



IRFU Tag Rugby Laws 2019

Contents

Definitions	- 2 -
LAW 1: PLAYING THE GAME	- 7 -
LAW 2: PLAYERS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT.....	- 8 -
LAW 3: SCORING	- 10 -
LAW 4: DEFENCE	- 12 -
LAW 5: ATTACKING	- 14 -
LAW 6: KICKING LAWS	- 16 -
LAW 7: KNOCK-ON AND KNOCK-BACK.....	- 20 -
LAW 8: PENALTIES.....	- 21 -
LAW 9: DUTIES OF REFEREE	- 22 -
LAW 10: FOUL PLAY	- 22 -
Appendix.....	-25-

Definitions Section

Term	Definition
Advantage:	The law of advantage takes precedence over most other laws and its purpose is to make play more continuous with fewer stoppages for infringements. Players are encouraged to play to the whistle despite infringements by their opponents. When the result of an infringement by one team is that their opponents may gain an advantage, the referee does not whistle immediately for the infringement, the referee allows play to continue with the option to return to the original offence. The referee is the sole judge of whether or not a team has gained an advantage and has wide discretion when making decisions. When the referee is playing advantage he/she shall shout "advantage". When the referee determines that an advantage has been gained he/she shall shout "advantage over".
Attacker:	Is a player from the team in possession of the ball.
Attacking Team:	The team in possession of the ball.
Ball Carrier:	A player carrying/controlling the ball.
Ball Player:	Is the player who plays the ball, by kicking, passing or controlling it.
Captain:	The captain is a player nominated by the team. Only the captain is entitled to consult the referee during the match and is solely responsible for choosing options relating to the referee's decisions.
Changeover:	Is the surrendering of the ball to the opposing side.
Chip-Kick:	Chip-kicks are only allowed in the men's and veterans' games and must travel no more than fifteen (15) metres and no higher than five (5) metres above the opposing team player's head.
Contact:	Colliding with other players. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact unless law 4.8(A) applies.

Defender:	Is a player from the team not in possession of the ball.
Defending Team:	Is the team not in possession of the ball.
Defending/Offside Line:	It is a line parallel to the try line and is set a minimum distance of seven (7) metres from the roll ball. The distance is ten (10) metres in respect of Penalties, kick-offs, restart-kicks and drop-kicks. In open play there is no offside line.
Drop-Kick:	The ball is released from the hand and is kicked as it rebounds off the ground.
Drop out:	This is a drop kick that occurs at the center of the try line.
Field of Play:	Is the playing area between the touchline and the try lines and does not include the touchlines.
Forward Pass:	Is passing or throwing the ball forward towards the opposing teams try line.
Foul Play:	Is anything a person does within the playing enclosure that is against the letter and spirit of the Laws of the game. It includes, but is not limited to, obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, dangerous play and misconduct which are prejudicial to the game and shall be construed in accordance with law 10.
Golden Try:	<p>In the event of a playoff match being tied at the end of normal time the referee will allow play to continue for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Play does not stop nor do the teams change ends. The team that scores the next try will be declared the winner. If there is no try scored within the 5 minutes of additional time the following shall apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team that scored the most tries in regular time will be declared the winner. In this case all tries scored in regular time are worth 1 point. • If the teams are still tied on number of tries scored the team that scored the first try in regular time will be declared the winner.

- If neither team scored in regular time the team that ranked higher in the pool stages of the competition will be declared the winner.
- If the teams were ranked equally after the pool stages of the competition the winner will be decided by a coin toss. The coin toss will be conducted by the match referee.

Grubber-Kick:	Is a kick that is kicked into the ground and must not go above shoulder height.
In-Goal:	Is the area between the try line and the dead-ball line. In instances where there is no dead-ball line marked on the pitch the in-goal area is defined as the area between the tree line and the boundary of the playing field. In the interest of safety, the referee has discretion to declare the ball dead at any time in this area.
Kick:	A kick is made by hitting the ball with any part of the leg or foot, from the toe to the knee but not including the knee; a kick must move the ball a visible distance out of the hand, or along the ground. Stopping or attempting to stop a ball in motion is not considered a kick.
Kicking Team:	Is the team kicking the ball.
Kick-Off:	The kick-off occurs at the start of the match and the restart of the match after half time and shall be by way of a female kick from the ground in the center of the halfway line.
Kick-Off Point:	Is the position at the center of the half way line from which the kick-off shall occur.
Knock-On:	A knock-on occurs when a player loses possession of the ball and it goes forward, or when a player hits the ball forward with the hand or arm, and the ball touches the ground or another player before the original player can catch it. Forward means towards the opposing teams try line.

Knock Back:	Is to knock the ball back towards one's own try line with the hand or arm.
Late Tag:	If an attacker is tagged after passing or kicking the ball, the referee may call "Late Tag".
Mark:	A player, in Veterans all male league, must make a clean catch directly from an attacker's kick and at the same time shout "Mark". A mark cannot be made from a kick-off, or a restart kick.
Marker:	Is a defender who may stand at least one (1) meter directly in front of the player conducting the roll ball. He/she must stand in this position or seven (7) metres back in the defensive line. Anything in between is considered offside.
Obstruction:	Is the act of preventing an opponent from playing the game, by pushing, holding, blocking or crossing.
Offside Player:	Is a defender not back the required distance at any restart of the game which includes a roll ball and also an attacker who is in front of the player in possession of the ball from his own team. See section 4.
Pass:	A player throws the ball to another player or hands the ball to another player without throwing it.
Penalise:	Is to award a penalty against an offending player.
Penalty:	A penalty is awarded by a referee where provided in the laws and shall be taken by way of tap-kick from where the infringement occurs, unless otherwise provided in the laws.
Penalty Try:	If in the opinion of a referee a try would probably have been scored but for an infringement by an opponent, a penalty try may be awarded. A penalty try is worth 3 points in all matches.
Phantom Tag:	Defender calls 'Tag' without physically removing the tag.

