



**LAW & REGULATION  
UPDATES  
FOR SEASON  
2019/20**

**Areas covered:**

- RFU Regulation 15      Half Game Rule
- RFU      Game On
- Law 3.33c      Tactical Replacements Re-Joining The Match
- Law 4      Goggles RFU Regulation
- Law 9      Decision Making Framework for High Tackles
- Law 19.10b      Scrum Engagement

## RFU Regulation 15.12 – Age Grade Rugby

### Half Game Rule

1. Each player selected in every match day squad plays at least half of the Available Playing Time.

This requirement is mandatory across the entire age grade game and in respect of all contact and non-contact age grade matches, including 7 a-side matches and festivals/tournament matches

2. U18 Academy Competition **only**, all clubs must ensure that each player selected in every match day squad plays at least 20% of the Available Playing Time



## RFU Regulation 15.12 – Age Grade Rugby

### Half Game Rule

3. Available Playing Time' means the total amount of playing time available to a team on any particular day
4. Regulation 15.12.1 will not apply in the event that a player is permanently removed from the match:
  - a) due to an injury incurred during the match;
  - b) as a result of a bona fide risk of injury; or
  - c) as a result of a red card or in the event of the referee requesting that a player be permanently removed from the match

- The Regulation change can be found at

<https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations/regulation-15-age-grade-rugby>

## RFU Regulation 15.12 – Age Grade Rugby

### Half Game Rule

#### **I am a referee, what can I do to support the half-game rule?**

- Referees, like all others involved in Age Grade rugby, have a key role in supporting a great player experience
- Referees should agree with coaches from both teams prior to the game, how they wish to implement the half-game rule – i.e. rolling subs, or during set breaks. Referees can help by reminding coaches of this as the game progresses
- Once the game has commenced the referee has no role to play in the application of the half game rule
- We are not asking referees to enforce this locally by stopping the game or awarding sanctions, the coaches (or team managers) are responsible for complying with the regulation

# GAME ON!

NOT GOT AN ADULT 15?  
SWIPE LEFT FOR  
SOME OPTIONS TO  
KEEP THE GAME ON!



**WE PLAY**  
**WE RUGBY**



## What is it?

An initiative and playing philosophy

From season 2019/20 will be in regulation for all friendlies, and all matches in competitions **OUTSIDE** the RFU English Clubs Championship, for men and women

# GAMEON!

Builds on some of the work and initiatives already happening to get games played

Overcome some other barriers by reducing the complexity of the game



## Some laws...

<b>Law 3.2: Team Numbers</b>	A match can take place with a minimum of 10 players on each team at the start of the match. It is encouraged that the number of players on each team is equal, subject to the laws of the game.
<b>Law 5.3: Match Duration</b>	A match can be a minimum of 40 minutes in duration.
<b>Law 3.34: Rolling substitutions</b>	Rolling substitutions are permitted in accordance with paragraphs [3(a) to 3(b)] above.
<b>Law 3.34: Half Game rule</b>	Where rolling substitutions are adopted, teams are encouraged to apply the half game rule to ensure each player in every match day squad plays at least half of the Available Playing Time (as defined in RFU Regulation 1).
<b>Law 18: Line outs</b>	Teams may agree not to contest or lift in the line out
<b>Law 19: Scrums</b>	Teams may agree that scrums will be uncontested



Some regs...

- Both teams must agree which of the Game On Principles will apply to the match, and notify the referee accordingly at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off
- If both teams cannot agree which principles to apply, the match will proceed without the application of the Game On Principles.
- Competition organisers may request for the Game On Principles not to apply to a competition. To do this, they apply in writing to the RFU Head of Regulations

Why are we doing this?

- Around one third of lower level XV matches aren't played: **WE NEED TO ENABLE THESE MATCHES TO GET PLAYED**
- The NRS shows that a quarter of players would play more rugby if they knew of available opportunities to enjoy more social and turn up and play rugby: **WE NEED TO LISTEN TO OUR PLAYERS WHO ARE LOOKING FOR DIFFERENT PLAYING OFFERS**
- Rugby is maintaining participation, largely driven by the female and age grade game. The number of planned and completed matches in the adult male game is falling: **MORE MATCHES = MORE PEOPLE IN CLUBS = MORE SUBS & MONEY BEHIND THE BAR = MORE SUSTAINABLE CLUBS**
- Game on is **one possible solution** to getting more matches played. It has been utilised across Wales and Ireland in different ways with some success.

