



# NZ Rugby Training & Development Module

World Rugby Law Application  
Guidelines

**CONTACT TO THE HEAD**



# RATIONALE

World Rugby introduces new measures to limit contact with the head.

Effective 3 January 2017 World Rugby has introduced new Law Application guidelines relating to contact with the head. This will **apply at all levels of the game** and is a further commitment to injury prevention. The new measures introduce a zero-tolerance approach to reckless and accidental head contact in our sport.

In a change to Law, World Rugby has redefined illegal (high) tackle categories and increased sanctions to deter high tackles  
The new law effectively lowers the acceptable height of the tackle



# RECKLESS TACKLE

(Definition)

A player is deemed to have made a reckless contact during a tackle or attempted tackle or during other phases of the game if in making contact, the player knew or should have known that there was a risk of making contact with the head of an opponent, but did so anyway. This sanction applies even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders. This type of contact also applies to grabbing and rolling/twisting around the head/neck area even if the contact starts below the line of the shoulders

Minimum Sanction: **Yellow card**

Maximum Sanction: **Red Card**



# ACCIDENTAL TACKLE

(Definition)

When making contact with another player during a tackle or attempted tackle or during other phases of the game, if a player makes accidental contact with an opponent's head, either directly or where the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders, the player **MAY** be sanctioned. This includes situations where the ball carrier slips into the tackle

**Minimum Sanction: Penalty**



# REFEREE CONSIDERATIONS

When adjudicating on high tackles the referee will take into consideration:

1. CONTACT (Initial & final location of the Hand, Arm or Shoulder)
2. ACTION (stiff arm, swinging arm, reflex arm, wrap arm, shoulder)
3. FORCE (of the tackle)



# Referee Guidelines / Process

## HAS FOUL PLAY OCCURRED

NO	YES
PLAY ON	<b>Decide: Was it RECKLESS or ACCIDENTAL?</b>
	<b>RECKLESS – Consider</b> Where was contact? What was force of the contact? What was speed on contact/when impact was made? Were there any other circumstances to consider? i.e. actions / body position of ball carrier. Minimum Sanction = Yellow Card Maximum Sanction = Red Card
	<b>ACCIDENTAL –</b> It is still Foul Play Sanction = Penalty Kick
	<b>RECKLESS (Definition) = Player knew or should have known contact was high and/or dangerous</b>

# EXERCISE 1

## TACKLE ACTIONS - YOUR DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Your decision
1	Northampton v Bristol	<a href="https://youtu.be/RctcvZSaE1k">https://youtu.be/RctcvZSaE1k</a>	
2	Leinster v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/r5hQeoncWGo">https://youtu.be/r5hQeoncWGo</a>	
3	Leinster v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/FDsOEIrdso">https://youtu.be/FDsOEIrdso</a>	
4	Wasps v Bath Rugby	<a href="https://youtu.be/0iCez0fiwnQ">https://youtu.be/0iCez0fiwnQ</a>	
5	Scarlets v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/Zfiq3SMQbOA">https://youtu.be/Zfiq3SMQbOA</a>	
6	Scarlets v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/6p2CpvJw_KM">https://youtu.be/6p2CpvJw_KM</a>	



# EXERCISE 1

## ORIGINAL DECISION v CORRECT DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Original Decision	Notes
1	Northampton v Bristol	<a href="https://youtu.be/RctcvZSaE1k">https://youtu.be/RctcvZSaE1k</a>	PK	Correct
2	Leinster v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/r5hQeoncWGo">https://youtu.be/r5hQeoncWGo</a>	PK	Correct
3	Leinster v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/FDsOEIrdso">https://youtu.be/FDsOEIrdso</a>	PK	Correct
4	Wasps v Bath Rugby	<a href="https://youtu.be/0iCez0fiwnQ">https://youtu.be/0iCez0fiwnQ</a>	PK	Correct
5	Scarlets v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/Zfiq3SMQbOA">https://youtu.be/Zfiq3SMQbOA</a>	YC	Should be PK
6	Scarlets v Ulster	<a href="https://youtu.be/6p2CpvJw_KM">https://youtu.be/6p2CpvJw_KM</a>	Penalty try + YC	Should be PK





# EXERCISE 2

## TACKLE ACTIONS - YOUR DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Your Decision
1	Ospreys v Connacht	<a href="https://youtu.be/QBq2IIWJyg8">https://youtu.be/QBq2IIWJyg8</a>	
2	Northampton v Leinster	<a href="https://youtu.be/ZDv_ev0B1bl">https://youtu.be/ZDv_ev0B1bl</a>	
4	Cardiff Blues v Newport Gwent Dragons	<a href="https://youtu.be/JB4x-H721HM">https://youtu.be/JB4x-H721HM</a>	
5	Ospreys v Scarlets	<a href="https://youtu.be/L6iv6vm15vE">https://youtu.be/L6iv6vm15vE</a>	
6	Racing 92 v Castres Olympique	<a href="https://youtu.be/ODWY7-tmgZk">https://youtu.be/ODWY7-tmgZk</a>	
7	Newcastle Falcons v Wasps	<a href="https://youtu.be/jzMrt6h6beU">https://youtu.be/jzMrt6h6beU</a>	
8	Newcastle Falcons v Wasps	<a href="https://youtu.be/nGTuO_ycOhQ">https://youtu.be/nGTuO_ycOhQ</a>	
9	Ospreys v Connacht	<a href="https://youtu.be/j_dq_0ST-oM">https://youtu.be/j_dq_0ST-oM</a>	
10	Brive v Lyon Rugby	<a href="https://youtu.be/JwmDVGbMBrU">https://youtu.be/JwmDVGbMBrU</a>	



