



**To:** Secretaries / CEOs of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership  
**From:** David Carrigy, Head of External & Member Relations  
**Subject:** Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee  
**Date:** May 11, 2009  
**Ruling:** 4: 2009

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### **Ruling Request from the NZRU and ARU Law 15 and 16**

Law 15 6 (b) states:

After a tackle any players on their feet may attempt to gain possession by taking the ball from the ball carriers possession.

Law 16.1 (b) states:

**How can a ruck form?** Players are on their feet. At least one player must be in physical contact with an opponent. The ball is on the ground.

Law 16.4 (b) states:

(b) Players must not handle the ball in a ruck.

When a player has complied with Law 15 6 (b), is on his feet and playing the ball after a tackle and is then joined by an opposition player on his feet so that the situation outlined in 16 1 (b) occurs, can the player who has complied with Law 15 6 (b) continue to play the ball with his hands or at what point does he have to release the ball?

This does not appear to be covered by Law.

### **Ruling**

Law 15 6 (a) states: After a tackle, all other players must be on their feet when they play the ball. ....

Law 15.6 (b) reads: After a tackle any player on their feet may attempt to gain possession by taking the ball from the ball carriers possession.



Law 15 5 (e) states that: If opposition players who are on their feet, the tackled player must release the ball.

This indicates that after a tackle a player on his feet may play the ball.

Law 16 1 (b) states: **How can a ruck form?** Players are on their feet. At least one player must be in physical contact with an opponent. The ball is on the ground.

Law 16.1 refers to a player from each side in physical contact over the ball and implies that the ball is not in the possession of any player.

Providing a player from either side on their feet after a tackle comply with all aspects of Law 15 and have the ball in their hands prior to contact with an opposition player on his feet those players may continue with possession of the ball even if a player from the opposition makes contact with those players in possession of the ball.

Any other players joining the two players contesting the ball must not handle the ball in accordance with Law 16.4 (b). If the ball is not in possession of any player after a tackle and a ruck is formed players may not use their hands in accordance with Law 16.4 (b).

**The Ruling is effective from May 23 for the start of matches in the June window and after the close of any domestic or cross border competitions**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Carrigy', with a small flourish at the end.

**David Carrigy**  
**Head of External & Member Relations**