



Rugby Vocabulary

Rugby union is a team sport played between two teams of fifteen players. It is known for its rich terminology.

89

An "89" or *eight-nine move* is a phase following a *scrum*, in which the *number 8* picks up the ball and transfers it to number 9 (*scrum half*).

99

The "99" call was a policy of simultaneous retaliation by the 1974 British Lions tour to South Africa, (the 99 comes from the British emergency services telephone number which is 999). The tour was marred by on-pitch violence, which the match officials did not adequately control and the relative absence of cameras, compared to the modern game, made citing and punishment after the fact unlikely. The Lions' Captain, Willie John McBride (Ireland) therefore instigated a policy of "one in, all in" - that is, when one Lion retaliated, all other Lions were expected to join in the melee or hit the nearest Springbok. By doing so, the referee would be unable to identify any single instigator, and so would be left with the choice of sending off all or none of the team. In this respect, the "99" call was extremely successful - no Lions player was sent off during the tour.

A

Advantage

"Advantage" is the period of time after an infringement, in which the non-offending side has the opportunity to gain sufficient territory or tactical opportunity to negate the need to stop the game due to the infringement. The referee will signal advantage with their arm out horizontally, toward the non-infringing team. If no tactical or territorial advantage is gained, the referee will whistle and give the decision that had been delayed. If sufficient advantage is gained, the referee will call "advantage over", and play will continue. The Advantage Law allows the game to flow more freely and not stop for every minor infringement. An example of the application of advantage would be if Team A knocked the ball on (technical offence, conceding a scrum) but a Team B player picked the ball up and made a run forwards before being tackled.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Advantage line

Also called the *gain line*. It is an imaginary line drawn across the centre of the pitch when there is a breakdown in open play, such as a *ruck*, *maul* or *scrum*. Advancing across the gain line represents a gain in territory.

Ankle tap

An ankle-tap or *tap-tackle* is a form of tackle. It is used when the player carrying the ball is running at speed and a defending player is approaching from behind. Even if the defender is not able to get close enough to the ball-carrier to wrap his arms around him in a conventional tackle, he may still be able to dive at the other player's feet and, with outstretched arm, deliver a tap or hook to the player's foot (or feet) causing the player to stumble.

B

Ball back

If the ball enters touch, then play is restarted by a *line-out* at the point where the ball left the field of play. The exception to this is if the ball is kicked into touch on the full. In this case, a *line-out* is taken from the point from where the ball was kicked, and not from where it entered *touch*.

Ball back is waived in certain circumstances:

- If the kicking player is inside his own 22m line when he receives and then kicks the ball. If the player receives the ball outside the 22 then retreats back into the 22 and kicks into touch on the full, it is a lineout at the nearest point on the touchline from where the ball was kicked.
- If a side elects to kick a *penalty* into touch.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Blindside

The narrow side of the pitch in relation to a scrum or a breakdown in play; it is the opposite of *openside*. The blindside flanker is expected to cover the opposing team blindside at *scrum* and *breakdown*.

Blitz defence

The blitz defence is a defensive technique similar to the defence used in rugby league. It relies on the whole defensive line moving forward towards their marked man as one, as soon as the ball leaves the base of a *ruck* or *maul*. The charge is usually led by the inside centre.

The idea of this technique is to prevent the attacking team gaining any ground by tackling them behind the gain line and forcing interceptions and charged down kicks. However, the defending team can be vulnerable to chip kicks and any player breaking the defensive line will have lots of space to play because the defence players are running the other way and must stop, turn and chase.

Blood bin

It is also called blood replacement. A player who has a visible bleeding injury may be replaced for up to fifteen minutes (running time not game time), during which he or she may receive first-aid treatment to stop the flow of blood and dress the wound. The player may then return to the pitch to continue playing.

Bonus points

Bonus points are a method of deciding table points from a rugby union match. It was implemented in order to encourage attacking play throughout a match, to discourage repetitive goal-kicking, and to reward teams for "coming close" in losing efforts.