# GAMEON!

**NOT GOT A FULL 15?  
HERE ARE SOME OPTIONS  
TO KEEP THE GAME ON!**



**WE PLAY  
RUGBY**



## MATCH LENGTH

MINIMUM OF 40 MINS  
IN TOTAL



## ROLLING SUBS

PLAYERS ABLE TO RETURN  
TO THE FIELD OF PLAY



## LINE-OUT

TEAMS MAY AGREE  
NOT TO CONTEST OR  
LIFT IN THE LINE OUT



**HALF  
GAME**

## HALF GAME RULE

ALL PLAYERS TO PLAY  
AT LEAST HALF A MATCH



## MINIMUM 10 PLAYERS

TEAMS FROM 10 TO 15 A SIDE.  
EQUAL NUMBERS ENCOURAGED



## SCRUMS

TEAMS MAY AGREE THAT SCRUMS  
WILL BE UNCONTESTED

CONFIRM WITH OPPONENT AND MATCH OFFICIALS PRIOR TO MATCH

FOR MORE INFORMATION [ENGLANDRUGBY.COM/GAMEON](http://ENGLANDRUGBY.COM/GAMEON)

**CONFIRM WITH OPPONENT  
AND MATCH OFFICIALS  
PRIOR TO MATCH**

**GAMEON!**



- For further information  
<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/game-on>

**Law 3 – Team**     ***Law 3.33c (Tactical Replacements Joining The Match)***

A Player Welfare driven law which changes Law 3.33c:

33.        Tactically replaced players may return to play only when replacing,

- a. An injured front-row player
- b. A player with a blood injury
- c. A player with a head injury
- d. A player who has just been injured as a result of Foul play (as verified by the match officials)
- d. The nominated player described in Law 3.19 or 3.20

*The amendment to Law 3.33c will now mean that in “Recognise & Remove” games players who sustain a head injury can now be replaced by a player who has been previously tactically substituted*

- The Law change can be found at <https://laws.worldrugby.org/?law=3>



## Law 4 – Players' Clothing

***Headline from 28/05/2019***

### **World Rugby approves game-changing goggles law**

World Rugby has approved a game-changing amendment to the laws of the game that will enable the wearing of goggles at all levels of the game, reaffirming the sport's commitment to inclusivity.

This does not apply to games played subject to RFU Regulation, where a **Sports Goggle & Eyewear** trial is being conducted ...

- For further details

<https://www.englandrugby.com/dxdam/9f/9fc5e605-d855-42c7-b24b-c74237df589e/new%20sports%20goggles%20and%20eyewear.pdf>

## Law 4 – Players' Clothing

# RUGBYSAFE ESSENTIAL GUIDE



## Sports Goggles & Eyewear

The wearing of spectacles is prohibited for any type of contact rugby activity. However, both prescription glasses and sunglasses are permitted for non-contact activities such as touch rugby and Under 8 and below age grade variations.

The use of sports goggles is currently being trialled by the RFU, enabling the wearing of certain sport goggles by players playing contact rugby at the Under 13 age grade and below, provided certain conditions are satisfied. In exceptional circumstances U14s and above may also take part in the trial if additional conditions are satisfied. Please note that this trial differs from the World Rugby trial and is a variation of the RFU's regulations, which prohibits the wearing of all types of goggles in contact rugby.



Goggles may be worn to provide protection e.g. for a medical condition or by a player having lost the sight in one eye and wanting to protect the remaining eye from injury, or to enhance vision where contact lenses can't be worn. This latter situation is often resolved in children, as by the time a child reaches 14 (or shortly afterwards) they may be able to wear contact lenses.

- For further details

<https://www.englandrugby.com/dxdam/9f/9fc5e605-d855-42c7-b24b-c74237df589e/new%20sports%20goggles%20and%20eyewear.pdf>

## Law 9 – Foul Play



### Decision making framework for high tackles

#### ? What is a framework?

A framework is a systematic tool that guides decision making

- Logical, step by step approach to the problem

#### ? What is the goal of a framework?

Guide users to arrive at decisions that are:

- Consistent
- Accurate
- Objective (can be explained even with allowable disagreements)

#### ? What is the purpose of this framework?

Under Law 9.11, the referee is always entitled to issue a red or yellow card for anything that they deem to be reckless or dangerous. However, the following guideline is intended to improve consistency in application of sanctions by distinguishing between dangerous tackles that warrant a penalty, yellow card or red card. The framework also supports protection of the head of both players by consistently and frequently sanctioning the tackle behaviour that is known to be the highest risk.



