

Memorandum

To: All MARFU Member Clubs & All MARR affiliated Referees

From: Len Borcky, Director of Referees, Mid-Atlantic Rugby Referee Society

Importance: High

Date: 5/11/2012

This memo is being sent to all Clubs affiliated with the Mid-Atlantic Rugby Football Union (MARFU) and all Referees affiliated with the Mid-Atlantic Rugby Referee Society (MARR) to address the issue of Dump Tackles. Due to increased debate over the sanctions related to Dump Tackles, the collective Boards of MARFU and MARR, along with the MARFU Disciplinary Committee, have asked me as the Director of Referees for MARR to clearly address the issue.

A Dump Tackle is defined as the Tackler lifting the Ball Carrier off their feet and turning their body parallel to the ground or more in the process of the tackle. The 2012 USA Rugby Game Management Guidelines clearly outline two scenarios and the subsequent sanctions as shown below:

Spear tackle (Lifting a player from the ground, turning the body parallel to the ground or more, and driving the player into the ground, whether deliberate or accidental). **PK and RED CARD**

Lifting a player from the ground, turning the body parallel to the ground or more, and throwing the player to the ground. **PK and RED CARD**

In fact, the only way in which a Tackler who has brought the Ball Carrier to a position parallel to the ground or more would not receive a Red Card is if every effort was taken to return the player to the ground safely and with the utmost level of care. In this instance, the Tackler may still be penalized and shown a Yellow Card. Referees should use their discretion to still penalize and possibly Yellow Card.

The overriding principal in all of this is that this type of tackle needs to be eliminated from the sport immediately. This is an edict that is coming from the highest levels of the International Rugby Board (IRB) and must receive our attention at every level here.

With the above in mind, here are the directives to our members:

Referees, upon seeing a player brought to a position parallel to the ground or more, you should immediately encourage the Tackler to bring the Ball Carrier to ground safely. At the conclusion of the tackle, a long whistle should be blown and time called. Bring the Tackler and the Captain to you and deliver the appropriate sanction. Please understand that upwards of 95% of these cases will result in a Red Card. Obtain the player's name and take time to jot down any notes about the incident that you will use later in your report. Following the match, send a Disciplinary Report through the MARFU website (<http://marfu.org/discipline/refcardreport.php>) and provide a full description of the incident. Be sure to include intent, how the Ball Carrier was put to ground, and on what part of the body he/she landed. The MARFU Disciplinary Committee may contact you for further input.

Coaches and Players, this practice needs to be discontinued immediately. While we realize that you do not coach this tactic and typically do not intend to utilize it, understand that the Referees have very

strict guidelines about dealing with it. Referees have no further input in the Disciplinary process outside of reporting the facts. There is nothing to be gained from pressing them further.

The reality for all of us is that there is no gray area in this topic. The Dump Tackle must be eliminated and we all bear responsibility in doing so. Many of us are aware that the level or importance of the match has no bearing on the response to the action. This was clearly shown in the 2012 World Cup Semi-Final between Wales and France. Welsh Flanker Sam Warburton was correctly shown a Red Card 17 minutes into one of the biggest matches in rugby's four year cycle. This sanction must be delivered on all levels. We do have additional visual resources should anyone remain in doubt of the types of tackles we are referencing.

Thanks to everyone for their part in addressing this matter.

Len Borcky
Director of Referees, Mid-Atlantic Rugby Referee Society