

FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL TOUCH INC.

# Playing Rules



FEDERATION  
OF INTERNATIONAL  
TOUCH

4th Edition, 2012

## **FOREWORD**

This is the Fourth Edition of the Federation of International Touch (FIT) Playing Rules. This Edition is issued following a review of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Playing Rules by the Federation Playing Rules Commission (FPRC) during the period September 2010 to November 2011. The Terms of Reference for that sub-committee were directed towards clarification and simplification, with the intent to not make significant change to the meaning of any rule.

Members of the FPRC included Darrin Sykes (Chair, New Zealand), Peter Faassen de Heer (Scotland), Lou Tompkins (Australia), Tony Trad (Australia), Paula Wanakore (New Zealand) and Dennis Coffey (FIT Secretary General).

The Touch Playing Rules are to be used for all international competition. It is also recommended by the FPRC and the FIT Board that all FIT Members and Developing Nations implement these Playing Rules at domestic level. Players and officials should consult domestic authorities for further details.

These Playing Rules are issued under the authority of the Federation of International Touch Inc. and are subject to international copyright laws. The Playing Rules will be subject to a full review in the near future.

On behalf of the FIT Board



Dennis Coffey  
Secretary General  
5<sup>th</sup> April 2012

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## RULE 1: Definitions and Terminology

1. **Definitions.** Unless the contrary intention appears the following definitions and terminology apply to the game of Touch:

<b>TERM / PHRASE</b>	<b>DEFINITION / DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Advantage</b>	<i>A part of play which gives one team the potential to improve their situation relative to the other team.</i>
<b>Affiliate</b>	<i>The legitimate, subordinate association or governing body with a constitutional connection to a Member.</i>
<b>Attacking Team</b>	<i>The team which has or is gaining Possession.</i>
<b>Attacking Scoreline</b>	<i>The line on or over which a player has to place the ball to Score a Touchdown.</i>
<b>Behind</b>	<i>A position or direction towards a team's defending Scoreline.</i>
<b>Compulsory Interchange</b>	<i>A sanction issued to a player by a referee for an offence less serious than an offence leading to a dismissal. See Forced Substitution.</i>
<b>Dead Ball</b>	<i>When the ball is out of play and includes the period following a Touch until the ball is brought back into play at a Rollball, the period following a Touchdown or Penalty until the match is recommenced, and when the ball goes to ground and / or outside the boundaries of the Field of Play prior to the subsequent Rollball.</i>
<b>Change of Possession</b>	<i>The act of moving control of the ball from one team to the other. This is called the "Changeover".</i>
<b>Dead Ball Line</b>	<i>The end boundaries of the Field of Play. There is one at each end of the Field of Play.</i>
<b>Defending Scoreline</b>	<i>The line which a team has to defend to prevent a Touchdown.</i>
<b>Defending Team</b>	<i>The team without or which is losing Possession.</i>
<b>Deliver</b>	<i>To part with the ball.</i>
<b>Dismissal</b>	<i>When a player is sent from the Field of Play either for a period of time or for the rest of the match. The dismissed player cannot be substituted.</i>
<b>Drop Off</b>	<i>A procedure used to determine a winner following equal scores at the expiration of normal Duration.</i>
<b>Duration</b>	<i>The length of time a competition match lasts, which is normally forty-five minutes, inclusive of a five (5) minute Half Time.</i>
<b>End of Play</b>	<i>When the Referee indicates completion of the match when the ball next becomes dead following expiration of the duration of the game.</i>

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<b>Federation Member</b>	<i>A geographic region or country governed by a national Touch Association or equivalent that meets the Federation of International Touch membership requirements.</i>
<b>Field of Play</b>	<i>The playing area bounded by the Sidelines and Dead Ball Lines, both of which are out of bounds. See Figure 1 on Page 8.</i>
<b>FIT</b>	<i>The Federation of International Touch Inc., the global governing body for the sport of Touch, under whose authority these Playing Rules are issued.</i>
<b>Forced Substitution</b>	<i>When a player is required to undertake a compulsory interchange for an infringement ruled more serious than a Penalty but less serious than formal dismissal. See Compulsory Interchange.</i>
<b>Forward</b>	<i>A position or direction towards a team's attacking Scoreline.</i>
<b>Full Time</b>	<i>The expiration of the second period of time allowed for play.</i>
<b>Half</b>	<i>The player who takes Possession following a Rollball.</i>
<b>Half Pass</b>	<i>A pass made from the ground by the Half immediately following a Rollball.</i>
<b>Half Time</b>	<i>The expiration of the first period of time allowed for play that includes a five (5) minute break in play.</i>
<b>Infringement</b>	<i>The action of a player contrary to the rules of the game.</i>
<b>Interchange</b>	<i>The act of changing an on-field player moving from the Field of Play with an off-field player entering the Field of Play.</i>
<b>Interchange Area</b>	<i>A marked rectangle for each Team on opposite sides of the Field of Play measuring twenty (20) meters long by no more than five (5) meters wide, extending ten (10) meters either side of the half-way line and not less than one (1) meter from the Sideline. It is the area in which all off-field team players must remain until an Interchange is initiated.</i>
<b>Line Markings</b>	<i>Markings indicating the boundaries of the Field of Play, the Scorelines and five (5) meter lines, the Halfway Line and ten (10) meter lines, and the Substitution Boxes. The ten (10) meter and five (5) meter lines are broken or dotted lines.</i>
<b>Link Member</b>	<i>The player beside the Wing player. There are two in each team. See Federation Member.</i>
<b>Mark (for a Touch)</b>	<i>The position in the Field of Play below the centre of gravity of the player in possession at the time the Touch was made.</i>
<b>Mark (for a Tap)</b>	<i>The centre of the halfway line for the commencement or recommencement of play, or the position where a Penalty Tap is awarded as a result of an Infringement.</i>
<b>Middle</b>	<i>The player inside the Link player. There are two in each team.</i>
<b>Near (Scoreline)</b>	<i>The player in Possession is within fifteen (15) meters of the Attacking Scoreline.</i>

