

MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY

# *REFEREE REVIEW SYSTEM*





# REFEREE REVIEW SYSTEM (RRS)

## Incorporating an In-Stadium Replay Operator for Enhanced Officiating

### Purpose

To support accurate, timely, and transparent officiating decisions through a structured review process that includes a designated **In-Stadium Replay Operator (ISRO)**. This protocol enhances real-time decision-making, reduces game disruption, and ensures consistency across matches as well as empowering the referee as the main decision maker.

### 1. Key Roles and Responsibilities

#### A. On-Field Referee Team

- The Referee is the primary authority for match control and enforcement of laws.
- Initiates on-field reviews and communicates with the ISRO.
- The Referee is the final decision maker of all reviews.

#### B. In-Stadium Replay Operator (ISRO)

- A neutral, league-certified SportsCode Analyst with appropriate game understanding, officiating experience and law knowledge.
- Located in the technical zone with access to real-time feeds and audio communication.

#### C. Match Review Coordinator (MRC)

- Oversight (MLR Director of Match Officials and Referee Coaches), ensuring compliance, post-match review, and statistics tracking.

### 2. Types of Referrals

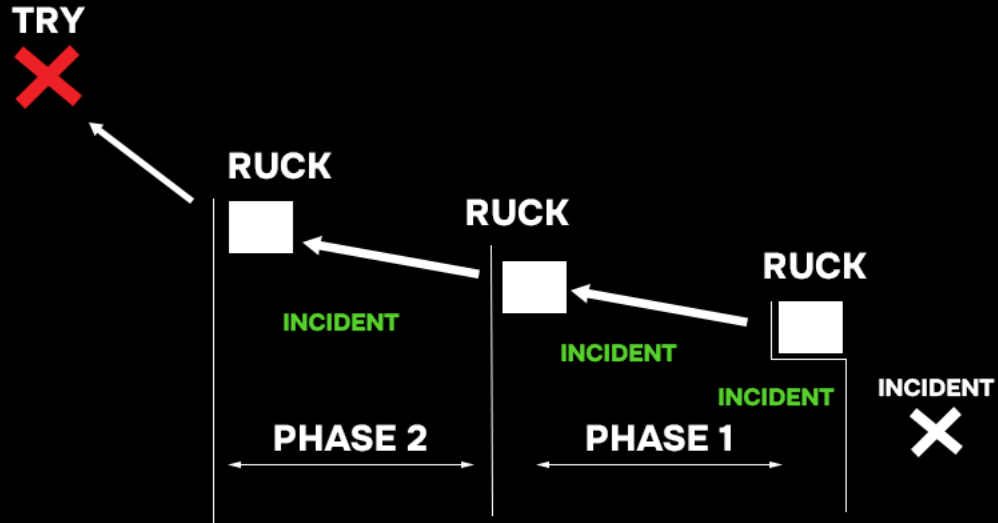
#### A. Referee Initiated Review

- The on-field referee/ARs can request a review on uncertain incidents.
- On-field match officials can only review within the scope of this protocol.

#### B. Team Challenges

Where a Team believes a clear and obvious infringement may have occurred in relation to a potential try (scored or not scored), aspects of play in the following laws may be reviewed within 'Two-phases of play' - A phase of play is defined in the Laws of the Game as a scrum, lineout, ruck or maul – see pictorial diagram.

## DEFINING WITHIN 2-PHASES OF A TRY



A phase of play is defined in the Laws of the Game as a scrum, lineout, ruck or maul.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Law 8                                      | Scoring  |
| Law 10                                     | Offside in Open Play                                     |
| Law 14.1-14.3                              | Tackle   |
| Law 15.4-15.9                              | Offside at a Ruck  |
| Law 16.4-16.7                              | Offside at a Maul  |
| Law 18.30-18.36                            | Lineout Offside Offences                                 |
| Law 19.27-19.33                            | Offside at a Scrum                                       |
| Law 21                                     | In-goal  |
| Law 20:                                    | Penalty & Free-Kick                                      |
| Law 11: Knock-on                           | Clear & obvious knock-on                                 |
| Law 11: Throw forward                      | Clear & obvious throw forward                            |
| Law 18.1-18.8 Touch, Quick Throw & Lineout | Whether ball was in touch & who should throw the ball in |



The following may be reviewed at any stage of the game, **since the last restart and before play restarts again:**

