LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

2023

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PART A
INTRODUCTION

A. THIS PUBLICATION

This publication contains the Laws of Australian Football as administered and controlled by the AFL.

B. APPLICATION

(a) These Laws apply to all Matches of Australian Football organised and conducted by a Controlling Body.

(b) The AFL Anti-Doping Code, as varied from time to time, shall apply to all persons to whom these Laws apply, unless a Controlling Body has adopted its own code or policy which has been approved by the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA).

(c) The Australian Football Member Protection Policy (MPP) shall apply to all persons to whom these Laws apply, unless a Controlling Body has adopted its own relevant policy to replace a National Policy (as defined in the MPP) approved by the relevant Football Body (as defined in the MPP).

C. NATURE AND OBJECT OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

Australian Football is a game played between two Teams competing in accordance with these Laws. The objective of each Team playing Australian Football is to win by scoring more points than the opposing Team. The winner of a Match of Australian Football is the Team which has scored, in accordance with these Laws, the greater number of points at the conclusion of the Match. A Match is drawn when each Team has the same number of points at the conclusion of the Match.

D. PURPOSE OF LAWS

These Laws explain how a Match of Australian Football is played and seek to attain the following objectives:

(a) to ensure that the game of Australian Football is played in a fair manner and a spirit of true sportsmanship; and

(b) to prevent injuries to Players participating in a Match so far as this objective can be reasonably achieved in circumstances where Australian Football is a body contact sport.

PART B
DEFINITIONS, INTERPRETATION and VARIATION

1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

1.1 DEFINITIONS

Unless the context requires otherwise, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

Active Bleeding: has the meaning described in Law 24.1.

AFL: the Australian Football League.

AFL Affiliates: a league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of Matches of Australian Football and which is affiliated to the AFL.

AFL Anti-Doping Code: the code adopted by the AFL (and any variation), which regulates the use and administration of drugs by Players competing in the competitions conducted by the AFL.

AFL Rules: the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the AFL, the AFL Player Rules, the AFL Regulations and any resolution or determination passed from time to time by the AFL Commission.

'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear': the verbal and visual instruction given by a field Umpire for the goal Umpire to signal and record a Goal or a Behind, as the case may be.

Arena: means the Playing Surface and all of the area between the Playing Surface and the perimeter fence, including any break in the perimeter fence.

Attacking Team: the Team where the football is in their forward half of the Playing Surface.

Australian Football: the game played between two Teams competing in accordance with these Laws.

Behind: the recording of one point, when any of the circumstances described in Law 16.1.2 occur.

Behind Line: the white lines marked on the Playing Surface between the goal posts and the behind posts, as illustrated in Diagram 1.

Boundary Line: the white line drawn on the ground to identify the Playing Surface, as described in Law 3.2.

Centre Circle: the area on the Playing Surface described in Law 3.5.

Centre Square: the area on the Playing Surface described in Law 3.5.

Charge or Charging: the act of a Player colliding with an opposition Player where the amount of physical force used is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances, irrespective of whether the Player is or is not in possession of the football or whether the Player is within five metres of the football.

Club: an entity fielding a Team in an Australian Football competition conducted by the Controlling Body.

Controlling Body: a Controlling Body includes:

(a) the AFL;

(b) AFL Affiliates;

(c) any league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of Matches of Australian Football, who has determined to play such Matches in accordance with these Laws; and

(d) any league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of Matches of Australian Football which is affiliated to the AFL Affiliates.

Correct Disposal or Correctly Dispose: a Kick or Handball of the football by a Player.

Defending Team: the Team where the football is in their defensive half of the Playing Surface.

Fifty Metre Arc: the line drawn in the shape of an arc at each end of the Playing Surface to show that the distance to the centre of the Goal Line is 50 metres.

Fifty Metre Penalty: the act of advancing the position on the Playing Surface by 50 metres towards the centre of the Goal Line, where a Player has been awarded a Free Kick or a Mark.

Free Kick: giving possession of the football to a Player on the occasions described in Law 18.

Goal: the recording of six points when any of the circumstances described in Law 16.1.1 occur.

Goal Line: the white line marked on the Playing Surface between each goal post, as illustrated in Diagram 1.

Goal Square: the areas on the Playing Surface described in Law 3.4.

Handball: the act of holding the football in one hand and disposing of it by hitting it with the clenched fist of the other hand.

Home and Away Matches: the Matches played between Teams to determine the premier Team or those Teams who will compete in a finals series to determine the premier Team.

Interchange Area: the area marked on the Boundary Line through which Players may enter and exit the Playing Surface.

Interchange Player(s): the Player(s) of a Team who are not on the Playing Surface but who are listed on the Team Sheet and available to replace a Player on the Playing Surface.

Interchange Steward: the person(s) appointed by the relevant Controlling Body to monitor and approve the interchange of Players during a Match.

Kick or Kicking: in relation to disposing of the football, means making contact with the football with any part of the Player's leg below the knee.

Kick-Off Line: the straight line drawn on the Playing Surface which runs parallel to the Goal Line, as described in Law 3.4.

Legal Tackle or Legally Tackled: a tackle by a Player where:

(a) the Player being tackled is in possession of the football; and

(b) that Player is tackled below the shoulders and above the knees.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Legal Tackle may be executed by holding (either by the body or playing uniform) a Player from the front, side or behind, provided that a Player held from behind is not pushed in the back.

Mark: has the meaning described in Law 15.1.

Match: the contest of Australian Football played between two Teams.

Melee: an incident involving three or more Players and/or Officials who are grappling or otherwise struggling with one another and which, in the opinion of the field Umpire or any other person authorised by the relevant Controlling Body, is likely to bring the game of Australian Football into disrepute or prejudice the interests or reputation of the relevant Controlling Body or the competition(s) conducted by that Controlling Body.

Member Protection Policy or MPP: the policy endorsed by the AFL Commission, that provides governance to affiliates of the AFL, including Affiliated State & Territory Bodies to promote ethical and informed decision-making and responsible behaviours within Australian Football.

Nine Metre Line: the lateral extension of the Kick-Off Line in both directions to the boundary of the Arena.

Official: includes but is not limited to an officer, coach, assistant coach, trainer, runner, employee or any person performing any duties (paid or unpaid) for or on behalf of a Club or Team.

Out of Bounds: where the football passes completely over the Boundary Line or touches a behind post or touches the padding or any other attachment to the behind post but before doing so, touches the ground or is touched by a Player on or above the knee. If any portion of the football is on or above the Boundary Line, the football is not Out of Bounds.

Out of Bounds On the Full: means the football, having been Kicked, passes completely over the Boundary Line without touching the ground within the Playing Surface or being touched by a Player on or above the knee, or the football has touched the behind post or passed over the behind post without touching the ground or being touched by a Player on or above the knee.

Player: a person who plays or is selected to play with a Team or a person who otherwise trains with a Team or who is within the purview of these Laws.

Playing Surface: the field of play inside the Boundary Line, Goal Line and Behind Line, excluding the area between such lines and the perimeter fence.

'Play On' or 'Touched Play On': the verbal and visual instruction given by a field Umpire in the following circumstances to indicate that play will continue:

(a) a Free Kick or Mark will not be awarded;

(b) a Player has failed to dispose of the football when directed to do so by the field Umpire;

(c) a Player has attempted to dispose of the football other than in a direct line over The Mark.

Possession of the Football: a designation to a Player who:

(a) is holding or otherwise has control of the football; or

(b) is in the act of bouncing the football.

Prior Opportunity: a designation to a Player in Possession of the Football who:

(a) is balanced and steady; or

(b) attempts to evade or fend an opponent; or

(c) has taken a Mark or been awarded a Free Kick; or

(d) has driven their head into a stationary or near stationary opponent.

Prohibited Contact: contact between Players which is described in Law 18.3.

Protected Area: the area described in Law 17.2 for a Player bringing the football back into play after a Behind has been scored, or 20.1.2 for a Player awarded a Mark or Free Kick.

Protective Equipment: has the meaning described in Law 9.1.

Rough Conduct: any conduct against an opposition Player which in the circumstances is unreasonable, as described in Law 18.7.

Ruck: the designated Player from each Team who engages in the initial contest of the football following a bounce, throw-up or boundary throw-in.

Shepherd: the act of a Player using the body to push, bump or block an opposition Player who does not have possession of the football and who is no further than five metres away from the football.

Team: the group of Players competing against another group of Players in a Match of Australian Football.

Team Runner(s): the person(s) appointed to deliver messages to the Players of a Team during a Match.

Team Sheet: the document which must be completed and lodged by each Team under Law 5.3.

Ten Metre Circle: the area on the Playing Surface described in Law 3.5.

The Mark: the position on the Playing Surface where a Free Kick or Mark has been awarded or the location defined by Law 17.1(d) after a Behind has been scored.

Throw: shall be given its ordinary meaning, but also includes the act of propelling the football with one or both hands in a scooping motion. For the avoidance of doubt, a Player does not throw the football if the Player hits, punches or taps the football without taking Possession of the Football.

Timekeeper(s): the person(s) appointed by a Controlling Body (or Teams) to keep the time of a Match.

Time Wasting: where a field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player is unnecessarily causing a delay in play.

Tribunal: a body established and constituted by a Controlling Body to hear and determine charges brought before it under these Laws.

Umpire: any of the field, boundary, goal and emergency Umpires officiating a Match.

Under-Age Competition: a competition conducted between Teams in which the age of the Players in each Team falls within a specified age category or below an age limit.

Within the Immediate Proximity of the Arena: any area within 500 metres of an Arena where a Match is conducted.

1.2 INTERPRETATION

In the interpretation of these Laws, unless the context requires otherwise:

(a) words importing the singular shall be deemed to include the plural and vice versa;

(b) words importing any gender shall be deemed to include the other gender;

(c) headings are included for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation of these Laws;

(d) 'including' and similar words are not words of limitation;

(e) any words, terms or phrases defined in the remainder of these Laws shall have the meaning prescribed within the particular Law;

(f) words, terms or phrases not otherwise defined in these Laws shall be given their ordinary meaning; and

(g) a reference to 'careless' or 'carelessly' may be interpreted as a reference to 'negligent or reckless' or 'negligently or recklessly' (as applicable).

1.3 AFL RULES OR REGULATIONS PREVAIL

Where any provision in the AFL Rules or Regulations is inconsistent with any provision contained in these Laws, the provision in the AFL Rules or Regulations shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

2. VARIATION

2.1 AFL MAY AMEND

The AFL may from time to time change these Laws and make further Laws in its absolute discretion.

2.2 VARIATION BY CONTROLLING BODY

(a) A Controlling Body may apply to the AFL to vary these Laws as they apply to the competition or competitions conducted by the Controlling Body.

(b) An application to the AFL by a league, association or body affiliated to the AFL Affiliate shall be made through the AFL Affiliate.

(c) Unless specifically allowed under these Laws or a variation is allowed by the AFL under Law 2.2(a), a Controlling Body shall not prescribe any rules or laws in addition to or which conflict with or affect the full operation of these Laws.

PART C
PRE-MATCH PROVISIONS

3. PLAYING SURFACE AND POSTS

3.1 GENERAL

The dimensions and markings of the Playing Surface are contained in this Law 3 and illustrated in Diagram 1.

3.2 PLAYING SURFACE

(a) The Playing Surface shall be:

(i) oval in shape;

(ii) between 135 metres and 185 metres in length; and

(iii) between 110 metres and 155 metres in width.

(b) A white line shall be marked on the ground to identify the Playing Surface. This white line shall be drawn in the shape of an arc from the behind post (refer Law 3.3 below) at one end of the Playing Surface to the behind post at the other end of the Playing Surface. The white lines which are drawn are called the Boundary Line.

3.3 GOAL POSTS AND BEHIND POSTS

3.3.1 Position

(a) Two posts, to be called goal posts, shall be a minimum height of six metres and a maximum height of 15 metres and be placed at each end of the Playing Surface at a distance of 6.4 metres apart.

(b) A further two posts, to be called behind posts, shall be a minimum height of three metres and a maximum height of 10 metres and be placed at a distance of 6.4 metres on each side of the goal posts so that a straight line can be drawn on the ground to join each post.