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<b>Obstruction</b>	<i>A deliberate attempt by either an attacking or defending player to gain an unfair advantage by interfering with the opposition to prevent them from gaining a rightful advantage.</i>
<b>Offside (General Play)</b>	<i>An attacking or defending player in position liable to Penalty.</i>
<b>Offside (at Rollball)</b>	<i>A position Forward of the ball for an attacking player. A position no closer than a minimum of five (5) meters from the line of the Rollball for a defending player.</i>
<b>Offside (at Tap)</b>	<i>A position Forward of the ball for an attacking player. A position no closer than a minimum of ten (10) meters to the line of the Tap for a defending player.</i>
<b>Onside</b>	<i>A position whereby a player may legitimately become involved with play.</i>
<b>Pass</b>	<i>The act of changing Possession between individual attacking players by propelling the ball laterally and / or backwards, and may include a flick, knock or throw.</i>
<b>Penalty</b>	<i>The Ruling by a Referee to award a Tap when a player or team infringes the rules of the game.</i>
<b>Possession</b>	<i>Refers to the player or team that has control of the ball.</i>
<b>Rebound</b>	<i>When the ball deflects from, or makes contact with a player, other than the player who first had Possession.</i>
<b>Referee</b>	<i>The match official appointed to make Rulings during the conduct of a game. There may be more than one.</i>
<b>Rollball</b>	<i>The act of bringing the ball into play following a Touch or a Change of Possession. The attacking player is to position on the Mark, face the opponent's (defending) Scoreline, stand parallel to the sidelines, and either place the ball on the ground between the feet in a controlled manner or roll the ball back no more than one meter. Once the ball is placed on the Mark, the attacking player may step over the ball. There is no requirement for the ball to be picked up to perform the Rollball.</i>
<b>Ruck</b>	<i>The area in the immediate vicinity of the Rollball including the player performing the Rollball or dump, the Half and all defending players involved in the area of the Touch.</i>
<b>Ruling</b>	<i>The decision made by a Referee as a result of particular circumstances and may result in a Play On, a Tap, Change of Possession or a Touchdown.</i>
<b>Sidelines</b>	<i>The side boundaries of the Field of Play. There are two.</i>
<b>Score</b>	<i>The act that results in a Touchdown.</i>
<b>Shooter</b>	<i>Defending player who moves Forward quickly.</i>
<b>Substitute Player</b>	<i>The player who replaces another player during Interchange. There is a maximum of eight (8) substitute players in any team and except when interchanging or on the Field of Play, they must remain in the</i>

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*Substitution Box.*

<b>Substitution Box</b>	<i>See Interchange Area.</i>
<b>Tap</b>	<i>The method of commencing the match, recommencing the match after half time and after a Touchdown has been scored. The Tap is also the method of recommencing play when a Penalty is awarded. The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the Mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball gently with either foot or touching the foot on the ball. The ball must not roll or move more than one (1) meter and must be retrieved cleanly without retouching the ground. The player may face any direction and use either foot. Provided it is at or not more than ten (10) meters behind the Mark, the ball does not have to be lifted from the ground prior to a Tap being taken.</i>
<b>Team</b>	<i>A group of players constituting one side in a competition match.</i>
<b>Touch</b>	<i>Legitimate and minimal contact between the player in Possession and a defending player. A Touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and may be made by a defending player or by the player in Possession.</i>
<b>Touchdown</b>	<i>The result of any attacking player except the Half placing the ball on or over the team's Attacking Scoreline before being touched.</i>
<b>Touchdown Area</b>	<i>The area in the Field of Play bounded by the Sidelines, the Scorelines and the Dead Ball Lines. There are two, one at each end of the Field of Play.</i>
<b>Touch Count</b>	<i>The progressive number of Touches that each team has before a Change of Possession, from zero (0) to six (6).</i>
<b>Wing</b>	<i>The player positioned on the outside of a team in the Field of Play. There are two in each team.</i>
<b>Winner</b>	<i>The team that scores the most Touchdowns during the match.</i>

## **RULE 2: Field of Play and the Ball**

- 2.1 **Field of Play.** The Field of Play is rectangular in shape measuring seventy (70) meters in length from Scoreline to Scoreline excluding the Touchdown Areas and fifty (50) meters in width from Sideline to Sideline excluding the Interchange Areas. Variations to dimensions of the Field of Play must be included in tournament conditions.
- 2.2 **Line Markings.** Line Markings should be 4cm in width but must be no less than 2.5cm. Line markings are to be laid out as shown in Figure 1 - The Field of Play. Sidelines extend five (5) meters beyond the Scorelines to join Dead Ball Lines and define the Touchdown Areas which measure fifty (50) meters by five (5) meters. Sideline markings and Dead Ball Line markings are outside the Field of Play.
- 2.3 **Interchange Areas.** The Interchange Areas (Substitution Boxes) are located no closer than one (1) meter from each Sideline.
- 2.4 **Corner Markers.** Suitably sized Markers or cones of a distinguishing colour and made from safe and pliable material should be positioned at all line intersections and are to be positioned at the intersections of:
  - 2.4.1 Sidelines and Scorelines;
  - 2.4.2 Sidelines and Dead Ball Lines; and
  - 2.4.3 Halfway Line and Sidelines.
- 2.5 **Playing Surface.** The playing surface is normally grass. Other surfaces approved by the Federation of International Touch may be used. Ground surfaces which may cause injury are not to be used.
- 2.6 **The Ball.** The game is played with an oval, inflated ball of a shape, colour and size approved by the Federation of International Touch. The ball shall be inflated to the recommended air pressure and is to be the officially sanctioned ball endorsed by the Federation from time to time. Unless otherwise advised in specific tournament conditions the approved ball size is 36cm long and 55cm in circumference.



