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## Match Official Development

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### **Distribution List:**

RFRU Secretary  
Referee Society Secretaries  
Federation Secretaries  
Area Training Managers

### **Special update on the Tackle/Ruck – 03/03/2017**

Welcome to a special update, which is being distributed following the England v Italy 6 Nations game last weekend.

The following has been sent out to all National 1 and 2 Clubs so they are aware that we discussions have been had and how things will be managed going forward. The Premiership and Championship clubs have received exactly the same.

### **According to law 16:**

The definition of a ruck is a phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet, in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. Open play has ended.

In view of the England v Italy Six Nations game at the weekend, where one or both teams decided not to compete at the breakdown, we have discussed this issue within our referee groups and we will be taking the following approach this weekend:

The referees will not on every occasion call 'tackle only' or 'ruck'. If a player runs around the breakdown and a ruck has been formed, the referee will either PK that player or play advantage and will not be telling the player to go back. If an AR calls midfield offside against a defender, the referee can respond by 'tackle only' therefore it is play on.

I would also like to bring to your attention that the player acting as number 9 cannot be tackled or have a kick charged down by players on the wrong side at a 'tackle only' situation.

Also attached are some further notes to help your members prepare for their next game and to build a better understanding with coaches and players.

Please circulate to your members and clubs they will be ref'ing this weekend.

Do contact us for any clarification at; [laws@rfu.com](mailto:laws@rfu.com)

Yours in ref'ing,

*Michael*

**Michael D Patz**

**RFU Match Official Development Manager**

## **Tackle Only Messages**

**Us** – Consistent, Calm, don't shoot the messenger – 'Professional'

1. Know the law
2. Practice Pictures – e.g. England v Italy
3. Consistent Comm's – Succinct, not a commentary
4. We are not going to "call players back" if a ruck forms and they are offside

### **Other Areas to Consider**

1. Players voluntarily to ground
2. Tackle only
  - a. Can't play the 9 unless from own side
  - b. Beware players pulling in defenders
  - c. If the 9 runs into a player looking for a penalty – NOT a penalty
  - d. Charge down – can't interfere as law above

### **Ruck**

2 players in contact/on feet/over the ball

### **Communication**

There will be times when referees will use "Ruck", "Tackle" as normal and to clarify when there is an offside line