Quick Tap	Is an option in the case where the ball has gone into touch or at a roll ball. If there is no player from the defending team present at the roll ball, there is an option of taking a tap kick to restart the game. The player taking the tap kick must touch the ball with his/her foot, in five metres from the touchline. Whether or not there is a defending player present to prevent a quick tap is at the discretion of the referee.
Restart-Kick:	Restart-kicks occur after a try is scored and shall be taken by the team who scored the try from the centre of the half wayline. The Kick a drop-kick by any player in Veterens all mens league, and in Mixed Social leagues by way of a female kick from the ground.
Roll Ball:	When the tagged player rolls the ball backwards with the hand or foot between his/her legs. The ball may roll a maximum of one (1) meter.
Scrum Half:	Is the player who takes up position immediately behind the ball player during the roll ball. A scrum-half may also be known as a dummy-half.
Sin-bin:	When a player has been shown a Yellow card, the payer will hand his/her tags to the referee and may not return or be substituted for four (4) minutes in a forty (40) minute game, where in other events it will be two (2) mins for fifteen (15) minute games.
Spinning:	A 360° spin is permitted in all leagues and levels. Any contact initiated in an attempted spin or swivel is liable to sanction. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact.

- Tap-Kick:** A deliberate touch of the ball with any part of the leg or foot up to the knee whilst in the hand or on the ground. The ball does not have to leave the hand. This occurs when a penalty is given or there is no marker present at the roll ball.
- Try:** When an attacker is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, a try is awarded.
- Tagging:** Is removing a tag from an attacker.
- Veteran:** Players participating in any designated veterans league must have reached the age of 33 by the commencement date of that league.

LAW 1: PLAYING THE GAME

- 11 The objective of the game is that two teams each consisting of seven players, observing fair play, adhering to the laws and sporting spirit of the game, should by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible, the team scoring the greater number of points being the winners of the match in question.

It is essential that players play the game in accordance with the laws of the game and are mindful of the safety of themselves and others. It is the responsibility of the captain to ensure compliance with the laws of the game and in accordance with safe practices.

- 12 A match shall last forty minutes have divided into two halves each of twenty minutes playing time.
- 13 The referee organizes the toss. The winner of the toss decides whether to kick-off or to choose an end. If the winner of the toss decides to choose an end, the opponents must kick-off and vice versa.
- 14 The field of play shall be a maximum of 70 metres long by 50 metres wide with an in-goal area of up to 5 metres.
- 15 A match is started by a kick-off. After the kick-off, any player who is not offside may take the ball and run with it. Any player may pass the ball or kick it. Any player may ground the ball in the in-goal. Whatever a player does must be in accordance with the laws of the game.
- 16 The Attacking Team has six (6) "tags" in which to score a try. A changeover occurs after the sixth tag.
- 17 The ball carrier may be tagged by defenders to prevent him/her from running with the ball or kicking or passing the ball to his/her team mates.
- 18 A player not in possession of the ball cannot be tagged or obstructed during the game. Sanction: Penalty.
- 19 The law of advantage takes precedence over most other laws and its purpose is to make play more continuous with fewer stoppages for infringements. Players are encouraged to play to the whistle despite infringements by their opponents. When the result of an infringement by one team is that their

opponents may gain an advantage, the referee does not whistle immediately for the infringement, the referee allows play to continue with the option to return to the original offence. The referee is the sole judge of whether or not a team has gained an advantage and has wide discretion when making decisions. When the referee is playing advantage he/she shall shout "*advantage*". When the referee determines that an advantage has been gained he/she shall shout "*advantage over*".

LAW 2: PLAYERS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT

2.1 A team must have no more than seven (7) players, with a minimum of 3 females on the field of play at any one time. There may be any number of authorized replacements and/or substitutes. The maximum number of players per squad for any given match is fifteen (15). Any players not playing in at least 3 matches prior to the play-offs/semi-finals/finals may not play in those play-offs/semi-finals/finals.

2.2 If a team that arrive at a venue with insufficient numbers, they may request, through the Venue Manager, a player from another team to make up the starting numbers only. Players that play with a second team must be registered with both teams by the end of the grading rounds.

A player may play for one or more teams on any given night but only in the following situations:

- (A) If a team did not have the full complement of players, a player may play with a second team to make up the correct starting numbers.
- (B) After the grading rounds, if a team did not have the full complement of players, a player may play for a second team in the same league, a league below or in the case of the beginner's league, the one league above.
- (C) If both captains agree, the game can be played with a greater number of male players. This law shall not apply in respect of play-offs, semi-finals or finals.
- (D) If the captains do not agree, the team not having the required number of players may start the match with the players they have available or notify the referee of the walkover.

In any case where a team does not have the required number of players to start the match (minimum of six (6) players) that team may forfeit the match. The result will be recorded as a ten (10) points to nil (0) victory for the opposition.

The Venue Manager has the final decision on any of the above situations & will decide using common sense on any complaints made. Teams may be subject to points deduction if Law is not upheld.

***The above laws may vary from Venue to Venue due to size, requirements & demands on venues. All teams, referees & volunteers will be given advanced notice of any changes, if any, to Laws 2.1 & 2.2.**

2.3 There will be no stoppage of play when replacements are made. The player being replaced must leave the field of play before the replacement player can participate in the game. All replacements during the game shall come into the field of play from the same side of the field of play.