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Law 9: Foul play | Dangerous play where the outcome would be a Penalty, YC or RC. |
|------------------|--|

**Referral Timeframes:**

| Since Last Restart of Play | Foul play         |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Within Two Phases of Play  | Knock on          |
|                            | Throw forward     |
|                            | Touch and lineout |
|                            | Offside           |
|                            | Maul obstruction  |
|                            | Tackle complete   |

Clarification points: For any of these offences: This includes up until the start of a lineout after a kick to touch from a penalty or free kick. - Should a quick tap or quick throw take place, and a Review is unable to take place before the tap/throw is taken, the Review will occur at the next available opportunity.

**Each team is allowed 1 Challenge per game.**

- A Team cannot challenge previously referee-reviewed situations or when the Referee has begun a Referee Initiated Review.
- A challenge is initiated by the designated Team Operator, throwing the Team Challenge Flag.
- Once a team throws the flag requesting a team challenge, the flag cannot be withdrawn
- A Team will retain a challenge if successful.
- Any attempt by a player or member of the coaching staff to pressure the referee/ARs into initiating a referee-initiated review, in lieu of lodging a Team Challenge, is prohibited. The first instance will result in a warning; any further instances will be sanctioned by penalty.
- If a team wishes to challenge a Penalty Kick (PK) for a higher sanction, upon review, the sanction must be higher than the original PK; otherwise, the team loses the challenge (including the 35th and 75th minute rules)



## **C. Team Challenge – Flag Procedure (4 Steps)**

### **Immediate Flag Throw**

- The Team Tech Zone Manager throws a Team Challenge Flag, confirming they wish to initiate a formal Team Challenge.
- The Team Tech Zone Manager must throw the flag from the Technical Zone in the direction of the halfway and 15m lines.
- Teams MUST have the exact time of the incident before they throw a flag.
- Failing to provide the correct/exact time of the incident when throwing the flag will result in the loss of the challenge
- Teams MUST write the exact time of the incident they wish to challenge on a sub card and provide it to their Sub Controller

### **Match Official Acknowledgment**

- The No.4/5/6 will inform the referee of the flag and who wishes to initiate a challenge, and the referee will stop play when appropriate.

### **Challenge Confirmation**

- The Team Tech Zone Manager clearly identifies the specific incident being challenged with a clear statement about WHAT and WHEN they would like reviewed to the Match Officials in the Tech Zone.

### **Review and Outcome**

- The Referee will signal in-stadium and to broadcast that a review has been initiated, and the referee will review the incident.
- Overturning the Decision. If the referee sees clear and obvious evidence to overturn the decision, he/she will announce in-stadium and broadcast by facing camera one and announcing his/her findings.

## **3. Reviews**

- Replays are reviewed on the big screen (or pitchside monitor) for the Referee.
- Only clear and obvious evidence results in overturning
- Teams have 30 seconds real time, from play stops to formally review an incident or up to the restart following a try.
- If a Team Challenge is unsuccessful, this results in the loss of that challenge



#### 4. Outcome and Communication

- The referee communicates the outcome of the review on-field and to the broadcast audience, starting with one of two standard phrases:
  - i. “Following a Referee Initiated review of...”
  - ii. “Following a Team Challenge by X and a review of the incident.”
- A public-facing graphic on the stadium screen explains the decision if applicable.

#### 5. Match Management Integration

- **Game Clock Management:** Referee stops clock during reviews.
- **Substitution Freeze:** No subs allowed during review periods.
- **Broadcast Integration:** ISRO feed can be fed into the broadcast package with the commentary team receiving the decision rationale.

#### 6. Post-Match Review and Accountability

- **All Reviews Logged:** Outcome, time, context, and decision rationale stored.
- **Weekly Debrief:** ISRO, Referee Team, and Director of Match Officials conduct joint review.
- **Public Report Summary:** Key reviews are summarized weekly for transparency.

#### 7. Technology & Infrastructure

- **Multi-Camera Setup:** Minimum 4 angles, including end zone and in-goal cameras.
- **Dedicated Comms Channel:** Encrypted, isolated referee-ISRO channel.
- **In Stadium Replay Operator Software:** ISRO has telestrator and frame-by-frame functionality through Hudl Replay.
- **Stadium Display Integration:** Decisions shown with match context for crowd