing the ball passes on the inside of the supporting foot.
- C. Defending players who are offside at the Rollball are liable to penalty and should remain out of play until a touch has been effected or until they have assumed an onside position.
- D. The player performing the Rollball cannot retrieve the ball.
- E. Any defending player involved in a touch must immediately retire to a position along a line five (5) metres forward of the touch or to their own defending scoreline.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. The mark for a tap from a penalty is awarded under Rule 9.4 is along a line five (5) metres forward of the mark for the Rollball and nearest the infringement.
- B. The half is permitted to use the foot to control the ball. However, play must not be delayed. Defending players may move forward as soon as the half has made contact with the ball.

- C. A player in possession may run or stand with the ball extended towards the ground without penalty. However, Rule 9.6 (Voluntary Rollball) applies as soon as the ball is rolled.
- D. In an attempt to encourage a free-flowing match, referees should warn offside players (or teams) and use the advantage rule as applicable (e.g. If a warned offside player moves to make a touch, the referee may call "play on" rather than stop play and penalise the offender). However, if the referee hasn't warned the player (or team) he cannot call "play on" and must allow the touch or penalise the offending player.
- E. Players who delay the Rollball are to be penalised.
- F. Should the half or other attacking players effect a touch on an offside defender following a quick Rollball, the touch will count (and the half would lose possession).
- G. The half is not permitted to score touchdowns. They are unrestricted as to where they can run and may cross the scoreline to link up with support players.

Should the half be touched or place the ball on the ground within the boundaries of the Touchdown Zone, whether the ball is released or not, a change of possession will occur five (5) metres from the scoreline (and no closer than five (5) metres from the sideline) opposite where the half was touched or where the ball touched the ground.

- H. There is no requirement for the ball to be picked up to commence the Rollball, but the referee should ensure the Rollball takes place at the mark.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 9

SITUATION 9:1

A player in possession runs up to effect a touch on a defender (or alternatively expects to be touched by a defender) and at the moment of the expected touch the defender backs away causing the player in possession to voluntary Rollball.

DECISION

Penalty awarded to the defending team. Rule 9.6.

SITUATION 9:2

At a change of possession, the attacking player places the ball on the ground and walks over it.

DECISION

Play on. The attacking player has brought the ball into play. The same would apply if a defending player placed the ball on the mark.

SITUATION 9:3

A defending player trying to retire has an attacking player running at him. The defender effects a touch not knowing if he/she has retired the required distance.

DECISION

- (a) The touch counts if the defender has retired the correct distance.
- (b) A penalty is awarded if the defender failed to retire the correct distance.

NOTE: The referee WOULD NOT call "Play on" as he failed to WARN the defender they were still offside. If warned, the referee may call "Play on".

SITUATION 9:4

An attacking player performs a Rollball. The half traps the ball with his foot BUT another onside attacking player picks the ball up. When can the defence move forward and what happens if a player other than the half picks up the ball?

DECISION

- (a) As soon as the half touches the ball the defence can move forward.
- (b) The half once having touched the ball must pick it up immediately otherwise a penalty will be awarded against them (Rule 9.3).
- (c) Once the half has touched the ball, no other player can pick it up from the Rollball.

SITUATION 9:5

The ball hits the foot of the half before it is picked up. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

Defence can move forward as soon as the ball touches the foot of the half.
Rule 9.4 and Referee Note B.

SITUATION 9:6

The half deliberately uses a foot to trap the ball prior to picking it up.

DECISION

Play on, defence can move forward. - Rule 9.4 and Referee Note B.

SITUATION 9:7

Half in attempting to trap the ball causes it to go more than one (1) metre.

DECISION

Change of possession at the mark. - Rule 9.2.

SITUATION 9:8

After a touch, the player in possession places the ball on the ground and uses his foot to Rollball. There is no half in position. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

As soon as the ball has left the hands of the "touched" attacking player. - Rule 9.5.

SITUATION 9:9

The half in attempting to gather the ball rolls it towards himself along the ground.

DECISION

Play on. - Rule 7; Referee Note B.

SITUATION 9:10

The ball is placed on the mark at a change of possession. An attacking player takes up a position in front of the ball and steps over it backwards so as to be quickly in position to support the half.

DECISION

Such actions would constitute a Rollball in a forward direction and would result in a change of possession. Rule 9.2; Rule 9; Player Note D and Referee Note G. Refer also Situation 9:14

SITUATION 9:11

At a change of possession, the team losing possession places the ball on the mark. An attacking player steps over the ball and there is no half in position. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

When the attacking player's foot or body passes over the ball.

SITUATION 9:12

At a change of possession, the team losing possession places the ball on the mark. An attacking player uses his foot to bring the ball into play. There is no half in position. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

When the attacking player places a foot on the ball. - Rule 9; Player Note A and Referee Note G.

SITUATION 9:13

Player in possession deliberately touches the ground with the ball, does not release it and does not get touched, he then proceeds to play on hoping his ploy will confuse the opposition.

DECISION

Play on. - Rule 7; Referee Note B.

SITUATION 9:14

A penalty is awarded and offending team places the ball on the mark. Attacking player chooses to bring the ball into play by using the Rollball method. The attacking player however steps backwards over the ball to bring it into play.

DECISION

Change of possession at the mark. Stepping backwards over the ball constitutes a Rollball in a forward direction. Rule 9.2; Rule - 9 Player Notes D and G. - Refer also to Situation 9:10

SITUATION 9:15

The half who is over the scoreline passes to a team mate. The ball is deflected by the defender, (either by an unintentional attempt to prevent the pass, or a deliberate attempt to intercept the pass), back to the hands of the half who places it on the ground and claims a touchdown.

DECISION

A touchdown would be awarded as the action of releasing the ball no longer designates the player as the half.

SITUATION 9:16

The half who is over the scoreline releases the ball either in an attempt to throw a pass or otherwise, but before the ball comes into contact with another player or the ground, he re-gathers it and places it on the ground claiming a touchdown.

DECISION

The fact that the player has released the ball does not automatically mean he is no longer the half. Because the ball did not come in contact with another player the pass (in effect to himself), does not relinquish his role as the half and the touchdown would be disallowed.

SITUATION 9:17

An attacking player drops the ball from waist height and traps it with his foot for a Rollball. Is such action allowable ?