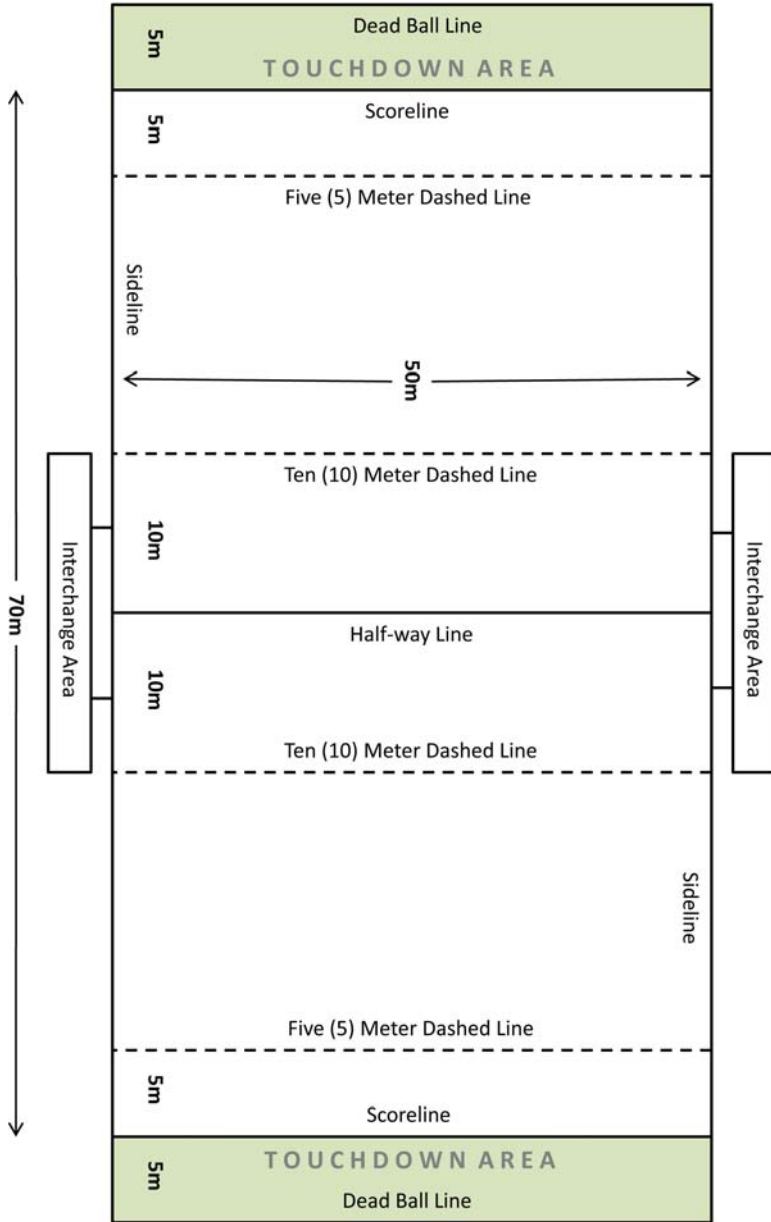


Figure 1: Field of Play

## **RULE 3: Player Eligibility and Playing Uniform**

- 3.1 Eligibility. Participating players are to be registered with the Federation Member or by an authorized affiliate of the Member. International players must meet the eligibility criteria contained in FIT Operational Policy No 3 – Player Eligibility. Teams using unregistered or unauthorized players are liable to forfeit those matches.
- 3.2 Playing Uniform. Participating players are to be correctly attired in team uniforms approved by the Member, Affiliate Member, or by the Federation for international events. Playing uniforms consist of upper apparel, shorts (or briefs for female players) and socks. Appropriate one piece uniforms are allowed. Hats or caps are allowed provided they are safe and meet team uniform requirements.
- 3.3 Footwear. Safe footwear must be worn. Exceptions may be allowed for game variants such as Beach Touch. Shoes with screw-in studs or with long, metal or dangerous cleats are not allowed.
- 3.4 Identification Numbers. All players are to wear an identifying number not less than sixteen centimeters (16cm) in height, clearly displayed on the rear of the upper garment. Numbers may be positioned on both sleeves as an alternative providing the numbers are not less than eight centimeters (8cm) in height. Numbers may also be worn on the lower garment in addition to the upper garment. Players in a team must not wear the same number. Numbers must be visible, are restricted to two-digit numbers and should be sequential. Player identification numbers for Federation Events must be between 1 and 16.
- 3.5 Jewellery and Fingernails. Players are not to participate in any match while wearing any item of jewellery, chain, identification band or similar item that may prove dangerous. Long or sharp fingernails are not allowed. Jewellery or other items that cannot be removed, or dangerous fingernails, are to be taped.
- 3.6 Other Items. Players may wear spectacles or sunglasses provided they are safe and securely attached, or meet guidelines specified by the respective Member or Affiliate Member. Medical supports such as knee or ankle braces may also be worn provided they are not harmful. Dangerous items are not to be worn.
- 3.7 Member Responsibility. Competition organizers and deliverers have a duty of care to all participants and that duty of care and participant safety remain paramount. Minor variations to the above eligibility and uniform requirements may be made by Members or Affiliates.

## RULE 4: Mode of Play, Duration and Scoring

- 4.1 Object. The object of the game of Touch is for each team to score Touchdowns and to prevent the opposition from scoring.
- 4.2 Mode of Play. The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between Onside players of the attacking team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial advantage and score. Kicking the ball is not allowed. Defending players prevent the attacking team from gaining a territorial advantage by touching the ball carrier. Either defending or attacking players may initiate touches. After a touch, play stops and is restated with a Rollball, unless other rules apply.
- 4.3 Duration. A match is forty-five (45) minutes duration, consisting of two (2) twenty (20) minute halves. There is a five (5) minute halftime break. Tournament conditions may vary the duration.
- 4.4 End of Play. When time expires play is to continue until the next Dead Ball and End of Play is signaled by the Referee.
- 4.5 Scoring. A Touchdown is awarded when a player other than the Half places the ball on the ground on or over the team's Attacking Scoreline within the Touchdown Area, without being touched. A Touchdown is worth one (1) point.
- 4.6 Touched while attempting to Score. If a player is touched during the act of placing the ball on or over the Scoreline, the Touch Counts and a Touchdown is not awarded.
- 4.7 Winner. At the End of Play the team that has scored the most Touchdowns is declared the winner. In the event of neither team scoring, or in the event of both teams scoring the same number of touchdowns, a draw is declared.
- 4.8 The Drop Off. Should a winner be required in drawn matches after the End of Play, the following "Drop Off" procedure is used to determine a winner:
  - 4.8.1 Each team will reduce their playing strength by one and within sixty (60) seconds take up a position to restart play from the Halfway in the same direction as the team was at End of Play.
  - 4.8.2 Once a player has been removed, the game continues with a tap from the centre of the Halfway Line by the team who won the toss at the commencement of the game.
  - 4.8.3 Should a team have a player who has been dismissed for the remainder of the game, that team must commence to Drop Off with four (4) players.
  - 4.8.4 Substitution during the Drop Off is permitted in accordance with normal interchange rules.