## Law 9 – Foul Play



### Decision making framework for high tackles

Three step process to use the framework

#### INITIAL DECISION

#### Is the tackle a shoulder charge or high tackle?

##### DEFINITIONS

- **Shoulder charge:** Arm of the shoulder making contact with the ball carrier is behind the tackler's body or tucked in 'sling' position at contact
- **High tackle:** An illegal tackle causing head contact, where head contact is identified by clear contact to ball carriers head/neck OR the head visibly moves backwards from the contact point OR the ball carrier requires an HIA

*Note: the head's first movement is back in a head-contact tackle or head-contact shoulder charge, and forward in a 'body-contact' tackle or 'body-contact' shoulder charge*

#### IF SHOULDER CHARGE or HIGH TACKLE:

1. Was there BC head/neck contact?
2. What is the degree of danger – high or low?
3. Are there clear and obvious mitigating factors?\*

*\*For mitigation, only one reduction in sanction can apply, irrespective of the number of mitigating factors present*

## Law 9 – Foul Play



# Decision making framework for high tackles

### DEFINITION

**Shoulder charge:** Arm of the shoulder making contact with the ball carrier is behind the tackler's body or tucked in 'sling' position at contact

### DEFINITION

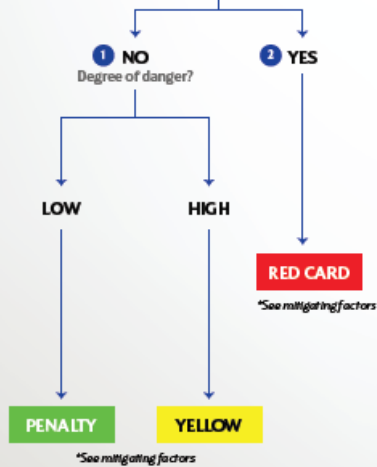
**High tackle:** An illegal tackle causing head contact, where head contact is identified by clear, contact to BC head/ neck OR the head visibly moves backwards from the contact point OR the ball carrier requires an HIA

### VIDEO SIGNS INDICATING HIGHER DEGREE OF DANGER

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Preparation</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tackler draws the arm back prior to contact</li> <li>Tackler may leave the ground</li> <li>Arm swings forward prior to contact</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Contact</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tackler is attempting an active/dominant tackle, as opposed to passive/soak, or "pulling out" of contact</li> <li>Tackler speed and/or acceleration into tackle is high</li> <li>Rigid arm or elbow makes contact with BC head as part of a swinging motion</li> </ul> |
| <b>Follow through</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tackler completes the tackle (as opposed to immediate release/withdrawal)</li> </ul>   |

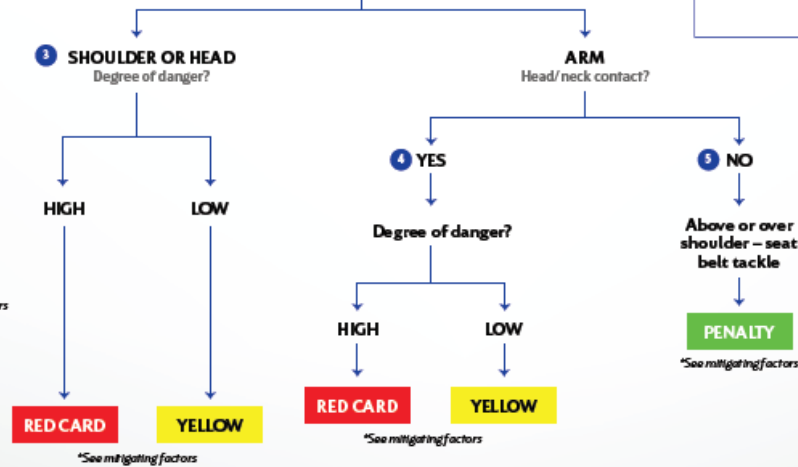
### SHOULDER CHARGE

Head/neck contact?



### HIGH TACKLE

High contact by tackler's...



Factors to consider against mitigation:

- If the tackler and BC are in open space and the tackler has clear line of sight and/ or time before contact

Mitigating factors (must be clear and obvious and can only be applied to reduce a sanction by 1 level)

- Tackler makes a definite attempt to change height in an effort to avoid ball carrier's head
- BC suddenly drops in height (e.g. From earlier tackle, trips/falls, dives to score)
- Tackler is unsighted prior to contact
- "Reactionary" tackle, immediate release
- contact is indirect (starts elsewhere on the body and then slips or moves up resulting in minor contact to the BC's head or neck)




**WORLD  
RUGBY™**

## POTENTIAL FOUL PLAY HIGH TACKLE

- Video resource

**SHOULDER CHARGE**




Q1. WAS THERE BALL CARRIER HEAD/NECK CONTACT?