- Under the standard system, 1 bonus point is awarded for scoring 4 (or more) tries and 1 bonus point for losing by 7 points (or fewer).
- The French professional league replaces the four-try bonus point with a point for a win in which the winning team scores at least 3 more tries than its opponent.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Box-kick

This is a kick taken from behind a scrum, normally by the scrum-half, in which he turns away from the scrum facing the touchline, and kicks the ball back over the scrum into the clear "box" of space behind the opposition to allow his own team to chase through and regain the ball in undefended territory .

Breakdown

The breakdown is a colloquial term for the period immediately after a tackle and the ensuing ruck. During this time teams compete for possession of the ball, initially with their hands and then using feet in the *ruck*. Most referees will call "ruck" or "hands away" as soon as a ruck is formed. Most infringements take place at the breakdown, owing to the greater variety of possible offences at a breakdown, for example handling in the ruck, killing the ball, offside at the ruck and so on.

C

Caution

A player who deliberately or repeatedly infringes the laws is cautioned, and shown a yellow card. A cautioned player is suspended from playing for ten minutes.

Centre

They are the players wearing shirt numbers 12 & 13. They are divided into inside and outside centre.

Conversion

If a team scores a try, they have an opportunity to "convert" it for two further points by kicking the ball between the posts and above the crossbar - that is, through the goal. The kick is taken at any point on the field of play in line with the point that the ball was grounded for the try parallel to the touch-lines. So it is advantageous to score a try nearer to the posts as it is easier to convert it.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Conversion (continued)

The kick can be either a *drop kick* or a *place kick* in the 15-man game. However, in sevens, all conversions must be drop kicks.

Counter rucking

If a team (usually the team that took the ball into contact) has secured the ball at a ruck, and the other team manage to force them off the ball and secure possession themselves, the defending team are said to have "counter-rucked"

Crash ball

It is an attacking tactic where a player receives a pass at pace and runs directly at the opposition's defensive line. The crash ball runner attempts to commit two or more opposing players to the *tackle*, then attempts to make the ball available to team-mates by *off-loading* in the tackle or recycling the ball quickly from the *ruck*.

By committing players to the tackle, the crash ball runner creates holes in the opposition's defence, thereby creating attacking opportunities for team-mates.

Crash tackle

Another name for the *crash ball* as mentioned above.

D

Drop goal

A drop goal is scored when a player kicks the ball from hand through the opposition's goal, but the ball must touch the ground between being dropped and kicked. It is worth three points.

The team awarded a free kick cannot score a dropped goal until the ball next becomes dead, or until an opponent has played or touched it, or has tackled the ball carrier. This restriction applies also to a scrum taken instead of a free kick.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Drift defence

The drift defence is a defensive technique which forces the attacking side into an ever shrinking pocket near to the touchline. It operates by the defensive side moving forward and diagonally, following the path of the attacking side's ball movements. If used successfully the ball will usually end up in the attacking winger's hands near the line of touch. This player would then find themselves surrounded on one side by a defending outside centre, with the opposing winger opposite and the touchline on his other side. This will prevent a cut-back and allows the Touchline to act as a 16th player. Its disadvantage is that if the attacking team are strong enough to break through the pocket tackle the defending team will have no players spare to cover a breakout.

Drop kick

A drop kick is when a player kicks the ball from hand and the ball touches the ground between being dropped and kicked. If a drop kick goes through a goal then it results in a *drop goal*.

Dummy pass

An offensive ruse, where the ball carrier moves as if to pass the ball to a team-mate, but then continues to run with the ball himself; the objective is to trick defenders into marking the would-be pass receiver, creating a gap for the ball carrier to run into.

Dummy runner

Another offensive tactic; a player on the attacking team runs towards the opposition as if running onto a pass, only for the ball to be passed to another player, carried on by the ball carrier or kicked forwards. As with a *dummy pass*, this tactic draws defenders away from the ball and creates space for the attacking team



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Dump tackle

It is a tackling technique. The tackler wraps his arms around the ball carrier's thighs and lifts him a short distance in the air before forcibly driving him to the ground. The tackler must go to ground with the ball carrier for the tackle to be legal. This technique is useful to completely stop the opponent in his tracks. A dump tackle which drops the ball carrier on his head or neck is known as a *spear tackle*, and will almost invariably concede a penalty and possibly result in a caution for the tackler.