2.4 If a player has an open or bleeding wound he/she must leave the playing area immediately. The player may not return until the bleeding has been controlled and the wound has been covered.

2.5 A player must not wear any item that is contaminated by blood. A player must not wear any item that is sharp or abrasive. A player must not wear any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted under this law. A player must not wear jewelry such as rings or earrings. A player must not wear spectacles but may wear sports goggles. A player must not wear any item that is normally permitted by law, but, in the referee's opinion that is liable to cause injury to a player. A player must not wear a single stud at the toe of the boot.

2.6 The referee should inspect players' equipment prior to the commencement of the game and if necessary the referee can prevent a player from participating in the game if he/she considers a player's equipment dangerous.

2.7 All players must wear approved tag shorts when participating in matches. If a player is not wearing approved tag shorts the player shall not be permitted play in the match.

2.8 The referee is the sole judge of fact in relation to the laws of the game and their enforcement. His/her decision is final.

LAW 3: SCORING

3.1 When an attacker is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, a try is scored.

- In the mixed games, a try scored by a female player shall be worth three (3) points and a try scored by a male player shall be worth one (1) point.
- In veteran's league matches a player who has reached the age of fifty (50) at the commencement of the league season will be awarded three (3) points for each try they score.
- A penalty try shall be worth three (3) points in all games.
- In men's league a try shall be worth one (1) point.

3.2 In veteran's league matches over 50 players must be clearly identifiable by one of the following means:

- Wearing different color shorts to their team mates
- Wearing a different color jersey to their team mates that does not clash with the opposition colors

Over 50 players must make themselves known to the referee before the start of play. Over 50 players not adhering to this law will be awarded one (1) point per try scored.

3.3 Attackers may dive to score a try when the ball is in their possession and there is no defender within tagging distance. The referee may at his/her discretion not award a try where an attacker dives in order to ground the ball. If having decided not to award a try the referee will restart the game with an attacking roll ball unless the attacking team have used all 6 tags. In this case a roll ball to the defending team will restart the game.

3.4 A try shall not be awarded where from a kick by the attacking team, an attacker dives on a ball over the try line. If a player Grubber Kicks and ball bounces in field of play and once it hits ground over try line, it is considered dead. The ball is live until it hits the ground over the try line.

3.5 A player cannot pass the ball to another player after crossing the try line nor can he/she run back into the field of play to pass the ball to another player thus allowing that player to score a try. A tag will be called 5 metres out from the try line from the point where the player crossed back into the field of play. When this occurs on the sixth tag a changeover shall be awarded.

3.6 In pool matches the game shall be won by the team scoring the most points and awarded four (4) points. The team that does not win the game will be awarded zero (0) points. If the score is equal or if both teams fail to score, then the game shall be a tie/draw with both teams being awarded two (2) points. In the event of a tie in play-off games the golden try law shall apply.

3.7 Golden Try. In the event of a playoff match being tied at the end of normal time the referee will allow play to continue for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Play does not stop nor do the teams change ends. The team that scores the next try will be declared the winner. If there is no try scored within the 5 minutes of additional time the following shall apply.

- The team that scored the most tries in regular time will be declared the winner. In this case all tries scored in regular time are worth 1 point.
- If the teams are still tied on number of tries scored the team that scored the first try in regular time will be declared the winner.
- If neither team scored in regular time the team that ranked higher in the pool stages of the competition will be declared the winner.
- If the teams were ranked equally after the pool stages of the competition the winner will be decided by a coin toss. The coin toss will be conducted by the match referee.

LAW 4: DEFENCE

41 The progress of the ball carrier is halted if a defender removes one or both of the ball carrier's tags. If both tags are removed by one or more defender, then the point where the first tag was removed will be where the roll ball occurs.

42 When a tag is removed, the defender must hold it in the air where the tag was made, drop or place it at that point and assume a marker position or return to the defensive line. The ball carrier must return to the point where the tag was removed, conduct a roll ball and then replace his/her tag(s). The defender must not throw the tag away from where the tag was made.

43 When a ball carrier is in the action of a roll ball, the defensive line must be at least seven (7) metres back from the roll ball line and there may only be one marker. A penalty shall be awarded at the point where the offside player(s) should have been standing in the defensive line.

44 The marker must stand directly in front of and one (1) meter away from the player conducting the roll ball. The marker and the defensive line can only move forward once the ball is rolled back to the scrum half, the team have 3 seconds to play the ball. Once hands are placed on the ball by the scrum half the ball must be played & the defensive line may move.

Note: The marker must be one (1) meter back or seven metres (7) back in the defensive line other wise he/she is considered offside.

44 Sanction: Penalty at place of infringement. (See law 5.16 in this regard should a team not have a scrum half in position)

45 If the attacking team fails to score before the sixth tag has been made, they will lose possession of the ball and a changeover shall occur where the 6th tag has occurred.

46 A player may defend with one or no tags, however if he/she receives the ball he/she must immediately play the ball. i.e. pass or kick the ball and may not take more than one step in doing so. If he/she does not play the ball immediately a tag will be called.

47 A defender may block down a grubber kick without a knock-on being called by the referee and the game goes on with normal playing laws applying.