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- 4.8.5 Should no winner be declared at the expiration of two minutes a siren or hooter is sounded and the game will cease at the next Dead Ball. Each team will then drop off another player.
- 4.8.6 Play will recommence immediately after the players have left the field at the same place where it ceased (i.e. the team retains possession at the designated number of touches, or at Change of Possession due to some infringement or the sixth Touch).
- 4.8.7 The clock does not stop when the hooter sounds at the two minute intervals and there is no time off during the Drop Off.
- 4.8.8 At the next two minute period a final signal for another player to drop off will be sounded.
- 4.8.9 Once a team has been reduced to three players no further drop off of players will occur and the match will continue until a Touchdown is scored. Should a player be dismissed, either for a period of time or for the remainder of the match when teams have only three players, the game is be abandoned and the non-offending team will be the winner.
- 4.8.10 During the Drop Off procedure once each team has had possession the team to first score will be the winner. Should a team score in the first Possession following commencement of the Drop Off, the Touchdown counts and the other team recommences with a restart until a Change of Possession occurs. Should that team also score then following the next restart the first team to score will be the winner.
- 4.8.11 The decision on which player will drop off is a team decision.
- 4.8.12 Mixed Gender Teams can drop off in any sequence provided:
  - 4.8.12.1 There is a minimum of one (1) male and one (1) female on the field at all times; and
  - 4.8.12.2 The maximum number of males on the field is three (3).
- 4.9 Abandoned Matches. If a match is abandoned due to any circumstances the Member or Affiliate Association shall decide the result.

### **Rule 4 RULINGS**

- 4.A Unless other Rules apply a breach of Rule 4.2 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the place where the offence occurred.
- 4.B A breach of Rule 4.8.12.1 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the center of the half way line.

## **RULE 5 - Team Composition and Substitution**

- 5.1 Number of Players. A Team consists of a maximum of fourteen (14) players, no more than six (6) of whom are allowed on the field at any time.
- 5.2 Mixed Gender Competition. In mixed competitions, the maximum number of males allowed on the field of play is three (3) and the minimum male requirement on the field of play is one (1).
- 5.3 Substitution. Players may substitute at any time in accordance with the interchange procedure in Rule 5.4. There is no limit to the number of times a player may interchange.
- 5.4 Interchange Procedure. Substitute players must remain in their Interchange Area for the duration of the match. All interchanges must occur at or within the team's Interchange Area and only after the player being substituted has crossed the Sideline and entered the Interchange Area. In addition and subject to specific tournament conditions:
  - 5.4.1 Interchanges must be made from the allocated side of the Field of Play;
  - 5.4.2 Substituting players must not delay moving onto the Field of Play;
  - 5.4.3 Physical contact does not have to be made between interchanging players;
  - 5.4.4 Players leaving or entering the Field of Play shall not hinder or obstruct play and must enter the play from an Onside position;
  - 5.4.5 Following a Touchdown, players may interchange at will without having to wait for the substituted player to enter the Interchange Area.
- 5.5 Team Coach and Team Officials. The team coach and team officials should remain in the Interchange Area for the duration of the match however a team coach or team official may move without delay between the Interchange Area and the end of the Field of Play. While in that position the team coach or team official must remain no closer than five (5) meters from the Dead Ball Line and must not coach the team.

### **Rule 5 RULINGS**

5.A A breach of Rule 5.1, 5.2, or 5.4 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified or five (5) meters infield from where the substitution took place, whichever is the greater advantage.

### Rule 5 RULINGS (Cont)

5.B A breach of Rule 5.5 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified and the team coach will be required to immediately return to the Interchange Box and remain there for the duration of the match.



## **RULE 6 – Commencement and Recommencement of Play**

- 6.1 The Toss. Team captains are to toss a coin in the presence of the Referee with the winning captain's Team receiving possession for the commencement of the first half, the choice of direction for the first half and the choice of Interchange Areas for the duration of the match, including any extra time.
- 6.2 The Tap Off. A player of the attacking team is to commence the match with a Tap at the centre of the half way line following the indication to commence play from the Referee. All players of the attacking team are to remain in an Onside position until the ball has been tapped. All players of the defending team are required to retire a distance of not less than ten (10) meters from the Mark for the Tap. Defending players may move forward once the ball has been tapped.
- 6.3 Recommencement after Half Time. For the recommencement of play following the halftime break, teams shall change directions and the team losing the toss is to re-start the match with a Tap. Other conditions of Rule 6.2 apply.
- 6.4 Recommencement after Touchdown. For the recommencement of play following the scoring of a touchdown, the team against which the score was made is to recommence play with a Tap as described in Rule 6.2. There is to be minimum delay after the scoring of a touchdown before recommencement of play.

### **Rule 6 RULINGS**

- 6.A A breach of Rule 6.2 by the attacking team will result in a Change of Possession at the center of the half way line.
- 6.B A breach of Rule 6.2 by the defending team will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team ten (10) meters forward of the center of the half way line.
- 6.C A breach of Rule 6.4 by the attacking or defending team will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the center of the half way line.