DECISION

Yes! 'Dunking' is allowed therefore using the foot to 'dunk' the ball is also allowed (provided all other Rule re Rollball are adhered to). No Rule says the ball has to be placed on the ground (mark) with the hand. See 9 PN A and PN B.

SITUATION 9:18

An attacking player drops the ball from say upper thigh height to Rollball without using the foot. Is such action allowable ?

DECISION

No! Such action would constitute an incorrect Rollball. Rule 9.2

SITUATION 9:19

An attacking player in an attempt to execute a quick "dump" deflects the ball off the ground the knee or leg (or any other part of his body) thus causing the ball to project either sideways or forward without control. Should the player be asked to collect the ball and Rollball correctly?

DECISION

No! It was the attacking players decision to effect a quick Rollball and if they have "mucked" it up, they loose possession. Hand over to opponents.

Note here, that if the ball is dislodged by a defender or dropped accidentally then the ball is regarded as dead and the attacking player retains possession, unless it is the sixth touch.

SITUATION 9:20

A player who has been awarded a change of possession incorrectly taps the ball assuming that a penalty was awarded. Is this a penalty or change of possession to the non offending team ?

DECISION

The referee would award a change of possession.

SITUATION 9:21

A player in possession attempts to make a touch and places the ball on the ground in anticipation of the touch (the ball is not released). However contact is not made with the original defender so the player reaches to touch another defender. Is such action allowed?

DECISION

Yes. The placing of the ball on the ground, whilst attempting to effect a Rollball, (provided the ball is not released), does not constitute a Rollball. The fact a touch has not been effected is irrelevant as the ball must leave the hands of the attacking player for the action to constitute a Rollball. The attacking player would not be penalised for a voluntary Rollball.

SITUATION 9:22

The ball is rolled and there a half is in position. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

Provided they were onside at the Rollball the defending players can move forward as soon as the ball has made contact with the half. - Rule 9.4

SITUATION 9:23

The ball is rolled and there is no half in position. When can the defence move forward?

DECISION

Provided they were onside at the Rollball the defending players can move forward as soon as the ball has left the hands of the player effecting the Rollball. - Rule 9.5

SITUATION 9:24

The ball is rolled and there is no half in position. A defending player moves to the ball and walks over it claiming he has taken possession and bought the ball into play. Is such action legal?

DECISION

Provided the player was onside at the Rollball, possession must be claimed by the defending player. Merely walking over the ball is not deemed to be sufficient. The ball must be claimed (that is touched) by the defender either with the hand or foot. The referee would instruct the player to touch the ball and that once they touch the ball they must perform a Rollball to bring it into play .See Rule 9.5

SITUATION 9:25

The half crosses the scoreline untouched and runs around trying to link up with a team mate. Before the ball can be passed the half is touched. Where is the mark for the subsequent Rollball ?

DECISION

Change of possession and Rollball to the defending team is five metres from the scoreline opposite where the touch was effected:- See Rule 9.3

SITUATION 9:26

A player performs a Rollball and notices there is no half in position so they turn around and pick up the ball. What action can the Referee take? Would the action be different if the player after picking the ball up passed it to a team mate ?

DECISION

According to Rule 9 Player note D. The player performing the Rollball cannot retrieve the ball. Should this happen the Referee would order a change of possession. If however the player passes the ball, the referee would penalise the player in accordance with an incorrect changeover procedures, that is, a penalty ten metres forward of the mark for the changeover. - Rule 7.2

RULE 10 - THE TOUCH

- 1 General.** See Rule 1.25 - Definitions. Players of both defending and attacking teams are to use the minimum force necessary to effect touches.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non offending team and, as a minimum, a warning to the offending player.

- 2 Ball knocked from Hands.** If the ball is knocked from the hands of a player in possession during a touch, the touch counts and the player retains possession, and they are required to perform the Rollball. The touch count continues, unless it is the sixth (6th) touch.
- 3 Actions Following Touch.** After a touch has been effected, the player in possession is required to stop, return to the mark where the touch occurred if the mark has been over-run, and perform a Rollball without delay.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark.

- 4 Passing after Touch.** A player is not to pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a touch has been effected.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark where the touch occurred.

- 5 Claimed Touch.** A player must not claim or otherwise call for a touch unless a touch has actually been effected.

RULING - If an advantage is apparent, the referee will indicate "play on", otherwise a penalty is awarded to the attacking team where the touch is claimed.

- 6 The Mark.** The mark for the Rollball is dependent on the position of the player in possession at the time of the touch.

- 7 Interference After Touch.** Following a touch, the ball is deemed to be dead and is brought into play at the Rollball when the half touches the ball or, if there is no half in position, when the ball leaves the hands of the attacking player performing the Rollball. See rule 9.4 and 9.5. Defending players are not to interfere with the player in possession or otherwise prevent the immediate Rollball, after a touch is made.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team five (5) metres forward of the mark for the Rollball.

- 8 Touched While Scoring.** On the rare occasion a player places the ball on the ground on or over the scoreline at the same time a touch is effected, the touch counts and a touchdown is not awarded.

- 9 Touch on Offside Defender.** Should a player in possession effect a touch on an offside defender who is making every effort to retire and remain out of play, the touch is to count. If the player in possession is the half, a change of possession results in accordance with rule 9.3.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. When effecting touches with the ball, attacking players are to ensure minimum force is used (See Rule 10.1).
- B. If a touch is effected on or over the scoreline before the ball is grounded, no touchdown results. The player in possession is to move from that point to a position five (5) metres from the scoreline to Rollball, provided it is not the sixth (6th) touch.
- C. If in doubt as to the location of the mark for the Rollball, the player in possession should check with the referee.
- D. Attacking players cannot delay the Rollball while awaiting for a half to be in position.
- E. Calling a touch prior to contact is subject to a penalty under Rule 10.5

- F. A player who is touched while in the act of passing should attempt to refrain from releasing the ball.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. More than the minimum physical force to effect a touch should be dealt with severely.
- B. A Player should be instructed to regather the ball if it is knocked or dropped to the ground during or following a touch. However, players who attempt to delay play by such deliberate acts are to be penalised under Rule 10.3 .
- C. If defending players effect a touch after an attacking player has delivered the ball, play continues and "play on" is called.
- D. Unless the referee is sure no contact is made, the referee should acknowledge all claimed touches and call back the player in possession for a Rollball. Should the referee observe a defending player claim a touch without contact and unless there is an advantage to the attacking team, a penalty and a warning are to be awarded under rule 10.5
- E. On the rare occasion that the referee is unable to distinguish between a pass before a touch and a pass after a touch and provided the ball does not go to ground, the touch counts as a "simultaneous touch". The ball is returned to the attacking player for a Rollball. If the ball goes to ground on such occasions, or if it is the sixth (6th) touch, a change of possession is the result.
- F. Mandatory penalties should not be awarded when players fail to feel slight touches. However, deliberate running on is to be penalised.
- G. Infringements against Rule 10.4 are to be penalised, even if it is the sixth (6th) touch.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 10

SITUATION 10:1

A defending player effects a touch on an attacking player. The defender retires directly towards the five (5) metre line with his/hers arms slightly apart or fully extended. The half runs towards the defender who is still offside and pushes him aside and runs on.