E

Eightman, Eighth-man

Alternative name for the Number 8

F

Five metre scrum, Scrum-five

When a scrum offence is committed within 5m of either try line, or a player carries the ball over his own try line and touches it down, the referee will award a scrum on the five metre line; this is to prevent all but the most brutal packs from driving the ball over the try line within the scrum.

Fend or "hand off"

Fending is the action by the ball carrier of repelling a tackler using his arm. For the action to be legal, the ball carrier's arm must be straight before contact is made; a shove or "straight-arm smash", where the arm is extended immediately before contact or on contact, is illegal and classed as dangerous play.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Flanker

Also known as breakaways or wing forwards. They are the players wearing shirt numbers 6 & 7. They are the players with the fewest set responsibilities. The player should have all round attributes: speed, strength, fitness, tackling and handling skills. Flankers are always involved in the game, as they are the real ball winners at the *breakdown*, especially the number 7. The two flankers do not usually bind to the *scrum* in a fixed position. Instead, the *openside* flanker will attach to the scrum on whichever side is further from the nearer touchline, while the *blindsides* flanker attaches himself to the scrum on the side closer to the touchline.

Fly half or five-eighth

Also referred to by a number of different names, they are the players wearing shirt number 10. This position is one of the most influential on the pitch. The fly-half makes key tactical decisions during a game. Generally a fly-half is also the goal kicker due to excellent kicking skills.

Forward pass

It is called a throw-forward in the laws of the game.

A forward pass occurs when the ball fails to travel backwards in a pass. If the ball is not thrown or passed forward but it bounces forward after hitting a player or the ground, it is not a throw-forward.

If the referee deems it accidental, this results in a *scrum* to the opposing team; however deliberate forward passes result in the award of a *penalty*.

Foul play

Foul play is defined as the deliberate infringement of the laws of the game.

Fourth official

A fourth official is one who controls replacements and substitutes. He may also substitute for referee or touch judge in case of injury to either of them.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Free-kick

Also called *short arm penalty*. This is a lesser form of the penalty, usually awarded to a team for a technical offence committed by the opposing side such as numbers at the line-out or time wasting at a scrum. A free kick is also awarded for calling a *mark*.

A team cannot kick for goal and the normal 22m rule applies for kicking for position from a free kick. A Free Kick is signaled by the referee with a bent arm raised in the air.

Fullback

They are the player wearing jersey number 15. They act as the last line of defence against running attacks by the opposing three-quarter backs. The full back is expected to field high kicks from the opposition, and reply with a superior kick or a counterattack. The full back is sometimes the specialist goal-kicker in a team, taking penalty and conversion kicks.

G

Gain line

The gain line is an imaginary line drawn across the centre of the pitch when there is a *breakdown* in open play, such as a ruck, maul or scrum. Advancing across the gain line represents a gain in territory.

Garryowen

A Garryowen or up and under kick, is a high short punt onto or behind the defending team.

Goal

A goal is scored when a player kicks the ball through the plane bounded by the two uprights and above the crossbar. A *drop goal* or *penalty goal* counts for 3 points and *conversions* count for two points.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Goal from mark

Goal from mark is an antiquated method of scoring. It occurred when a player "marked" and scored a goal from there. In the modern game, a goal cannot be scored from a free kick, but in the past the reward for scoring a "goal from mark" (which is a difficult kick to play) was three or four points. This is occasionally referred to as a field goal.

Goal line, Try line

Two solid, straight white lines (one at each end) stretching across the entire width of the pitch passing directly through the goal posts, which define the boundary between the "field of play" and the "in-goal". As the goal line is defined as part of the "in-goal", attacking players can score tries by placing the ball with downward pressure onto the goal line itself. The base of the goal posts and post protectors are also defined to be part of the goal line.

The goal line is often referred to as the "try line" though that term does not appear in the Laws of the Game.

Goose Step

Group of death

Is an informal sobriquet used to describe a situation that often occurs during the group stage of a tournament, where either (1) *any* team in the group could qualify and *any* team could be eliminated, or (2) more teams have a legitimate chance to advance to the next stage than allowed by the tournament structure.