48 The referee should consider playing advantage prior to penalizing either team. A penalty may be awarded at the point of the infringement in the following circumstances:

- (A) If a defender deliberately obstructs a ball carrier and contact is made, the defender will be judged as initiating this contact.
- (B) If a defender in the referee's opinion deliberately attempts to impede an attacker with or without the ball.
- (C) If a defender holds onto an attacker and no advantage is gained by the attacking team.
- (D) If a defender calls "tag" without physically removing the tag, play may continue.
- (E) If a defender tags an attacking player and throws the tag away from the mark where the tag occurred.
- (F) If the marker fails to stand directly in-line with the roll ball.
- (G) If the marker interferes with the ball player at the roll ball.
- (H) If the marker attempts to play the ball whilst the ball is being rolled.

4.9 If a defender removes an attacker's tag(s) without the attacker being in possession of the ball, the referee has the following options: -

- (A) If it is a simultaneous tag and off load, no action is taken, and the attacker must replace the tag before being able to attack again. The referee will call "Ball away, Play on".
- (B) If an attacker is tagged after passing or kicking the ball, the referee may call "Advantage, Late Tag" and allow the attacker to progress, however if no advantage is made (less than 10 metres) a penalty will be awarded from where the original infringement took place. If, however advantage is gained (more than 10 metres) by the team, the referee may call advantage over and play and tag count continues.
- (C) Penalise the defender and at his option sin bin a repeat offender.
- (D) If an attacker not in possession is tagged before receiving the ball the referee will call "Advantage, Early tag". The referee will then play the advantage and adopt / follow (B) and (C), if deemed necessary.

4.10 If a defender is less than seven (7) metres from the roll ball when the ball is being played that player is offside and a penalty may be awarded at the point where the offside player(s) should have been standing in the defensive line.

4.11 Under no circumstances can the marker run around and retrieve the ball from the scrum half position. See law 5.16 in this regard.

4.12A defender may dive to remove a tag but will be penalized if contact is initiated with any player from the attacking team.

4.13 When a team in possession of the ball, pass or run the ball back over their own try line, and are tagged over their own try line the result should be a drop out to the team tagged over their own line

4.14 When a defender picks up a loose ball behind own try line and attempts to run ball out but gets tagged behind own try line, a Tag is called for defender out 5 as they did not take ball over own goal line.

LAW 5: ATTACKING

5.1 When in possession of the ball, the ball carrier can attempt to position the ball further downfield by running, kicking or passing the ball to his/her teammates. An attacker may only progress the ball with both tags attached to the shorts unless advantage is being played due to a late/early tag.

5.2 When a ball carrier has one or more tags removed by a defender, the ball carrier must return to the point where the first tag was removed and play a roll ball without delay. If the roll ball is conducted from the wrong place the referee will order the roll ball to be conducted from the correct place.

5.3 Any attacking team player may take up a position directly behind the ball player and assume the scrum-half position.

5.4 A tagged player may, if there is no marker replace both of his/her tags, tap-kick the ball and play on. If the tagged player is missing one or both tags he/she may only tap-kick the ball and then pass or kick the ball taking no more than one (1) step.

5.5 If the attacking team is tagged a sixth (6th) time the attacker must place the ball on the ground or hand it to an opposition player and a changeover shall occur.

5.6 If the ball carrier falls or dives to the ground, and a defender is within tagging distance, a tag shall be counted. A try shall not be awarded if the ball carrier falls or dives over the try line and in doing so prevents a tagging. The ball carrier shall be asked to conduct a roll ball no less than five (5) metres out from the try line and the tag count will continue. If this occurs on the last tag a changeover will occur.

- 5.7 If any attacker is tagged in the opposition in-goal before he/she scores a try, he/she shall be asked to conduct a roll ball five (5) metres out from the try line, and the tag count will continue.
- 5.8 The scrum half can pass or kick the ball with only one tag on as long as they do so immediately (one step). If he/she plays on taking more than one step, the referee will call them back to the mark and the next tag will be counted. There he/she must replace his/her tags before the roll ball is conducted.
- 5.9 If the ball carrier comes into contact with the referee whilst trying to evade a tag, a tag will be called at the previous tag count and a roll ball shall take place at the position where the ball carrier came into contact with thereferee.
- 5.10 Where a referee interferes with play and in his/her opinion has prevented a tagging the referee shall call a tag at the previous tag count, at the position where the tag would have occurred.
- 5.11 Where the referee feels that a player is directly running the line of the referee to shield them from being tagged, a penalty against the attacking player will be awarded.

ATTACKING TEAM CHANGEOVERS

- 5.12 If a ball carrier is tagged over the try line prior to grounding the ball for a try and it is the last tag, a changeover will be awarded to the defending team five (5) metres out from the try line and opposite where the ball carrier was tagged.
- 5.13 When the ball carrier crosses the touchline before their tag is removed, a changeover will be awarded to the defending team five (5) metres in-field from where the ball carrier crossed the touchline.
- 5.14 When the ball carrier accidentally steps over the touchline whilst playing the ball, a changeover will be awarded to the defending team five (5) metres in-field from where the ball carrier stepped over the touchline.
- 5.15 If the ball carrier knocks-on, a changeover will be awarded to the defending team at the point where the ball carrier knocks-on.
- 5.16 If the scrum half is not in position or has not played the ball within three (3) seconds of the ball being rolled. The referee will determine this time period & call 'USE' that if the scrum half still does not play the ball a changeover will be awarded. The changeover will be awarded to the

defending team at the point where the original roll ball . The count start when the ball has touched the hand or foot of the scrumhalf.

ATTACKING INFRINGEMENTS

5.17The referee may award a penalty where an infringement occurs in the following circumstances:

- (A) The ball carrier must not attempt to bump or fend off a defender in their attempts to remove a tag nor may an attacker or defender fend off or bump each other when chasing for the ball. The ball carrier can in no way protect his /her tags with their hands, elbows, ball etc.

