SCRUM ENGAGEMENT SEQUENCE 2013

For games of all Levels

The scrum engagement is managed in sequence by the referee to ensure that it occurs safely, squarely and in synchronisation. If any part of the scrum set-up is not right, the referee should call the front rows up and re-start the process.

The Law requires that referees will call the scrum engagement in the sequence CROUCH, TOUCH and then, when both front rows are ready, SET. This is to be strictly observed.

1. CROUCH

Front row players must adopt the CROUCH position before the engagement. Head and shoulders must remain above the level of the hips, with knees bent sufficiently to make a simple forward movement into engagement. Players should keep their chin up and head straight in order to maintain the normal and safe alignment of the cervical spine.

Once all front-rowers are crouched, there must be a non-verbal pause, during which time the referee should be checking that all players are balanced and that the height, angle and alignment of all front-rowers is correct before moving to the next stage.

2. TOUCH

The TOUCH requires each prop, using their outside arm, to touch the point of their opposing props outside shoulder. This is done to standardise the distance between the two sets of forwards. The props then withdraw their arms.

Once the props withdraw their arms, there must be a non-verbal pause to allow players to sight their target area before they engage. During this pause, the referee should be checking that the front rows are steady, stable and ready for engage before moving to the next stage.

3. SET

On the SET call, and not before, the front rows should engage the opposition firmly with a short horizontal movement and the props should draw with their outside arms to take binds. In this position, all players must be able to support their own weight and maintain body shape and pressure on the opposition scrum.