DECISION

The half effected a touch thus causing a change of possession - Rule 10.9. (Seealso13:2)

SITUATION 10:2

An attacking player effects a touch and quickly performs a Rollball. The defender attempts to retire but the half has scooped up the ball and passes it to another attacking player who touches the defender still retiring and still offside.

DECISION

Touch counts. Rollball unless sixth (6th) touch. - Rule 10.9.

SITUATION 10:3

What or where is the mark for the tap as a result of an infringement for interference after a touch?

DECISION

The tap is awarded to the attacking team along a line five (5) metres forward of the mark for the Rollball and nearest the infringement.

SITUATION 10:4

Player in possession is touched and whilst attempting to Rollball, drops the ball. What happens ?

DECISION

The referee would ask the player to Rollball, touch count continues (unless sixth). See Rule 10.7, RN B.

SITUATION 10:5

A defender in attempting to effect a touch dislodged the ball from the hand of the player in possession. What can the referee do ?

DECISION

Generally Rule 1.24 will apply, the touch will count and the attacking team will Rollball with NO change to the touch count. However the referee must consider Rule 10.1 to ensure minimum force was used in making the touch. (See also Rule 10 PN A and RN B).

SITUATION 10:6

In general play an attacking player becomes injured. Whilst play continues up field the injured player lies on the ground and is not replaced. A defender takes an intercept and heads towards the scoreline. The injured player jumps up and effects a touch on the player in possession. Would the touch be allowable ?

DECISION

Provided the now defending team has no more than six players on the field, the player can legitimately effect a touch.

SITUATION 10:7

In general play an attacking player becomes injured. Whilst play continues up field the injured player lies on the ground and is not replaced. A defender takes an intercept and heads towards the scoreline. The injured player lashes out with his foot and effects a touch on the player in possession. Would the touch be allowable?

DECISION

The touch conforms with the definition in the Rules Book, that is, contact being made between an attacking and defending player, however other Rules would apply where the touch with the foot may cause a penalty to result, the player being dismissed for a period of time or the whole game and/or a penalty touchdown. - See Rules 1, 10

SITUATION 10:8

Near the scoreline the referee calls a defender offside. In an attempt to retire to the scoreline the defender falls over. The player in possession jumps the defender and places the ball over the scoreline claiming a touchdown. However as he places the ball on the ground the player stands on the hand of the defender lying on the ground. Is the touchdown awarded?

DECISION

When a player places the ball on the ground on or over the scoreline at the same time a touch is effected, (and the player in possession effected a touch), the touch counts and no touchdown is awarded (Rule 10.8). However, the referee had “warned” the offside player so the touch would not count and a touchdown would be awarded.

SITUATION 10:9

When the player in possession is effecting a rollball near the scoreline and is in the process of placing the ball on the ground, a touch is effected by the defender on the ball, pushing it out and in between the legs of the player in possession - the ball is quickly passed out to a supporting player who scores. Is there any allowance for an advantage here if the referee thinks that the push out of the ball, by the defender, was over-vigorous?

DECISION

There is no allowance for advantage to be played. A touch on the ball constitutes a touch and with that the ball must be played correctly. If the ball has been knocked down by the defender (purposely) a penalty should result. There can be no "play on" or advantage from this as the touch is made.

The referee however has the option of considering the action of the defender a “professional foul” near the scoreline and decide on a subsequent course of action against the defending player, including a penalty touchdown.

RULE 11 - BALL ON OR OVER SIDELINE/SCORELINE

- 1 On or Over Sideline.** The ball becomes dead when it or a player in possession touches or crosses the sideline and a change of possession results. However if a player in possession is touched prior to crossing the sideline, then the touch counts and play continues with a Rollball at the mark where the touch occurred.

RULING - The team NOT responsible for the ball touching or crossing the sideline restarts play with a Rollball five (5) metres infield from where the ball or the player in possession touched or crossed the sideline, or at the position of best advantage to the attacking team.

- 2 Touched over Attacking Scoreline.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched after crossing the attacking scoreline and prior to the scoring of a touchdown, the touch counts. Play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) metres infield from where the player in possession crossed the scoreline.

- 3 Ball on or behind Defending Scoreline.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched whilst on or behind their defending scoreline, the touch counts and play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) metres infield from where the player in possession was touched.
- 4 Actions Near Defending Scoreline.** An attacking team is not required to Rollball within five (5) metres of the defending scoreline. After each touch the player in possession may move forward to the five (5) metre broken line to Rollball.
- 5 Actions near Attacking Scoreline.** When a touch is effected within five (5) metres of the attacking scoreline, a player in possession may move directly behind the mark a distance of up to five (5) metres to the broken line to restart play with a Rollball.
- 6 Actions further than Five (5) Metres from Defending Scoreline.** When defending players are required to defend further than five (5) metres from their defending scoreline, they must move forward beyond the five (5) metre broken line and continue to move forward in an attempt to effect a touch on the player in possession.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. When moving forward or backward from the mark in accordance with Rules 11.4 and/or 11.5, players should indicate to the referee that such options have been chosen and thus avoid confusion. Defending players must remain five (5) metres from the Rollball.
- B. When moving forward or backward in accordance with Rules 11.4 and/or 11.5, the player in possession should avoid contact with defending players and should not move sideways from the mark.
- C. When the player in possession is further than five (5) metres from the scoreline and the defending team is defending on or within five metres (5) of their defending scoreline, the defending team must move forward in an attempt to effect a touch. This means the whole team must move out to beyond the five (5) metre line and can only return to the scoreline once a touch is effected. They may however move back beyond the five metre broken line to realign for the next defensive move once a touch is about to be effected by either the attacking or defending player.
- D. When a player in possession is on or within five (5) metres of their attacking scoreline, the defending team are permitted to remain on, and defend their scoreline.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Players who are onside at their defending scoreline may lean over the scoreline to touch an attacking player, and remain onside provided both feet remain on or

behind the scoreline and contact with the ground is not made with the hands inside the field of play.