3.3.2 Padding

A Controlling Body must ensure that padding is attached around each goal and behind post as follows:

(a) a minimum of 35 millimetres thick foam padding, covered in canvas or painted;

(b) a minimum height of 2.5 metres from the bottom of each goal and behind post;

(c) a suitable width to allow the padding to be fixed around each goal and behind post; and

(d) the padding must be securely attached around each goal and behind post.

3.4 GOAL SQUARE AND KICK-OFF LINE

A further area, to be called the Goal Square, shall be marked by drawing two lines at right angles to the Goal Line for a distance of nine metres from each goal post and connecting the outer end of each line by a straight line. This line is called the Kick-Off Line.

3.5 IDENTIFYING AREAS ON THE PLAYING SURFACE

The following areas shall be marked on the Playing Surface:

(a) a square, to be called the Centre Square, which shall:

  (i) be located in the centre of the Playing Surface; and

  (ii) be 50 metres long and 50 metres wide;

(b) a Centre Circle three metres in diameter and an outer circle 10 metres in diameter (Ten Metre Circle) which shall:

  (i) be located in the middle of the Centre Square; and

  (ii) both be divided into two semi-circles, by drawing a straight line parallel to each Goal Line;

(c) an Interchange Area, which shall be 15 metres wide;

(d) a Goal Square at each end of the Playing Surface;

(e) the Goal Line and Behind Line; and

(f) a Fifty Metre Arc at each end of the Playing Surface.

3.6 RELOCATION OF CENTRE SQUARE

Where a Controlling Body is satisfied that the area within the Centre Square and Centre Circle will prevent the bouncing of the football or is otherwise in an unsuitable condition, it may direct the relocation of the Centre Square and or Centre Circle.

3.7 UNDER-AGE COMPETITIONS

A Controlling Body may approve smaller dimensions for the Playing Surface and areas identified under Law 3.5 for an Under-Age Competition or for an open age competition where a complying venue is not readily available.

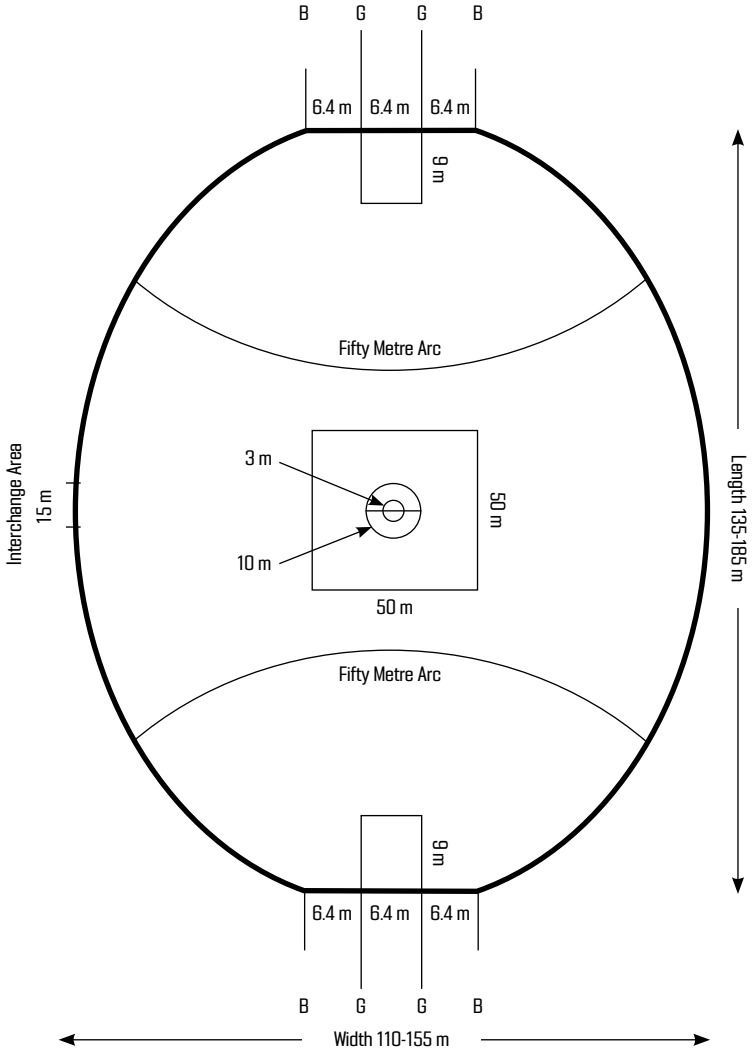

DIAGRAM 1

4. THE FOOTBALL

4.1 SPECIFICATIONS

Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, a football shall be of a symmetrical oval shape and conform to the standard size of 720-730 millimetres in circumference and 545-555 millimetres transverse circumference and be inflated to a pressure of 69 kPa.

4.2 SUPPLY AND SELECTION OF FOOTBALLS

Unless the Controlling Body decides on an alternative procedure, the following shall apply to the supply and selection of footballs for a Match:

(a) the home Team shall supply a minimum of two footballs approved by the Controlling Body to the field Umpires before the commencement of the Match;

(b) the field Umpires shall inspect and ensure that the two footballs are suitable to be used during the Match;

(c) the field Umpires shall submit the two footballs to the captain of the away Team, who shall select the football to be used; and

(d) unless the captains of each Team otherwise agree, the football selected by the captain of the away Team shall be the football used for the entire Match.

5. TEAMS AND PLAYERS

5.1 NUMBER OF PLAYERS IN TEAM

Unless the number is varied under Law 5.2, a Team must consist of between 14 and 18 Players, who may be on the Playing Surface at any one time, and no more than four Interchange Players. The Controlling Body shall determine the actual number of Players which may play for each Team in the competitions conducted by the Controlling Body.

5.2 VARIATION OF NUMBER

Unless otherwise determined by the AFL, a Controlling Body may reduce below 14 or increase above 22 the number of Players (including Interchange Players) who may participate in a Match played in the competition conducted by the Controlling Body.

5.3 TEAM SHEETS

5.3.1 Details

Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, a Team Sheet shall:

(a) list the names and numbers of the Players in the Team;

(b) identify the Interchange Players;

(c) identify the captain and vice-captain; and

(d) list the name of the coach, Team Runner(s) and any other Official participating in the Match.

5.3.2 Completing and Lodging Team Sheet

Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, an Official of each Team shall complete and lodge with a field Umpire its Team Sheet no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled commencement of a Match.

5.4 CHANGE OF PLAYER GUERNSEY DURING MATCH

Where it becomes necessary to replace a guernsey worn by a Player during a Match and the replacement guernsey displays a different number, the Team Runner shall advise the Interchange Steward and the field Umpire at the first available opportunity. Upon being advised, the Interchange Steward or the field Umpire, as the case may be, shall make an appropriate amendment to the Team Sheet.

5.5 COUNTING OF PLAYERS

5.5.1 Request by Captain

The captain or vice-captain of a Team or Team Runner(s) may at any time during a Match request that the field Umpire count the number of Players of the opposing Team who are on the Playing Surface.

5.5.2 Procedure

(a) Where a request is made under Law 5.5.1, the field Umpire shall:

(i) stop play at the first available opportunity;

(ii) call into line within the Centre Square the Players of both Teams who are at the time on the Playing Surface and count the number of Players;

(iii) upon completing the count, ensure that each Team has the permitted number of Players on the Playing Surface and then recommence play at the position on the Playing Surface where the field Umpire stopped play; and

(iv) as soon as practicable after the Match, report to the Controlling Body that a request has been made to count the number of Players in a Team and the number of Players actually counted.

(b) The maximum number of Players permitted on the Playing Surface at the same time is 18 per Team or, in circumstances where a Player(s) has been ordered from the Playing Surface under Law 23, 18 less the Player(s) ordered from the Playing Surface.

5.5.3 Players Exceeding Permitted Number

Where a Team has more than the permitted number of Players on the Playing Surface, the following shall apply:

(a) a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the captain or acting captain of the opposing Team, which shall be taken at the Centre Circle or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending Team;

(b) a Fifty Metre Penalty shall then be imposed from the position where the Free Kick was awarded;

(c) the Team shall lose all points which it has scored in that quarter up to the time of the count; and

(d) the field Umpire shall report the circumstances to the Controlling Body, including the scores at the time. The Controlling Body may further determine the matter by way of a fine, reversal of Match result or other sanction as it deems appropriate, including overturning the loss of points prescribed by Law 5.5.3(c).

5.5.4 Correct Number and Request Without Merit

Where a count reveals that the opposing Team has the permitted number of Players on the Playing Surface, the following shall apply:

(a) a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the captain or acting captain of the opposing Team, which shall be taken at the Centre Circle or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending Team;

(b) a Fifty Metre Penalty shall then be imposed from the position where the Free Kick was awarded;

(c) if a field Umpire is of the opinion that a request was made under Law 5.5.1 primarily to delay play or such request did not have sufficient merit, the field Umpire shall report the Player who requested the count for Time Wasting under Law 22.2.2; and

(d) if Law 5.5.4(c) applies, the field Umpire shall report the circumstances to the Controlling Body, including the scores at the time. The Controlling Body may further determine the matter by way of a fine, reversal of Match result or other sanction as it deems appropriate.

5.5.5 Post-Match Review

(a) A Club or other person may request post-Match review by the relevant Controlling Body of a Team exceeding the permitted number of Players on the Playing Surface where a request under Law 5.5.1 did not occur during a Match.

(b) Notification of the request and lodgement of relevant evidence must occur within 24 hours of the completion of the relevant Match in a form prescribed by the Controlling Body.

(c) The Controlling Body may further determine the matter by way of a fine, reversal of Match result or other sanction as it deems appropriate.

6. TEAM OFFICIALS AND TEAM RUNNER

6.1 CONTROLLING BODY TO REGULATE

A Controlling Body shall adopt rules which:

(a) specify the times and occasions when an Official and Team Runner may enter the Playing Surface; and

(b) identify the tasks or duties which such persons may perform when on the Playing Surface.

6.2 IDENTIFICATION

Each Team Official and Team Runner(s) shall wear a uniform or other form of identification (such as an armband), as determined by the Controlling Body.

7. INTERCHANGE

7.1 INTERCHANGE STEWARD – APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES

A Controlling Body may appoint two Interchange Stewards to officiate during a Match. The Interchange Stewards shall:

(a) be positioned throughout the Match at or near the Interchange Area;

(b) monitor and approve the interchange of Players made by each Team during a Match; and

(c) report to the field Umpire any infringement by a Team of this Law 7.

7.2 PROCEDURE FOR INTERCHANGE

The following procedure shall apply to the interchange of Players during a Match who are listed on the Team Sheet:

(a) unless Law 7.3 applies, the Players intending to interchange shall leave and enter the Playing Surface through the Interchange Area;

(b) where a Player does not leave or enter the Playing Surface as specified under Law 7.2(a), the Interchange Steward shall report the breach to a field Umpire and the following shall apply:

  (i) the field Umpire shall stop play at the first available opportunity;

  (ii) a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the nearest Player of the opposing Team; and

  (iii) a Fifty Metre Penalty shall then be imposed from the position where the Free Kick was awarded. For the avoidance of doubt, Law 7.2 operates in conjunction with Law 5.5 where a Team has more than the permitted number of Players on the Playing Surface.

7.3 USE OF STRETCHER

7.3.1 Health and Safety of Player

Any Player who is injured during a Match and who, in the opinion of a doctor, trainer or Official, requires the assistance of a stretcher, shall be attended by the Team's training staff and a stretcher as soon as possible so as to ensure the health and safety of the Player.