## **RULE 7 – Possession**

- 7.1 General. Providing other Rules do not apply, the team with the ball is entitled to six touches prior to a Change of Possession.
- 7.2 Changeover Procedure. Following the sixth Touch or a loss of possession due to any other means, the ball must be handed or passed to the nearest opposition player without delay. Alternatively to expedite the changeover, the ball may be placed on the ground at the Mark without delay. An attacking player requesting the ball is to be given the ball without delay. Players losing possession must not deliberately delay the changeover procedure.
- 7.3 Ball to Ground. If the ball is dropped to the ground during play a Change of Possession results. The Mark for a Change of Possession is where the ball first pitches or where the attacking player dropped or passed the ball, whichever is the better advantage to the team gaining possession.
- 7.4 Ball on Ground. If the ball contacts the ground while still under the control of a player a Change of Possession does not result and play is to continue. This does not apply to the Half in the Touchdown Area in which case possession is lost.
- 7.5 Mishandled Ball. Play is to continue if a player mishandles the ball providing the ball does not go to ground, even if in an effort to gain control, the ball is accidentally knocked forward. (Refer to Rule 9.4.3)
- 7.6 Ball Deliberately Touched by Defender. If a defender deliberately touches the ball but fails to gain possession and the ball is subsequently re-gathered by any attacker, possession is retained by the attacking side and the Touch Count restarts.
- 7.7 Ball Accidentally Touched by Defender. If the ball accidentally hits a defender and the ball is subsequently re-gathered by an on-side attacker, possession is retained and the Touch Count continues.
- 7.8 Intercepts. Intercepts by Onside defending players are allowed. Following an intercept, play continues until the first Touch is made, a Touchdown is scored, or a stoppage occurs as a result of a Rule infringement.
- 7.9 Dead Heat Catch. If an attacker and a defender both gain control of the ball at the same time, the Touch counts and the attacking team retains possession providing it is not the sixth Touch.



**Rule 7 RULING**

7.A A breach of Rule 7.2 by the defending team will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team ten (10) meters forward of the Mark for the Change of Possession.



## **RULE 8 – Passing**

- 8.1 General. A player in possession may pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any other Onside player in the attacking team.
- 8.2 Forward Pass. A player in possession is not to pass, flick, knock, throw, hand-off or otherwise propel the ball in a forward direction. A player who juggles the ball forward into the possession of a team-mate is deemed to have made a forward pass.
- 8.3 Off-side Receiver. Supporting players in the attacking team must remain Onside. The receiver of the ball must not be in front of the player who was in possession, even if the pass, flick, knock or throw is not forward.
- 8.4 Passing into Onside Defender. A player who passes the ball forward, at or towards an Onside defending player, is liable to Penalty. If the defending player attempts to catch or play at the ball and the ball goes to ground, or if the defending player makes no attempt to play at the ball, the forward pass infringement detailed in Rule 8.2 applies. However if the defending player catches or retrieves the ball, Advantage in accordance with Rule 16 applies. Also refer to Rules 7.6 to 7.9.

### **Rule 8 RULINGS**

8.A A breach of Rule 8.2 by the player in possession will result in a Penalty awarded to the defending team at the Mark where the ball was propelled forward.

8.B A breach of Rule 8.3 by the player receiving the ball will result in a Penalty awarded to the defending team at the Mark where the ball was propelled forward.

8.C Rule 16 applies when an Advantage is evident.

## RULE 9 – The Rollball

- 9.1 Method. The Rollball must be performed correctly. The attacking player is to position on the Mark, face the opponent's (defending) Scoreline, stand parallel to the Sidelines, and either place the ball on the ground between the feet and step over the ball or roll the ball back between the legs no more than one (1) meter. There is no requirement for the ball to be picked up to perform the Rollball.
- 9.2 The Mark. The Mark for the Rollball is either where the Touch occurred (Refer to Rule 10.2), where the ball goes to ground, five (5) meters infield from the Sideline or at a position indicated by the Referee.
- 9.3 Timing. The Rollball must be performed without delay.
- 9.4 When Required. A player is to perform a Rollball under the following circumstances:
- 9.4.1 When a Touch has been made;
  - 9.4.2 When possession changes following the sixth Touch;
  - 9.4.3 When possession changes due to the ball being dropped to the ground or being knocked-forward or backward (Refer to Rule 7.5);
  - 9.4.4 When possession changes due to an infringement by an attacking player at a Penalty, a Tap or a Rollball;
  - 9.4.5 When possession changes after the Half is touched or when the Half places the ball on or over the Scoreline;
  - 9.4.6 When possession changes due to a player in possession touches the sideline or Dead Ball Line; or
  - 9.4.7 When so directed by the Referee.
- 9.5 Voluntary Rollball. A player must not perform a Rollball unless a Touch has been made or unless directed to do so by the Referee.
- 9.6 Attacking Players at Rollball. Any other attacking player may receive the ball at the Rollball. That player becomes the Half and may roll the ball with the hands, knock the ball backwards or control the ball with a foot prior to picking up the ball, provided the ball is not dropped, knocked-forward or travels more than one (1) meter. The Half must not delay picking up or retrieving the ball.
- 9.7 The Half. The Half may perform a Half Pass or run with the ball. However, if the Half is touched, the team loses possession. A player ceases to be the Half once the ball is passed to another player.
- 9.8 Defending Players at Rollball. Defending players are not to interfere with the player in possession or otherwise prevent the performance of the Rollball. All players of the defending team are to retire towards their Defending Scoreline, a distance of not less than five (5) meters from the Mark for a

Rollball. Players of the defending team must not move forward of the Offside position until the Half has made contact with the ball or unless directed to do so by the Referee. (Refer Rule 13.2.1)

- 9.9 Actions without Half in Position. When the Half is not in position to retrieve the ball following a Rollball, players of the defending team may move forward as soon as the player in possession releases the ball. When the ball is on the Mark and the attacking player steps over it, the defending team may move forward of their five (5) meter positions as soon as the attacking player's foot or body passes over the ball.
- 9.10 Gaining Possession. When no Half is in position behind the player in possession at a Rollball and a defending player moves forward and makes contact with the ball, a Change of Possession results and the match recommences with a Rollball at the same Mark.

## **Rule 9 RULINGS**

9.A A breach of Rule 9.1 will result in a Change of Possession at the Mark where the Rollball should have been performed.

9.B A breach of Rule 9.2 or 9.3 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the Mark where the Rollball should have been performed.

9.C A breach of Rule 9.5 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the Mark where the Rollball was performed.

9.D A breach of Rule 9.8 will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team five (5) meters forward of the Mark for the Rollball.

9.E A player who performs a Tap instead of a Rollball will lose possession and the other team will recommence the game with a Rollball at the Mark.