Q2. WHAT IS THE DEGREE OF DANGER?

Q3. ARE THERE CLEAR AND OBVIOUS MITIGATING FACTORS?



**HIGH TACKLE**



Q1. WAS THE BALL CARRIER HEAD/NECK CONTACT FROM THE TACKLER'S SHOULDER, HEAD OR ARM?

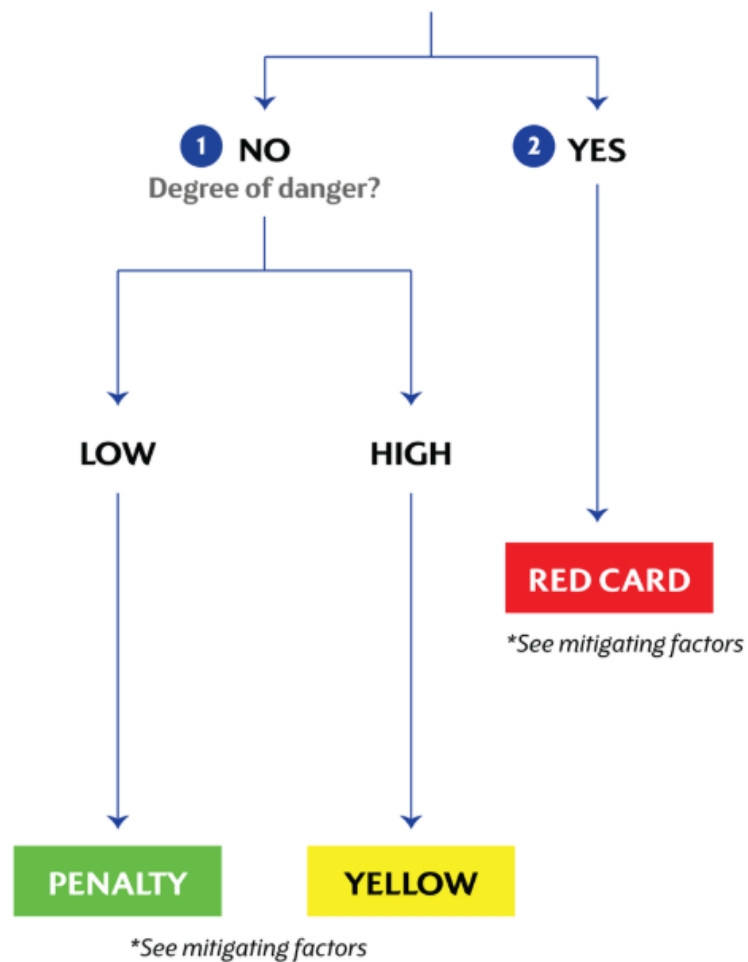
Q2. WHAT IS THE DEGREE OF DANGER?

Q3. ARE THERE CLEAR AND OBVIOUS MITIGATING FACTORS?