- B Before a penalty is awarded in accordance with Rule 11.6, the referee must warn the defending team to move forward in an attempt to effect a touch. If the defending team does not move forward in accordance with the referee's direction a penalty will result.
- C. If the same situation arises again after a tap from a penalty has been taken, (that is, within the attacking team's following six possessions), and the defending team still refuses to move forward to effect a touch, another penalty is awarded to the attacking team. In addition the referee will instruct the captain of the defending team to remove one (1) player from the field. The player is to return to the interchange area.

That player (or a substitute) cannot be replaced until the defending team gains possession. On each occasion before awarding a penalty the referee must have warned the defending team to move forward of the five (5) metre broken line, to effect a touch.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 11

SITUATION 11:1

A player in possession performs a Rollball near the scoreline. An onside defending player leans over and touches the half before the ball is cleared.

DECISION

Half caught in possession. - Rules 9.3 and 11.5.

SITUATION 11:2

A player in possession puts a foot on the sideline whilst running downfield.

DECISION

Player is in touch. Change of possession five (5) metres infield from where their foot touched the sideline. - Rule 11.1

SITUATION 11:3

A defender with one foot on the sideline effects a touch on an attacking player.

DECISION

Touch Counts. No change of possession for the attacking player coming into contact with someone outside the field of play. - Rule 11.1.

SITUATION 11:4

In Rule 11 PN A it states " when moving forward or backwards from the mark in accordance with Rules 11.4 or 11.5 players should indicate to the referee that such options have been chosen " Does the referee penalise the player if he is not notified?

DECISION

No. The Player Note says that the player SHOULD indicate to the referee, there is no compulsion that he does this. So in fact, the referee cannot take any action, it is expected the referee knows the player is allowed to take this step.

SITUATION 11:5

A defender intercepts a pass, thrown by the half, behind their own scoreline and is touched before they can run it back into the field of play. Where is the mark for the Rollball ?

DECISION

The mark is on the five metre line from the scoreline, directly opposite where the touch was effected.

SITUATION 11:6

If a Rollball occurs more than 10 metres from the scoreline, and the defensive line is set more than 5 metres from the scoreline (say six metres), are the defenders are entitled to use freeze defence at this point in the game.

DECISION

Yes the defenders are entitled to use freeze defence at this point in the game provided no defensive players has held a defensive position on the five metre line or between the five metre line and scoreline.

SITUATION 11:7

If Rollball occurs on the 10 metres or within 10 metres of the scoreline, and the defensive line is set on the 5 metres (or anywhere between the scoreline and the 5 metres broken line), must the whole team must move forward and attempt to effect a touch.

DECISION

Yes the WHOLE team must move forward and attempt to effect a touch as the Rule comes into effect when any defender holds a position on the five metre line or between the five metre line and scoreline.

SITUATION 11:8

The Rollball occurs more than 10 metres from the scoreline, however a defender holds a position on the 5 metre broken line (or enters the area between the 5 metre line and the scoreline), is the whole team is deemed to be involved in the Mexican Standoff.

DECISION

Yes the WHOLE team must then move forward in an attempt to effect a touch as any ONE defender can initiate the “no freeze” defence pattern.

SITUATION 11:9

If a penalty is awarded to the attacking team which forces the defensive line to be set on or within the 5 metres line and scoreline, and the attacking team moves the mark up to 10 metres directly behind the original mark does the defending team still have to move forward in an attempt to effect touch after the ball is tapped, even though the ball is bought into play more than 10 metres from the scoreline.

DECISION

Yes the fact that the new mark is further than 10 metres from the scoreline is irrelevant as the original mark has set the point where the defending team must remain until the ball is brought into play.

SITUATION 11:10

When can a team employ “freeze defence” tactics and do not have to come out to attempt to effect a touch.

DECISION

The defending team can freeze their defence on the scoreline ANY time the player in possession is within the area between, (not on), the 5 metres broken line, and the scoreline.

SITUATION 11:11

What happens when a defender, engaged in moving forward in an attempt to effect a touch, jumps backwards to “milk” a penalty when the attacking player dumps thus effecting a voluntary Rollball.

DECISION

A defending player, once engaged in the “no freeze” situation, will be penalised if they back away from a touch whilst trying to “milk a penalty for a voluntary Rollball.

SITUATION 11:12

At what speed must a defender move forward once the Mexican Standoff Rule comes into effect, and can the referee penalise a player for not moving forward fast enough, or direct a player to move out faster.

DECISION

Speed is defined as moving forward (even at snails pace) and ONLY when the defender is standing stationary, and has been warned, can the referee award a penalty. Referees cannot determine a player is moving out too slow and direct them to move faster.

RULE 12 - BALL TOUCHED IN FLIGHT

- 1 Intentional Contact by Defender.** If the ball goes to ground following a defender's attempt to gain possession, the attacking team retains the ball and the touch count restarts. This also applies if the defending player deliberately knocks the ball to the ground. The mark where the Rollball occurs is where the ball first pitches or where the defender touched the ball, whichever is of best advantage to the attacking team.
- 2 Intentional Contact but not to Ground.** If a defending player touches the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play continues and the touch count restarts at the next touch.
- 3 Intentional Contact and Touched again by Attacker.** If an attacking player attempts to gather the ball after a deflection by a defender and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession and the touch count restarts as per Rule 12.1. (See Referee Note A below).