## **RULE 10 – The Touch**

- 10.1 General. A Touch is contact between a player in possession and a defending player. A Touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and may be made by a defending player or by the player in possession.
- 10.2 Touch Mark. The location of the Touch Mark is the position on the Field of Play below the centre of gravity of the player in possession at the time the Touch was made.
- 10.3 Minimum Force. Players of both defending and attacking teams are to use the minimum force necessary to make a Touch. Players must ensure that the method employed in making a Touch does not pose an unnecessary risk to player safety.
- 10.4 Ball Dead. Once a Touch is made the ball is deemed to be out of play until a Rollball is performed. Possession does not change if a player drops the ball following a Touch and before a Rollball.
- 10.5 Ball Accidentally knocked from Hands. If the ball is accidentally knocked from the hands of a player in possession during a Touch, the Touch counts. The player retains possession, may re-gather the ball and then perform the Rollball. The Touch Count continues, unless it is the sixth Touch when a Change of Possession will occur.
- 10.6 Ball Deliberately knocked from Hands. A defending player must not deliberately knock the ball from the hands of a player in possession during a Touch.
- 10.7 Running on after a Touch. After a Touch has been made the player in possession is required to stop, return to the Mark where the Touch occurred if the Mark has been over-run, and then perform a Rollball without delay. Players are not to run on or play on after a deliberate Touch has been made.
- 10.8 Late Pass. A player is not to pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a Touch has been made.
- 10.9 Claimed Touch. A player must not claim a Touch unless contact has been made in accordance with Rule 10.1. Players must avoid calling “Yes” followed by “No”. A player must not claim a Touch prior to contact being made.
- 10.10 Simultaneous Touch. If the Referee is unable to distinguish between a pass before a Touch and a pass after a Touch (Late Pass) and provided the ball does not go to ground, the Touch counts as a simultaneous Touch and a Rollball is required, unless it is the sixth Touch when a Change of Possession will occur.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Edition FIT Playing Rules**

- 10.11 Touch while Attempting Score. If a player places the ball on the ground on or over the Scoreline at the same time that a Touch is made, the Touch counts and a Touchdown is not awarded.
- 10.12 Touched beyond Scoreline. If a Touch is made on or over the Scoreline before the ball is grounded, the player in possession is to move from that point towards the team's Defending Scoreline, to a position five (5) meters from the team's Attacking Scoreline and perform a Rollball, provided it is not the sixth Touch. If the touched player is the Half, Rule 9.7 applies, possession changes and the game recommences with a Rollball at the same position.
- 10.13 Touched behind Defending Scoreline. If a player in possession is touched while on or behind their defending Scoreline, the Touch counts and play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) meters infield from where the player in possession was touched.
- 10.14 Touch on Offside Defender. Should a player in possession make a Touch on an Offside defender who is making every effort to retire and remain out of play, the Touch is to count. If the player in possession is the Half, a Change of Possession results in accordance with Rule 9.7.

### **Rule 10 RULING**

10.A A breach of Rule 10.3, 10.6, 10.7, 10.8 or 10.9 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the Mark where the offence occurred.

## **RULE 11 – Actions On or Over Boundary Lines**

- 11.1 On or Over Sideline or Dead Ball Line. The Field of Play boundary lines are deemed to be out of play. Play becomes dead when the ball or a player in possession touches or crosses a Sideline or Dead Ball Line.
- 11.2 Touched Before Crossing Sideline. If a player in possession is touched prior to crossing the Sideline, even if the defender is outside the Field of Play, then the Touch counts and play continues with a Rollball at the Mark where the Touch occurred.
- 11.3 Rollball near Defending Scoreline. An attacking team is not required to Rollball within five (5) meters of their defending Scoreline. After a Touch the player in possession may move forward to the five (5) meter broken line to perform a Rollball.
- 11.4 Rollball near Attacking Scoreline. When a Touch is made within five (5) meters of the attacking Scoreline, a player in possession may move directly behind the Mark a distance of up to five (5) meters to the broken line to perform a Rollball.
- 11.5 Defender Actions near Scoreline. Defenders may choose to remain on their own Scoreline if the player in possession is on or within the five (5) meter broken line. When the player in possession is beyond the five (5) meter broken line and within fifteen (15) meters of the Scoreline, all defenders must move forward in an attempt to make a Touch and must continue to do so until a Touch is made or a Touch is imminent.
- 11.6 Withdrawing from Making a Touch. Defenders are not permitted to deliberately withdraw from making a Touch when Rule 11.5 applies.
- 11.7 Repeated Infringements. If the defending team is consecutively penalized under Rule 11.5, for not moving forward, then the defending team will be required to remove one player from the Field of Play. That player is to return to the Interchange Area and cannot return or be substituted until that defending team subsequently gains possession.

### **Rule 11 RULINGS**

11.A Provided no other Rule breaches were committed, when Rule 11.1 is breached, play recommences with a Rollball by the defending team five (5) meters infield from where the Sideline was touched or crossed, or on the five (5) meter dotted line if the Dead Ball Line was touched or crossed.

**Rule 11 RULINGS (Cont)**

11.B A breach of Rule 11.5 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at a Mark on the five (5) meter dotted line or where the offence occurred.

11.C A breach of Rule 11.6 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at a Mark where the offence occurred.

11.D A breach of Rule 11.7 will result in removal of the player nearest the breach and a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at a Mark on the five (5) meter dotted line or where the offence occurred.





## **RULE 12 – Ball Touched in Flight**

- 12.1 Intentional Contact by Defender. If the ball goes to ground following a defender's attempt to gain possession, the attacking team retains the ball and the Touch Count restarts. This also applies if the defending player deliberately knocks the ball to the ground. The Mark where the Rollball occurs is where the ball first pitches or where the defender touched the ball, whichever is of best advantage to the attacking team.
- 12.2 Intentional Contact but not to Ground. If a defending player touches the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play continues and the Touch Count restarts at the next Touch (“Six Again”).
- 12.3 Intentional Contact and Touched again by Attacker. If an attacking player attempts to gather the ball after intentional contact by a defender and the ball then goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession and the Touch Count restarts as per Rule 12.1 provided the Referee decides that the intentional contact or deflection was the cause of the ball going to ground.
- 12.4 Unintentional Contact and Ball to Ground. If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball goes to ground, a Change of Possession results and play restarts with a Rollball where the ball first pitches or where the ball rebounded from the defender, whichever is of best advantage to the team gaining possession.
- 12.5 Unintentional Contact but not to Ground. If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball is regained by an attacking player, play continues and the Touch Count continues.
- 12.6 Score after Contact by Defending Player. If the ball is recovered by an attacking player (including the former Half), after it has been touched in flight by a defender, and that attacking player places the ball down in the attacking Touchdown Area, a Touchdown is awarded.

