

GENERAL INFORMATION

Lead Area:	RUGBY SERVICES
Lead Policy Title:	CONTESTED/UNCONTESTED SCRUMS
Date last modified:	February 2024

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

This policy applies to all Competition Grades (U12 and above)

If a Coach/Team Manager knows before the game that their team intend to nominate uncontested scrums at the commencement of the match, then they must notify the Referee and opposition Coach/Manager of this fact before the start of the match.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- World Rugby Laws
- Rugby Australia Variations
- RUSA Laws Summary document
- RUSA Team Forfeit Procedure
- RUSA GAME-ON Variations

STEPS

1. Contested Scrums

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
1.1	<p>There must be sufficient players to play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, and on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.</p> <p>Should a team not be able to meet this obligation for any reason during a game, or should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, then the team concerned must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed (or as otherwise applied by Game On Rules). (** See examples in the appendix)</p> <p>If, subsequently, a qualified front rower becomes available so that scrums can be contested, then that player will be allowed on to the field and the team may return to the appropriate compliment of players.</p> <p>RUSA reserves the right to consider on a case by case basis if required.</p>	Club/ Team Manager
1.2	<p>Premier Grade and Reserve Grade Mens Teams competing in Premier Grade Mens and Reserve Grade Mens must commence their match with contested scrums as described in 2.1 above. If a team is unable to commence their match with contested scrums, then that team will be recorded as forfeiting the match.</p> <p>There is exemption (considered on a case by case basis) from the requirement to commence a match with contested scrums for the Reserve Grade Mens team, where the lowest Senior Mens Grade in the Club is Reserve Grade / or separate entity club.</p>	Club/ Team Manager

2. Number of Players in a Contested Scrum

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
2.1	<p>Senior Grades When a team on the pitch is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, then the number of players in each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced.</p> <p>Where a permitted reduction is made by one team, there is no requirement for the other team to make a similar reduction. However, a team must not have fewer than five (5) players in the scrum (3 x front row and 2 x second row).</p>	Referee
2.2	<p>Junior Grades (U12 to U18) When a team on the pitch is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, the number of players in each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced. Where a permitted reduction is made in the scrum by one team, the other team must reduce their scrum accordingly, down to a minimum of five (5) Where there is an incomplete scrum, it must be formed as follows: 10 players = 5 in the scrum = 3-2 formation (i.e. no flankers or #8) 11 players = 5 in the scrum = 3-2 formation (i.e. no flankers or #8)</p>	Referee

	12 players = 6 in the scrum = 3-2-1 formation (i.e. no flankers) 13 players = 7 in the scrum = 3-4 formation (i.e. no #8)	
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3. Uncontested Scrums

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
3.1	<p>Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players in the scrum.</p> <p>Uncontested scrums as a result of not having a suitably trained front row and there are insufficient numbers to play 15 players may result in players in the scrum as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 or more players = 8 in the scrum - 13 players = 7 in the scrum - 12 players = 6 in the scrum - 11 players or less = 5 in the scrum <p>If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the action described in 1.1 above do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.</p>	Referee

APPENDIX:

** EXAMPLES

Note the definition –

If a team is required to nominate Uncontested Scrums, then that team must play with **one fewer player than would otherwise be allowed (including team reductions as applied by Game On Rules)**.

A team is “allowed” to have **X** players on the pitch (i.e. 15 players, or other number per Game On Rules).

Team numbers are applied before Kick Off (15-a-side or otherwise as required by Game On Rules):

Then each team is “allowed” to have **X** players on the pitch, then that team **does** have to drop a player if nominating uncontested scrums, as a penalty for not having sufficiently trained front row to be able to contest scrums.

If a team receives a yellow card or red card:

Then that player cannot be replaced, regardless of whether the team is already playing short because they called uncontested scrums.

e.g. Game On Rules applied for a 13-a-side game. **Team A** cannot play contested scrums, so must play with 12 players on the pitch. **Team A** then received a yellow or red card, then **Team A** must then play with 11 players on the pitch (for the duration of the yellow/red card). The exception is in U12, where a yellow/red carded player may be replaced (if there is a replacement available)