Typically, a group of death will see an unusual match-up of heavyweight sides, due to a quirk in the seeding system.

Grubber kick

It is a type of kick which makes the ball roll and tumble across the ground, producing irregular bounces making it hard for the defending team to pick up the ball without causing a knock-on. It gives the ball both high and low bounce and, on occasions, the ball can sit up in a perfect catching position.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

H

Haka

The haka is a traditional Maori dance performed by the All Blacks, the international rugby union team of New Zealand, immediately prior to international matches. It serves as a challenge to the opposing team.

Hand-off

Handing off (also called *fend*) is the action by the ball carrier of repelling a tackler using his arm. For the action to be legal, the ball carrier's arm must be straight before contact is made; a shove or "straight-arm smash", where the arm is extended immediately before contact or on contact, is illegal and classed as dangerous play.

High tackle

A high tackle (or head-high tackle) is a form of tackle where the tackler grasps the ball carrier above the line of the shoulders (most commonly around the neck or at the line of the chin and jaw).

Executed violently or at speed, a high tackle is potentially instantly lethal and, as extremely dangerous play, high tackles are a cause for penalties, and yellow or red cards.

Hooker

Hookers traditionally wear the number 2 shirt. The hooker is the player who is in the centre position of the front row of the scrum and who uses his/her feet to 'hook' the ball back. Due to the pressure put on the body by the scrum and the requirement to use both arms to bind to other players (and hence having no free arm to use to support or deflect bodyweight) it is considered to be one of the most dangerous positions to play.

Hookers normally throw the ball in at *line-outs*, partly because they are normally the shortest of the forwards, but more often because they are the most skillful of the forwards.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

I

IRB

With its headquarters in Dublin, Ireland, the IRB is the World Governing and Law-making body for the Game of Rugby Union.

J

JPR Williams

John Peter Rhys Williams (born 2 March 1949 in Cardiff, Wales), known universally as J.P.R. Williams (due to another team-mate called John Williams, J. J. Williams), played rugby union for Wales between 1969 and 1981.

Williams gave up tennis for the then-amateur game of rugby union in order to pursue a career in medicine. He quickly attracted attention and was consequently first capped by Wales in 1969, aged 19. He went on to earn 55 caps for Wales and 8 for the British Lions. He played club rugby for Bridgend and London Welsh.

K

Kick-off

A coin is tossed and the winning captain either chooses which direction his team shall play, or elects to take the kick that starts the game. Both halves of the match are started with a *drop kick* from the centre-point of the halfway line. The kick must cross the opposition's 10-metre line, unless played by a member of the receiving team. The opposition are not allowed to encroach beyond the 10-metre line until the ball is kicked.

If the ball does not travel 10 metres, goes straight into touch, or goes over the dead ball line at the end of the pitch, the opposing team may accept the kick, have the ball kicked off again, or have a *scrum* at the centre.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Kick-off (continued)

After a score, the game is restarted from the same place under the same restrictions, with the conceding team drop-kicking the ball to the scoring team. However, in sevens, the scoring team kicks off.

Knock-on

It is also called knock-forward. A knock-on is when a player loses possession of the ball and goes forward off the hands or arms of a player and hits either the ground or another player. It results in a *scrum* with the put-in to the opposition.

L

Late tackle

A late tackle is a tackle executed on a player who has already passed or kicked away the ball. As it is illegal to tackle a player who does not have the ball, Late tackles are penalty offences (referees allow a short margin of error where the tackler was already committed to the tackle) and if severe or reckless may result in yellow or red Cards.

If a late tackle occurs after a kick and a penalty is awarded, the non-offending team has the option of taking the penalty where the ball landed.

Loose head

The loose head prop is the player who takes the left hand position on the front row of the *scrum*. A loose head prop traditionally wears the number 1 shirt.

As the loose head has considerable potential freedom of movement compared to other front row players, the loose head can attempt to play various illegal techniques to divert the push of the opposing pack and is often able to illegally interfere with the ball in the scrum using his free arm.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Line-out

A maximum of seven and a minimum of two forwards line up parallel with each other between the five-metre and 15-metre lines. The hooker of the team in possession throws the ball in while his opposite number [may] stand in between the touchline and the five-metre line. (Note, from August 1st 2008 the IRB is conducting a global trial of a modification to this Law which requires the opposing player to stand no closer than 2m to the other players in the line out.)

