



**NRL
REFEREES
2008
KEY INDICATORS**

**EXPLANATORY
GUIDE**

NRL Referees 2008



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Key Indicators 2008

The Key Indicators set out in this document and supported by the Key Indicator DVD has been developed to provide clarity for coaches and players on the official's interpretations in key areas of the game.

Officials' performances are measured against these interpretations and the Laws and Notes of the game.

Please ensure you familiarise yourself and your team on these interpretations.

TACKLE IDENTIFICATION

Note: It is the sole responsibility of the referee to adjudicate on the tackle.

DOMINANT TACKLE DEFINITION

- When the ball carriers momentum is propelled backwards towards his own goal then the tackle is **DOMINANT**.
- Defenders are permitted to lever themselves up of the ball carrier.

Referee's Vocabulary – **Dominant Tackle**

SURRENDER TACKLE DEFINITION

- A **SURRENDER** tackle will be called if the ball-carrier:
 1. Surrenders his run IN or AT the line.
 2. Spears in at the hips of the defending player.
 3. Spears into the space between two defenders.

Note: If a SURRENDER tackle is called the defender/s may:

1. Work the player on the ground. They are not permitted to do this by using the ball carriers head or neck as a lever. This will be deemed a **GRAPPLE TACKLE**.
2. Lay on and spin to the front of the tackle.
3. Move to a position known as the "Bear Hug".

Referee's vocabulary - **Surrender**

NON DOMINANT TACKLE DEFINITION

- If the attacking player's momentum is still moving towards the opponent's goal line when a tackle is being performed then the tackle deemed neutral.
- The referee will allow more time for a low defender to release the legs of the ball carrier. This tackle is still classified as non dominant and the defender **MUST** release on the referee's call of Movement.
- The ball carrier may be penalised if he commences to kick out with his legs.

Referee's vocabulary - "**MOVEMENT or Move**"

NOTE: When a referee calls on a defender/s to move the intent of this movement is to immediately move away from the ball carrier. Defenders cannot:

- a) Spin on the ball carrier to an advantageous defensive position.
- b) Peel off the ball carrier one by one.
- c) Climb back over the ruck.

RUCK DEFENCE

- A Penalty is required against a defender/s if he:
 - a) Flops late onto a ball carrier on the ground
 - b) Works the ball carrier on the ground.
 - c) Leg pulls.
 - d) Places his hand on the ball once the tackle is complete.
 - e) Holds the ball carriers arm once tackle is complete.
 - f) Crowds the play the ball by using his knee.
 - g) Is not square as marker and becomes involved, or goes early from that position.



GRAPPLE TACKLE (ie unnecessary contact with head or neck)

- A defender/s making any accidental/incidental contact with the head or neck during any stage of the tackle will be required to immediately release contact from that area.
- Any prolonged contact with the head or neck will be penalised.
- In tackles where a defender/s use their body weight to bend and exert pressure on the ball carriers head or neck (ie Crusher) the offender/s will be penalised or possibly even dismissed from the field in serious cases.

HIGH TACKLES (ie initial contact with head or neck)

- Any initial high contact with the head or neck of a ball carrier will be penalised.

RUCK ATTACK

- It is the responsibility of the tackled player to play the ball when he can.
- It is the responsibility of the tackled player to play the ball in the correct manner.
- The tackled player must stand up to play the ball.
- The tackled player must lift the ball clear of the ground.
- There is to be a genuine attempt to play the ball with the foot
- The tackled player must play the ball when instructed by the referee.

Note: Attacking player/s may not interfere with a defending player.
ie. Dummy half physically pulling a defending player off the tackled player.

TURNOVER OF POSSESSION

- The referee may request the video referee to review replays of any loss of possession by the ball carrier in the tackle or ruck to confirm or change the referee's decision. **(NRL to confirm procedure with broadcasters)**

STANDING IN TACKLE

- Once the tackle is called the attacking player is to be released immediately to play the ball.
- Once the ball carrier has one leg off the ground the referee is to call "**Held**".

NOTE: It will be deemed that the ball carrier has succumbed to the tackle.

Referee's Vocabulary – **Held or Release**

- If the ball-carrier is then pulled to the ground or another defender joins the tackle after the tackle has been called, a penalty is to be awarded to the attacking team.
- If the ball carrier offloads the ball after the tackle has been called a penalty is to be awarded to the defending team unless the referee deems it to be simultaneous in which case he will form a scrum.

RESTARTS OF PLAY

GOAL LINE DROP OUT

- From the time the referee signals goal line drop out the defending team will be required to have recommenced play within 40 seconds.
- The defending team will receive a warning from the referee with 10 seconds remaining.
- Failure to take the goal line drop out within the stipulated 40 seconds will result in a penalty to the receiving team 10m out directly in front of the goal posts.
- A Goal line drop out may be taken quickly if:
 1. The 3 Officials are in position
 2. The referee has signalled to recommence play.
 3. The kick is to be taken in the centre of the goal line.
- If in the opinion of the referee, he deems the kicking team is deliberately delaying the restart due to the circumstances of the game, the referee may call time-off as he can at any stage during the game if he believes time is being wasted to gain a tactical advantage.