7.3.2 Procedure

Where a stretcher is required, the following procedure shall apply:

(a) upon being advised or noticing that a Player requires a stretcher, the field Umpire shall stop play at the earliest opportunity and unless a doctor considers or it is apparent that it is unsafe to do so, the Player should be removed from the Playing Surface on the stretcher by the shortest possible route and taken directly to their Team's change rooms;

(b) a Team may replace the injured Player with a Player listed on its Team Sheet, who must enter the Playing Surface via the Interchange Area;

(c) the Interchange Steward may allow the Player who is replacing the injured Player to enter the Playing Surface before the injured Player is removed from the Playing Surface;

(d) once the injured Player has been removed from the Playing Surface, the field Umpire shall recommence play as follows depending on the circumstances:

  (i) where the football was in dispute at the time play was stopped, by throwing up the football;

  (ii) where the football was Out of Bounds at the time play was stopped, by directing the boundary Umpire to throw the football in;

  (iii) where a Player had possession of the football at the time play was stopped, by awarding a Free Kick to the Player; and

  (iv) where a Player had been awarded a Free Kick or a Mark at the time play was stopped, by allowing the Player to dispose of the football;

(e) a Player for whom a stretcher was called shall not resume playing for a period of 20 minutes (excluding intervals between quarters) from the time when the Player left the Playing Surface. After the 20 minute period has expired, the Player may be interchanged in accordance with the procedure set out under Law 7.2 provided the Player is able, having due regard to their health and safety, to resume playing in the Match; and

(f) where a stretcher enters the Playing Surface but the Player elects to walk off, all provisions of Law 7.3.2 apply but the Player may go to the Interchange Bench.

7.4 BREACH OF LAW 7

The Interchange Steward or field Umpire, as the case may be, shall advise the Controlling Body of any breach of this Law 7.

8. UMPIRES

8.1 APPOINTMENT AND REPLACEMENT

8.1.1 Appointment

Unless Law 8.1.2 applies, a Controlling Body shall appoint for each Match:

(a) a field Umpire or Umpires;

(b) two or more boundary Umpires; and

(c) two goal Umpires.

8.1.2 No Appointment of Boundary/Goal Umpires

(a) Where it is impractical to appoint or the Controlling Body has not appointed a boundary or goal Umpire to officiate at a Match, the field Umpire(s) may, in consultation with each Team, appoint persons before the commencement of the Match to officiate in those roles.

(b) Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, a field Umpire may overrule the decision of a boundary or goal Umpire who was appointed under Law 8.1.2(a).

(c) When no boundary or goal Umpire has been appointed under Laws 8.1.1 or 8.1.2(a), the duties normally undertaken by a boundary and goal Umpire shall be undertaken by the field Umpire.

8.1.3 Replacement of an Umpire

A Controlling Body shall adopt rules which prescribe the replacement of an Umpire who, by reason of injury or otherwise, becomes incapable of officiating either before or during a Match.

8.1.4 No Appointment or Non-Attendance of Field Umpire

Where a Controlling Body has not appointed a field Umpire or for any reason a field Umpire is unavailable or does not attend to officiate at a Match, the competing Teams may elect to play the Match and upon doing so, may appoint an Umpire(s) to officiate at the Match. The relevant Controlling Body may determine in its absolute discretion whether to recognise the result of such Match.

8.2 DUTIES

8.2.1 Field Umpires

The field Umpires shall have full control of and officiate a Match in accordance with these Laws.

8.2.2 Boundary Umpires

(a) Unless otherwise determined by the relevant Controlling Body, the duties of a boundary Umpire shall include without limitation:

(i) judging whether a football is Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full and signalling to the field Umpire when that has occurred;

(ii) throwing the football back into play if it has gone Out of Bounds, when directed to do so by a field Umpire;

(iii) determining whether a Player has breached a starting position in contravention of Law 18.2.2(b);

(iv) bringing the football back to the Centre Square after a Goal has been scored;

(v) reporting a Player or Official who commits a Reportable Offence; and

(vi) assisting goal Umpires to determine a score.

(b) When the boundary Umpire signals that the football is Out of Bounds, the field Umpire shall immediately sound a whistle to indicate that the football is out of play. When directed by the field Umpire, the boundary Umpire shall bring the football into play by throwing the football over their head towards the centre of the Playing Surface. The field Umpire may recall any throw-in by the boundary Umpire that in their opinion does not allow any opportunity for the football to be contested.

8.2.3 Out of Bounds

Where any field Umpire has failed to notice a boundary Umpire's signal that the football has gone Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full, the following shall apply:

(a) the boundary Umpire shall continue signalling until they are noticed by any field Umpire;

(b) upon noticing the boundary Umpire's signal, the field Umpire shall stop play and direct that the football be taken to where it crossed the Boundary Line, at which point the football shall be thrown in by the boundary Umpire or Kicked back into play, as the case may be;

(c) this Law applies even if a Goal or Behind is scored before the field Umpire notices the boundary Umpire's signal. In such instances, the field Umpire shall direct the goal Umpire to annul the score;

(d) this Law does not apply if a Free Kick or Fifty Metre Penalty is awarded before the field Umpire notices the boundary Umpire's signal.

8.2.4 Goal Umpire

(a) Unless otherwise determined by the relevant Controlling Body, the duties of a goal Umpire shall include:

(i) judging whether a Goal or Behind has been scored;

(ii) signalling that a Goal or Behind has been scored upon being given the 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear' by a field Umpire;

(iii) recording the Goals and Behinds scored by each Team during a Match;

(iv) determining whether a Player has breached a starting position in contravention of Law 18.2.2(b);

(v) reporting a Player or Official who commits a Reportable Offence; and

(vi) assisting boundary Umpires to determine if the football is Out of Bounds.

(b) Where a goal Umpire considers that a Behind has been scored and a boundary Umpire considers the football has gone Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full, the decision of the goal Umpire shall prevail.

(c) Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, if a goal Umpire is unsure whether a Goal, Behind or no score shall be recorded, the goal Umpire may consult with the field and boundary Umpires to determine the outcome. If a decision cannot be determined following consultation, the goal Umpire shall give the lesser outcome. If the outcome is no score and the football remained in play, the field Umpire shall throw the football up at the centre of the Kick-Off Line.

(d) At the end of each quarter and at the end of a Match, the goal Umpires shall compare the score which they have recorded. If the scores are different and cannot be agreed upon or corrected by the goal Umpires, the scores shall be compared to the score recorded by the Timekeeper(s) and person(s) appointed by the Controlling Body under Law 16.7 (if any). If the matter still remains unresolved or the Timekeeper has not recorded the scores, the matter shall be referred to the relevant Controlling Body for determination.

9. PLAYERS' BOOTS, JEWELLERY AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

9.1 INTERPRETATION

For the purposes of this Law 9, Protective Equipment includes but is not limited to:

(a) helmets;

(b) knee braces;

(c) shoulder pads;

(d) back supports;

(e) arm guards; and

(f) any other item designated as such by the relevant Controlling Body.

9.2 PROHIBITION OF ITEMS

A Player shall not wear during a Match:

(a) any form of jewellery;

(b) boot studs, plates/cleats or any Protective Equipment (other than Protective Equipment approved by the Controlling Body) unless the field Umpire is satisfied that the item does not constitute a danger or increase the risk of injury to other Players competing in the Match; or

(c) Protective Equipment which has been approved by the relevant Controlling Body, if the field Umpire is satisfied that such equipment has, during the Match, become dangerous or increased the risk of injury to other Players.

9.3 INSPECTION

At any time before or during a Match, a field Umpire may inspect a Player's boots or hands or any Protective Equipment that a Player intends to wear or use during the Match.

9.4 POWER TO ORDER OFF

9.4.1 Order by Umpire and Replacement Player

A field Umpire may order from the Playing Surface a Player who is wearing or using an item prohibited under Law 9.2. Where a Player is ordered from the Playing Surface under this Law:

(a) an Interchange Player may replace the Player ordered from the Playing Surface; and

(b) the Player ordered from the Playing Surface may only re-enter the Playing Surface once the Player has removed the prohibited item.

9.4.2 Refusal to Leave Surface

Where a Player refuses to or does not immediately leave the Playing Surface when ordered to do so by a field Umpire, the following shall apply:

(a) the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the Player of the opposing Team who is nearest to where play was stopped, or the location of the football, whichever is the greater penalty; and

(b) if the Player still refuses to leave the Playing Surface:

  (i) the field Umpire shall report the Player for misconduct in failing to follow a direction of an Umpire;

  (ii) the Match shall immediately end and the reported Player's Team shall forfeit the Match; and

  (iii) Law 11.2 shall apply to any Match which is forfeited.

10. MATCH TIMING

10.1 DURATION OF MATCH AND INTERVALS

10.1.1 Duration

Subject to Law 10.1.3, a Match shall be played for a period of 80 minutes, divided into four quarters, each of 20 minutes duration. The 20 minute duration for each quarter shall be actual playing time and shall not include stoppages in play.

10.1.2 Intervals Between Quarters

Subject to Law 10.1.3, an interval shall be taken between each quarter as follows:

(a) a maximum period of 6 minutes between the end of the first quarter and the beginning of the second quarter;

(b) a maximum period of 20 minutes between the end of the second quarter and the beginning of the third quarter; and

(c) a maximum period of 6 minutes between the end of the third quarter and the beginning of the fourth quarter.

10.1.3 Variation

A Controlling Body may vary the duration of a Match and the duration of the intervals between quarters.

10.2 TIMEKEEPERS

10.2.1 Appointment

(a) A Controlling Body shall appoint two or more persons to act as the Timekeepers for a Match;

(b) Where the Controlling Body does not appoint a Timekeeper, each of the participating Teams shall appoint a person to act as a Timekeeper for the Match.

10.2.2 Duties

Each Timekeeper appointed for a Match shall:

(a) keep time for each quarter of the Match;

(b) record on time cards the time taken to play each quarter and lodge the completed cards with the relevant Controlling Body;

(c) sound the siren in accordance with the procedures contained in these Laws until acknowledged by any field Umpire;

(d) stop the clock which is used for the timing of each quarter as required under Law 10.6 for a stoppage in play;

(e) record the Goals and Behinds scored by each Team during a Match; and

(f) perform any other function as may be directed by the relevant Controlling Body.

10.3 PROCEDURE FOR SOUNDING SIREN

The Timekeepers shall sound the siren at the times and on the number of occasions as set out in Table 1.

Start of Match	Number of Occasions
Five minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the Match and as Umpires enter the Arena	Once
Two minutes prior to the scheduled starting time	Twice
One minute prior to the scheduled starting time	Once
Scheduled starting time (start of Match)	Once
End of first quarter	Once
Start of Second Quarter	
Two minutes prior to the scheduled starting time	Twice
One minute prior to the scheduled starting time	Once
Scheduled starting time (start of quarter)	Once
End of second quarter	Once
Start of Third Quarter	
Five minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the quarter and as Umpires enter the Arena	Once
Two minutes prior to the scheduled starting time	Twice
One minute prior to the scheduled starting time	Once
Scheduled starting time (start of quarter)	Once
End of third quarter	Once
Start of Final Quarter	
Two minutes prior to the scheduled starting time	Twice
One minute prior to the scheduled starting time	Once
Scheduled starting time (start of quarter)	Once
End of fourth quarter	Once

10.4 START OF QUARTER

To start the quarter, the Timekeeper shall commence the clock used for timing the Match when:

(a) the football touches the ground in the act of bouncing or leaves the Umpire's hands in the act of throwing the football up; or

(b) a Player, who has been awarded a Free Kick prior to the start of the quarter, brings the football into play or the Umpire calls 'Play On'.

10.5 END OF QUARTER

(a) The end of a quarter occurs when any field Umpire or emergency Umpire first hears the siren sounded by the Timekeepers to signal the end of a quarter. The field Umpire shall acknowledge the siren and bring play to an end by blowing a whistle and holding both arms above their head.

(b) For the avoidance of doubt, if immediately before hearing the siren to end a quarter, a field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player should be awarded a Free Kick or a Mark, the field Umpire shall signal that play has come to an end and then award the Free Kick or Mark to the Player. A Free Kick will not be awarded where the football has been kicked and, after the field Umpire has heard the siren, lands Out of Bounds On the Full.

10.6 STOPPING AND RECOMMENCING TIME

10.6.1 Stopping Time

The Timekeepers shall stop the clock which is used for the timing of a Match when:

(a) directed to do so by a field Umpire in accordance with Law 10.6.3;

(b) the goal Umpire signals that a Goal or Behind has been scored;

(c) the boundary Umpire signals that the football is Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full; or

(d) the field Umpire crosses their arms to indicate they are going to throw the football up.