- (B) The ball carrier must not jump to avoid being tagged. A side step is allowed. A 360° spin is permitted at all levels & Leagues. Any contact initiated in an attempted spin or swivel is liable to sanction. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact. Any contact initiated will result in a penalty.

- (C) If changing direction while in possession of the ball, the ball carrier steps into a defender endeavoring to make a tag, a penalty may be awarded. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact unless law 4.8(A) applies.

- (D) If an attacker prevents a defender from executing a tag by running behind his/her team mate/s causing an obstruction, this is deemed to be crossing.

- (E) If the ball carrier executes a voluntary tag by deliberately playing a roll ball with both tags intact.

- (F) If the ball carrier deliberately removes his/her own tag.

- (G) If the ball carrier interferes with the marker at the roll ball.

- (H) If the ball is deliberately knocked on by a player.

- (I) If the ball is deliberately passed in a forward direction.

LAW 6: KICKING LAWS

There are only four (4) situations in IRFU TAG where kicking the ball is allowed:

- (A) Each kick-off and restart-kick shall be a female kick off the ground in the center of the halfway line.
- (B) When a tap-kick is used to restart play after a penalty.
- (C) A grubber-kick is permitted in general play.
- (D) Chip kicks are only allowed in the men's and veterans games in accordance with the appendix.

If an attacker kicks the ball in open play (i.e. not from a kick-off, restart-kick or drop-kick) the following shall apply:

- (A) If a member of the kicking team gathers or re-gathers a ball that has not touched a member of the opposing team, play shall continue, and the tag count shall continue.
- (B) If a member of the kicking team re-gathers a ball that has struck a member of the opposing team who has not played at the ball, play shall continue, and the tag count shall continue.
- (C) If a member of the kicking team re-gathers a ball that has struck and been played at by a member of the opposing team, play shall continue, and the tag count shall be restarted.

In open play the ball may only be kicked from hand and not while it is on the ground or while it is in the air, having hit the ground. A penalty is awarded at the place the offence took place.

If, in the referee's opinion, a player deliberately kicks the ball directly towards an opponent to illicit an infringement a penalty may be awarded for dangerous play.

KICK-OFF, RESTART-KICK AND DROP-KICK LAWS

Note: In this law all references to kick-offs should be construed as including restart-kicks.

6.1 When a try is scored the scoring team will restart the match with a kick from a female player. The kick will be from the ground on the center of the halfway line. The referee will indicate when he/she is ready before the match can restart. Teams will be made to restart again should the restart be taken incorrectly.

6.2 From a kick-off the ball must travel forward at least ten (10) metres. The kicking

team may not take possession of the ball or obstruct a player from the receiving team until it has been first played / touched by the receiving team, or until the ball has bounced in the field of play having gone at least ten (10) metres. Kicking team players must stay at least two (2) metres away from a potential receiver while the ball is in the air or on the ground. The onus is on the kicking team not to make any contact with the receiver. If that happens a penalty is awarded to the place the offence took place.

- 6.3 The kicking team may not play the ball if it has not travelled at least Ten (10) metres otherwise a penalty shall be awarded. However, the receiving team may play the ball if it has gone less than ten (10) metres and in this case, play shall continue.
- 6.4 The players from the kicking team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If a player offside regardless of whether they interfere with player or ball, an advantage is called. If no advantage, then penalty to attacking team where infringement took place.
- 6.5 The opposing team may be spread out across the field in various formations, but they must be at least ten (10) metres from the kicker at the time of the kick-off. A penalty may be awarded at the place of infringement.
- 6.6 From a kick-off if the ball is going over the try line on full but hits off a player en route, then a dropout results.
- 6.7 If the ball from a kick-off lands in the field of play and bounces over the touchline, a changeover will be awarded, and the receiving team will restart with a roll ball five (5) metres in-field from the touchline where the ball crossed the touchline.
- 6.8 If the ball from the kick-off lands in the field of play and travels over the receiving team's try line without being touched by the receiving team. Play will restart with the receiving team taking a drop out from their own try line where the following shall apply:
 - (A) The drop kick must travel ten (10) metres.
 - (B) The ball must land in the field of play.
 - (C) A penalty on 10-meter line of kicker will be awarded to receiving team if the ball travels over the touchline without landing in the field of play or if it doesn't travel 10 metres.

GENERAL PLAY KICKING

- 6.9 The attacking team may kick the ball at any time while in possession. The ball must not go higher than the referee's shoulders for a grubber kick. Chip-kicks

are only allowed in the men's and veterans' games and must not travel more than fifteen (15) metres and not more than five (5) metres above the opposing team player's head. "Garryowen" or up and under kicks are not allowed in any form of IRFU Tag Rugby. A penalty kick may be awarded at the place of infringement.

- 6.10 A defender may call a mark from a chip kick in the field of play and the game shall restart with a tap-kick by the player who caught the ball and the defending team must retreat ten (10) metres.
- 6.11 Only attacking team players behind the kicker when the ball is kicked are onside. If an attacker is onside he/she may chase the ball to retrieve the ball or affect a tag subject to the kicking laws.
- 6.12 If an attacker is in front of the kicker when the ball is kicked in play, this player is offside and cannot affect a tag until either the ball receiver has run at least ten (10) metres in any direction or the kicker or a player behind the kicker runs past the offside player and puts him/her onside. When the offside player is put onside in this manner he/she can affect a tag.
- 6.13 If, from a kick, the offside attacker deliberately plays the ball or effects a tag, a penalty shall be awarded at the point of the tagging or playing of the ball.
- 6.14 The receiving team may take possession from a kick and elect to kick the ball back downfield to gain a territorial advantage.
- 6.15 If the ball is kicked and bounces in the field of play and crosses the receiving team's try line they will receive a changeover five (5) metres out from where the ball crossed the try line. The ball is considered dead at this point.
- 6.16 If the ball is kicked and it crosses the receiving team's try line after it strikes a player from the receiving team who has deliberately played at the ball, a changeover will be awarded to the kicking team 5m out in line where the ball crossed the line. If the ball strikes a player from the receiving team who has not played at the ball deliberately then a changeover shall be awarded to the receiving team 5m out in line where the ball crossed the line. The ball is considered dead once it crosses the tryline.
- 6.17 If an attacker or the kicker deliberately impedes the progress of a defender who is attempting to take possession of the ball after a kick, then a penalty shall be awarded to the defending team at the point where the defender was impeded.
- 6.18 No player may go to ground/dive on the ball to gain possession after it has been kicked, knocked on, or from a dropped pass. Players must not dive to the

