



**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:** March 10, 2010  
**Ruling:** 1: 2010

---

### **Request from the IRFU**

The IRFU request a Ruling related to Law 15.6 (c) as follows:

“Law 15.6(c) was introduced in 2009, and the stated purpose was to write into Law Ruling No. 13 of 2003, and Nos. 3 and 8 of 2004.

We are of the firm opinion that 15.6(c) does not reflect accurately these Rulings:

- The Rulings clearly deal with an opponent of a tackled player, who remains on his feet, **and** is on the tackled player’s side of the tackle. This player must release and re-enter from his own side.
- This is the only requirement within these Rulings in relation to a player on his feet who is an opponent of the tackled player.
- The Rulings also state that players can play the ball if they have come from their own side, and are on their feet. There is no requirement within the Rulings for a player, who has always been on his side of the tackle, to release the ball.
- As written 15.6(c) is inclusive of all players on their feet, and this does not meet the objective of the Rulings.

Furthermore, Law 15.6(c) is anomalous and in contradiction with several other sections within the totality of Law 15 – particularly 15.5(b) and 15.6(b).

We ask the Designated Members to consider the above observations and to determine if a re-write (or clarification) of 15.6(c) is necessary so it reflects correctly and accurately the Rulings No. 13 of 2003, and Nos. 3 and 8 of 2004, and to remove the current anomaly in Law.



In view of the recent focus and discussions in relation to this Law, we would also ask that this request is treated with the utmost urgency.”

### **Ruling of the Designated Members of the Rugby Committee**

In the Designated Members opinion the Law amendment, Law 15 6 (c) reflects the Rulings 13 – 2008, 3 and 8 2004. In order to clarify the situation the Designated Members’ comments are included below.

A player who is brought to the ground when carrying the ball is a tackled player.  
(Definition)

A player who goes to ground when tackling a player is known as a tackler.  
(Definition)

A player who brings a player to ground who is carrying the ball is not a tackler  
(Definition), however, this player has completed a tackle.

A tackler must release the tackled player (Law15.4 (a)).

The tackled player must pass or release the ball (Law 15.5(b)).

The tackled player may release the ball by putting the ball on the ground in any direction (Law15.5 (c)).

The tackled player may release the ball by pushing the ball along the ground (Law15.5 (d)).

However, if opposition players who are on their feet attempt to play the ball, the tackled player must release the ball (Law15.5 (e)).

Players arriving at a tackle may play the ball providing they are on their feet (Law15.6 (b)).

Players who were attached to the player who is tackled and who remain on their feet must release the player and the ball (Law15.6 (c)) and then may play the ball in accordance with Law15.6 (b).

Law Ruling 8 of 2004 stated that the players who are not tacklers are covered by Law 15.7(c) (2008 Law) and those players can only play the ball if they approach from behind the ball and from directly behind the tackled player or the tackler closest to those players’ goal-line.



To approach behind the tackled player means the tackle has taken place and the revised Law 15.6 (c) (2009) makes that very clear.

Law 15.6 (c) as written reflected the views of the Designated Members in 2004 and now, Law 15.6 (c) is part of the Law amendments circulated to all Unions in 2009 and was accepted by the Rugby Committee and Council.

Yours sincerely,

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

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