10.6.2 Recommencing Time

The Timekeepers shall recommence the clock used for the timing of a Match when:

(a) directed to do so by the field Umpire in accordance with Law 10.6.3;

(b) the football is bounced or thrown up by the field Umpire;

(c) the football is brought back into play after a Behind has been scored;

(d) the football is thrown back into play by the boundary Umpire or brought back into play by a Player (as the case may be), after it has gone Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full;

(e) the football is obviously in play; or

(f) the umpire calls 'Play On'.

10.6.3 Signalling

A field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to stop the clock or re-start the clock used for the timing of the Match by blowing a whistle and raising one arm above their head.

10.6.4 Domestic Provisions

A Controlling Body may vary the provisions of Law 10.6.1 at its discretion.

11. UNAUTHORISED PLAYING SURFACE ENTRY, INCOMPLETE MATCH AND MATCH FORFEITURE

11.1 UNAUTHORISED PLAYING SURFACE ENTRY AND INCOMPLETE MATCH

11.1.1 Unauthorised Playing Surface Entry

Where a person(s) enters the Playing Surface when they are not authorised to do so, the field Umpire shall:

(a) stop play at the first available opportunity;

(b) seek the assistance of person(s) authorised by the relevant Controlling Body to remove the unauthorised person(s) from the Playing Surface;

(c) once the unauthorised person(s) has been removed from the Playing Surface, the field Umpire shall recommence play as follows depending on the circumstances:

  (i) where the football was in dispute at the time play was stopped, by bouncing or throwing up the football;

  (ii) where the football was Out of Bounds at the time play was stopped, by directing the boundary Umpire to throw the football in;

  (iii) where a Player had Possession of the Football at the time play was stopped, by awarding a Free Kick to the Player;

  (iv) where a Player had been awarded a Free Kick or a Mark at the time play was stopped, by allowing the Player to dispose of the football.

11.1.2 Incomplete Match

If a Match is unable to commence or continue within the time scheduled for the Match for reasons beyond the control of either Team (including circumstances where it is unsafe for the Match to proceed), the following shall apply:

(a) Match not commenced: The result of a Match which is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either Team shall be determined by the Controlling Body.

(b) Prior to half time: If a Match has commenced but is not able to proceed at any time prior to half time, the Teams shall depart from the Arena. If the Match is unable to recommence within a 30 minute period, the Match shall be deemed to be drawn and the scores of the Teams at the time the Match was interrupted shall be used in calculating the percentage of each Team.

(c) Half time & beyond: If the half time interval has been reached and the Match is unable to proceed at any time, the Teams shall leave the Arena, or in the case of half time, not return to the Arena. If the Match is unable to recommence within a 30 minute period, the scores of the Teams at the time the Match was interrupted shall be deemed to be the final scores of the Match. The Team with the highest score shall be deemed the winner of the Match and the scores shall be used in calculating the percentage of each Team.

(d) Match not able to proceed: Unless otherwise determined by a Controlling Body, a field Umpire shall, having regard to the health and safety of the Players and any other relevant circumstances, determine whether a Match is unable to commence or proceed. A field Umpire must determine that a Match is unable to commence or proceed for such time as lightning is present at or Within the Immediate Proximity of the Arena where the Match is being conducted, in line with the AFL Extreme Weather Policy outlined in the Member Protection Policy.

(e) Recommencing of Play: Where a Team is directed to recommence play by a field Umpire and the Team fails, refuses or neglects to recommence play, the Team shall be deemed to have forfeited the Match, in which case Law 11.2 shall apply.

(f) The Controlling Body may vary the length and scheduling of the intervals to suit practical circumstances.

11.2 MATCH FORFEITURE

11.2.1 Forfeiture

For the purposes of this Law, a Team forfeits a Match if:

(a) it is unable or it fails, refuses or neglects to commence or recommence play:

(i) at the scheduled starting time; or

(ii) within such other time period determined or specified by the Controlling Body, a field Umpire or these Laws;

(b) a field Umpire determines, in accordance with these Laws, that a Team has forfeited the Match; or

(c) an event occurs under the Laws which results in a Team forfeiting the Match.

11.2.2 Consequence of Forfeiture

Where a Team forfeits a Match, the following shall apply:

(a) the points for the Match shall be awarded to the Team who did not forfeit the Match; and

(b) at the conclusion of the Home and Away Matches:

(i) the percentage of the Team who did not forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did forfeit the Match; and

(ii) the percentage of the Team who did forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did not forfeit the Match.

11.2.3 Variation by Controlling Body

If the relevant Controlling Body is of the opinion that a Team will be disadvantaged by the calculation of percentage under Law 11.2.2, the Controlling Body may, upon application by the Team, vary the points debited or credited to the Team or the method of calculating the Team's percentage.

PART D
MATCH PROVISIONS

12. CHOICE OF GOAL AND COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

12.1 CHOICE OF GOAL

The end of the Playing Surface to which a Team shall attack shall be decided by the toss of a coin as follows:

(a) the field Umpire (or such other person approved by the Controlling Body) shall toss the coin;

(b) before the coin is tossed, the captain of the away Team shall call "the fall of the coin";

(c) the captain of the Team who wins the toss of the coin shall choose the end to which their Team shall attack in the first quarter; and

(d) at the conclusion of each quarter, the Teams shall change ends.

12.2 COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

12.2.1 Readiness to Commence Play

Before commencing play in each quarter, the field umpire shall confirm:

(a) the Timekeepers are ready to commence timing the Match;

(b) all Interchange Players have left the Playing Surface;

(c) the starting positions set out in Law 13.1 are met; and

(d) with each captain that both Teams are ready to commence play.

12.2.2 Commencing Play

(a) Unless Law 12.2.2(b) applies, the field Umpire shall commence play in each quarter by holding the football above their head, blowing a whistle and bouncing or throwing up the football in the Centre Circle.

(b) Where the field Umpire awards a Free Kick to a Player before bouncing or throwing up the football, the field Umpire shall signal time on, blow their whistle and give the football to the Player.

12.2.3 Report to Controlling Body

The field Umpire shall advise the Controlling Body of any occasion when a Team is not ready to commence play at the scheduled starting time. The Controlling Body may impose a sanction determined in its absolute discretion.

13. CENTRE BOUNCES

13.1 STARTING POSITIONS

The following starting positions must be met within a reasonable time as set by the Controlling Body, before the field Umpire commences their approach to the Centre Circle to bounce or throw up the football to start a quarter or recommence play after a Goal has been scored:

(a) six Players from each Team are permitted in each area defined by the Boundary Line and the Fifty Metre Arcs;

(b) of these six Players for each area referenced in Law 13.1(a), at least one Player from each Team is positioned within the Goal Square;

(c) four Players from each Team are permitted in the Centre Square;

(d) of these four Players referenced in Law 13.1(c), one Player from each Team will be the Ruck and is positioned within the Ten Metre Circle in their defensive half;

(e) one Player from each Team is positioned in each shaded area in Diagram 2;

(f) if a Team is unable or elects not to have 18 Players on the Playing Surface, the requirements stated in Law 13.1(a), (c) and (e) are modified such that the number of relevant Players for each starting position can be reduced but not exceeded;

(g) after a Goal has been scored, if a Player is injured and making their way from the Playing Surface with the assistance of doctor, trainer or any other person treating Players of a Team, the field Umpire may wait a reasonable period to allow the replacement Player to take up position before recommencing play. A replacement Player may enter the Playing Surface while the Player that they are replacing is leaving the Playing Surface.

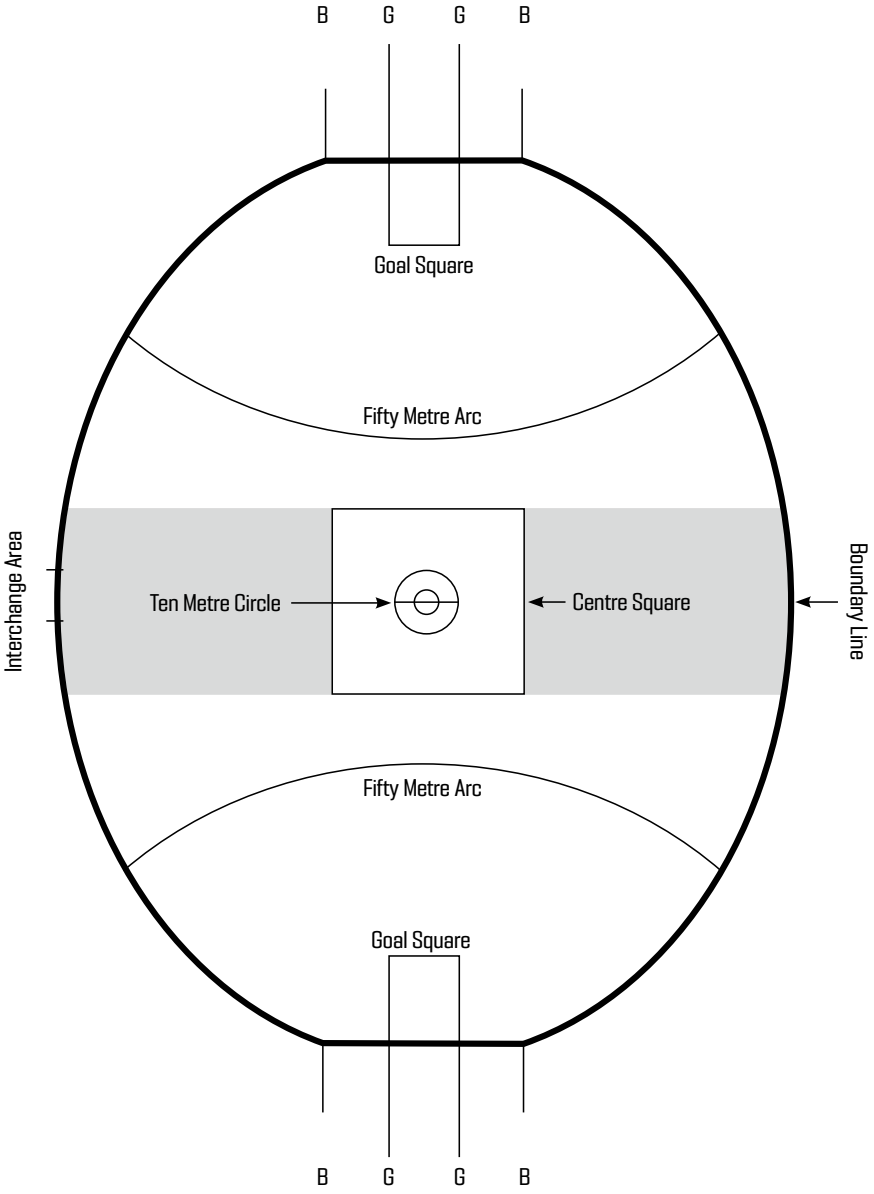
B G G B
Goal Square
Fifty Metre Arc
Interchange Area
Ten Metre Circle
Centre Square
Boundary Line
Fifty Metre Arc
Goal Square
B G G B

DIAGRAM 2

13.2 CONTESTING THE CENTRE BOUNCE OR THROW-UP

(a) The centre bounce or throw-up of the football shall be contested by the Ruck who must start with both feet within the Ten Metre Circle, and may only enter the Team's attacking half or exit the Ten Metre Circle after the football is bounced or thrown up by the field Umpire.

(b) No other Player may enter the Ten Metre Circle until the football is bounced or thrown up by the field Umpire.

(c) Where a Player contravenes Law 13.2(a) or (b), the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the Ruck of the opposing Team.

13.3 RECALLING BOUNCES OR THROW-UPS

(a) A field Umpire may recall any bounce or throw-up of the football that in the Umpire's opinion does not allow for the football to be contested by both Rucks.

(b) Where a field Umpire recalls a bounce under Law 13.3(a), the football shall be thrown up to restart play.