All players not involved in the lineout, except the scrum-half, must retire 10 metres.

The ball must be thrown in straight down the middle of the lineout and the hooker must not cross into the field of play while throwing in. If throw is not straight then the throw is given to opposition or a *scrum*.

Jumpers can be lifted by their team-mates below the waist, but the opposition's jumpers must not be obstructed, barged or pulled down.

Line-out code

It is a coded piece of information, used to communicate intentions about a *line-out* within one team in a match without giving information away to the other team. The advantage in line-out comes from knowing in advance how the throw will be made.

Lock

Locks or second-row are the players wearing shirt numbers 4 & 5. Locks are very tall, athletic and have an excellent standing jump along with good strength. So they are the primary targets at *line-outs*. They also make good ball carriers, bashing holes in the defence around the ruck and maul. They also have to push in the *rucks* and *mauls*.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

M

Mark

A mark is the place where the game will restart after a stoppage, such as where a scrum-offence or penalty offence occurred, or on the touchline where the ball went out of play (or where the ball was kicked in the case of ball-back). Marks are generally defined by the referee, or the touch judge when the ball leaves play by the touchline.

Marks can be called when the ball is cleanly caught following a kick by the opposition for any type of kick except a kick off or restart after a score. It is legal, though very unusual, to call a mark from a clean catch of a Penalty Kick.

Maul

When a ball carrier is held up (without being tackled) by both an opposing player and a player from his own team, a maul is then considered formed.

The offside line becomes the last foot of the last man on each side of the maul. Players can only join in from behind that team-mate. Anyone who comes in from the sides will be penalised by the referee. Hands are allowed to be used in the maul. If either team deliberately collapses the maul then that side will be penalised by the referee. (Note that from August 1st 2008, the IRB is conducting a global trial of a modification of this Law which will allow players to deliberately collapse a maul providing the collapse is achieved by pulling from above the waist.)

If the ball does not come out in a timely fashion, the referee will award a scrum to the team that did not take the ball into the maul.

Mauls can only exist in the field of play. Play that looks like a maul can exist within the in-goal but restrictions on entry to the maul and the need to bind onto a team member do not apply.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Mulligrubber

The mulligrubber kick is a style of kicking. A mulligrubber is directed towards the ground and forced to bounce. Often used in situations where either the ball needs to be placed in a specific position (i.e. on the try line) or to intentionally stop the opponent from being able to catch the ball on the full.

N

Number 8

They are the players wearing shirt number 8. It is the only position that is known only by the shirt number. Number Eights must have a good tactical awareness in order to coordinate scrums and ruck moves with the scrum-half. If the ball is at his feet at the back of a scrum, ruck or maul, it is normally the number eight's decision whether to pass the ball out or drive the breakdown on in order to make ground.

O

Off-load pass

A short pass made by a player being tackled before he reaches the ground, usually by turning to face a team-mate and tossing the ball into the air for a team-mate to catch.

Offside

A player is offside when he/she is forward of the relevant offside line i.e. between the relevant offside line and the opposing team's dead ball line.

In a match, most players will be offside several times but they only become liable for penalty if they do not act to attempt to become onside (which generally means retreat downfield) or attempt to interfere with play.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Offside (continued)

In open play, only the ball carrier's team (or the team that last carried or deliberately touched the ball) is bound by offside - the offside line for them is the ball. (Note every player who passes the ball backwards is offside and must attempt to retire.)

Onside

A player is onside whenever he or she is behind the relevant offside line for the particular phase of play. Players who are onside take an active part in playing the game.

Previously offside players may be "put onside" by the actions of other players (for example, in a kick ahead in open play, players in the kicker's team in front of the kick are offside but can be put onside by the kicker or any other team member who was onside at the time of the kick running up the pitch past them). So that players can be confident they are now onside and can take an active part in the game, the referee may shout "Onside" or "All Onside".

On the full

If the ball is kicked into touch without first bouncing inside the field of play it is termed as kicked into touch on the full.

