



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: August 10, 2009

Ruling: 5 : 2009

Request for a Ruling from the Designated Members from the RFU

LAW 3.12 SUBSTITUED PLAYERS REJOINING THE MATCH

Early in a match Team A replace their Tight Head Prop, due to injury, with their nominated prop forward replacement.

Late in the match, the replacement prop forward collects a serious injury forcing him to leave the field. Team A, having used all their nominated substitutes, continue to play with 14 players. When the first scrum after the injured prop leaves the field is awarded, and after consulting with the Captain of Team A, who confirms his side cannot replace their injured prop with a suitably trained and experienced prop forward, the referee orders uncontested scrums.

At this stage, Team A seek permission from the match officials for their substituted hooker to rejoin the match in an attempt to bring their playing numbers back to 15. The match officials refuse to allow the player to rejoin the match, which concludes with uncontested scrums and Team A playing with 14 players.

Were the officials correct in not permitting Team A the opportunity to bring their playing numbers up to 15?



Ruling of the Designated Members:

In this situation the team has used all its permitted replacements/substitutes.

The purpose of Law 3.12 was to allow a player who has been substituted to return to the front row (in the event of an injury requiring a replacement front row player) to enable the game to continue with contested scrums.

In the situation described, uncontested scrums had been ordered and the team had utilised all its permitted replacements and substitutes and therefore the injured front row player should not be replaced.

Additionally, if uncontested scrums have been ordered and there is an injury to a front row player which requires that player to be replaced and there is a front row player available to replace that player then the front row player replacement must be used rather than players other than front row replacements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Carrigy', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

David Carrigy
Head of External & Member Relations