14. THROWING UP THE FOOTBALL

In addition to the other instances specified in these Laws, the field Umpire shall throw up the football in the following circumstances:

(a) where they are of the opinion that the conditions are unsuitable for bouncing but before doing so, shall advise the Players accordingly;

(b) where the football becomes pinned as two or more opposing Players are contesting the football;

(c) where the field Umpire is unsure about which Player has taken a Mark;

(d) unless a Free Kick or a Mark is awarded, or a Player has possession of the football, if the football is in the proximity of an injured Player;

(e) where the football hits any fixed attachment to the stadium above the Playing Surface; and

(f) if directed to do so by the Controlling Body.

15. MARKING THE FOOTBALL

15.1 DEFINITION

A Mark is taken if, in the opinion of the field Umpire, a Player catches or takes control of the football:

(a) within the Playing Surface;

(b) after it has been Kicked by another Player a distance of at least 15 metres; and

(c) which has not touched the ground or been touched by another Player.

15.2 PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

(a) For the avoidance of doubt, a Mark shall be awarded if:

(i) a Player catches or takes control of the football before it has passed completely over the Boundary Line, Goal Line or Behind Line; or

(ii) before the football was caught or controlled by the Player, it was touched by an Umpire or any other Official.

(b) The field Umpire may consult with a boundary and/or goal Umpire before deciding whether a Mark has been taken before the football passed completely over the Boundary Line, Goal Line or Behind Line.

15.3 LOCATION OF THE MARK

Where a field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player has taken a Mark, the field Umpire shall award the Mark to the Player at the location on the Playing Surface where the Mark was taken. This location on the Playing Surface is known as The Mark.

15.4 'TOUCHED PLAY ON'

Where the football is touched by another Player during the period when the football was Kicked until it is caught or controlled by a Player, the field Umpire shall immediately call and signal 'Touched Play On' in order to indicate to the Players that a Mark will not be awarded.

15.5 MARK NOT AWARDED

Where a Player claims to have taken a Mark which is not awarded by the field Umpire, the following shall apply:

(a) if the Player does not retain possession of the football, play shall continue; or

(b) if the Player retains possession of the football and the Player is Legally Tackled by an opponent, the field Umpire shall throw up the football provided they are satisfied that the Player did not hear or see the signal of 'Touched Play On' or 'Play On'. If the field Umpire considers that the Player did hear or see the signal of 'Touched Play On' or 'Play On', Law 18.6 shall apply.

15.6 CANCEL OF MARK

(a) Where a field Umpire is of the opinion that they have incorrectly blown the whistle to award a Mark that was not subsequently completed, they may cancel the decision and call 'Play On'.

(b) If the Player retains possession of the football and is Legally Tackled by an opponent, the field Umpire shall throw up the football provided they are satisfied that the Player did not hear or see the signal of 'Play On'. If the field Umpire considers that the Player did hear or see the signal of 'Play On', Law 18.6 shall apply.

16. SCORING

16.1 GOALS AND BEHINDS

16.1.1 Scoring a Goal

Subject to Law 16.2, a Goal is scored when the football is Kicked completely over the Goal Line by a Player of the Attacking Team without being touched by any other Player, even if the football first touches the ground.

16.1.2 Scoring a Behind

Subject to Law 16.2, a Behind is scored when any of the following occurs:

(a) the football passes completely over the Behind Line;

(b) the football touches or passes over the goal post or touches the padding or any other attachment to the goal post;

(c) a Player of the Attacking Team Kicks the football over the Goal Line but before completely passing over the Goal Line, the football is touched by another Player;

(d) a Player from the Attacking Team Handballs, knocks or otherwise takes the football over the Goal Line, other than kicking the ball described in clause 16.1.1;

(e) a Player from the Defending Team Kicks, Handballs, knocks or otherwise takes the football over the Goal Line or Behind Line; or

(f) if a defending Player plays on from behind the Goal Line or Behind Line and subsequently changes direction before entering the Playing Surface.

16.1.3 Clarification and Examples

For the avoidance of doubt:

(a) if the football touches an Umpire or any Official, and in the opinion of the field Umpire it has affected a score, play will be stopped and the Umpires will determine if the score should be recorded;

(b) if the football touches an Umpire or any Official, and in the opinion of the field Umpire it has not affected a score, the field Umpire shall call 'Play On' and the football shall remain in play; and

(c) if the football is Kicked by a Player on the Attacking Team at the time when another Player is touching the football, the football shall be deemed to have been touched by that Player.

16.1.4 Football Touching or Passing Over the Behind Post

Where a football touches or passes over a behind post, the football shall be Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full.

16.2 'ALL CLEAR' AND 'TOUCHED ALL CLEAR'

16.2.1 Signal by Field Umpire

A Goal or a Behind shall only be signalled by a goal Umpire and recorded as a Goal or Behind when:

(a) subject to Law 16.2.1(b), the field Umpire signals 'All Clear'; or

(b) in the case of the football being touched by another Player and then passing over the Goal Line, the field Umpire signals 'Touched All Clear'.

16.2.2 Goal Umpire to Notify Field Umpire

(a) Where the goal Umpire is of the opinion that a Goal or Behind has been scored and the field Umpire has allowed play to continue, the goal Umpire shall immediately notify the field Umpire.

(b) Upon being notified by the goal Umpire, the field Umpire shall stop play and signal 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear', as the case may be, and the Goal or Behind shall be signalled by the goal Umpire and recorded as a score. Play shall then recommence in accordance with these Laws.

(c) Unless Law 16.4.1 applies, any Free Kick awarded to a Player before the field Umpire signals 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear' under Law 16.2.2(b) shall be cancelled.

16.3 SIGNALLING A GOAL OR BEHIND

16.3.1 Goal

The goal Umpire shall signal that a Goal has been scored by raising both index fingers and then waving two flags.

16.3.2 Behind

The goal Umpire shall signal that a Behind has been scored by raising one index finger and then waving one flag.

16.3.3 Changing a Decision

(a) The goal Umpire may change their decision about the scoring of a Goal or a Behind if the goal Umpire notifies the field Umpire before the football is brought back into play.

(b) A goal Umpire shall signal that the scoring of a Goal or Behind has been changed by:

  (i) immediately standing on the centre of the Goal Line and holding both flags above their head in a crossed position; and

  (ii) then signalling the new score or advising the boundary Umpire to signal Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full, as the case may be.

16.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FREE KICKS AND 'ALL CLEAR'

16.4.1 Free Kick Awarded Before 'All Clear'

Where a Free Kick is awarded to a Player immediately after the football passes the Goal or Behind Line but before the field Umpire signals 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear', the following shall apply:

(a) where the Player is from the Attacking Team, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear', after which the goal Umpire shall signal and record the score. The Free Kick shall then be taken where the infringement occurred, or the position at which the football is brought back into play, whichever is the greater penalty against the Defending Team; or

(b) where the Player is from the Defending Team, the field Umpire shall not signal 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear' and a Free Kick shall be awarded.

16.4.2 'All Clear' Given But Play Has Not Recommenced

(a) Where a Free Kick is awarded to a Player during the period when the field Umpire has signalled 'All Clear' for a Goal to be recorded and the football is bounced in the Centre Circle, the Free Kick shall be taken where the infringement occurred, or at the Centre Circle, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending Team.

(b) Where a Free Kick is awarded to a Player after the field Umpire has signalled 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear' for a Behind to be recorded but before the football has been brought back into play:

  (i) in the case of a Free Kick being awarded to the Attacking Team, it shall be taken from the centre of the Kick-Off Line, or where the infringement occurred, whichever is the greater penalty against the Defending Team; or

  (ii) in the case of a Free Kick being awarded to the Defending Team, it shall be taken where the infringement occurred, or the field Umpire shall award a Fifty Metre Penalty from The Mark defined in Law 17.1(d), whichever is the greater penalty against the Attacking Team.

16.5 SCORING A GOAL OR BEHIND AFTER PLAY HAS ENDED

16.5.1 Goal or Behind Recorded in Certain Circumstances

Even though play has been brought to an end under Law 10.5, a Goal or Behind shall be recorded for a Team if:

(a) the Goal or Behind is scored by a Player from a Free Kick or Mark which was awarded to the Player before play came to an end;

(b) the Goal or Behind was scored by a Player who disposed of the football before play came to an end; or

(c) the Goal or Behind is scored by a Player who was awarded a Free Kick under Law 16.6.

16.5.2 Football Touched in Transit

A Behind shall still be recorded under Law 16.5.1 if the football is touched in transit by another Player, provided the field Umpire is satisfied that the scoring of the Behind was not assisted by a Player from the same Team.

16.5.3 Field Umpire Sole Judge

A field Umpire or an emergency Umpire (if applicable) shall be the sole judge in deciding whether a Free Kick or Mark should be awarded or whether the football was disposed of by a Player before play came to an end.

16.6 FREE KICK AFTER PLAY HAS ENDED

16.6.1 Before Kick or in the Act of Kicking

After a field Umpire has signalled that play has come to an end, any field Umpire may award a Free Kick to any Player when a Player is preparing to Kick or in the act of Kicking for Goal. In such cases, the following shall apply:

(a) if the Player awarded the Free Kick is playing for the Attacking Team, the Free Kick shall be awarded to the Player where the infringement occurred, or the Player shall be awarded a Fifty Metre Penalty, whichever is the greater penalty against the Defending Team; or

(b) if the Player awarded the Free Kick is playing for the Defending Team, the Player shall be awarded the Free Kick where the infringement occurred or where the football is at the time of the infringement, whichever is the greater penalty against the Attacking Team.

16.6.2 After the Kick

After a field Umpire has signalled that play has come to an end, any field Umpire may award a Free Kick to any Player after a Player has Kicked for Goal but before the field Umpire has signalled 'All Clear' or 'Touched All Clear'. In such cases, the following shall apply:

(a) if the Player awarded the Free Kick is playing for the Attacking Team and a Goal is Kicked, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' and a Goal shall be recorded;

(b) if the Player awarded the Free Kick is playing for the Attacking Team and a Goal is not scored:

  (i) if the Free Kick occurs within the Playing Surface then that Player will take the Free Kick where the Free Kick was awarded or at the location of the Kick for Goal, whichever is the greater penalty against the Defending Team;

  (ii) if the Free Kick occurs outside the Playing Surface then that Player will take the Free Kick at the closest point to the Goal Line, Behind Line or Boundary Line where the infringement occurred or at the location of the Kick for Goal, whichever is the greater penalty against the Defending Team; or

(iii) where a Behind is scored, that Player may elect to have the Behind recorded; or

(c) if the Player awarded the Free Kick is playing for the Defending Team, the Player shall be awarded the Free Kick where the infringement occurred. For the avoidance of doubt, any Goal or Behind shall not be recorded.

16.7 RECORDING SCORES

A Controlling Body may appoint a person or persons to record the scores of a Match independently from the goal Umpires and Timekeepers. Where the goal Umpires cannot agree on the final score of a Match, the Controlling Body may take into account the scores recorded by the Timekeepers and person(s) so appointed to determine the result of a Match.

17. PROCEDURE AFTER A BEHIND HAS BEEN SCORED

17.1 BRINGING THE FOOTBALL BACK INTO PLAY

Unless Law 16.4 applies, after a goal Umpire has signalled a Behind:

(a) any player of the Defending Team may elect to Kick the football from within the Goal Square or play on by exiting the Goal Square within a reasonable time;

(b) if the Player has not elected to Kick the football or exit the Goal Square within a reasonable time, a field Umpire will call 'Play On';

(c) a Player may not handball the football from within the Goal Square unless the field Umpire has called 'Play On' pursuant to Law 17.1(b);

(d) The Mark shall be set at 15 metres from the centre of the Kick-Off Line towards the centre of the Playing Surface, as shown in Diagram 3.

17.2 FOOTBALL BROUGHT INTO PLAY INCORRECTLY

Where the field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player has not brought the football back into play in accordance with Law 17.1, the field Umpire shall reset the play.

17.3 PROTECTED AREA

Other than the Player bringing the football into play, all Players must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area described in Diagram 3.