Openside

The broad side of the pitch in relation to a *scrum* or a *breakdown* in play. The openside flanker is expected to cover the opposing team openside at *scrum* and *breakdown*. It is the opposite of *blindsides*.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

P

Passing

A pass is to transfer a ball to a teammate by throwing it. Passes in rugby must not travel forwards. There are different varieties of pass, including the flat, direct spin pass; the short, close-quarters pop pass; and the floated pass - a long pass which an advancing player can run onto at pace.

Penalty

Penalties are awarded for serious infringements like dangerous play, offside and handling the ball on the ground in a ruck. Penalties are signalled by the referee with a straight arm raised in the air. Players can also receive red and yellow cards, as in Association football.

The offending team must retire 10 metres (or to their goal line if closer) for both penalties and free kicks. A team can either kick for goal, *tap* and run the ball, take a scrum or kick directly into touch with the resulting line-out awarded to them.

Penalty kick

If a side commits a *penalty* infringement the opposition can take the option of a *place kick* at goal from where the infringement occurred (or, if the offence occurred when a player was in the process of kicking the ball, the non-offending team can opt to take the kick from where the ball landed which may be more advantageous). This is called a penalty kick. If successful, it is worth three points.

Penalty try

A penalty try awarded if the referee believes a team illegally prevented a try from probably being scored. Penalty tries are always awarded under the posts regardless of where the offence took place. (This gives the non-offending team the opportunity for the easiest possible conversion kick meaning that a penalty try is generally a certain 7 points for the non-offending team.)



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Phase

A phase is the time a ball is in play between breakdowns. For example, first phase would be winning the ball at the lineout and passing to a centre who is tackled. Second phase would be winning the ball back from the ensuing breakdown and attacking again.

Place kick

The place kick is a kicking style commonly used when kicking for *goal*. It typically involves placing the ball on the ground. To keep the ball in position, a mound of sand or plastic tee is sometimes used.

Professional foul

A professional foul is a deliberate act of foul play, usually to prevent an opponent scoring.

Prop

They are the players wearing shirt numbers 1 & 3. The role of both the props is to support the hooker in the scrum and to provide support for the jumpers in the line-out. The props provide the main power in the push forward in the scrum. For this reason they need to be exceptionally big and strong.

Q

Queen

An exuberant Australian rugby player tossed the Queen into the air when she was a child, sparking "mild panic" among those watching, it has emerged. The player apparently had a long lunch before a function where Princess Elizabeth, then just a toddler, encountered him and was sent flying. The story was relayed to the Queen 80 years on as she hosted the Australian rugby union tour squad.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

R

Red card

In International matches, Red cards are shown to players who have been ordered off, which results in the player being removed from the game without being replaced. Players are usually ordered off for serious foul play, for violent conduct or for committing two offences resulting in cautions (yellow cards).

Red cards are also commonly used in non-international matches in precisely the same manner as in International matches but there is no regulation requiring their use. (i.e. in a domestic match, a referee may dismiss a player without actually displaying a red card.)

Round the corner kicking

Round the corner kicking is a style of kicking used for kicking penalties and converting tries.

Ruck

A ruck is formed when the ball is on the ground and two opposing players meet over the ball. The offside line becomes the last foot of the last man on each side of the ruck and players compete for the ball by attempting to drive one another from the area and to 'ruck' the ball backwards with their feet.

Handling the ball while it is in the vicinity of a ruck is a penalty offence. If the ball does not come out of a ruck after about five seconds, the referee will award a scrum to the team he considers to have been moving forward in the ruck.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

S

Scrum

The eight forwards from each team bind together and push against each other. The scrum-half from the team that has been awarded possession feeds the ball into the centre of the scrum from the side most advantageous for his hooker (which is typically the side of loose head prop).

The ball must be fed straight down the middle of the tunnel and the hookers must not contest for the ball until it is put in. If they do, a free-kick is awarded for "foot up".

The scrum is taken again if the ball comes straight out of the tunnel or if it collapses. If the scrum wheels (rotates) due to pushing more than 90 degrees the scrum is re-formed and awarded to the other side. Pulling in an attempt to unbalance the other side or to assist in rotating the scrum is a Penalty Offence.