20M RESTART

- A 20m restart may be taken quickly if:
 1. All 3 Officials are in position.
 2. The referee has signalled for play to recommence.
 3. The kick is taken on the centre of the 20m line.
 4. All players from the team taking the restart are onside.

Penalty

- A player may not take the quick restart from a penalty kick until the referee has indicated the mark by **verbal instruction and has moved to a position to adjudicate the game**. The referee should move quickly to the mark however he does not need to be standing on the mark for play to continue. If the player takes the tap before the mark has been given, play should be stopped and the player instructed to retake the tap on the nominated mark.
- If the penalty is given within ten metres of the goal line, the referee should hold play until he is able to position himself where he will not interfere with play.

Kick Off

The referee shall not allow a restart of play until:

1. All officials are in a position to adjudicate the game.

DISTRACTING GOAL KICKER

- It is illegal to attempt to distract the attention of a player who is kicking for goal.
- Players from the non-kicking side must position themselves as follows:
 - a) **KICK AT GOAL FOLLOWING A TRY:** Outside the field of play (ie. Must be behind their own goal-line or outside the touch-line)
 - b) **PENALTY KICK AT GOAL:** To their goal-line or not less than 10 metres from the mark.

BALL-CARRIER SPEARS OUT OF HIS INGOAL

- When a ball-carrier spears out of his in goal into the field of play the referee will:
 1. Allow the defending team to place their hand on the ball-carrier constituting a tackle has been made.
 2. Identify the tackle as a **SURRENDER** tackle.
 3. Call on the ball-carrier to get to his feet and continue his run. If the player fails to do so the referee will adjudicate a voluntary tackle.

NOTE: The defending player/s cannot lift or force the ball-carrier back into the in goal.

OFFSIDE

- A player is offside when he has one foot (either on or off the ground) in front of one of his own team who touches, is touched by, held or kicked the ball.



10 METRES

- All defenders must make it back to the marked 10 metres and remain there until the ball clears the ruck.
- The defensive line may only move forward once the ball has cleared the ruck.

Referees Vocabulary - “**Hold and Go**”.

- The 10 metres is marked as the line between the referee and the sideline official/s.

Definition: ‘Clear of the ruck is when the ball is positioned behind the foot of the player playing the ball.’ (See example DVD)

OBSTRUCTION

- There is to be no advantage to the attacking team.
- It is the responsibility of the decoy runner/s not to interfere with the defending team.
- The ball carrier cannot run behind a decoy runner and gain an advantage.
- Attacking players who loiter next to the play the ball can be interpreted as obstructing the defending team.
- In the process of scoring a try an attacking player dives through or into the legs of the player who has played the ball a penalty will be awarded to the defending team. This action will be interpreted as obstruction.
- Defensive decisions that commit defenders to decoy runners will not be considered obstruction.

BLOCKERS

- A defending player shielding a catcher from attacking chasers must position himself early.
- It will be interpreted as obstruction if the defender:
 1. Arrives at the same time as the attacking chasers and deliberately obstructs the catching of the high ball.
 2. Deliberately runs the attacking chasers off the football.

NOTE: See example DVD.

DOWNTOWN CHASERS

- Any player who is in front of the kicker in general play is not permitted to advance beyond the point of the previous play the ball until the ball has gone past the offside players.

STEALING THE BALL

- The referee must form an opinion there was an obvious intent to dispossess the ball carrier before penalising.
- Where a player steals the ball (1 on 1) from a player on whom he is effecting a tackle, play will be allowed to continue.
- Where two or more players are effecting the same tackle – irrespective of whether all but one ‘drops off’ the tackle and the ball carrier is subsequently dispossessed of the ball, a penalty will be awarded against the player or players effecting the tackle.

BALL STRIPPING INGOAL

- The ball may be stripped from the ball carrier if the ball carrier is attempting to ground the ball for a try.

NOTE: Defenders cannot deliberately hold the ball carrier up simply to strip the ball unless the ball carrier is clearly attempting to ground the ball.

ATTACKING PLAYER HELD UP OVER TRY LINE

- When an attacking player is held up over the opponent’s goal line the referee will rule the ball-carrier recommence the game with a play the ball 10 metres into the field of play adjacent to where he was held up.
- The referee will continue the tackle count.

SUPPORTING BALL CARRIER

- It is permissible for attacking player/s to lend weight to the ball-carrier with an objective of not losing ground. The referee will call 'Held' when this occurs.
- It is **NOT** permissible for the attacking player/s to impede any defender from making a tackle. The referee will penalise if this occurs.

Note: The referee will take into account any momentum the tackle has generated after '**Held or Release**' has been called.