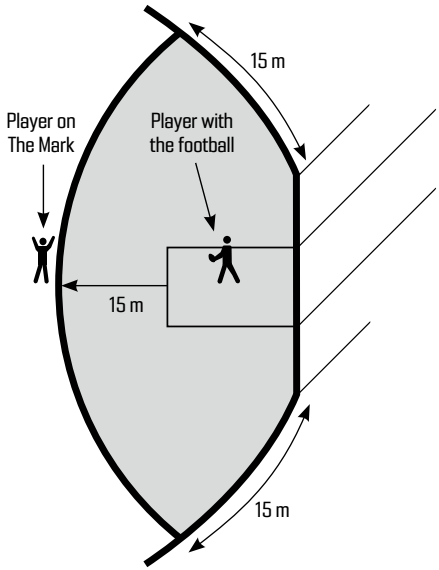

DIAGRAM 3

17.4 ATTACKING TEAM DELAYING RECOMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

Where the field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player from the Attacking Team:

(a) is within the Protected Area described in Law 17.3 at the time when a Player from the Defending Team is bringing the football back into play, and not made every endeavour to immediately vacate the area;

(b) has prevented or attempted to prevent the Player from the Defending Team from bringing the football back into play; or

(c) has otherwise delayed play.

The field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the Defending Team and a Fifty Metre Penalty from The Mark.

18. FREE KICKS

18.1 INTRODUCTION

18.1.1 Spirit and Intention of Awarding Free Kicks

It is the spirit and intention of these Laws that a Free Kick shall be awarded to:

(a) ensure that a Match is played in a fair manner and spirit of true sportsmanship;

(b) where possible in a contact sport, protect Players from sustaining injury;

(c) provide a Player, who makes obtaining possession of the football their sole objective, every opportunity to obtain possession; and

(d) a Player who executes a Legal Tackle which results in an opponent failing to dispose of the football in accordance with these Laws.

18.1.2 Awarding Free Kicks

Unless otherwise stated in these Laws, a Free Kick can be awarded at any location on the Arena and shall be taken where it is awarded or where the football is at the time, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending Team. For the avoidance of doubt, Free Kicks awarded outside the Playing Surface will be taken at the nearest location on the Boundary Line or where the football is at the time, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending Team.

18.1.3 When a Free Kick May be Awarded

A Free Kick may be awarded when the football is or is not in play, between when a field Umpire starts and ends a quarter. However, a Free Kick may also be awarded:

(a) if an infringement occurs on the Arena before the commencement of a quarter, in which case the Free Kick shall be taken at the Centre Circle or in accordance with Law 18.1.2, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending team; and

(b) after a score has been recorded or play has come to an end, in the circumstances described in Laws 16.4, 16.5 and 16.6.

18.1.4 Simultaneous Free Kicks

Unless otherwise stated in these Laws, where Umpires pay simultaneous Free Kicks to opposing teams, play will be restarted with a throw-up.

18.2 STARTING POSITIONS

18.2.1 Spirit and Intention

Starting positions are aimed at retaining the traditional positions of Australian Football.

18.2.2 Free Kicks - Starting Positions

(a) Unless otherwise prescribed by the Controlling Body, where a team fails to comply with the requirements listed in Law 13.1, the field Umpire shall signal time on and award a Free Kick to the Player of the opposing Team who is in the Centre Circle.

(b) Where the starting positions specified in Law 13.1 have been met, but a Player subsequently fails to maintain a starting position listed in Law 13.1 prior to the ball touching the ground in the act of bouncing by the field Umpire, or leaving the field Umpire's hand in the act of the ball being thrown up, an Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the Player of the opposing Team who is in the Centre Circle.

(c) Where a Player has been pushed or otherwise forced outside of the starting positions specified in Law 13.1, the Free Kick shall be awarded against the Team which caused the transgression.

(d) The Free Kicks specified in Law 18.2.2(a) - (c) shall be taken in the centre of the Playing Surface behind the line through the Centre Circle.

(e) Where a field Umpire is satisfied that an intentional breach of Law 13.1 has occurred, a Free Kick and Fifty Metre Penalty shall be awarded to the Player of the opposing Team who is in the Centre Circle.

18.3 PROHIBITED CONTACT

18.3.1 Spirit and Intention

A Player who makes the football their sole objective shall be provided every opportunity to do so.

18.3.2 Free Kicks - Prohibited Contact

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player when that Player makes any of the following Prohibited Contact with an opposition Player:

(a) executes a tackle that is not legal (refer to the definition of Legal Tackle);

(b) pushes or bumps an opposition Player in the back;

(c) makes high contact to an opposition Player (including the top of the shoulders) with any part of their body;

(d) holds an opposition Player who is not in possession of the football;

(e) executes an illegal Shepherd;

(f) Charges an opposition Player;

(g) trips or attempts to trip an opposition Player, whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;

(h) kicks or attempts to kick an opposition Player;

(i) kicks or attempts to kick the football in a manner likely to cause injury;

(j) strikes or attempts to strike an opposition Player, whether by hand, fist, arm, knee or head;

(k) bumps or makes forceful contact to an opposition Player from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football.

18.3.3 Permitted Contact

A Player may use their hip, shoulder, chest, arms or open hands provided that the football is no more than five metres away from the Player and the Player does not make Prohibited Contact as per Law 18.3.2 above.

18.4 RUCK CONTESTS

18.4.1 Spirit and Intention

The Ruck whose sole objective is to contest the football shall be permitted to do so.

18.4.2 Number of Rucks

Each Team must have no more than one Ruck contesting any centre bounce, throw-up or boundary throw-in.

18.4.3 Free Kicks - Ruck Contests

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Ruck contest against a Player where the Player:

(a) who is not a Ruck, contests a throw-up or boundary throw-in;

(b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Ruck;

(c) blocks an opposition Ruck;

(d) makes contact with an opposition Ruck prior to the football leaving the field or boundary Umpire's hand;

(e) who is a Ruck, enters their attacking half or steps outside the Centre Circle prior to the field Umpire bouncing or throwing up the football; or

(f) hits the football Out of Bounds On the Full from a throw-up by a field Umpire or a throw-in by a boundary Umpire.

18.5 MARKING CONTESTS

18.5.1 Spirit and Intention

The Player whose sole objective is to contest or spoil a Mark shall be permitted to do so.

18.5.2 Free Kicks - Marking Contests

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Marking contest against a Player where the Player:

(a) holds or blocks an opposition Player;

(b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Player;

(c) deliberately interferes with the arms of an opposition Player;

(d) makes contact to an opposition Player from front-on and whose sole objective is not to contest or spoil a Mark; or

(e) makes an unrealistic attempt to contest or spoil a Mark which interferes with an opposition Player.

18.5.3 Permitted Contact

Incidental contact in a Marking contest will be permitted if the Player's sole objective is to contest or spoil a Mark.

18.6 HOLDING THE BALL

18.6.1 Spirit and Intention

The Player who has Possession of the Football will be provided an opportunity to dispose of the football before rewarding an opponent for a Legal Tackle.

18.6.2 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Prior Opportunity

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if that Player does not Correctly Dispose of the football immediately when they are Legally Tackled.

18.6.3 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Incorrect Disposal

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has not had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if that Player elects to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Player does not elect to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when:

(a) the Player genuinely attempts to Correctly Dispose of the football;

(b) the Legal Tackle causes the football to be dislodged from the Player's possession.

18.6.4 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: No Genuine Attempt

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has not had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if the Player is able to, but does not make a genuine attempt to Correctly Dispose of the football within a reasonable time when Legally Tackled.

18.6.5 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Diving on Top of the Football

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who dives on top of or drags the football underneath their body and fails to immediately knock clear or Correctly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.

18.7 ROUGH CONDUCT

18.7.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be protected from unreasonable conduct from an opposition Player which is likely to cause injury.

18.7.2 Free Kicks - Rough Conduct

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player when that Player engages in rough conduct against an opposition Player which in the circumstances is unreasonable, which includes but is not limited to:

(a) executing a dangerous tackle on an opposition Player;

(b) making forceful contact below the knees of an opposition Player or executing a forceful action towards the lower leg of an opposition Player causing the opposition Player to take evasive action;

(c) sliding knees or feet first into an opposition Player;

(d) using boot studs in a manner likely to cause injury.

18.8 UMPIRES

18.8.1 Spirit and Intention

Umpires shall be protected from unreasonable contact and behaviour whilst performing their duties and their decisions should be respected and followed by Players and Officials.

18.8.2 Free Kicks - Umpires

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player or Official who:

(a) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;

(b) behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire;

(c) intentionally, unreasonably or carelessly makes contact with an Umpire;

(d) disputes a decision of an Umpire;

(e) fails to follow the instruction of an Umpire; or

(f) intentionally or carelessly engages in conduct which affects, interferes with or prevents an Umpire from performing their duties.

18.9 EMERGENCY UMPIRES

An emergency Umpire can award a Free Kick against a player when attending an incident on the Arena or when players are exiting the Playing Surface.

18.10 OUT OF BOUNDS

18.10.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play.

18.10.2 Free Kicks - Out of Bounds

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who:

(a) Kicks the football Out of Bounds On the Full;

(b) Kicks, Handballs or forces the football over the Boundary Line and does not demonstrate sufficient intent to keep the football in play; or

(c) fails to immediately hand the football to the boundary Umpire or drop the football directly to the ground once the football is Out of Bounds.

18.10.3 Taking Free Kick

A Free Kick awarded under Law 18.10 shall be taken at the point where the football crossed the Boundary Line.

18.11 DELIBERATE RUSHED BEHINDS

18.11.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play.

18.11.2 Free Kicks - Deliberate Rushed Behinds

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player from the Defending Team who intentionally Kicks, Handballs or forces the football over the Attacking Team's Goal Line or Behind Line or onto one of the Attacking Team's Goal Posts, and the Player:

(a) is greater than nine metres from the Goal Line or Behind Line;

(b) is not under immediate physical pressure;

(c) has had time and space to dispose of the football; or

(d) from a Ruck contest, hits the football over the Goal Line or Behind Line on the full.

18.11.3 Taking Free Kick

A Free Kick awarded under Law 18.10.2 shall be taken from the middle of the Goal Line if the football crossed the Goal Line or hit the goal post, or at the point where the football crossed the Behind Line.

18.12 INTENTIONALLY SHAKING, CLIMBING OR OTHERWISE INTERFERING WITH A GOAL POST OR BEHIND POST

18.12.1 Free Kicks – Intentionally Shaking, Climbing or Otherwise Interfering with a Goal Post or Behind Post

Unless Law 18.12.3 applies, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player or Official who intentionally shakes, climbs or otherwise interferes with a goal or behind post (either before or after a Player has disposed of the football).

18.12.2 Taking Free Kick

The following shall apply to a Free Kick awarded under Law 18.12.1:

(a) if a Free Kick is awarded against a Player or Official of the Defending Team and a Goal is not scored, the Player from the Attacking Team who was about to or who has Kicked for Goal shall take the Free Kick at the centre of the Goal Line;

(b) if the Free Kick is awarded against a Player or Official of the Attacking Team, the Player on the Defending Team who was nearest to the position from where the football will be or has been Kicked shall take the Free Kick from that position. For the avoidance of doubt, any Goal or Behind which would have been recorded in favour of the Attacking Team but for the awarding of the Free Kick, shall not be recorded.

18.12.3 Goal Scored

If a Player or Official of the Defending Team contravenes Law 18.12.1 but a Goal is still scored, the field Umpire shall not award a Free Kick. In such cases, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' and a Goal shall be recorded.

18.13 OTHER

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who:

(a) Throws the football;

(b) hands the football to another Player;

(c) whilst in possession of the football, does not bounce or touch the football on the ground at least once every 15 metres, irrespective of whether such Player is running in a straight line or otherwise. For the purposes of this Law, a Player shall be deemed to be in possession of the football during the period when the Player kicks or handballs the football to themself and regains possession without the football touching the ground;

(d) engages in Time Wasting;

(e) makes unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured opposition Player;

(f) intentionally lifts a Player from the same Team to interfere with play;

(g) engages in misconduct;

(h) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language; or

(i) uses an obscene gesture.

18.14 OFFICIALS

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against an Official who:

(a) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language;

(b) uses an obscene gesture;

(c) interferes with the football, an opposition Player, an Umpire or general play; or

(d) is located within the Fifty Metre Arc during the time when a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a Behind is scored, unless attending to an injured Player or making every endeavour to immediately vacate the area.