- Video: 1 minute 25 seconds

SHOULDER CHARGE

SHOULDER CHARGE



- Video: 1 minute 35 seconds

**Q2. WHAT IS THE DEGREE OF DANGER?**

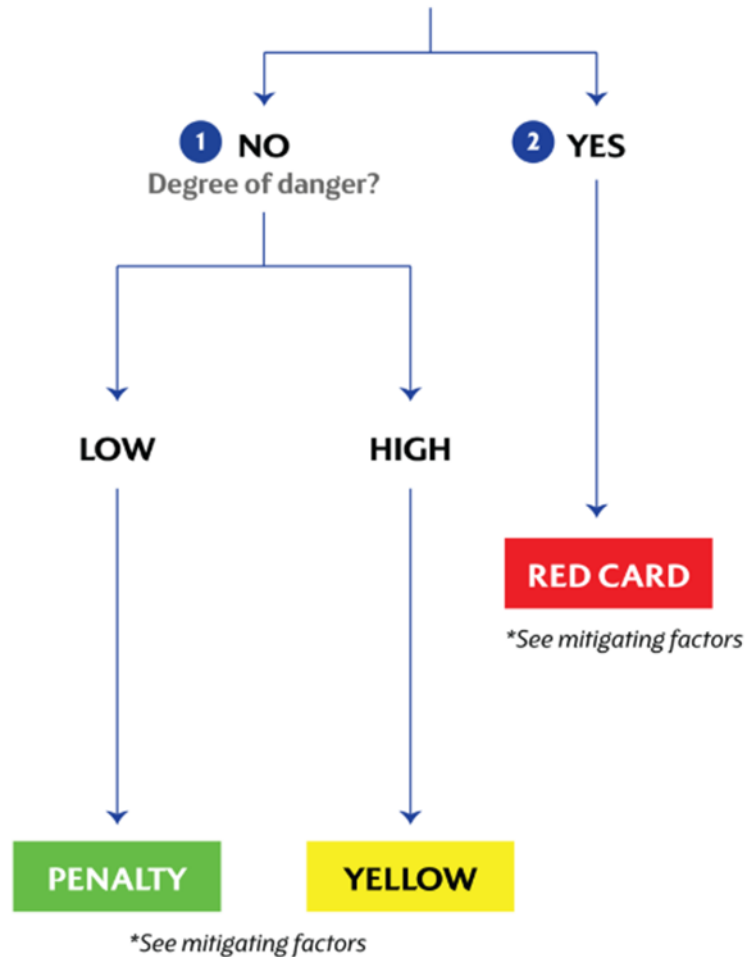
**HIGHER DEGREE OF DANGER**

- Tackler draws the arm back prior to contact
- Tackler leaves the ground
- Arm swings forward prior to contact
- Tackler is attempting an active/dominant tackle, as opposed to passive/soak, or “pulling out” of contact
- Tackler speed and/or acceleration into tackle is high
- Rigid arm or elbow makes contact with ball carrier’s head as part of a swinging motion
- Tackler completes the tackle

- Video: 2 minute 5 seconds

**SHOULDER CHARGE**

Head/neck contact?



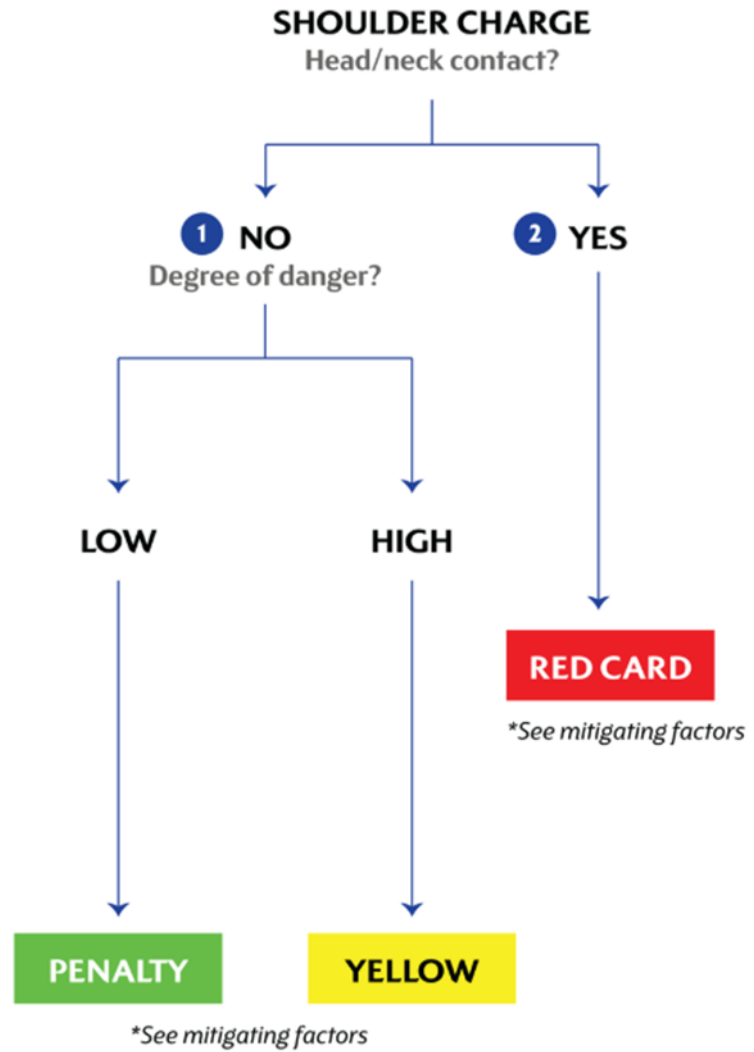
**HIGH TACKLE**  
High contact by tackler's...