Scrum half

Also known as a half-back, they are the players traditionally wearing shirt number 9. Scrum halves form the all-important link between the forwards and the backs. They are relatively small but with a high degree of vision, the ability to react to situations very quickly, and good handling skills.

They are often the first tackler in defence and are behind every scrum, maul or ruck to get the ball out and maintain movement. They put the ball into the scrum and collect it afterwards. Scrum Halves generally also act as "receiver" in the line-out to catch the ball knocked down by the forwards. (The receiver is a member of the line out and so stands within 10 metres of it and may join the line once the ball is thrown.)



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Shoeing

At the *breakdown* a *ruck* commonly forms over the players involved in the tackle.

Where players who are on the ground on the opposition side of the ruck do not move away quickly enough, players on their feet may be tempted to "help" them move by pushing them away with their boots.

This potentially dangerous act is illegal and if done deliberately (or recklessly) may result in penalties and *yellow* or *red cards*.

Sin bin

The notional area where a player must remain for a minimum of ten minutes after being shown a *yellow card*. In high level games, the sin bin is monitored by the *fourth official*.

Sipi Tau

Sipi Tau is a Tongan war dance performed by the Tongan national rugby union team before each of their international match.

Spear tackle

A spear tackle is a dangerous tackle in which a player is picked up by the tackler and turned so that they are upside down. The tackler then drops or drives the player into the ground often head, neck or shoulder first.

Spear tackles are particularly dangerous and have caused serious injury including spinal damage, dislocations and broken bones in the shoulder or neck. On rare occasion, even death can occur.

Spear tackles are taken very seriously by the various Union discipline committees and can result in lengthy playing bans.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

T

Tackle

A tackle takes place when one or more opposition players [tackler(s)] grasp onto the ball carrier and succeed in bringing him/her to ground and holding them there.

Once briefly held, the tackler(s) must release the tackled player who must then him/herself immediately release or attempt to pass the ball so that play can continue.

Tap kick

A tap kick is a type of kick used by players at penalties or free kicks to meet the regulation that requires the ball to be kicked a visible distance before a player may pass or run with it.

In a tap kick, the player momentarily releases the ball from his hands and taps it with his foot or lower leg and then quickly catches it again. The player will then generally try to run forward with the ball.

Tap-tackle

Despite its name, a tap tackle is not actually a tackle, as the ball carrier is brought to ground by a form of trip, is not actually held on the ground and may attempt to get up and continue to run. A tap tackle is used when a defending player is unable to get close enough to the ball carrier but is able to dive at the other player's feet and, with outstretched arm, deliver a tap or hook to the player's foot (or feet) causing the player to stumble. At speed, this will often be sufficient to bring the ball-carrier down, allowing a team-mate of the tackling player to retrieve the ball or provide sufficient delay for the defending team to organise a defence.

Ten Metre Law

The Ten Metre Law is a form of offside which is designed to prevent injury to a defending player who attempts to catch a ball that has been kicked ahead by the attacking side.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Ten Metre Law (continued)

In the normal Law of Offside in open play, it is possible for an offside player to be put onside by actions of the opposing team. This ability to be put onside by a member of the opposing team does not apply if the offside player was within 10 metres along the field of a defending player waiting to catch the ball and the offside player remains offside until either he/she retreats onside or is put onside by a member of their own team.

Test match

International rugby union matches with full (Test) status are called Test matches.

Tight Head

The tight head prop is the player who takes the right-hand position on the front row of the *scrum*. A tight head prop traditionally wears the number 3 shirt. He is named the tighthead since in the scrum he will have an opposition player bind to both his left and right hand side, meaning his head is unexposed to the side of the scrum as opposed to the loosehead, whose left-hand side is exposed.

TMO

Television match official (TMO), commonly called the video referee.

Touch

Touch is the area outside and including the two touch-lines which define the sides of the playing area. As the touch-lines are not part of the playing area they are part of touch.