ground to prevent the opposition playing the ball. A penalty shall be awarded to the non-offending team at the place of infringement.

KICKING CHANGEOVERS

- 6.19 If a grubber-kick travels higher than 1.5 metres, before the ball bounces, a penalty will be awarded to the defending team at the place where the ball was kicked.
- 6.20 From a kick-off, If the ball is going over the try line & the ball hits off a player en route, then a dropout results.
- 6.21 If the ball is kicked and it lands in the field of play then rolls out over the touchline, the receiving team will play a roll ball five (5) metres infield from where the ball crossed the touchline. A roll ball five (5) metres in, is also taken by an opponent of the team that last played or touched the ball before it went over the touch line.
Exception: If the referee believes the kicking team kicked the ball at an opposition player which then rolls into touch, in a deliberate attempt to gain further possession, a penalty may be awarded.
- 6.22 If a member of the attacking team is in front of the kicker when the ball is kicked, and the ball accidentally strikes that offside player, a changeover shall be awarded to the defending team at the point of the kick. The referee may allow a defender an advantage if he/she gains possession of the ball.
- 6.23 If a kick hits the referee and play is irregularly affected to the benefit of either team a roll ball will restart play at the previous tag count where the ball hit the referee. If play is not irregularly affected a referee may call “*play on*”.
- 6.24 If a kicker is interfered with after kicking the ball or one of his/her team- mates giving chase is interfered with, a penalty shall be awarded where the ball first bounces or is stopped by an opposing player or if the ball crosses the touchline the penalty is given five (5) metres in field from the point the ball first crossed the touchline.
- 6.25 If a player from the kicking team chasing a kick is obstructed and the ball rolls over the try line, the penalty shall be awarded to the kicking team, no less than five (5) metres in from the touchline in the field of play and opposite to where the ball crossed the try line and no less than five (5) metres out from the try line, or at the point where the player was impeded. If the impeded player in the referee’s opinion probably would have scored a try if he/she had not been impeded, then a penalty try may be awarded.

- 6.26 In men's & veterans matches – after a chip kick, the referee will blow his / her whistle to avoid contact between players and award a roll ball to the team he/she anticipates would have gained possession. In the situation where the kicking team retains possession and no defender has deliberately played the ball they will continue the same tag count as before the kick. If on tag 6, a turnover will be given at the next tag.

LAW 7: KNOCK-ON AND KNOCK-BACK

- 7.1 A changeover will be awarded to the non-offending team in the case of a knock-on.
- 7.2 A player may not knock-on deliberately and a penalty may be awarded if he/she does so. A penalty try may be awarded if the defending player knocks the ball on in a deliberate attempt to prevent the try.
- 7.3 If an attacker propels the ball in a backward direction play will continue.
- 7.4 If the attacking team causes the ball to meet the ground by a knock-on, the defending team may pick up the ball and look to gain an advantage.
- 7.5 If an attacker knocks-on and no advantage is gained by the defending team, the ball is returned to the point of the original offence and the defending team will restart with a roll ball.
- 7.6 If the attacking team commits an offence and the defending team takes possession and gain an advantage the referee will allow the game to go on. If no advantage has been gained by the defending team, the ball will be returned to the point of the original offence and the defending team will restart with a roll ball at tag count 0 (zero).
- 7.7 A player in possession of the ball may not deliberately throw the ball out of the field of play. A penalty is awarded 5m in from where the ball crossed the touchline.
- 7.8 If a player knocks-on in in-goal, a changeover will be awarded 5 metres from the goal-line opposite where the offence took place.

7.9 A defender may knock the ball backwards in open play. Once the ball is knocked backwards by defending player and crosses the try line, it is deemed dead when it touches the ground. Sanction is a drop out by defending team.

LAW 8: PENALTIES

Penalties are taken by way of a tap-kick in any direction.

Note: If a player chooses to use the roll ball action instead of taking the tap-kick it is still deemed as a tap-kick.

81 A penalty shall be awarded against any player who is guilty of misconduct unless advantage can be played by the non-offending team in accordance with these laws. All penalties or changeovers awarded for infringements/tagging's that take place within five (5) metres of the offending team's try line shall be awarded five (5) metres out from that team's try line.

82 If a penalty is not taken on the mark designated by the referee, play will stop, and the ball returned to the mark. The penalty is then retaken.

83 The offending team must retire seven (7) metres (or to the defending team's try line) from where the penalty is to be taken.

84 Further misconduct by the offending team shall allow the referee to advance the mark once only, by ten (10) metres but only up to five (5) metres from opposing team's try line Incidents would include:

- (A) Bad sportsmanship
- (B) Throwing Tags away, to the ground, or at a referee or player in frustration.

