

KNOW THE LAWS? BY ANDY MELROSE.

Andy Melrose, the Rugby Referee Development Officer for the South West, has compiled a set of situations with various possible answers for the referee. Test your knowledge of the Law and see how well you can do.

SCENARIO 1.

An attacking player loses the ball three metres from the goal line and it goes forwards. A defending player, who has one foot on the goal line, picks up the ball as it is rolling forward but before it has crossed the goal line and touches the ball down in In-goal.

Would you award:

- (a) A 22 metre drop out?
- (b) A 5 metre scrum, defending team to feed?
- (c) A 5 metre scrum, attacking team to feed?
- (d) A scrum where the ball was lost forward, subject to all players' feet in the scrum being in the field of play, defending team to feed?

SCENARIO 2.

I also pose a question which has exactly the same set of circumstances but the ball had stopped moving in the field of play.

ANSWER 1.

It is a scrum to the defending team 5 metres from the goal line and in line with where the knock-on occurred. This is covered under Law 22.7 (b) on page 131. If you are looking at this problem from the point of view of who took the ball into in-goal and therefore how the game is to be restarted, you could go astray. The problem with that is there has been an infringement and that infringement has to be dealt with. Therefore, the concept of who took the ball in-goal does not apply.

ANSWER 2.

The second scenario answer is the same. You must play the infringement, hence the scrum

SCENARIO 3.

An attacking player tackles an opponent one metre from the goal line and the defender, in releasing the ball, pushes the ball back towards his own in-goal. The ball touches the goal-line so that it comes to rest in in-goal. The tackler, without getting to his feet, reaches out and grounds the ball with his hand.

Would you:

- a. Award a try?

- b Award a penalty against the attacking player for playing the ball before he has regained his feet?
- c. Award a 5 metre scrum to the attackers?
- d. Award a 5 metre scrum to the defenders?

ANSWER 3.

It is a try. Law 15.7 Exception on the bottom of page 76 states that, "After a tackle near the goal-line, if the ball has been released and has gone into the in-goal any player, including a player on the ground, may ground the ball."

SCENARIO 4.

Red winger kicks ahead inside Blue 22 and the ball hits the corner flag and drops into in-goal. As the Red winger is about to dive on the ball he is pulled from behind by the Blue full back. The ball is then touched down by the defending Blue winger.

Do you award

- a. A 22 drop out for the ball going dead?
- b. A penalty try to Red?
- c. A penalty to Red five metres from the goal-line?
- d. A penalty try to Red and a yellow card to the Blue full back?

ANSWER 4.

The crucial point here is that the ball has touched the corner **flag** not the post - the post is touch-in-goal but the flag is not! Therefore the ball was live and the Red winger would have scored but for foul play by the Blue Full Back. Option 'd' is correct as the Law now requires the referee to Red or Yellow card a player who gives away a penalty try - provided the referee can identify the individual. A yellow card is the appropriate sanction.

SCENARIO 5.

Blue drop out on the 22. Red player advances half a metre over the 22 and charges the kick down with his hands and the ball bounces towards the Blue goal-line.

Do you award

- a. Another kick to Blue?
- b. A scrum to Blue for the knock on by Red?
- c. A free kick to Blue?
- d. A penalty to Blue for an intentional knock on?

ANSWER 5.

A charge down in Law is not a knock on so 'b' and 'd' are wrong. The Law used to be answer 'a' but this year the award is a free kick - Law 13.18 (a) "If a drop out from the 22m area is prevented from crossing the line by an opponent, the re-start is a free kick on the 22m line".

SCENARIO 6.

Reds win a line-out near their own goal line. The ball is not controlled and lands in in-goal, one foot over the goal line and one foot from touch-in-goal. The Blue hooker, who was onside at the line-out, dives forward, flattens the corner post and places his hand on top of the ball with the remainder of his body lying on the ground in touch-in-goal.

Is the award:-

- a. A try?
- b. A 22 drop out to Red?
- c. A scrum 5 to Red?
- d. A scrum 5 to Blue?

ANSWER 6.

It is a try. Law 22.4(h) states that, "If an attacking player is in touch or touch-in-goal the player can score a try by grounding the ball provided is not carrying the ball" The player was never holding the ball so the ball was never in touch.

SCENARIO 7.

Reds kick the ball from open play from their 10-metre line towards touch. Just before the ball reaches the vertical plane of the touch line, it is caught, without having bounced, by a Blue player, who has one foot in the field of play and one foot on the touch line.

Is it

- a. A throw in to Red where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- b. A throw in to Blue where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- c. A throw into Blue on the 10 metre line?
- d. Play on, ball not in touch?

ANSWER 7.

Answer is (c) as the ball has gone directly into touch from a kick in open play

SCENARIO 8.

Reds kick the ball from a Penalty from their 10-metre line towards touch. Just before the ball reaches the vertical plane of the touch line it is caught without having bounced by a Blue player, who has one foot on the field of play and one foot on the touch line.

Is it

- a. A line-out to Red where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- b. A line-out to Blue where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- c. A line-out to Blue on the 10 metre line?
- d. Play on, ball not in touch?

ANSWER 8.

Answer is 'a'. The ball has gone directly into touch from a Penalty Kick therefore the kicking team throw in at the line-out

SCENARIO 9.

Reds kick the ball from open play from their 10-metre line towards touch. Just before the ball reaches the vertical plane of the touch line it is knocked backwards by Blue player, who has one foot on the field of play and one foot on the touch line.

Is it

- a. A line-out to Red where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- b. A line-out to Blue where the Blue player had his foot on the line?
- c. A line-out to Blue on the 10 metre line?
- d. Play on, ball not in touch?

ANSWER 9.

Answer is 'd' as the ball has *not* gone into touch. The ball is in touch when it (i) crosses the plane of the touchline and touches the line or anything or anybody beyond it or (ii) when it is held or caught by a player who has a foot on or over the touchline. In this case the ball was *knocked* backwards but not held or caught - so play on.

SCENARIO 10

An attacking player kicks the ball forward inside his opponents' 22. A defending player, who has one foot on the goal line, picks up the ball as it is rolling forward but before it has crossed the goal line and touches the ball down in In-goal.

Would you award:

- (a) A 22 metre drop out?
- (b) A 5 metre scrum, defending team to feed?
- (c) A 5 metre scrum, attacking team to feed?
- (d) A scrum where the ball was kicked?

ANSWER 10.

Answer is 'a' as the ball has gone into In-goal. In-goal in this scenario is like touch, in that, if a player places his foot on the touchline before collecting the ball then the ball is deemed in touch, even although it has not crossed the line. Thus a player who has his foot on the goal line and is carrying the ball then the ball is deemed to be in in-goal. It was put there by the attackers, therefore 22 drop out.