**Q3. ARE THERE CLEAR AND OBVIOUS MITIGATING FACTORS?**

- FACTORS AGAINST MITIGATION:**
- If the tackler and ball carrier are in open space and the tackler has clear line of sight and/or time before contact
  - Mitigation should not be applied

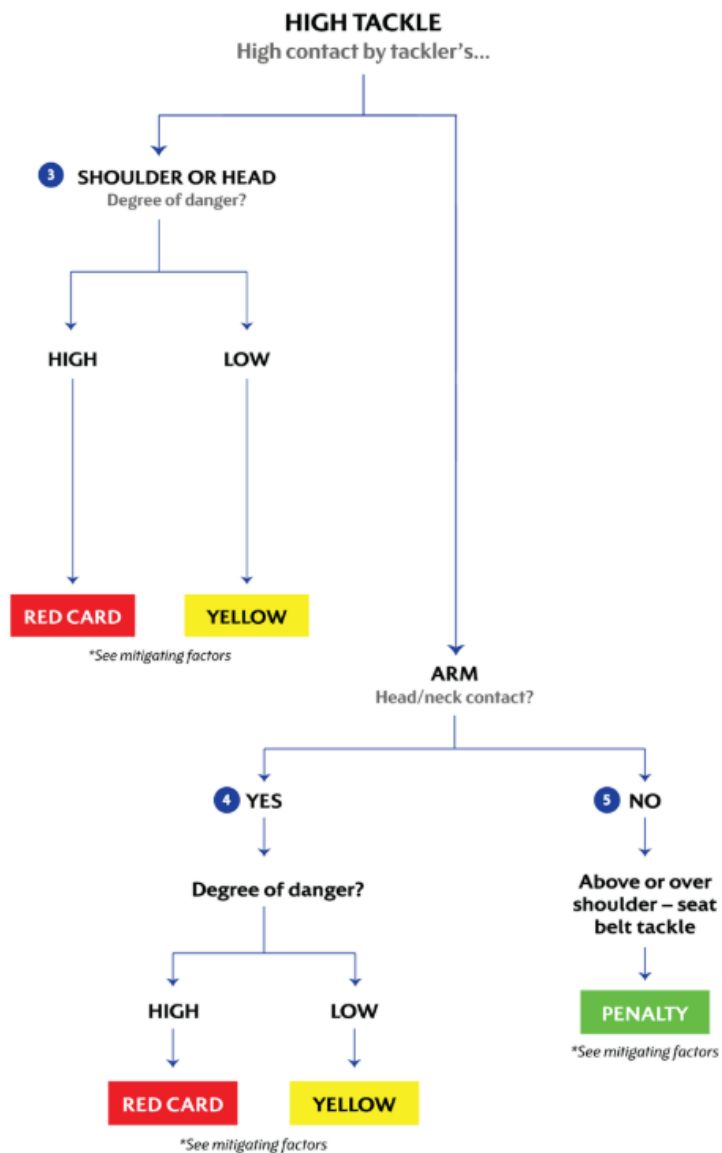
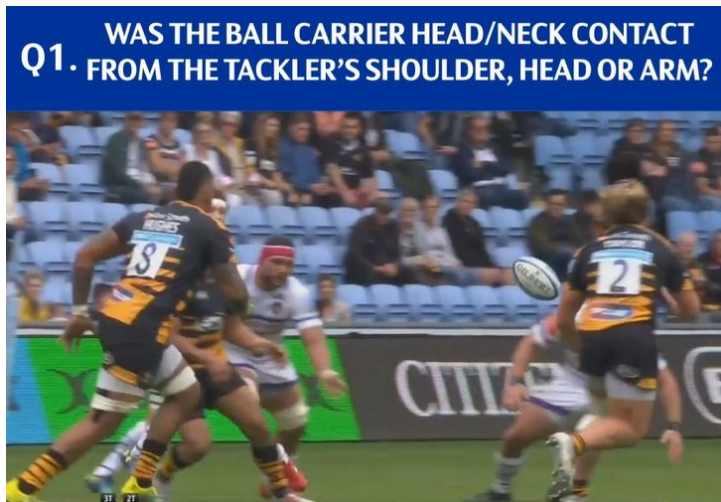
- MITIGATING FACTORS:**
- Tackler makes a definite attempt to change height in an effort to avoid ball carrier's head
  - Ball carrier suddenly drops in height
  - Tackler is unsighted prior to contact
  - "Reactionary" tackle, immediate release
  - Head contact is indirect - arm slips or moves up, with minor head or neck contact
- CLEAR AND OBVIOUS**