19. FIFTY METRE PENALTY

19.1 SPIRIT AND INTENTION

After a Mark or Free Kick has been awarded to a Player, a Fifty Metre Penalty will be awarded against the opposing Team which delays or impedes the play, or behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner.

19.2 WHEN IMPOSED

Where a field Umpire has awarded a Mark or Free Kick to a Player, or a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a Behind is scored, a Fifty Metre Penalty in favour of that Player will be awarded if the field Umpire is of the opinion that any Player or Official from the opposing Team:

(a) has moved off The Mark;

(b) when in the immediate contest, unreasonably holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;

(c) when not in the immediate contest, holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;

(d) enters or does not make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area, except when the Player is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent;

(e) has not returned the football directly and on the full to the Player awarded the Mark or Free Kick;

(f) engages in any conduct which delays or impedes the play; or

(g) engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would ordinarily be awarded.

19.3 PREVENTING A PLAYER TAKING PART IN THE NEXT ACT OF PLAY

If a Player intentionally makes Prohibited Contact against an opposition Player who has disposed of the football for the purpose of preventing that Player from taking part in the next act of play, the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick and a Fifty Metre Penalty to that Player.

19.4 IMPOSING A FIFTY METRE PENALTY

When the field Umpire imposes a Fifty Metre Penalty, the following procedure shall apply:

(a) the field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to stop the clock used for the timing of the Match;

(b) the field Umpire shall advance The Mark by 50 metres in a direct line with the centre of the Goal Line of the Team awarded the Fifty Metre Penalty;

(c) if the Player who received the Fifty Metre Penalty is less than 50 metres from the Goal Line, The Mark shall become the centre of the Goal Line;

(d) once The Mark has been advanced, the field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to re-start the clock used for the timing of the Match;

(e) if any Player from the opposing Team impedes or delays the Player with the football whilst The Mark is being advanced, a second Fifty Metre Penalty shall be imposed by the field Umpire after the initial 50 metre advancement; and

(f) the Player who is awarded the Fifty Metre Penalty may elect to Play On at any stage whilst The Mark is being advanced.

19.5 LOCAL CONDITIONS

A Controlling Body may reduce the distance of a Fifty Metre Penalty to 25 metres for the Matches played in the competition conducted by the Controlling Body.

20. DISPOSAL AFTER MARK OR FREE KICK

20.1 STANDING THE MARK AND THE PROTECTED AREA

20.1.1 Standing The Mark

When a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick, one Player from the opposing Team may:

(a) stand on The Mark; or

(b) otherwise be directed by a field Umpire.

For the avoidance of doubt, all other Players from the opposing Team must be positioned behind The Mark or otherwise outside the Protected Area defined in Law 20.1.2.

20.1.2 Protected Area

(a) The Protected Area after a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick is a corridor which extends from 10 metres either side of The Mark and five metres behind, to 10 metres either side of, and five metre arc behind, the Player with the football, as illustrated in Diagram 4.

(b) No Player shall enter and remain in the Protected Area unless the field Umpire calls 'Play On' or the Player from the opposing Team is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent. Any Player caught in the Protected Area must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area.

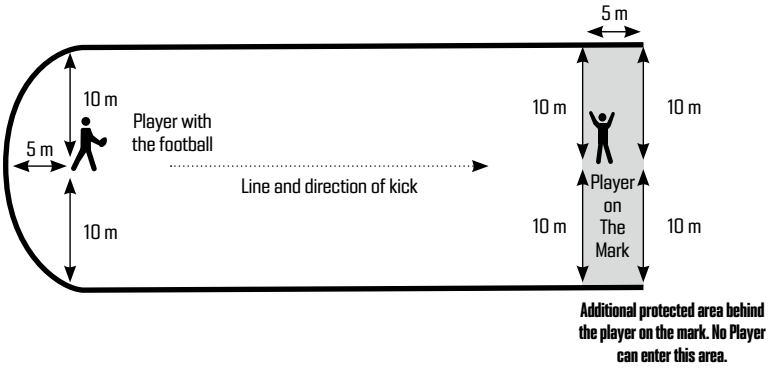

DIAGRAM 4

20.2 DISPOSAL FROM BEHIND THE MARK

(a) A Player who has been awarded a Mark or Free Kick shall be directed by a field Umpire to dispose of the football within a reasonable time in a direct line from The Mark to the centre of their Goal Line.

(b) If a Player does not dispose of the football within a reasonable time, or attempts to dispose of the football other than in a direct line over The Mark, the field Umpire shall call 'Play On' and the football shall immediately be in play.

(c) This Law does not apply if a Player is disposing of the football from beyond the Goal Line, Behind Line or Boundary Line, in which case Law 20.3 or 20.4 shall apply.

20.3 DISPOSAL FROM OUT OF BOUNDS

20.3.1 Bringing the Football Back Into Play

(a) A Player who is awarded a Mark or Free Kick and attempts to bring the football back into play or is called to play on from beyond the Boundary Line must bring the football back into play.

(b) If a Player breaches Law 20.3.1(a), including being tackled, the football shall be deemed Out of Bounds and a boundary throw-in shall result from the location of The Mark or Free Kick.

20.3.2 Moving in One Direction

(a) A Player who is awarded a Mark or Free Kick may bring the football back into play from outside the Playing Surface beyond the Boundary Line provided that the Player moves in one direction off the line of The Mark in the process of re-entering the Playing Surface.

(b) If a Player breaches Law 20.3.2(a), the football shall be deemed Out of Bounds and a boundary throw-in shall result.

20.4 DISPOSAL BY A DEFENDING PLAYER – WITHIN NINE METRES

Where a Player from the Defending Team is awarded a Mark or Free Kick within the shaded area shown in Diagram 5.

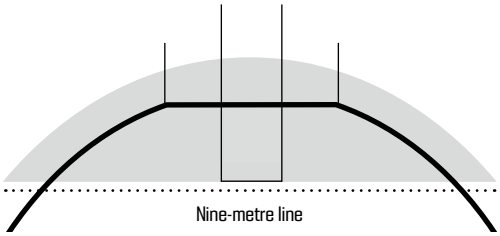

DIAGRAM 5

20.4.1 Setting the Mark

A field Umpire will set The Mark where the Nine Metre Line intersects the direct line between the location of the Mark or Free Kick and the centre of the Defending Team's Goal Line.

20.4.2 Crossing the Goal Line or Behind Line

(a) In the event the Player from the Defending Team crosses the Goal Line or Behind Line and then elects or is called to play on:

  (i) the Player must re-enter the Playing Surface by crossing the same Goal Line or Behind Line; and

  (ii) the Player must move in one direction off the line of The Mark in the process of re-entering the Playing Surface.

(b) If the Player breaches Law 20.4.2(a)(i) or (ii), including being tackled, a Behind shall be registered.

(c) If the football hits either the goal or behind post after the Player disposes of the football, the Player shall be given the football again to recommence play.

20.4.3 Crossing the Boundary Line

(a) In the event the Player from the Defending Team crosses the Boundary Line and elects to play on through the Goal Line or Behind Line, a boundary throw-in shall result adjacent to the behind post.

(b) If the football hits either the goal or behind post after the defending Player disposes of the football, a boundary throw-in shall result adjacent to the behind post.

20.5 KICKING FOR A GOAL

20.5.1 Line of The Mark

Where a Player from the Attacking Team is Kicking for a Goal after being awarded a Mark or a Free Kick, the Kick shall be taken along a direct line from The Mark to the centre of the Attacking Team's Goal Line, except in the following cases:

(a) where the Mark or Free Kick is awarded within or on a line of the Goal Square, the Kick shall be taken from directly in front of the Goal Line from a spot horizontally across from where the Mark or Free Kick was awarded;

(b) where the Kick will occur after the siren, the Player shall be entitled to approach The Mark from any direction, as long as the location of the Kick does not improve the angle to the goal posts.

20.5.2 Moving Off The Mark While a Player is Kicking for a Goal

If the Player standing The Mark moves off The Mark whilst a Player is in the act of Kicking for a Goal, the following shall apply:

(a) if a Goal is Kicked, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' and a Goal shall be recorded; and

(b) if a Goal is not Kicked, the Player may elect to take another Kick, in which case the Player shall also be awarded a Fifty Metre Penalty.

20.6 INJURY PREVENTING DISPOSAL

Where a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick and, in the opinion of the field Umpire, that Player is suffering from an injury which will prevent them from disposing of the football, the nearest Player from the same Team shall dispose of the football at the location of the Mark or Free Kick.

21. 'PLAY ON' AND THE ADVANTAGE RULE

21.1 'PLAY ON'

The football shall remain in play on each and every occasion when the field Umpire calls and signals 'Play On' or 'Touched Play On'.

21.2 THE ADVANTAGE RULE

A field Umpire will call and signal 'Advantage' where a Team offended against demonstrates an intent to continue with play within a reasonable time.

22. REPORTING PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS

22.1 OBLIGATION TO REPORT

22.1.1 to Controlling Body

An Umpire shall report to the Controlling Body any Player or Official who commits or engages in conduct which may constitute a Reportable Offence:

(a) during a Match; or

(b) on the day of the Match and Within the Immediate Proximity of the Arena where the Match is conducted.

22.1.2 Other Appointed Persons

In addition to an Umpire, a Controlling Body may authorise a person or persons to report any Player or Official who commits or engages in conduct which may constitute a Reportable Offence. Any person so authorised shall have the same powers and duties as imposed upon an Umpire under this Law 22.

22.2 REPORTABLE OFFENCES

22.2.1 Degree of Intent - Clarification

Where any of the Reportable Offences listed in Law 22.2.2 specify that conduct may be intentional or careless:

(a) any report or notice of report which does not allege whether the conduct was intentional or careless shall be deemed to and be read as alleging that the conduct was either intentional or careless; and

(b) the Tribunal or other body appointed to hear and determine the report may find the report proven if it is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the conduct was either intentional or careless.

22.2.2 Specific Offences

Any of the following types of conduct is a Reportable Offence:

(a) intentionally or carelessly:
    (i) striking another person;
    (ii) kicking another person;
    (iii) kneeing another person;
    (iv) Charging an opponent;
    (v) engaging in Rough Conduct against an opponent;
    (vi) bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football;
    (vii) head-butting or making contact to another person using the head;
    (viii) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the eye region of another person;
    (ix) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of another person;
    (x) scratching another person; or
    (xi) tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;

(b) eye-gouging another person;

(c) stomping on another person;

(d) intentionally making contact with, or striking, an Umpire;

(e) attempting to strike an Umpire;
(f) spitting on or at an Umpire;
(g) behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an Umpire;
(h) using abusive, insulting or obscene language towards or in relation to an Umpire;
(i) unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an Umpire;
(j) carelessly making contact with an Umpire;
(k) disputing a decision of an Umpire;
(l) spitting on or at another person;
(m) attempting to strike another person;
(n) attempting to kick another person;
(o) attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;
(p) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured Player;
(q) engaging in a Melee;
(r) instigating a Melee;
(s) wrestling another person;
(t) pinching another person;
(u) engaging in an act of staging;
(v) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language;
(w) use of an obscene gesture;
(x) engaging in Time Wasting;
(y) interfering with a Player Kicking for Goal;
(z) intentionally shaking, climbing or otherwise interfering with a goal or behind post;
(aa) failing to leave the Playing Surface when directed to do so by an Umpire;
(bb) wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9; or
(cc) engaging in any other act of misconduct or serious misconduct.

22.3 REPORTING PROCEDURE

22.3.1 Reports During a Match

(a) Where an Umpire reports a Player or Official during the course of a Match, the Umpire shall use their best endeavours to inform the Player or Official of the report:

(i) at the time of the incident;

(ii) before the commencement of the next quarter; or

(iii) where the incident occurs in the final quarter, after the completion of the Match.

(b) The Umpire shall use their best endeavours to inform the person against whom the Reportable Offence has been committed (if applicable).

(c) An Umpire may inform the captain, acting captain or Official of a Team of the report where it is impracticable to inform the Player or Official who has been reported.