SCRUMS

- The scrum is to be bound correctly.
- The **OUTSIDE** leg of **BOTH** open side props must be forward.
- All forwards must be bound correctly and not break until the ball is called "**OUT**" by the referee.
- The ball is to be fed into the tunnel with the halfback standing **SQUARE AND** with **BOTH** hands on the ball.
- To be in play, the ball must emerge from the scrum **BETWEEN AND BEHIND** the inner feet of the second row forwards.
- Both teams must be 5 metres behind the last row of forwards and not move forward until it has cleared the scrum.
- If a team is bound and ready to contest a scrum the referee will call time out. The scrum will then be contested when the opposing team is bound.
- With the exception listed below, Interchanges cannot be made after the referee has ordered a scrum. This applies regardless of whether the referee calls time out for an injury or not. The player leaving the field may do so at any time, but the player going on cannot enter the field until the ball emerges from the scrum.

- Interchange at scrums will only be permitted at scrums resulting from a touch line stoppage (i.e. kick finds touch, or player tackled into touch), provided that the interchange player is already with the interchange official waiting to get on when the ball or the player crosses the touch line. Trainers will still be responsible for getting the player being replaced off the field before the interchange player can go on. The referee will not call a time-out or delay the recommencement to allow the interchange to take place.
- The referee will hold the game up to replace a bleeding player, but trainers must first advise the referee that an interchange is going to take place.

Note: Closer scrutiny of scrums will be demanded on all officials in season 2008.

PROTECTING KICKER

- It is the responsibility of tacklers not to make any dangerous contact with kickers.
- Any defender who leaves the ground and contacts dangerously the kicker after the ball has been kicked will be penalised.

DISSENT

- A captain may approach the referee to clarify a ruling.
- Verbal abuse or casting aspersions on the referee's ability or integrity will not be tolerated.
- Referees are not to debate decisions with captains.
- Captains should not use the process to deliberately slow the opposing team's momentum. It will be at the discretion of the referee as to whether a clarification of a decision is to be carried out immediately or at a later time in the match.
- Continual breaches may lead to advancing the mark or sin bin/dismissal.



SIN BIN

- There are four main areas for use of the sin bin:
 1. Repeated infringements;
 2. Deliberate break down of play, especially in try scoring positions;
 3. Cooling off; and
 4. Dissent

DOUBLE MOVEMENT

- The attacking player must not promote the football from the position the ball or the arm carrying the ball has been grounded, in the process of scoring a try.
- If momentum carries a player in possession into the in-goal area, it will not be a double movement if the ball would have finished over the goal line regardless of any subsequent movement of the ball or the arm carrying the ball.

COIN TOSS

- The captain who wins the coin toss may select to either:
 1. Choose the end they wish to defend and receive the kick-off; OR
 2. Kick-off.

The captain who loses the toss will have the remaining option

Note: The team that chooses to kick-off does not get the opportunity to select which end they wish to defend.

BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

- The Benefit of the Doubt rule applies to the attacking team.

VIDEO REFEREE

FOUL PLAY

- The Video Referee's power to intervene on foul play replicates those of the sideline official.
- The Video Referee may advise the Referee of an incident of foul play of which he was previously unaware. As a result of that advice the Referee may take any necessary action except to the extent that play has extended beyond the 1st play the ball of the next set, or in the event of a scrum having been formed and decided. In this case the Referee may still put the incident on report.

NOTE: A shoulder charge that comes into contact with the head of the ball carrier is classified as a high tackle.

GROUNDING THE BALL

- Ball Stationary - Downward pressure and control.
- Ball rolling - Ball rotation changes, no separation from hand and control.
- Ball in Possession – Grounding by hand or arm, no separation form hand or arm and control
- The front of the torso may bring the ball to ground.

DOUBLE MOVEMENT

- The attacking player must **not promote the football from the position the ball or the arm carrying the ball has been grounded**, in the process of scoring a try.
- If momentum carries a player in possession into the in-goal area, it will not be a double movement if the ball would have finished over the goal line regardless of any subsequent movement of the ball or the arm carrying the ball.

OFFSIDE

- A player is offside when he has one foot (either on or off the ground) in front of one of his own team who touches, is touched by, held or kicked the ball.

OBSTRUCTION

- There is to be no advantage to the attacking team.
- It is the responsibility of the decoy runner/s not to interfere with the defending team.
- The ball carrier cannot run behind a decoy runner and gain an advantage.
- Attacking players who loiter next to the play the ball can be interpreted as obstructing the defending team.
- In the process of scoring a try an attacking player dives through or into the legs of the player who has played the ball a penalty will be awarded to the defending team. This action will be interpreted as obstruction.
- Defensive decisions that commit defenders to decoy runners will not be considered obstruction.
- A defending player shielding a catcher from attacking chasers must position himself early. It will be interpreted as obstruction if the defender:
 1. Arrives at the same time as the attacking chasers and deliberately obstructs the catching of the high ball.
 2. Deliberately runs the attacking chasers off the football.
- When adjudicating Obstruction decisions the Video Referee will consider the following:
 1. Did the decoy runner/s interfere or defender commits?
 2. Did ball carrier run behind decoy and gain an advantage?
 3. Did the decoy runner interfere with the defence structure?

TURNOVER OF POSSESSION

- The video referee can request replays of any loss of possession by the ball carrier in the tackle or ruck to confirm or change the referee's decision.