- Video: 2 minute 50 seconds



**HIGH TACKLE**  
High contact by tackler's...

## HIGH TACKLE



- Video: 3 minute 50 seconds

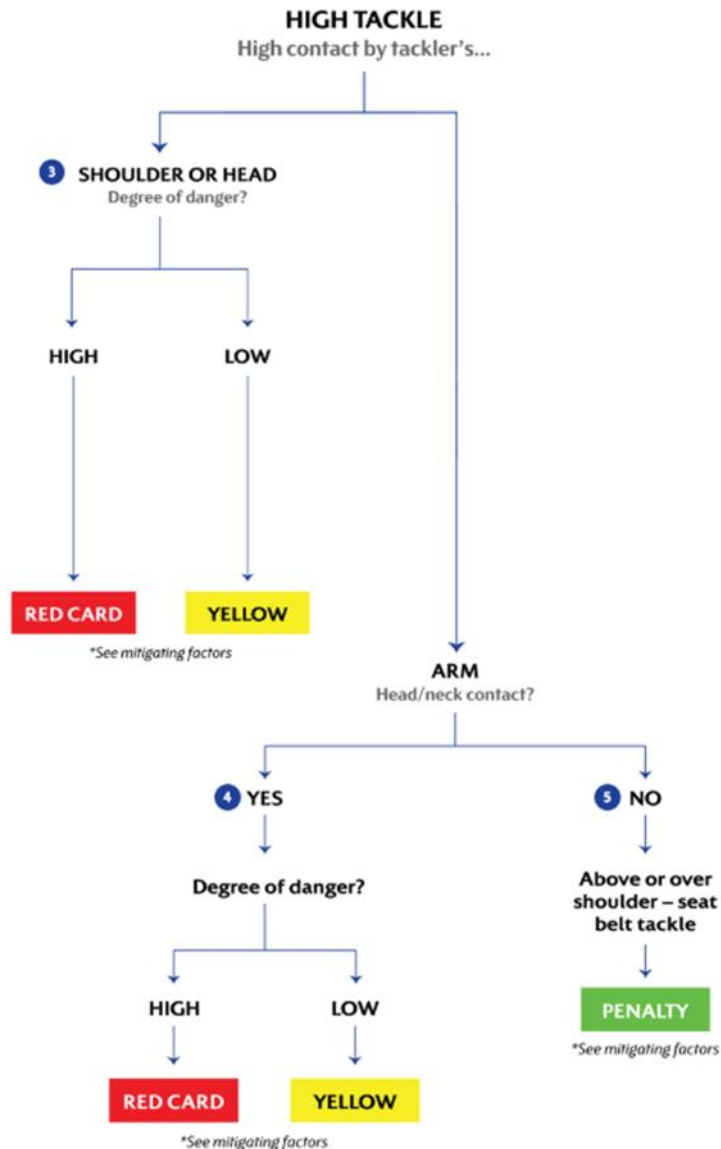


**Q2. WHAT IS THE DEGREE OF DANGER?**

**HIGHER DEGREE OF DANGER**

- Tackler draws the arm back prior to contact
- Tackler leaves the ground
- Arm swings forward prior to contact
- Tackler is attempting an active/dominant tackle, as opposed to passive/soak, or “pulling out” of contact
- Tackler speed and/or acceleration into tackle is high
- Rigid arm or elbow makes contact with ball carrier’s head as part of a swinging motion
- Tackler completes the tackle