- 4 Rebound and Ball to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball goes to ground, a change of possession results and the play restarts with a Rollball where the ball first pitches or where the ball rebounded from the defender, whichever is of best advantage to the team gaining possession.
- 5 Rebounds but not to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball is regained by an attacking player, play on and the touch count continues.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. If an attacking player considers a deflection from a defending player is difficult to retrieve, the player may either let the ball go to ground and receive six (6) more touches at the mark of best advantage, or the player may attempt to retrieve the ball, and even if the ball then goes to ground receive six (6) more touches at the mark of best advantage.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. In the case of Rule 12.3 above, the referee is to decide whether the deflection by the defending player was the cause of the ball to ground.
- B. If a ball deflected from a defending player travels in a forward direction and is then retrieved by a player of the attacking team, play should continue and Rule 12.2 applies.
- C. Unintentional contact by a defending player includes contact on the arms and hands providing an attempt is not made to secure possession.
- D. If the ball is passed forward and then deflected or played at by a defending player back to the attacking team or to ground, Rule 8.2 (Forward Pass) applies, with a penalty to the defending team.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 12

SITUATION 12:1

An attacking player juggles the ball. The ball touches a defender whilst the ball is out of the hands of the attacking player. The same attacking player subsequently catches the ball. Has a touch been effected?

DECISION

A touch has not been effected as the defender was not playing at the ball - Rule 12.5. However had the defender been playing at the ball then a touch would have been effected

SITUATION 12:2

The half crosses the attacking scoreline and passes the ball backwards to a team mate. The ball is deflected by a defender and rebounds to the half who places the ball on the ground claiming a touchdown.

DECISION

Touchdown is awarded. Once having passed the ball, the half becomes just another attacking player. - Rule 12.2. – See Situation 9:15 and 9:16

RULE 13 - OFFSIDE

- 1 Attacking Team.** A player in the attacking team is offside when that player is forward of the player who has possession or who last had possession. In general play, offside attacking players who interfere with play should be penalised.
- 2 Attacking Player Offside at Tap.** Attacking players are to remain onside at a tap until the ball has been tapped.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark (See Rules 6.2 and 15.4).

- 3 Defending Team.** A player of the defending team is offside when the following rules are infringed:
 - (a) Rule 6.4 - at the commencement and recommencement of play.
 - (b) Rule 9.4 - at the Rollball.
 - (c) Rule 15.5 - at the tap for a penalty.
 - (d) Rule 9 - Referee Note D - offside at a quick Rollball or tap.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team in accordance with the above rules.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Attacking players who are offside are non-effective and should return to an onside position as soon as possible.
- B. Offside defending players must at all times make an effort to retire to an onside position.
- C. A defending player must have both feet on or behind the defending scoreline to be onside when a Rollball occurs within five (5) metres, or a tap from a penalty within ten (10) metres of that player's defending scoreline.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees should note Rule 10.9 and notes on Rule 9.
- B. Defending players who are retiring should not normally be penalised while taking no active part in the match.
- C. Refer to notes of Rule 15 for consecutive penalties.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 13

SITUATION 13:1

A support player overruns the player in possession and crosses the scoreline. The player with the ball rolls it quickly and the half crosses the scoreline and delivers a correct pass to the attacking player who originally overran the ball but had failed to return to an onside position (either by virtue of the speed of the game or otherwise). This player grounds the ball claiming a touchdown.

DECISION

Touchdown would be awarded as the half placed the offside player onside.

SITUATION 13:2

A defending player who is retiring extends his arms either by stretching them outwards or upwards. Is such action against the Rules?

DECISION

The action constitutes passive obstruction and would be subject to warning or penalty, but **ONLY** if an attacking player were impeded before the defender reaches an onside position.

SITUATION 13:3

Defending players on the scoreline all have their arms out extended. Is such action against the Rules?

DECISION

If a player not in possession of the ball is impeded by the extended arms etc. then there is a possibility the support players is being obstructed and the referee will take appropriate action..

RULE 14 - OBSTRUCTION

- 1 Attacking Team.** Players of the attacking team are not to obstruct defending players from attempting to effect a touch. A player in possession must not run or otherwise move behind the referee or other players in the attacking team in an attempt to avoid a touch.

Obstruction here is defined as a deliberate attempt by an attacking player to gain an unfair advantage by preventing a defending player from effecting a touch.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark where the infringement occurred.

- 2 Defending Team.** Players in the defending team are not to obstruct or otherwise interfere with the attacking players supporting the player in possession.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark of the infringement providing the stoppage is not to the disadvantage of the attacking team.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. A player supporting the player in possession is entitled to run as necessary to obtain the best supporting position. However, in moving to a supporting position, attacking players must not deliberately interfere with defending players.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees should note any changes in the line of support adopted by attacking players. If the player in possession notices an obstruction by a team mate, the player may stop and wait to be touched without being penalised.
- B. Accepted sub-unit skills such as wraps or run-arounds do not constitute an obstruction.
- C. If a player in possession or a defender runs into the referee or the referee runs into either of the players, "play on" should result if there is no advantage either way. However, if the incident has an effect on the proceedings, a Rollball should be called with no effect to the touch count.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 14

SITUATION 14:1

An attacking player runs behind one of their team mates and impedes a defender. He/She realises the error and immediately stops to allow a defender to effect a touch on him/her.

DECISION

Touch counts. No obstruction no team has gained an unfair advantage.

SITUATION 14:2

A defending player after effecting a touch, attempts to retire, but has the player in possession run at him along the same retiring path, hoping to solicit a penalty for offside, or gain an advantage by having the referee call "play on". Is the defender entitled to retire in any direction from the Rollball area ?

DECISION

A defender can retire in any direction after effecting a touch, but once they change their line of direction, whether they interfere passively or not, they are still subject to a penalty if they are within the area between the Rollball and the five metre line.

SITUATION 14:3

A defending player, attempting to retire, without interfering in the play, has the player in possession running at him and is penalised for not retiring quickly enough. Is such a decision correct ?

DECISION

Each such circumstance is different depending on the perception of the referee as to the defender's intentions and actions. A defender should not be penalised for not retiring at a fast speed, however they must retire immediately, not change their line of direction until they have reached the five metre mark, and passive or any other interference is subject to a penalty.

SITUATION 14:4

A player takes a quick tap following the awarding of the penalty and the indication by the referee of the mark. An offside defending player, with their back to the player in possession, obstructs an onside defender from getting to the ball carrier to effect a touch. The defender appeals to the referee that the attacking player used the offside defender as an obstruction.

DECISION

According to paragraph one of Rule 14.1 the attacking player can only be penalised for obstruction if another team mate from the attacking team aids in preventing the player in possession from being touched. Paragraph two of Rule 14.1 must only be read in conjunction with paragraph one, which specifically refers to attacking team players.