85 A penalty try must be awarded if the offence prevents a try that would probably otherwise have been scored.

LAW 9: DUTIES OF REFEREE

9.1 The referee is responsible for ensuring the laws of the game are adhered to. The referee is the sole judge of fact.

9.2 The referee shall record the score and all tries scored during the match. He/she shall be the sole timekeeper except where this duty has been delegated to another person. (the referee will note which team scored the first try for playoffs and finals purposes).

9.3 Enforced substitution – if a player has been penalised for a number of technical infringements but the referee does not feel a YC is warranted, he /she may instruct the captain to replace the player. There is no time limit for the replacement. An enforced substitution will not be implemented for the same player twice in one match. Instead a yellow card will be given and a red if needed.

The referee at his/her discretion, can temporarily suspend or prematurely terminate a match because of adverse weather, undue interference from spectators, misbehavior of players, or any other cause as he/she sees fit that interferes with the control or safety of the game.

LAW 10: FOUL PLAY

- 101 All players are under the control of the referee from the time they enter the field of play to the time they leave. In the event of misconduct by a player, the referee shall, at his / her discretion, caution, sin-bin or dismiss the player.
- 102 A caution may be administered to a team as a whole or to an individual player. If a caution is given to a team, each team player is considered to have received an individual caution. If a final caution is given to a player, the nature of the offence must be recorded by the referee and must be quoted if the player is subsequently dismissed.
- 103 When a final caution is administered to a player or team who has consistently breached the rules of the game the referee shall advise the captain so that the latter may, if he / she wishes, replace the player.
- 104 The referee has the power to sin-bin (temporarily suspend) a player and the length of player suspension is four (4) minutes in a 40-minute game and two (2) mins in a fifteen (15). A sin-binned player cannot take part in the match and cannot be replaced for the duration of the suspension and shall re-enter the playing field only when permitted to do so by the referee.
- 105 The sin-bin may be used for the following incidents:
- (a) Blatant disregard for the laws.
 - (b) Continued law infringements.
 - (c) Back-chat, dissent or sledging.
 - (d) Repeated or deliberate contact infringements.
 - (e) Fighting.
 - (f) Cynical infringements.
 - (g) Verbal abuse towards referee.
 - (h) Kicking the ball away in frustration.
- 106 The referee may issue a red card to a player and dismiss that player for the remainder of the game if he/she deems the offence to be serious enough. If a player is dismissed from the field, he/she shall stand suspended until the referee's report is received by the I.R.F.U. The incident will then be dealt with according to the I.R.F.U. Tag Rugby disciplinary procedure.
- 107 A player who is dismissed/sent off shall take no further participation in the game nor shall he/she be permitted to take up a position likely to provoke

further incidents.

- 108 A player is guilty of misconduct and shall be penalised if he/she:
- (a) Trips, kicks or strikes another player.
 - (b) When effecting or attempting to affect a tag makes contact with any part of an opponent's body intentionally, recklessly or carelessly.
 - (c) Deliberately breaks the laws of the game.
 - (d) Uses offensive or obscene language.
 - (e) Disputes the decision of the referee.
 - (f) Re-enters the field-of-play without the permission of the referee.
 - (g) Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game.
 - (h) Deliberately obstructs/impedes an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.
- 109 If a referee is assaulted or unduly harassed by any person as a result of a match under his/her control the referee shall submit a report of the incident to the IRFU.
- 1010 All sin binned players shall surrender their "tags" to the referee for the duration of the sin binned time. Sin binned players will retrieve their tags from the referee at the conclusion of their sin binned time. All players sent off i.e. shown a red card, must surrender their tags to the referee before leaving the playing area.

Please Remember: All teams must register prior to their game each week

SAFETY

WARM UP: Please ensure players warm-up and stretch to avoid injuries.

SHORTS: IRFU TAG has a strict rule that if players do not have a pair of TAG shorts, *they DO NOT play*. No exceptions to this rule. Tag shorts can be purchased from the coordinator when available.

This document in its entirety, content and design is fully held by copyright of the Irish Rugby Football Union, 2019

LAW CHANGES/AMENDMENTS FOR 2019

Definitions Section

Term	Definition
Kick-Off:	The kick-off occurs at the start of the match and the restart of the match after half time and shall be by way of a female kick from the ground in the center of the halfway line.
Drop Out:	This is a drop kick that occurs at the center of the try line.
Quick Tap	Is an option in the case where the ball has gone into touch. If there is no player from the kicking team within seven (7) metres of the team now in possession, there option of taking a Tap-Kick. The player taking the Tap-kick must touch the ball with his/her foot in five (5) metres from the touchline. It also can occur if there is no marker present at a roll ball.
Sin-bin:	When a player has been shown a Yellow card, the payer will hand his/her tags to the referee and may not return or be substituted for four (4) minutes in a forty (40) game, where in other events it will be two (2) mins for fifteen (15) minute games.
Spinning:	A 360° spin is permitted in all leagues and levels. Any contact initiated in an attempted spin or swivel is liable to sanction. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact.

LAW 2: PLAYERS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT

2.1 A team must have no more than seven (7) players, with a minimum of 3 females on the field of play at any one time. There may be any number of authorized replacements and/or substitutes. The maximum number of players per squad for

any given match is fifteen (15). Any players not playing in at least 3 matches prior to the play- offs/semi-finals/finals may not play in those play-offs/semi-finals/finals.

2.2 If a team that arrive at a venue with insufficient numbers, they may request, through the Venue Manager, a player from another team to make up the starting numbers only. Players that play with a second team must be registered with both teams by the end of the grading rounds.