### **Rule 12 RULING**

12.A Provided no other Rule breaches were committed, rulings apply as detailed in 12.1 to 12.6 above.

## RULE 13 – Offside

- 13.1 Offside by Attacker. A player in the attacking team is Offside, ineffective and liable to Penalty whenever that player is forward or in front of the player in possession, or forward of or in front of the player who last had possession if the ball is in the air. Offside attacking players must return to an Onside position as quickly as possible and must remain Onside until the Tap has been taken or until the Rollball has been completed. Offside attacking players are not to become involved in play. Refer to Rule 1 – Definitions and Terminology.
- 13.2 Offside by Defender. A player of the defending team is Offside and must make every effort to return to an Onside position:
- 13.2.1 At a Rollball, when the player retires a minimum of five (5) meters as indicated by the Referee or to the Defending Scoreline (Refer Rule 9.8); and
  - 13.2.2 At a Tap, when the player retires ten (10) meters from the Mark or to the Defending Scoreline.
- 13.3 Defending Near Scoreline. A player defending near the Defending Scoreline at a Rollball within five (5) meters of the Defending Scoreline or for a Tap within ten (10) meters of the Defending Scoreline, becomes Onside when at least one foot touches the ground on or behind the Defending Scoreline and the other foot passes over or behind the Defending Scoreline.
- 13.4 Retiring Offside Defender. Unless the player becomes involved in play, in which Rule 13.2 applies, the Advantage applies to an Offside defending player making every effort to retire to an Onside position. Advantage also applies if a player in possession makes a touch on an Offside defending player making every effort to retire to an Onside position.
- 13.5 Retiring Line of Defender. When retiring to an Onside position after involvement in the making of a touch a defender must retain the same retiring line until an Onside position is achieved. The angle selected for retirement by the defender is to remain constant until the player becomes Onside in accordance with Rule 13.2 or Rule 13.3 above.

## Rule 13 RULINGS

13.A A breach of Rule 13.1 results in a Change of Possession and play recommences with a Rollball by the non-offending team at the Mark when the infringement occurred.

13.B A breach of Rule 13.2 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team nearest the infringement along a line either five (5) meters forward of the Mark for Offside at a Rollball or ten (10) meters forward for Offside at a Penalty, to indicate the Mark where the offending defending player should have been to be Onside.

13.C A breach of Rule 13.3 or 13.5 will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team on the five (5) meter dotted line near where the offence occurred.



## RULE 14 – Obstruction

- 14.1 Player in Possession. A player in possession must not run or otherwise move behind other attacking players or the Referee in an attempt to avoid a Touch or gain an unfair advantage.
- 14.2 Players in Support. An attacking player in support of the player in possession may move as necessary to achieve a supporting position and must not grab, hold, push or vary their position to deliberately interfere with a defending player attempting to make a Touch. An attacking support player may move behind the player in possession.
- 14.3 Involuntary Obstruction. Should a supporting, attacking player cause an apparent and involuntary or accidental obstruction and the player in possession ceases evasion to allow a Touch to be made, the Touch is to count and no Penalty is applied.
- 14.4 Defending Team. Players in the defending team may follow, “mirror” or “shadow” supporting attacking players without contact but are not to obstruct or otherwise interfere with attacking players supporting the player in possession.
- 14.5 Obstruction at Rollball. A defending player must not interfere with the actions of the Half at or following a Rollball. (Refer to Rules 9.8 and 13.2.1)
- 14.6 Referee Obstruction. If the Referee causes obstruction on either an attacking player or a defending player, play should cease and recommence with a Rollball at the Mark where the interference occurred. The Touch Count does not change.

### Rule 14 RULINGS

14.A A breach of Rule 14.1, 14.2 and 14.4 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the Mark where the offence occurred.

14.B A breach of Rule 14.5 will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team ten (10) meters forward of the Rollball Mark where the offence occurred.

## RULE 15 – Penalty

- 15.1 General. When a Penalty is awarded for an infringement a Penalty Tap is taken by the non-offending team to recommence play. The Penalty Tap is the same as the Tap used to commence or recommence play at the beginning of the game, at half-time and after a Touchdown is scored. All players should be Onside when a Penalty Tap is taken. (Refer to Rules 13.2.2 and 13.3)
- 15.2 Method. The Tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the Mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball gently with either foot or touching the foot on the ball. The ball must not roll or move more than one (1) meter and must be retrieved cleanly without retouching the ground. The player may face any direction. Provided it is at or not more than ten (10) meters behind the Mark, the ball does not have to be lifted from the ground prior to a Tap being taken.
- 15.3 The Mark. The Mark for the Penalty Tap is where the infringement occurs unless indicated otherwise in other Rules (Refer to Rule 13 – Offside), and is at the Mark indicated by the Referee. For infringements that occur within five (5) meters of the Scoreline, the Mark is on the five (5) meter dotted line nearest the infringement. For infringements that occur beyond the Field of Play or in the Touchdown Area the Mark is five (5) meters infield from the Sideline, on the five (5) meter dotted line nearest the infringement or at a position indicated by the Referee. Defending players must remain ten (10) meters from the Mark or on or behind the Scoreline, whichever is the closest, until the Tap is taken. (Refer to Rules 13.2.2 and 13.3)
- 15.4 Timing. The Penalty Tap must be performed without delay after the Referee indicates the Mark. The Mark should be indicated before a Penalty Tap is taken. However if a player in possession is positioned at the correct Mark for the Penalty Tap prior to the Mark being indicated, and the Referee acknowledges an indication by the player, and providing all attacking players are Onside, the player may take a quick Penalty Tap to gain an advantage. Advantage also applies to the play following a quick Penalty Tap, particularly with regards to Offside defending players.
- 15.5 Rollball instead of Tap. A player may perform a Rollball instead of a Penalty Tap. The player who receives the ball does not become the Half.
- 15.6 Penalty Touchdown. A Penalty Touchdown is awarded if any action by a player, team official or spectator, deemed by the Referee to be contrary to the rules or spirit of the game clearly prevents the attacking team from scoring a Touchdown.