Offside defenders should never be penalised if they have their backs turned to the team in possession, provided they are physically retiring. As to the onside defender who claimed the obstruction, the referee would simply call “play on”.

SITUATION 14:5

The player in possession uses an offside retiring defender as a “shield” preventing him from being touched by another defending player. Is such action deemed to be an obstruction ?

DECISION

The referee cannot interpret this action as an obstruction, as only an attacking player can obstruct the player in possession.

N.B. If such actions were allowed, the defending team would constantly claim obstruction and consequently receive possession as the result of the deliberate action by one of their offside players.

RULE 15 - PENALTY.

- 1 General.** A penalty is to be awarded for an infringement by any player in accordance with the rules contained herein.
- 2 Location of the tap for a Penalty .** The mark for a penalty is normally at the location of the infringement unless otherwise detailed in specific rules. For infringements which occur on the boundaries, within five (5) metres of the defending scoreline or outside the field of play, the location of a tap from a penalty is to be five (5) metres infield (or on the five metre line) from where the infringement occurred.
- 3 Method.** A method of taking the tap from a penalty is detailed in Rule 6.3. The ball does not have to be lifted from the ground for the tap. However, the ball must be at or behind the correct mark prior to the tap being taken. (See Rule 6; Player Note C).

RULING - A change of possession at the mark.

4 Attacking Team. Players of the attacking team are to be onside at the tap.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark.

5 Defending Team. Players of the defending team are to be onside at the tap as detailed in Rule 6.4.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line ten (10) metres directly forward of the original mark and nearest the infringement.

6 Penalty Touchdown. A penalty touchdown will be awarded if any action by a player or spectator deemed by the referee to be contrary to the rules or spirit of the game, prevented the attacking team from scoring a touchdown.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. The player who is to take the tap is required to wait until the referee indicates the location of the mark before the tap can be taken. However a player may take a quick tap providing the referee acknowledges such a request and providing the tap is taken at or behind the correct mark.
- B. For any tap, players may take the ball directly behind the mark up to a maximum of ten (10) metres.
- C. If a player chooses to Rollball in lieu of a tap, the player who receives the ball is not deemed to be a half.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. To allow the full advantage of a penalty to be realised there is to be minimum delay between awarding a penalty and the indication of the appropriate mark.
- B. A player may take the ball back behind the mark up to a maximum distance of ten (10) metres behind the mark for a tap to allow room to execute a move. In such cases the defending players must remain not closer than ten (10) metres from the mark or at the scoreline, whichever is the closest.
- C. If an attacking player effects a touch on an offside defending player (usually following a quick tap) in an attempt to gain a further penalty, the referee may call "play on" depending on the actions of the defending player, but only provided the offside player or team has been warned.
- D. If an offside defending player (whether that player is retiring or not) attempts to obstruct or effect a touch on an attacking player following a quick tap, the referee should play the advantage and allow play to continue or award a penalty, whichever is whichever is of greater advantage to the attacking team.
- E. To ensure control is maintained during a sequence of quick taps, the referee is to ensure that the location of the mark is correctly indicated.

- F. With regard to awarding a penalty touchdown, a referee is to be sure that a touchdown would have occurred had it not been for the illegal action of the player or spectator concerned.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 15

SITUATION 15:1

An attacking player in attempting a cut out pass causes the ball to go to ground in a forward direction. A defending player quickly taps the ball where it landed and plays on.

DECISION

- (a) The referee would award the penalty, indicate the mark and recall the player in possession to tap the ball on the correct mark. (i.e. from where the ball was thrown).
- (b) If the referee had awarded the penalty and indicated the mark, there would be a change of possession for the tap being taken on the incorrect mark. Rule 8.2. Rule 15.2; Player Note A.

SITUATION 15:2

A player in possession passes the ball after being touched and it goes to ground behind another attacking player. An opponent quickly gathers the ball and taps from the mark where the ball landed.

DECISION

- (a) The referee would award a penalty, indicate the mark and recall the player in possession to tap the ball on the correct mark.
- (b) If the referee had awarded the penalty and indicated the mark, there would be a change of possession for the tap being taken on the incorrect mark. Rule 10.4. Rule 15.2; Player Note A.

SITUATION 15:3

A player taking a penalty tap rolls the ball as for a Rollball and touches it with their foot. The receiver of the ball runs and is touched.

DECISION

Touch counts. The receiver is not the half, even if the ball was not played with the foot

SITUATION 15:4

Attacking player taking a tap balks (i.e. goes to take the tap but hesitates) in an attempt to induce defending players to move forward before he actually taps the ball. What should the referee do ?

DECISION

Such action is not against the 'spirit of the game' and is allowed. The referee however, would instruct the player to tap the ball and refusal after the instruction may result in a change of possession.

SITUATION 15:5

An attacking player receives a penalty two metres from their attacking scoreline. Can the player with the ball take a quick tap at the mark or does the ball have to be returned to the five metre line ?

DECISION

Once the referee indicates the mark, the ball may be tapped. It doesn't have to be taken out to the five metre line. However, if the referee indicates the mark is on the scoreline (where it should be if the penalty is for offside) the mark is then on the boundaries of the field, and the ball is required to be taken back to the five metre line. - See Rule 15.2 and Rule 11 PN C

SITUATION 15:6

A penalty is awarded to the attacking team half a metre from the teams attacking scoreline, (a defender effected a touch with more than a minimum of force). The player taking the penalty, taps the ball forward and when the ball reaches the scoreline the player's hand is placed on the ball and a touchdown is claimed. Provided the player was not touched is the touchdown legal ?

DECISION

Firstly, the mark for the penalty is dependent on the position of the player in possession at the time of the hard touch, i.e. half a metre from the attacking scoreline. There are no other Rules that requires the mark to be moved back to the five metre line in these circumstances, so the tap was taken on the correct mark. - See Rule 15.2

Secondly, the tap may be taken in any direction and provided it does not travel more than one (1) metre, in this instance only half a metre, the taking of the tap does not infringe any Rules. - See Rule 6.3

Thirdly, the ball only needs to be placed on the ground ON or over the scoreline for a touchdown to be awarded. The ball does not have to be carried to, or over, the scoreline. - See Rule 4.5. Such an action would constitute a fair touchdown.