# EXERCISE 2

## ORIGINAL DECISION v CORRECT DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Original Decision	Notes
1	Ospreys v Connacht	<a href="https://youtu.be/QBq2IIWJyg8">https://youtu.be/QBq2IIWJyg8</a>	YC	Correct
2	Northampton v Leinster	<a href="https://youtu.be/ZDv_ev0B1bl">https://youtu.be/ZDv_ev0B1bl</a>	YC	Correct
4	Cardiff Blues v Newport Gwent Dragons	<a href="https://youtu.be/JB4x-H721HM">https://youtu.be/JB4x-H721HM</a>	YC	Correct
5	Ospreys v Scarlets	<a href="https://youtu.be/L6iv6vm15vE">https://youtu.be/L6iv6vm15vE</a>	YC	Correct
6	Racing 92 v Castres Olympique	<a href="https://youtu.be/0DWY7-tmgZk">https://youtu.be/0DWY7-tmgZk</a>	YC	Correct
7	Newcastle Falcons v Wasps	<a href="https://youtu.be/jZMrt6h6beU">https://youtu.be/jZMrt6h6beU</a>	PK	Should be YC
8	Newcastle Falcons v Wasps	<a href="https://youtu.be/nGTuO_ycOhQ">https://youtu.be/nGTuO_ycOhQ</a>	PK	Should be YC
9	Ospreys v Connacht	<a href="https://youtu.be/j_dq_0ST-oM">https://youtu.be/j_dq_0ST-oM</a>	PK	Should be YC
10	Brive v Lyon Rugby	<a href="https://youtu.be/JwmDVGbMBrU">https://youtu.be/JwmDVGbMBrU</a>	PK	Should be YC



# EXERCISE 3

## TACKLE ACTIONS – YOUR DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Your Decision
1	Harlequins v Timisoara	<a href="https://youtu.be/vWQFLoOIFNY">https://youtu.be/vWQFLoOIFNY</a>	
2	Harlequins v Timisoara	<a href="https://youtu.be/0pRL4d2I2m0">https://youtu.be/0pRL4d2I2m0</a>	
3	Leinster v Montpeiller	<a href="https://youtu.be/w9QDBh3BmVo">https://youtu.be/w9QDBh3BmVo</a>	
4	Scarlets v Cardiff Blues	<a href="https://youtu.be/aVVDwq4L2x8">https://youtu.be/aVVDwq4L2x8</a>	
5	Stade Francais v Toulouse	<a href="https://youtu.be/g5yuiNITof8">https://youtu.be/g5yuiNITof8</a>	
6	Racing 92 v Munster	<a href="https://youtu.be/Drh2B9FofnQ">https://youtu.be/Drh2B9FofnQ</a>	
7	Ireland v New Zealand – 19-Nov-2017	<a href="https://youtu.be/8Ykt58gOBSQ">https://youtu.be/8Ykt58gOBSQ</a>	



# EXERCISE 3

## ORIGINAL DECISION v CORRECT DECISION

	Match	You Tube link	Original Decision	Notes
1	Harlequins v Timisoara	<a href="https://youtu.be/vWQFLoOIFNY">https://youtu.be/vWQFLoOIFNY</a>	RC	Correct
2	Harlequins v Timisoara	<a href="https://youtu.be/0pRL4d2I2m0">https://youtu.be/0pRL4d2I2m0</a>	RC	Correct
3	Leinster v Montpellier	<a href="https://youtu.be/w9QDBh3BmVo">https://youtu.be/w9QDBh3BmVo</a>	RC	Correct
4	Scarlets v Cardiff Blues	<a href="https://youtu.be/aVVDwq4L2x8">https://youtu.be/aVVDwq4L2x8</a>	Play on	Should be RC
5	Stade Francais v Toulouse	<a href="https://youtu.be/g5yuiNITof8">https://youtu.be/g5yuiNITof8</a>	PK	Should be RC
6	Racing 92 v Munster	<a href="https://youtu.be/Drh2B9FofnQ">https://youtu.be/Drh2B9FofnQ</a>	PK	Should be RC
7	Ireland v New Zealand	<a href="https://youtu.be/8Ykt58gOBSQ">https://youtu.be/8Ykt58gOBSQ</a>	YC	Should be RC



## SUMMARY

- New Law application is a continuation of commitment to enhance player safety, which remains paramount.
- Collective responsibility of players, coaches and referees to be proactive in changing culture.
- Referees are reminded the “**CLEAR and OBVIOUS**” principle applies. Be clear on the action that occurred and precise in communicating the decision.