Touch judge

The touch judge is an official who monitors the touch-line and raises a flag if the ball (or player carrying it) goes into touch. Touch judges also stand behind the posts to confirm that a goal has been scored following a penalty kick or conversion of a try.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Truck and trailer

A colloquial term for an accidental obstruction. "Truck and trailer" occurs when a player carrying the ball leaves a maul, along with one or more of his teammates. Once the ball carrier leaves the maul, the maul is over, and if the ball carrier's teammates are in front of the ball carrier and prevent defending players from making a tackle, the defending team will be awarded a scrum. If the incident of truck and trailer is judged to be deliberate or the latest in a series of similar infringements, a penalty may be awarded instead.

Try

It is the primary method of scoring. A try is worth five points. It is scored when a player places the ball on the ground with *downward pressure* in the in-goal area between (and including) the goal-line and up to but not including dead ball line of the opposition's half. (As the goal posts and post protectors are also part of the goal-line, touching the ball down against the *base* of these is also a try.)

There is no such thing as an "own try". If you touch the ball down in your own in-goal area, it results in a twenty-two metre drop out or a five metre *scrum*.

Tunnel

When a *scrum* is formed, the gap between the legs of the three players from each team who form the 'front row' is called the 'tunnel'.

Turnover

When a team concedes possession of the ball, particularly at the breakdown, they are said to have turned the ball over to the other team. This can happen due to defending players stealing the ball from an isolated attacker, *counter rucking*, a *knock on*, an intercepted pass or the ball not emerging from a maul (wherein the referee awards the scrum feed to opposing team).



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Twenty two metre drop-out

A drop kick is taken from *behind* the 22m line if a team touches down in its own in-goal area but did not carry the ball over the try line, or if the ball is kicked over the dead ball line from any other play other than the kick-off.

The ball only needs to cross the line, but if it goes directly into touch a scrum is awarded to the receiving team at the centre-point of the 22m line.

U

Up and under

An up and under or a Garryowen kick, is a high short punt onto or behind the defending team.

Use it or lose it

If the maul stops moving forward the referee will often shout "use it or lose it" to the team that is in possession of the ball. This means they must pass the ball within a five-second time period. If they do not the referee will call a scrum and the team not in possession at the beginning of the maul will be given the feed.

V

Video Referee

This is the official who monitors the match in recorded matches. He is the person who could be called upon by the referee if he is unaware of the outcome of a rugby situation. A good example is a try that is obscured from view, i.e. under numerous players.



Rugby Vocabulary continued

W

Wheel

A scrum that has rotated through 90 degrees or more is said to have "wheeled". The referee will order the scrum to be reset, with the ball being turned over if the attacking team is deemed to have been deliberately or repeatedly wheeling the scrum.

Wing

They are the players wearing shirt numbers 11 & 14. They are divided into left and right wingers. Wingers must be fast runners and agile in order to evade tackles and have excellent ball handling skills in order to pass and receive the ball at pace.

X

Xavier Joseph Rush

Xavier Joseph Rush (born 13 July 1977 in Auckland) is a New Zealand rugby union footballer. He is a former All Black and currently plays professional rugby in Wales for Magners League-side Cardiff Blues where he is the former captain. He plays at number eight and is 1.87 m tall and weighs 112 kg.

Y

Yellow Card

In International matches, a yellow card is shown to a player who has been cautioned to indicate "temporary suspension" for repeated or deliberate infringements of the rules. The offending player is sent to the "sin bin" for at least 10 minutes while his team must play a man short. (A player who is temporarily suspended cannot return to the pitch until the first break in play after his/her 10 minute suspension is completed.)

In domestic matches, yellow cards are commonly used in exactly the same manner as in International matches but this is not required by regulation so a referee may order the temporary suspension of a player without showing a yellow card



Rugby Vocabulary continued

Z

ZinZan Brooke

ZinZan Valentine Brooke (born Murray ZinZan Brooke on February 14, 1965; changed name by deed poll) is a former New Zealand rugby union footballer who played at number eight.

He played 58 tests for New Zealand, and 42 non-international matches for the All Blacks, captained Auckland Blues to Super 12 championships in 1996 and 1997 and was an influential figure in Auckland's dominance in the National Provincial Championship during the late 1980s and 1990s. He scored 17 tries in Test matches, then a world record for a forward. He also played for New Zealand Maori.