## **Rule 15 RULINGS**

15.A A breach of Rule 15.1 by the defending team will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team at the Mark where the offence occurred. (Refer to Ruling 13.B)

15.B A breach of Rule 15.1, 15.2 or 15.3 by the attacking team will result in a Change of Possession with a Rollball at the Mark to recommence play.

15.C The Mark for an Offside Penalty under Rule 15.3 is nearest the infringement along a line either five (5) meters forward of the Mark for Offside at a Rollball or ten (10) meters forward for Offside at a Penalty, where the offending defending player should have been to be Onside.

15.D Delay in a Change of Possession by a defending player will result in a Penalty awarded to the attacking team ten (10) meters forward of the Mark for the Change of Possession.

15.E Obstruction by a defending player at a Rollball will result in a Penalty awarded to the non-offending team ten (10) meters forward of the Rollball Mark where the offence occurred. Refer to Rule 14.5.

## **RULE 16 – Advantage**

- 16.1** General. The principle of Advantage applies at all times providing some Advantage is readily obvious to a non-offending team. Advantage must be clear and takes precedence over other Rules.
- 16.2** Application. When Advantage is applied a team is given the opportunity to exploit an Advantage in accordance with other Rules. If an Advantage cannot be applied play will cease for an infringement ruling or other action. Once an Advantage has been exploited play continues.
- 16.3** Advantage Type. Advantage is normally realized by a team through position in the Field of Play or through possession however there may be another Advantage, either tactically or in the form of a Touchdown.
- 16.4** Subsequent Infringement. Should a team exploiting an Advantage subsequent infringe, the ruling on the initial infringement is to apply.



## RULE 17 – Discipline and Misconduct

- 17.1 Misconduct. Players and team officials who infringe the Rules of Touch are liable to Penalty or other appropriate action according to the seriousness of the infringement. Penalties are to be awarded in accordance with applicable Rules and may include Forced Substitution or Dismissal. Misconduct includes:
- 17.1.1 Continuous or regular breaches of the Rules;
  - 17.1.2 Swearing;
  - 17.1.3 Disputing decisions or back-chatting Referees;
  - 17.1.4 Using more than the necessary physical force to make a Touch;
  - 17.1.5 Poor sportsmanship;
  - 17.1.6 Tripping; or
  - 17.1.7 Any other action or verbal response that is contrary to the spirit of the game.
- 17.2 Team Captains. Respective team captains are responsible for the conduct of players. Team captains should develop a relationship with Referees and as necessary should be informed of the reason for any dismissal.
- 17.3 Voluntary and Forced Substitution. A player may be removed from the Field of Play as follows:
- 17.3.1 Requested Interchange. A team captain may be requested by the Referee to initiate a voluntary substitution by a player to assist with discipline. Play continues during a requested interchange.
  - 17.3.2 Forced Substitution. A player may be required to undertake a compulsory interchange for an infringement ruled more serious than a Penalty but less serious than formal dismissal. Play continues during a Forced Substitution.
- 17.4 Dismissal. A player or team official may be dismissed from the Field of Play for misconduct as follows:
- 17.4.1 Period of Time. A player dismissed for an offence requiring more than a Penalty or for repeated infringements is to move from the Field of Play and remain in a position midway along the team's attacking Scoreline and no closer than five (5) meters from the Dead Ball Line. The duration of the Period of Time is at the discretion of the Referee dependent on the nature of the offence. The dismissed player cannot be replaced. Should the Period of Time extend over Half-time the player may return to the Interchange Box for the duration of half-time. On



completion of the Period of Time the player must either return to the Interchange Box or enter the Field of Play in an Onside position from a Sideline. Play continues after the dismissed player is allowed to rejoin play.

- 17.4.2 Remainder of Match. A player dismissed after any previous Period of Time dismissal, or for an offence such as gross misconduct or a dangerous act is to take no further part in that match and is to move to and remain no closer than ten (10) meters from the Interchange Box or Sideline. The dismissed player cannot be replaced and that player shall receive an automatic two (2) match suspension. That player may also incur further penalty as deemed necessary by the Federation of International Touch Judiciary Committee or the relevant Judiciary Committee of the Affiliated Member Association. The Referee is required to submit dismissal reports or any other reports required in accordance with the governing regulations of the Federation of International Touch or the Affiliated Member Association.



## RULE 18 – Referee and Match Officials

- 18.1 Manner of Appointment. The appointment of all Referees and Referee Support Officials for all International matches sanctioned by the Federation will be made by the Executive of the Federation based on advice from the Federation Referee Panel.
- 18.2 The Referee. The Referee is the sole judge on matters of fact during play and is required to adjudicate on the Rules of the game. The Referee may impose any sanction necessary to control the match and in particular, award Touchdowns and record the progressive score, maintain a count of Touches during each possession, and award Penalties for infringements against the Rules.
- 18.3 Sanction Continuum. The Referee has for use the scale of sanctions from a simple warning to a Dismissal for the Remainder of the Match. The Referee should apply a sanction befitting the breach or infringement.
- 18.4 Authority of Referee. Players, coaches and officials of both teams are under the control of the officiating Referees.
- 18.5 Area of Control. The playing area under the control of the Referee extends from the boundaries of the Field of Play, to an area which covers all substitute players and team officials involved in the particular match.



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## REFEREE SIGNALS 1



Commence Match



Fifth Touch



Sixth Touch



Six More Touches



Half Caught



Late Pass



Voluntary Rollball

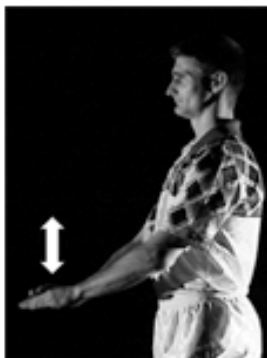


Forward Pass (1)



Forward Pass (2)

## REFEREE SIGNALS 2



Ball to Ground



Play On



Location of Mark



Over-stepping Mark (1)



Over-stepping Mark (2)



Touchdown



Penalty - Offside (1)



Penalty - Offside (2)



Compulsory Interchange

### REFEREE SIGNALS 3



Penalty



Defenders Back 10M



Playing On After Touch



Period Dismissal (1)



Period Dismissal (2)



Rest of Match Dismissal



Incorrect Rollball (1)



Incorrect Rollball (2)



End of Match