A player may play for one or more teams on any given night but only in the following situations:

- (A) If a team did not have the full complement of players, a player may play with a second team to make up the correct starting numbers.
- (B) After the grading rounds, if a team did not have the full complement of players, a player may play for a second team in the same league, a league below or in the case of the beginner's league, the one league above.

The Venue Manager has the final decision on any of the above situations & will decide using common sense on any complaints made. Teams may be subject to points deduction if Law is not upheld.

***The above laws may vary from Venue to Venue due to size, requirements & demands on venues. All teams, referees & volunteers will be given advanced notice of any changes, if any, to Laws 2.1 & 2.2.**

LAW 3: SCORING

3.7 In pool matches the game shall be won by the team scoring the most points and awarded four (4) points. The team that does not win the game will be awarded zero (0) points. If the score is equal or if both teams fail to score, then the game shall be a tie/draw with both teams being awarded two (2) points. In the event of a tie in play-off games the golden try law shall apply.

LAW 4: DEFENCE

4.9 (D) If an attacker is tagged after passing or kicking the ball, the referee may call "Advantage, Late Tag" and allow the attacker to progress, however if no advantage is made (less than 10 metres) a penalty will be awarded from where

the original infringement took place. If, however advantage is gained (more than 10 metres) by the team, the referee may call advantage over and play and tag count continues.

4.12 A defender may dive to remove a tag but will be penalised if contact is initiated with any player from the attacking team.

4.13 When defending a team in possession of the ball and they pass the ball back over own try line, and are tagged in possession behind try line, then Dropout results.

4.14 When a defender picks up a loose ball behind own try line and attempts to run ball out but gets tagged behind own try line, a Tag is called for defender out 5 as they did not take ball over own goal line.

LAW 5: ATTACKING

5.16 If the scrum half is not in position or has not played the ball within three (3) seconds of the ball being rolled. The referee will determine this time period & call 'USE' after the 3 seconds are up. A changeover will be awarded to the defending team at the point where the original roll ball. The count starts when the ball has touched the hand or foot of the scrumhalf.

5.11 Where the referee feels that a player is directly running the line of the referee to shield them from being tagged, a penalty against the attacking player will be awarded.

5.12

ATTACKING INFRINGEMENTS

5.17 The referee may award a penalty where an infringement occurs in the following circumstances:

(B) The ball carrier must not jump to avoid being tagged. A side step is allowed. A 360° spin is permitted at all levels & Leagues. Any contact initiated in an attempted spin or swivel is liable to sanction. The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact. Any contact initiated will result in a penalty.

LAW 6: KICKING LAWS

KICK-OFF, RESTART-KICK AND DROP-KICK LAWS

- 6.1 When a try is scored the scoring team will restart the match with a kick from a female player. The kick will be from the ground on the center of the halfway line. The referee will indicate when he/she is ready before the match can restart. Teams will be made to restart again should the restart be taken incorrectly.
- 6.2 From a kick-off the ball must travel forward at least ten (10) metres. The kicking team may not take possession of the ball or obstruct a player from the receiving team until it has been first played / touched by the receiving team, or until the ball has bounced in the field of play having gone at least ten (10) metres. Kicking team players must stay at least two (2) metres away from a potential receiver while the ball is in the air or on the ground. The onus is on the kicking team not to make any contact with the receiver. If that happens a penalty is awarded to the place the offence took place.
- 6.6 From a kick off if the ball is going over the Try Line on full but hits off a player en route, then a dropout results.
- 6.8 If the ball from the kick-off lands in the field of play and travels over the receiving team's try line without being touched by the receiving team. Play will restart with the receiving team taking a drop kick from their own try line where the following shall apply:
- (D) The drop kick must travel ten (10) metres.
 - (E) The ball must land in the field of play.
 - (F) A penalty on 10-meter line of kicker will be awarded to receiving team if the ball travels over the touchline without landing in the field of play.

GENERAL PLAY KICKING

- 615 If the ball is kicked and bounces in the field of play and crosses the receiving team's try line they will receive a changeover 5metre out from where the ball crossed the try line.
- 616 If the ball is kicked and it crosses the receiving team's try line after it strikes a player from the receiving team who has deliberately played at the ball, a changeover will be awarded to the kicking team 5m out in line where the ball crossed the line. If the ball strikes a player from the receiving team who has not

played at the ball deliberately then a changeover shall be awarded to the receiving team 5m out in line where the ball crossed the line.

LAW 7: KNOCK-ON AND KNOCK-BACK

7.2 A player may not knock-on deliberately and a penalty may be awarded if he/she does so. A penalty try may be awarded if the defending player knocks the ball on in a deliberate attempt to prevent the try.

7.9 A defender may knock the ball backwards in open play. Once ball is knocked backwards by defending player and crosses the try line, it is deemed dead when it touches the ground. Sanction is a drop out by defending team.

Law 8: PENALTIES

8.1 The offending team must retire seven (7) metres (or to the defending team's try line) from where the penalty is to be taken.

8.6 Further misconduct by the offending team shall allow the referee to advance the mark once only, by ten (10) metres but only up to five (5) metres from opposing team's try line Incidents would include:

- (J) Bad sportsmanship
- (K) Throwing Tags away, to the ground, or at a referee or player in frustration.
- (L) Verbal abuse towards referee.
- (M) Kicking the ball away in frustration.

Law 10: FOUL PLAY

10.10 The referee has the power to sin-bin (temporarily suspend) a player and the length of player suspension is four (4) minutes in a 40-minute game and two (4) mins in a fifteen (15). A sin-binned player cannot take part in the match and cannot be replaced for the duration of the suspension and shall re-enter the playing field only when permitted to do so by the referee.