• Video: 4 minute 15 seconds



**Q3. ARE THERE CLEAR AND OBVIOUS MITIGATING FACTORS?**

**FACTORS AGAINST MITIGATION:**

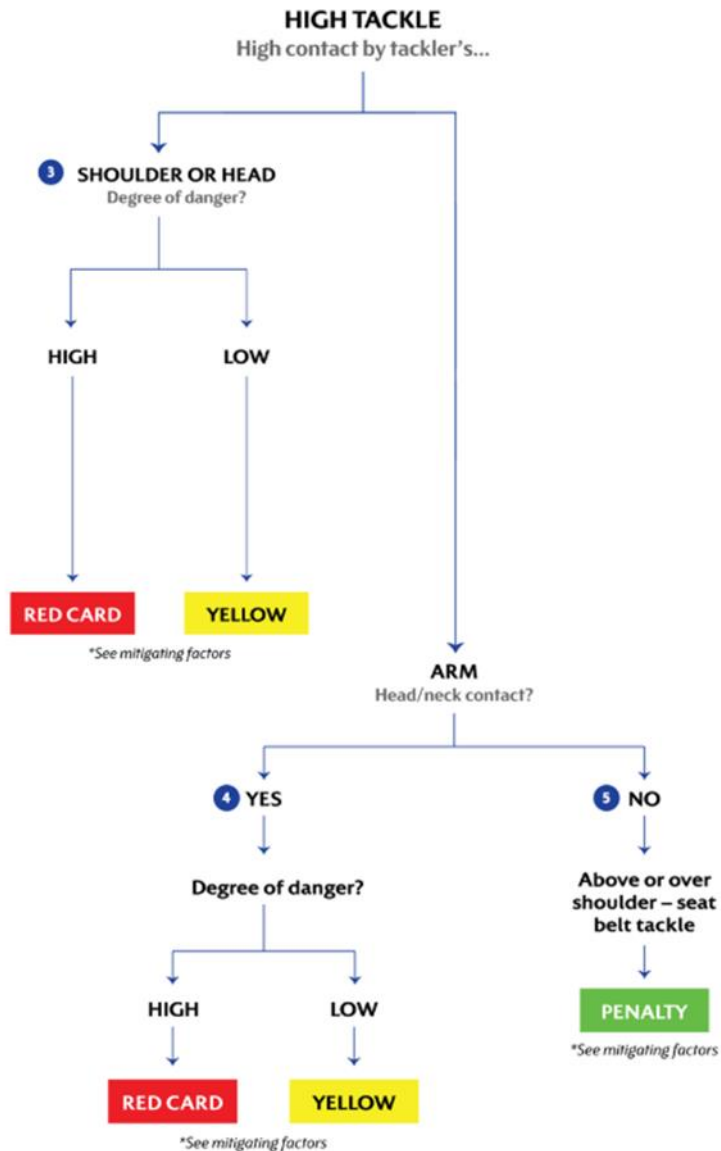
- If the tackler and ball carrier are in open space and the tackler has clear line of sight and/or time before contact
- Mitigation should not be applied

**MITIGATING FACTORS:**

- Tackler makes a definite attempt to change height in an effort to avoid ball carrier's head
- Ball carrier suddenly drops in height
- Tackler is unsighted prior to contact
- "Reactionary" tackle, immediate release
- Head contact is indirect - arm slips or moves up, with minor head or neck contact

**CLEAR AND OBVIOUS**

- Video: 5 minute 10 seconds



## Summary



# Decision making framework for high tackles

Summary of tackle circumstances warranting range of sanctions

### RED CARD

- Shoulder charge (no arms tackle) to the head or neck of the ball carrier, and mitigation is not applied
- High tackle with any contact between the tackler's shoulder or head and the BC's head or neck, with high degree of danger, and mitigation is not applied
- High tackle with first contact from the tackler's arm to the BC's head or neck, with high degree of danger, and mitigation is not applied

### YELLOW CARD

- Any red card offence where mitigation is applied (as per framework)
- Shoulder charge to the body (no head or neck contact), with high degree of danger
- High tackle with any contact between the tackler's shoulder or head and the BC's head or neck, with low degree of danger, and mitigation is not applied
- High tackle with contact from the tackler's arm to the BC's head or neck with low degree of danger, and mitigation is not applied
- High tackle with contact from the tackler's arm, which starts elsewhere on the body and then slips or moves up resulting in minor contact to the BC's head or neck, with high degree of danger, and mitigation is not applied

### PENALTY

- Any yellow card offence where mitigation is applied (as per framework)
- Shoulder charge to the body (no head or neck contact), with low degree of danger
- High tackle with first contact from the tackler's arm, which starts elsewhere on the body and then slips or moves up resulting in minor contact to the BC's head or neck, with low degree of danger and no mitigating factors
- High tackle with first contact above or over the shoulder of the ball carrier, but without contact to the head or neck of the ball carrier during the execution of the tackle (seat belt tackle)

## Law 19 – Scrum - *Law 19.10b*      ***Engagement***

The scrum law change will prevent 'pre-loading' where front row players place the crown of their heads on opponents shoulders between the "bind" and "set" calls. This action causes axial loads that can adversely impact player welfare.

- The Law change can be found at <https://laws.worldrugby.org/?law=19>

**It is important to incorporate this into your FRONT ROW Briefing**



**Law 19 – Scrum - Law 19.10b**      **Engagement**

10. When both sides are square, stable and stationary, the referee calls “crouch”.

a. The front-rows then adopt a crouched position if they have not already done so. Their heads and shoulders are no lower than their hips, a position that is maintained for the duration of the scrum.

*b. The front-rows crouch with their heads to the left of their immediate opponents’, so that no player’s head is touching the neck or shoulders of an opponent.*

**Sanction: Free-kick.**



THE  
GAME  
OF OUR  
LIVES