SITUATION 15:7

A penalty is awarded to the defending team half a metre from their attacking scoreline, (a player throws a forward pass only half a metre from their scoreline). The attacking player taking the penalty, taps the ball forward and when the ball reaches the scoreline the player's hand is placed on the ball and a touchdown is claimed. Between tapping the ball and placing the hand on it when it reaches the scoreline the player is touch. Would a touchdown be awarded.

DECISION

The player taking the penalty is technically in possession once the ball is tapped and as such a touch would have been effected on the player prior to placing the hand on the ball on the scoreline. Thus a touchdown would not be allowed.

SITUATION 15:8

An offside defending player, near the scoreline, is called out of play by the referee. The line is wide open and the defender noticing this knocks the ball out of the attackers hands whilst still in an offside position. What action should the referee take?

DECISION

The referee could penalise the defending player and/or send them off, but since the player was warned they were offside and the scoreline was wide open the better option would be to award a penalty touchdown and then consider further action against the offending player - See Rule 15.6

SITUATION 15:9

What happens when a team takes a quick tap before the referee indicates the mark ?

DECISION

A good referee will consider only two options: - Did the tap occur on or behind the mark? If - YES - Play on; if - NO - Change of possession.

N.B. Pedantic insistence by referees to wait until they are ready is a blight on the game and should be outlawed by Referees Directors. The same can be said for decision to being it back and restart the tap on the “next blade of grass”. Such actions are not in accordance with the rules as an incorrect tap - not on the mark - is a change of possession. See Rule 15.3

RULE 16 - ADVANTAGE

- 1 The principle of advantage to the non-offending team is to apply at all times, providing some advantage is readily obvious. Once a team is given the advantage that team does not necessarily forfeit the right to other action as described in these rules.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Players should at all times play in accordance with the rules of Touch and allow the referee to interpret the advantage.
- B. Players who use unnecessary force or whose actions unfairly prevent any other player from gaining an advantage will be liable to penalty.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 16

SITUATION 16:1

A referee awards a touchdown. Lines-person reports a player from the team who was just scored against. The referee exercises discretion re disciplinary matters and sends the reported player off for a period of time. How is the match restarted?

DECISION

Because the touchdown was awarded (and the player sent off) the game is recommenced with a tap to the team who was scored against at the centre of the halfway mark.

SITUATION 16:2

If the referee warns the defending team they are offside, what guide can be used to determine if advantage is gained?

DECISION

It can be generally accepted that the advantage has been gained once the attacking team has passed the five (5) metres defensive line (for the Rollball) or the ten (10) metres line for the tap.

SITUATION 16:3

If the advantage is lost (say dropped ball, forward pass) after the attacking team has crossed the relevant advantage line can the referee go back and penalise the offending player?

DECISION

No! Once the advantage line has been reached the referee must allow play to continue.

RULE 17 - DISCIPLINE AND PLAYER MISCONDUCT

- 1 General.** Players who infringe the Rules of Touch are liable to penalty or other appropriate action according to the seriousness of the infringement. Penalties are to be awarded in accordance with applicable rules.
- 2 Frequent Infringements.** A Player who continually breaches the playing rules is liable for dismissal. Team captains are responsible for the conduct of players in their respective teams and should be aware that undisciplined players are disruptive to the spirit of the game.
- 3 Dismissals.** Any player may be dismissed as follows:
 - (a) **Period of Time.** A player dismissed for repeated infringements or any offence requiring more than a penalty is to move from the field of play and remain in a position midway along the team's attacking scoreline and no closer than five (5) metres to the scoreline. The dismissed player cannot be replaced.
 - (b) **Remainder of match.** A player dismissed after any previous 'Period of Time' dismissal, or for an offence such as gross misconduct or a dangerous act is to take no further part in that match and is to move to and remain not closer than ten (10) metres from the scoreline. The dismissed player cannot be replaced and that player shall receive an automatic two (2) match suspension and may incur further penalty as deemed necessary by the federation of International Touch Judiciary Committee.
- 4 Striking Officials.** Any player who is found guilty of striking and/or assaulting an official, referee or line judge is liable to disqualification from playing the game of Touch for life.
- 5 Disciplinary Reports.** Officials are required to submit dismissal reports or any other reports required in accordance with the governing regulations of Federation of International Touch.

- 6 Misconduct.** Players guilty of misconduct will be penalised and could be excluded from the match. Misconduct includes:
- Continual breaches of the rules;
 - Swearing;
 - Back chatting referees or other match officials;
 - Bad sporting behaviour;
 - Fighting;
 - Using physical force in making a touch;
 - Attacking the head of an opponent;
 - Tripping;
 - Any other action which is not in the spirit of the game.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. A player sent from the field for a period for time is to remain at the midpoint of the attacking scoreline until recalled by the referee. Such a player is allowed to join his team mates at halftime.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. The referee is the sole judge of time in relation to dismissed players.
- B. A referee is required to advise the team captain as to the reason for a player's dismissal.
- C. Referees must submit a written report on players sent from the field for the remainder of the match.
- D. Referees may suggest to captains to replace infringing players for the remainder of the match otherwise the player may be sent off and suspended and the team reduced in playing numbers.

ADMINISTRATOR NOTES

- A. Besides the constitutional authority empowered to the Federation of International Touch these rules also provides for:-
- i) Powers for the General Committee and/or Executive Committee to make appropriate by-laws or regulations.
 - ii) Power to inquire into and deal with any act.
 - iii) Powers to be given to a Judiciary.
 - iv) Power to alter Tournament Rules for the benefit of the Sport and/or the safety of the participants.
- B. Coaches and officials deemed guilty of misconduct will be reported to the appropriate officials and be liable to disciplinary action.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 17

SITUATION 17:1

In Rule 17.3 (b), what is the definition of a two (2) match suspension from all matches conducted by any Touch Association?

DECISION

Two (2) matches refers to the period of time it takes for two matches to be completed by the team in the division from which the player was suspended. A bye does not count as a match completed.

The balance of the statement refers to the player being ineligible to play in ANY competition in ANY Affiliate or competition under the auspices of the Australian Touch Association.

SITUATION 17:2

A player plays men's open on Monday night, mixed open on Tuesday night and over 30's on Wednesday night. He is sent from the field of play for the remainder of the game on Monday night and incurs a two match suspension. His men's team has a bye next week. When he can resume playing?