(d) Apart from informing a Player or Official of the report, an Umpire shall not speak with the reported Player or Official or any other Player or Official about the report which has been made.

22.3.2 Completing Notice of Report

(a) During or after the completion of the Match, the Umpire shall complete a notice of report in the form prescribed by the Controlling Body.

(b) The Controlling Body shall adopt rules which prescribe the procedures for the lodgement and notification of notices of report.

22.4 SANCTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

22.4.1 Controlling Body

(a) A Controlling Body shall hear and determine a report made against a Player or Official and if the report is proven, may impose such sanctions (including suspension for any term or a monetary sanction), make such orders and give such directions in each case as it in its absolute discretion thinks fit.

(b) A Controlling Body may prescribe set sanctions for Reportable Offences.

22.4.2 Delegation

A Controlling Body may delegate the power to investigate, hear and determine a report to a Tribunal or other similar body duly established and constituted in accordance with the Controlling Body's Constitution.

22.4.3 Rules

Each Controlling Body shall adopt Rules which prescribe the procedures for the hearing and determination of a report. Such Rules must prescribe that the person reported be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

22.4.4 Effect of Suspension

(a) Unless Law 22.4.4(d) or 22.4.4(e) applies, a Player or Official suspended by a Controlling Body is, for the period of the suspension, or while the suspension remains unserved, prohibited from playing or participating in a Match conducted by the Controlling Body imposing the suspension and a Match conducted by any other Controlling Body.

(b) Where a suspended Player or Official transfers from one Club to another Club competing in the same or another competition, the Player or Official shall complete the period of suspension with their new Club if that Club competes in a competition conducted during the same period as the Club from which the Player has transferred.

(c) A Controlling Body may still require a Player or Official to complete any period of a suspension imposed by the Controlling Body, if the Player or Official returns to the competition conducted by the Controlling Body within 12 months of completing the suspension in another competition. This Law applies even though the Player or Official has completed the suspension in another competition.

(d) A Player or Official who has been suspended from playing or participating in a competition conducted primarily between 31 March and 30 September may, upon obtaining the prior written approval of the Controlling Body who imposed the suspension, play or participate in a competition conducted primarily between 1 October and 31 March.

(e) A Player or Official who has been suspended from playing or participating in a competition conducted primarily between 1 October and 31 March may, upon obtaining the prior written approval of the Controlling Body which imposed the suspension, play or participate in a competition conducted primarily between 31 March and 1 October.

23. ORDER OFF LAW

23.1 APPLICATION

This Law 23 applies to all competitions other than the AFL competition.

23.2 ORDER OFF REPORTABLE OFFENCES

In addition to being reported, a field or emergency Umpire shall order the Player reported from the Playing Surface for the remainder of the Match if the Player is reported for any of the following Reportable Offences:

(a) intentionally striking, kicking, kneeing, stomping, eye-gouging or head-butting another person;

(b) intentionally striking or making contact with an Umpire;

(c) attempting to strike or make contact with an Umpire;

(d) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an Umpire;

(e) behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an Umpire;

(f) spitting on another person;

(g) an act of serious misconduct.

A Controlling Body may specify other Reportable Offences or conduct for which a Player may be ordered from the Playing Surface for the remainder of the Match.

23.3 SECOND REPORTABLE OFFENCE

A Player reported on a second occasion by an Umpire for the same or any other Reportable Offence other than those listed in Law 23.2, shall, in addition to being reported, be ordered from the Playing Surface for the remainder of the Match.

23.4 REPLACING PLAYER

A Controlling Body may determine a period of time which must elapse before a Player ordered from the Playing Surface under Laws 23.2 or 23.3 can be replaced by another Player. In the absence of a determination by a Controlling Body, a Player ordered from the Playing Surface under this Law shall not be replaced by another Player.

23.5 ORDER OFF FOR SPECIFIED PERIOD

In addition to being reported on the first occasion for committing a Reportable Offence, other than those listed in Law 23.2, a Controlling Body may determine that a Player be ordered from the Playing Surface for such period as it in its absolute discretion deems fit.

23.6 SIGNALLING AND PROCEDURE FOR ORDER OFF

23.6.1 Signal

(a) A field Umpire shall, in addition to informing a Player that they are to immediately leave the Playing Surface, signal that the Player has been ordered off the Playing Surface by pointing to the Interchange Area.

(b) The field Umpire shall hold aloft a red card to signal that the Player has been ordered off for the remainder of the Match or a yellow card to signify that the Player has been ordered off for a period of time as specified by the Controlling Body.

23.6.2 Player to Leave Playing Surface

(a) A Player shall immediately leave the Playing Surface when ordered to do so by an Umpire under this Law 23.

(b) Where a Player refuses to or does not immediately leave the Playing Surface when ordered to do so by an Umpire, the following shall apply:

(i) in addition to being reported for the Reportable Offence which led to the Player being ordered from the Playing Surface, the Player shall be reported for misconduct in failing to follow a direction of an Umpire;

(ii) the Match shall immediately end and the reported Player's Team shall forfeit the Match; and

(iii) Law 11.2 shall apply to any Match which is forfeited.

23.7 REDUCTION OF PLAYERS

If a Team is reduced to less than 14 Players by reason of a Player(s) being ordered from the Playing Surface, the following shall apply:

(a) the field Umpire may, in their absolute discretion, declare the Match forfeited by the Team with less than 14 Players, in which case Law 11.2 shall apply; or

(b) if the Match continues, the field Umpire shall, as soon as practicable, lodge with the relevant Controlling Body a written report which contains:

(i) the circumstances leading to the reduction of Players;

(ii) the scores of each Team at the time the field Umpire allowed the Match to continue; and

(iii) the final score of the Match; and

(c) upon receipt of the written report, the Controlling Body may in its absolute discretion:

(i) confirm the results of the Match; or

(ii) determine the Match forfeited by the Team with less than 14 Players, in which case Law 11.2 shall apply.

A Controlling Body may amend the minimum number of Players before Law 23.7(a) applies in their absolute discretion, in the circumstances where both Teams have less than 18 Players on the Playing Surface at the start of the Match.

24. ACTIVE BLEEDING

24.1 DEFINITION

In this Law 24, the term Active Bleeding means the existence of an injury or wound which continues to bleed. Active Bleeding does not include minor bleeding from a graze or scratch, which has abated and can be readily removed from a Player or any part of their uniform.

24.2 PARTICIPATION IN MATCHES WHEN ACTIVELY BLEEDING

(a) Unless Law 24.7 applies:

(i) a Player must not remain on the Playing Surface whilst they are Actively Bleeding; and

(ii) a Club or Team must not allow any of its Players to remain on the Playing Surface whilst the Player is Actively Bleeding.

(b) Unless immediate treatment needs to be given, having due regard to a Player's health and safety, a Club or Team must not allow any Player who is Actively Bleeding to be treated on the Playing Surface.

24.3 ROLE OF UMPIRE

24.3.1 Role of Umpire

Where a field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player is Actively Bleeding, the field Umpire must stop play at the first available opportunity and:

(a) direct the Player to immediately leave the Playing Surface; and

(b) subject to Law 24.3.3, wait a reasonable period to allow the replacement Player to take up position before recommencing play.

24.3.2 Player to Follow Directions of Field Umpire

Where a Player is directed by a field Umpire to leave the Playing Surface because they are Actively Bleeding, the Player must leave the Playing Surface immediately through the Interchange Area. The Player must not re-enter the Playing Surface or take any further part in any Match until:

(a) the cause of such bleeding has been abated;

(b) the injury is securely bound to ensure that all blood is contained;

(c) any blood-stained article of uniform has been removed and replaced; and

(d) any blood on the Player has been thoroughly cleansed and removed.

24.3.3 Replacement Player

A Player directed to leave the Playing Surface may be replaced by another Player listed on the Team Sheet. A replacement Player may enter the Playing Surface while the Player that they are replacing is leaving the Playing Surface. If a replacement Player has not entered the Playing Surface by the time the directed Player has left the Playing Surface, the field Umpire must recommence play immediately.

24.3.4 Refusal to Leave the Playing Surface

Where a Player refuses to or does not immediately leave the Playing Surface when directed to do so by a field Umpire, the following will apply:

(a) the field Umpire must warn the Player that a Free Kick will be awarded and that the Player may be reported if they do not leave the Playing Surface;

(b) if the Player still refuses to leave the Playing Surface, the field Umpire must award a Free Kick to the Player of the opposing Team who is nearest to where the warning was given or where play was stopped, whichever is the greatest penalty;

(c) if the Player continues to refuse to leave the Playing Surface:

  (i) the field Umpire shall report the Player for misconduct in failing to follow a direction of an Umpire;

  (ii) the Match will immediately end and be forfeited by the reported Player's Team; and

  (iii) Law 11.2 will apply to any Match which is forfeited

24.4 PROCEDURE WHEN PLAYER IS NOT ACTIVELY BLEEDING

Where a field Umpire is of the opinion that a Player is not Actively Bleeding, but the Player has blood on any part of their body or uniform, the following will apply:

(a) at the first available opportunity, the field Umpire must signal and direct the Player to obtain treatment. After the signal is given, play will continue;

(b) the Player may remain on the Playing Surface after the signal is given by the field Umpire, but must at the earliest opportunity:

(i) in the case of blood being on any part of their uniform, have the piece of uniform removed and replaced; and/or

(ii) in the case of blood being on any part of their body, have the blood removed and the cause of any bleeding (if any) treated and covered so that all blood is contained;

(c) if after receiving treatment, the field Umpire is of the opinion that blood is still appearing on any part of the Player's body or uniform, the Player will be deemed to be Actively Bleeding and Law 24.3 will apply.

24.5 VARIATION BY CONTROLLING BODY

A Controlling Body may adopt its own rules to specify that Law 24.3 applies to all bleeding.

24.6 FAILURE TO OBEY DIRECTION

(a) A Player's refusal to promptly obey a direction of a field Umpire given under Law 24.3 or 24.4 is a Reportable Offence.

(b) Any fine, period of suspension or other sanction determined by a Tribunal or other body hearing the Reportable Offence shall be in addition to any sanction which may be imposed by a Controlling Body under Law 24.14.

24.7 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AT THE END OF A QUARTER

A Player awarded a Mark or Free Kick may Kick the football after the field Umpire has signalled that play has come to an end, even though the Player is at that time Actively Bleeding. However, this Law is subject to Law 20.6.

24.8 DELIBERATE SMEARING OF BLOOD

Regardless of any other provision in these Laws, if a Player intentionally smears or otherwise causes blood to be placed on another Player's body or uniform, the field Umpire must immediately stop play and allow that Player such time as is necessary to have the blood removed or item of uniform removed and replaced.

24.9 PROTECTIVE GLOVES

Each Club or Team must ensure that any doctor, trainer or any other person treating Players of a Team wears protective gloves.

24.10 DISPOSAL OF BLOODIED CLOTHING AND OTHER MATERIAL

Each Club or Team must ensure that:

(a) any bloodied item of uniform or clothing of a Player is placed as soon as possible in a hygienic sealed container and laundered to ensure the removal of all blood; and

(b) all towels, wipes, bandages, dressings and other materials used in the treatment of bleeding Players must be placed in a hygienic sealed container and discarded or destroyed in a hygienic manner.

24.11 DRESSING ROOMS

Each Club or Team must ensure that all dressing rooms and other areas occupied by the Team prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any Match are kept clean and that no blood remains on any surface, equipment, hand basin, toilet, shower, bath or other area. All such surfaces, equipment and areas must be cleansed and disinfected immediately after contact with blood.

24.12 HYGIENE

Each Club or Team must ensure that:

(a) Players do not urinate (other than in a toilet) in or about any dressing rooms or on the Playing Surface prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any Match; and

(b) each of its Players observe a high standard of personal hygiene.

24.13 TRAINERS

Unless Law 24.4 applies, a trainer or other personnel responsible for the treatment of Players shall not provide treatment to a Player on the Playing Surface for any cut, abrasion or other injury involving the discharge of blood.

24.14 SANCTIONS – CONTROLLING BODY

A Controlling Body may impose a sanction upon a Player, Club or Team for a breach of any obligation imposed under this Law 24.