



To: All Rugby Stakeholders

From: Tyler Coad

Date: March 17, 2014

Subject: Safety Related Laws/Equipment

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Please be advised of updated protocols surrounding the scrum and acceptable player equipment.

Scrum: The International Rugby Board (herein referred to as IRB) has recently changed the scrum laws to create a safer scrummaging environment for all players. The cadence has once again been changed to “Crouch-Bind-Set”. It is important that scrummaging is instructed safely and effectively at each level. Resultantly, the IRB has released a training module for safe scrummaging. Please [click here](#) for more information on the new scrum cadence.

As an addition to this, the IRB has also released a directive that referees may now indicate that the ball can be introduced using non-verbal communication. Follow [this link](#) for the IRB Clarification. While the IRB memo does not indicate how this will be communicated, we have seen that the top-level referees have adopted a system whereby they tap the scrumhalf on the shoulder or back. It is Rugby Canada/Rugby Ontario’s position that referees **should not** touch players, at any level. As such, Rugby Canada is implementing the following protocol for referees to follow:

- 1) When on the non-put in side of the scrum, referees are to initiate eye contact and point to the scrum half as an indication to put the ball in the scrum.
- 2) When on the put-in side of the scrum, referees are to initiate eye contact and point towards the tunnel as an indication to put the ball in the scrum.

Additionally, referees may also continue to use “Yes 9” to introduce the ball to the scrum, dependent on the needs of the athletes in the game. Rugby Ontario *recommends* adopting the non-verbal introduction, although this may not be feasible/ideal for all levels of athletes. Also be reminded that **current scrum laws are to be enforced strictly**.



**Goggles:** The IRB has recently also announced the trial of a corrective eyewear alternative, previously unavailable for participants. Athletes looking for more information on the eyewear should follow [this link](#) for more information. It is important to note that these are not intended to be purchased as eye protection, but are designed to serve as corrective vision alternatives for athletes who require them. Athletes interested in the trial will need to demonstrate the need for these goggles.

**Boots:** A reminder to all participants that as of last year, boots with a toe stud are now legal under a current IRB trial provided the studs meet the requirements in Law 4 and in Regulation 12. Please follow [this link](#) for more information.

It is recommended that all stakeholders (players, coaches, referees) take the free online IRB [RugbyReady](#) program annually, as this is the best resource for maintaining currency in safety and Law. Rugby Ready is available through the [IRB Passport](#), which offers a number of other safety, educational, development resources. Any coaches looking for education and development opportunities should contact Fran Mason at: [fmason@rugbyontario.com](mailto:fmason@rugbyontario.com).

Please direct any law, regulation, safety, IRB Passport, or refereeing related enquiries to Tyler Coad (info below).

Regards,  
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Memo Live links:

**Scrum Laws/safety:** <http://www.irblaws.com/index.php?domain=16>  
**Scrum Clarification:** <http://www.irb.com/newsmedia/mediazone/pressrelease/newsid=2069952.html#irb+further+empowers+referees+scrums>  
**Goggles Info:** <http://www.irbplayerwelfare.com/goggles>  
**Stud Pattern Law:** <http://www.irblaws.com/index.php?domain=11&amendment=20>  
**RugbyReady:** <http://www.irbrugbyready.com>  
**IRB Passport:** <http://www.irbpassport.com>