DECISION

He is suspended from the other games in week 1, ALL the games in weeks 2 and 3 and the men's open game only in week 4. Two weeks is the period of time it usually takes for the team the player was suspended from, to play two games. If a team fails to qualify for the semi-finals and the player is suspended during the last game of the competition, that player is eligible to play after the second game (i.e., the final or grand final) as if that team had won both the semi and the following game.

SITUATION 17:3

Can a player appeal against an automatic two match suspension?

DECISION

Yes. Unless an Association's constitution specifically denies it, a player may appeal to the Executive of an Association against an automatic two match suspension.

SITUATION 17:4

An interceptor proceeds downfield, remains in the field of play one metre from the scoreline, turns around to face the defenders, and waits for a defender to come near then places the ball on or over the scoreline. Is this misconduct?

DECISION

No - Allow Touchdown.

SITUATION 17:5

A defending player calls for the ball and the attacking player instinctively passes to the player. What action can the referee take ?

DECISION

Such a situation is not gamesmanship but misconduct (against the spirit of the game) and subject to penalty or other action. See Rule 17.6.

SITUATION 17:6

The attacking team throws a big pass which 'accidentally on purpose goes well out over the sideline after the fifth touch has been made, as a ploy to slow down the changeover procedure. What can the referee do ?

DECISION

Until the sixth touch is made or the ball goes to ground, there is no change over procedure that can come into effect, therefore the rules governing it cannot apply. If the referee sees this trend in the game he could warn the offending team that it is considered misconduct and therefore subject to penalty or other action .- See Rule 17.6

SITUATION 17:7

A player is sent from the field for a period of time. Whilst standing behind the teams attacking scoreline the player is yelling encouragement and/or coaching hints to his players. Is such action allowed ?

DECISION

Provided there is no interference with the opposition team, the player is allowed to encourage / coach his team mates from his position. The fact he is suspended from the field and is not allowed to be involved in the game, (as opposed to being dismissed for the whole game), is sufficient penalty. - See Rule 17 PN A

RULE 18 - THE REFEREE, LINE JUDGES AND TOUCHDOWN ZONE OFFICIALS

- 1 Manner of Appointment.** The appointment of all referees, line judges or touchdown zone officials for all International matches sanctioned by the Federation will be made by the Executive of the Federation upon advice from the Technical Panel.
- 2 The Referee.** The referee is the sole judge on matters of fact and is required to adjudicate on the rules of the game during play. The referee may impose any sanction necessary to control the match and in particular, award penalties for infringements against the rules.
- 3 Authority of Referee.** Players, coaches and officials of both teams are under the control of the officiating referees.
- 4 Area of Control.** The playing area under the control of the referee extends from the boundaries of the field of play, to an area which covers substitute players and officials involved in the particular match.

- 5 Line Judges Touchdown Zone Officials.** Line Judges and Touchdown Zone Officials should be appointed to assist the referee with tasks associated with sidelines scorelines and touchdown zone lines, and other matters at the discretion of the referee. Their normal duties include, indicating the ten (10) metres distance for taps from a penalty, controlling substitutions, matters of backplay and other advice when sought by the central referee.

PLAYER NOTES

- A. Team captains may respectfully inquire of the referee, matters of varying interpretation or causes of penalties. Any discussion is to be brief and polite and must not delay play. Other team members should not talk to the referee.

REFEREE NOTES

- A. Referees must familiarise themselves with grounds, markings and officials prior to the commencement of matches.
- B. Referees may consult with line judges and/or touchdown zone officials prior to making decisions.

Explanation and Interpretations - Rule 18

SITUATION 18:1

A penalty is awarded and the coach (and/or player or other team official on the sideline) shouts abuse and/or other profanities at the referee. What options does the referee have.

DECISION

The referee would award another penalty ten (10) metres forward of the original mark and may:-

- a) halt the game and warn the offender
- b) halt the game and send the offender outside the boundary of the playing area
- c) dismiss a player from the field in lieu of the offender for a period of time or for the whole game.
- d) Any or all combinations of the above.
- e) Report the offending player/official to the organising committee.

SITUATION 18:2

The referee awards a touchdown or penalty and realises they have made an error. Can the referee reverse his decision and disallow the touchdown or penalty ?

DECISION

The referee can change their minds if they realise they have ruled incorrectly and in fact, in the interest of fair play to both teams, they should reverse an incorrect decision. The Rules Book has no exclusions preventing the referee from changing their minds. See Rules 18.1. It is noted that once full time has been signalled by the referee any reversal of decisions is an Administration matter for the controlling Association.

SITUATION 18:3

There is an injured player on the field and the referee notices this but the play moves away from the area where the injured player is lying so play is allowed to continue. The game has only several minutes to go with one team leading 3-2. On a change of possession the leading team deliberately runs the ball into the area where the injured player is lying on the ground. It is critical for the losing side to score as a draw will allow them into the finals. What should the referee do ?

DECISION

The prime responsibility of the referee is the safety of the players and if the play could not be moved forward of the injured player the referee would have to stop the game. Any protests from the losing team is a matter for the Association's Administration not the referee.

SITUATION 18:4

The referee sends a player off with only two minutes remaining in a game. When the siren sounds the referee blows full time without recalling the player to the field of play. Next week the same teams meet in the Semi Finals and one team refuses to take the field in protest that the player that was sent off, should not be playing as he should be automatically suspended for two weeks.

DECISION

At all times the referee is the sole judge of matters of fact. In any situation where the action of the referee has prejudiced a player, the intent of the referee at the time of making the decision must always be taken into consideration. In this case if the referee intended the player be dismissed for a period of time, then the player is allowed to participate in the semi final. If the intent at the time of the dismissal was to remove the player for the remainder of the game, then the player incurs a two weeks automatic suspension. See Rule 18.1 and 18.2

SITUATION 18:5

The referee awards a touchdown and is not advised by his line referees of any infringement. The game continues and at half time the team scored against protests that the touchdown was scored by the half. This is confirmed by the line referees who did not (for whatever reason) bring this to the centre referee's attention at the time.

In line with decision at 18:2 can the referee change his mind.

DECISION

No – once the game has been restarted the option for the referee to change his mind is no longer available. This would also apply if half or full time was signalled just after the event and before the game could be restarted

