

## Q&A from Webinar – 2021 Global Law Trials



Following are questions that were submitted during and after the 5 August USA Rugby webinar, with answers from the Match Management Working Group (MMWG). The MMWG is now responsible for Law application in the USA. Some questions have been combined, redundant ones eliminated, and some reworded for clarity.

If you have additional questions, please present them first to your Local Referee Organization. Issues that cannot be resolved locally may be submitted to [laws@usa.rugby](mailto:laws@usa.rugby).

### Trial Law Implementation

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#### **Why were these laws added?**

See the World Rugby summary at <https://www.world.rugby/the-game/laws/global-law-trials>

#### **Will these trials apply for 7s?**

Yes, starting on 23 August after Rugbytown 7s.

#### **Will these trials apply for all levels?**

Yes.

#### **When will the 2021/22 USA Game Management Guidelines be published?**

These have been published. <https://assets.usarugby.org/docs/refereeing/USARR-GMG.pdf>

#### **Will these law variations be in play for fall 21?**

Yes. They took effect on 2 August 2021, except for competitions that were already underway.

#### **Was the webinar recorded?**

Yes. View at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfUlu-Lo2f0>

Other materials will also be posted online at: <http://usa.rugby/referee>

### 50:22

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**Q:** Can the ball bounce anywhere for the kicking team to get the lineout?

*It can bounce in front of or behind the 22m line but must bounce in the field-of-play.*

**Q:** If R kicks into touch in B's half, B wins the ensuing lineout, from that lineout can B kick the ball indirectly into R's 22 and get that lineout?

*Yes. R has put the ball into B's half.*

**Q:** Does 50:22 apply for a 22m or goal-line drop out?

*No, and not for a kickoff or restart from halfway either.*

**Q:** What if it goes straight into touch without touching in bounds?

*That is going "directly" into touch and 50:22 does not apply. The regular laws on gain in ground apply.*

**Q:** If touch is awarded in front of the 50, but a quick throw is taken behind the 50, will the 50:22 law apply?

*No. The kicking team has taken the ball behind the halfway line.*

**Q:** If a team takes the ball into their half, there's no contest, and they kick out indirectly, what happens?

*As previously, they gain ground, but the opposition has the lineout.*

**Q:** Can the kicking team take a quick throw after it goes out when 50:22 applies?

*Yes, but not by an offside player advancing in front of the kicker as thrower.*

**Q:** How are players that are in front of the kicker dealt with, assuming that they are retreating? Will they be allowed to reverse and go forward once the ball has crossed the touch line?

*Yes, but the thrower must be onside or put onside.*

**Q:** Player kicks a grubber through the line within their own 50 and chases it. During the chase, they kick it again without picking it up, and it bounces into touch within the 22. Whose lineout?

*Lineout to the opposition. Only the second kick matters.*

**Q:** What about off a set piece? Does there need to be a tackle or contested phase first?

*If a set piece is awarded in a team's half, the team can immediately kick and have the lineout under 50:22.*

**Q:** What about a lineout or scrum on the 50?

*It would depend where the ball emerged from the set piece. If it were in the half of the team winning the ball, then 50:22 is allowable. If they had pushed their opponents beyond the halfway before it emerged and then passed it back to within their own half, then 50:22 is not allowable.*

**Q:** If a scrum or lineout is awarded just in front of the 50, so the put in is in the opposition half and the ball is won and moved to the back of the scrum or the back of the maul from lineout which is inside the 50, can you then kick for inside 22 and gain the lineout?

*No. The team winning the scrum or lineout has put the ball into their own half and 50:22 does not apply.*

**Q:** R9 passes back across the 50 to R10. R10 then passes and ball is knocked on by B13 trying to intercept. While ref is playing advantage, R12 picks up ball and kicks indirectly for touch inside B's 22. Does 50:22 apply?

*Yes, 50:22 applies, and this is probably advantage gained. If the knock-on was intentional, it could still rate a YC.*

**Q:** B13 knocks on across the 50 and the ball is picked up by R12 on R's side of the 50. While ref plays advantage, R12 kicks indirectly into touch past the B 22m line. What happens?

*The 50:22 law applies. Advantage would then be gained with a lineout to R.*

**Q:** If a Free Kick is awarded to Red within their own half, can the team kick the ball and get a 50:22?

*Yes. (This differs from an answer given in the webinar.)*

## **Goal-line Dropout**

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**Q:** Is there a difference between the defending team grounding a kick in-goal, vs kicking the ball dead?

*No.*

**Q:** What about if an attacker carries into in-goal and is tackled into touch-in-goal or over dead-ball line?

*Give a 22m dropout. (World Rugby has confirmed this response, but it is one of the scenarios not covered in the current Law book.)*

**Q:** What happens if the ball is touched before it crosses the 5m line?

*The attacking team may play the ball before it reaches 5m if behind that line when the ball was kicked. If they were not behind, FK to the kicking team 5m out in line with the infringement. If touched by the kicking team, the Attack can choose a re-kick or 5m Attacking scrum center.*

**Q:** Is the signal for the goal line drop-out similar to a 22m drop out, but the referee points at the goal-line instead?

*Yes. Expect confusion and give clear, loud, verbal announcement.*

**Q:** What happens if the goal-line drop out is taken incorrectly or goes directly into touch or touch-in-goal?  
*First, advantage may be played for the attackers. The options are the same for both goal-line and 22m dropouts. They are covered in new Laws 12.13 through 12.19.*

**Q:** Is the goal-line dropout replacing the scrum 5m attacking feed?  
*No. There are still several scenarios for 5m attacking scrums.*

**Q:** So, no option to tap and go on goal-line dropouts since the ball must cross the 5?  
*A goal line dropout must reach the 5m line unless first played by the Attack.*  
*Note: many attempts to "tap and go" on 22m dropouts are not legal and should be brought back for opposing scrum or re-kick. A legal 22m dropout must meet the requirements of a drop kick, be taken from on or behind the 22m line, and cross the 22m line.*

**Q:** Can the drop-out be taken at any point along/behind the goal line and can the kicker be running laterally?  
*Yes to both parts.*

**Q:** How far does the team need to retreat?  
*The kicking team needs to be behind the kicker; the opposition team needs to be behind the 5m line.*

**Q:** Does goal-line drop out apply from kick off?  
*No. If the defense grounds the ball without delay, they have the option of a scrum center of the halfway line or re-kick. If they delay, they get a 22m dropout.*

**Q:** Is "doubt" on which team grounded the ball first (as opposed to held up) still a 5m attacking scrum?  
*Yes, but referees should avoid being in doubt.*

**Q:** How much time is allowed for the goal line drop out restarts?  
*The law says "without delay"; the sanction is FK anywhere along the 5m line. Warn before sanctioning.*

**Q:** Are there no more 5m scrums to the defending team?  
*They are mostly eliminated. However, a knock on from the field-of-play into goal yields a defending scrum no closer than 5m.*

## **Latching and Flying Wedges**

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**Q:** The law states in defining a flying wedge "Team-mates are latched on each side of the ball carrier in a wedge formation." What if two supporting players are bound together on only one side of the ball carrier?  
*No more than one teammate may be latched as a group to the ball carrier, regardless of side. Sanction with a PK.*

**Q:** What is the sanction for a flying wedge? Can it be treated as accidental offside, with a scrum?  
*Flying wedges or any pre-latching by more than one support player is liable for a PK.*

**Q:** Maul off a line out is pretty much formed before contact. Is this legal?  
*Pre-binding on both sides of a jumper will be allowed in a lineout; there is no danger from this. However, the ball carrier must remain accessible to the opposition. (Despite the wording of the question, there is no maul formed until the opposition joins on.)*

**Q:** How is a maul formed then with new rules? I'm not seeing any distinction that makes a maul legal and not a wedge. Under the new rules, are all mauls now illegal?  
*Mauls have not changed. Prior to contact with the opposition, a ball carrier may have only one support player latched on. If a ball carrier has a support player latched and an opponent binds onto the ball carrier, a maul has formed. An opponent may go low to tackle, which does not form a maul. After the opposition binds on, there is no restriction on additional teammates of the ball carrier joining the maul.*

**Q:** What is the penalty for lachers or a lacher ahead of ball carrier?

*A lacher ahead of the ball carrier is likely committing obstruction and liable for penalty.*

**Q:** Can the lacher “bridge” on the ball carrier?

*A lacher may put hands on a ball carrier following a tackle but must support their own weight and not seal preventing contest.*

**Q:** If the single lacher engages a defender and then seals is that OK?

*Lachers are bound by the same laws as other arriving players. A referee must evaluate if they are contesting for the ball or trying to prevent contest.*

**Q:** Does this apply to defense? Can they make a wedge to stop short gains?

*Defenders may bind up in anticipation of contact to make a maul. They may not charge or attempt to bring down a ball carrier without wrapping.*

**Q:** If a lacher loses their feet in contact, can they make an attempt to roll away like the tackler and be legal? If they roll away without having already prevented a contest, fine. If they interfere with a potential poach they are liable to penalty.

**Q:** What are we going to consider obstruction if a lacher is directly next to a ball carrier and prevents a tackle on the ball carrier?

*A lacher may not protect a ball carrier from initial contact. A lacher can help keep a ball carrier up and provide drive after contact.*

**Q:** What is the secondary signal for a flying wedge or multiple lachers?

*There is no approved signal yet. We recommend the “Failure to bind” signal from scrum infringements.*

## **Jackler**

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**Q:** Is the gator roll still prohibited for U19?

*USAR has not made the gator roll illegal for U19.*

**Q:** Can an arriving defensive player still go in and lift the leg to take off the jackler?

*Though there is no specific provision in law against tackling by lifting one leg, treating a jackler or ball carrier like a ‘wishbone’ may be viewed as dangerous play.*

**Q:** Can a legal gator roll include the player doing it leaving their feet? If so, isn’t that counter to the concept of rugby being a game played on the feet?

*Contact to remove a jackler must be initiated by a player on their feet, similar to how we treat a tackler. The roll should remove the jackler to the side of the breakdown.*

**Q:** Is there a difference between rolling a player by pulling them down to the side or levering them up and rolling them over?

*If done safely, both are legal, as long as both players are off to the side allowing access to the ball by arriving players.*

**Q:** Isn’t taking out a jackler collapsing a ruck?

*No. A jackler with hands on the ball is not a ruck.*

**Prepared by the Match Management Working Group, USA Rugby**

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**Please report any feedback to [laws@usa.rugby](mailto:laws@usa.rugby)**