

Clarification issued from IRB:

081128 SG IRB ELV Ruling 6 2008

To: Secretaries / CEOs of Unions and Regional Associations in Membership

From: David Carrigy, Head of External & Member Relations

Subject: Law Ruling by Designated Members of Rugby Committee

Date: November 28, 2008

Ruling: 6: 2008

The RFU has requested a Ruling with regard to Law 3.4 Players nominated as substitutes.

Ruling on IRB Law 3.4

The RFU believes that there is some uncertainty about the maximum number of players that can be nominated as replacements in a non international match.

The issue is governed by Law 3.4 (Players Nominated as Substitutes) which states:

"For international matches a Union may nominate up to seven replacements/substitutes. For other matches the Union with jurisdiction over the match decides how many replacements/substitutes may be nominated."

In addition Law 3.5 (Suitably Trained and Experienced Players in the Front Row)

indicates the number of players who have to be suitably trained to play in the front row

when nominating varying numbers for the team. There is no mention in Law 3.5 of

combinations where there are more than 22 players save for reference in the Under 19

Variations where Law 3.5 (c) provides for what happens if a team nominates more than 22 players.

In light of the drafting of Law 3.4 and Law 3.5 the RFU believes that the intention of the draftsman and the universal interpretation to date of Law 3.4 was that the maximum number of players that can be nominated for a match between adult teams is restricted to 22 players and that the Union having jurisdiction had the power to decide in the case of domestic matches that teams be restricted to less than 7 replacements/substitutes nominated for a match but not more.

The RFU would suggest that it is illogical:

- that more than seven players may be nominated in a match squad save for internationals where a limit has been imposed; and
- that any other interpretation would in effect mean that a Union having jurisdiction could permit any number of players to be nominated in a match squad for a match (other than an International).

It is the RFU's understanding that the maximum number of substitutes and replacements that can occur in an adult match (regardless of the number nominated) is

7 subject to exceptions related to blood injury and injury to a front row forward as covered by Law 3.12.

In light of this uncertainty, the RFU requests a ruling by the Designated Members as to the correct interpretation of Law 3.4 as regards the maximum size of a squad that can

be nominated for non international adult matches.
If the RFU's understanding is correct, then the IRB may consider it sensible to consider amending Law 3.4 to read as follows:
"For international matches a Union may nominate up to seven replacements/substitutes. For other matches, the Union with jurisdiction over the match decides how many replacements/substitutes may be nominated provided the number does not exceed seven."

Ruling:

The Designated Members confirm the RFU's understanding of Law 3.4 and that a Union having jurisdiction over a match can decide how many replacements/substitutes may be nominated provided the number does not exceed seven. The Designated Members will be referring the matter to the Chairman of the Rugby Committee for an amendment to Law to clarify the situation.

Yours sincerely

David Carrigy

Head of External & Member Relations

Precedence and Next Steps:

1. Since this is an IRB ruling, it is immediately adopted within USA Rugby based on USAR by-laws:

Section 2.5 IRB Rules. USA Rugby shall automatically adopt all *Laws of the Game*

as may be promulgated by the IRB from time to time, without any further action required by the Board of Directors, or any officer or committee of USA Rugby. USA Rugby will timely publicize any such Law changes.

2. Need to review the National Championships documentation:

- Action to the Competitions Committee to review
- Action to the Dan Payne to update National Championship documentation

3. Rugby Committee (RC) to communicate the IRB regulations to the TUs and LAUs to ask to review their competitions and ensure consistency. RC to document specific examples to help communicate and clarify for Clubs, Colleges and U-19 teams.

For Collegiate and Club Rugby:

- For a weekend tournament or championship, there may be an unlimited team roster at check in. For a specific match during the weekend competition, a maximum of only 22 players may be nominated as starters and replacements on a specific match roster consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in Law 3.5. Subsequent match rosters may vary with different players, but they too will be limited to 22 players that may be nominated as starters and replacements for a specific match consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in Law 3.5.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, 21 or 22	5 players who can play in the front row 0

Location to turn in rosters, time when rosters are due, and to whom they are to be turned into will be set by the match organizer of each event. For example, for a Territorial Championship, the governing territory will

designate when a team is to turn in their match roster and to whom it is given.

- For a single a-side match, a maximum of only 22 players that may be nominated as starters and replacements on a specific match roster consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in Law 3.5.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, 21 or 22	5 players who can play in the front row 0

Location to turn in rosters, time when rosters are due, and to whom they are to be turned into will be set by the match organizer of each event. For example, for a RSL match, USA Rugby will designate when a team is to turn in their match roster and to whom it is given.

For U-19:

- For a weekend tournament or championship, there may be an unlimited team roster at check in. For a specific match during the weekend competition, a team may nominate as many players as desired to be starters and replacements on a specific match roster so long as they are consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in U-19 variations for Law 3.5. Subsequent match rosters may or may not vary with different players where a team may nominate as many players as desired to be starters and replacements on a specific match roster so long as they are consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in U-19 variations for Law 3.5.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, or 21	5 players who can play in the front row 0
22 or more	6 players who can play in the front row and 3 players that can play lock

Location to turn in rosters, time when rosters are due, and to whom they are to be turned into will be set by the match organizer of each event. For example, for a State Based Rugby Organization Championship, the governing SBRO will designate when a team is to turn in their match roster and to whom it is given.

- For a single a-side match, a team may nominate as many players as desired to be starters and replacements on a specific match roster so long as they are consistent with IRB Front row requirements listed in U-19 variations for Law 3.5.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, or 21	5 players who can play in the front row 0
22 or more	6 players who can play in the front row and 3 players that can play lock

Location to turn in rosters, time when rosters are due, and to whom they are to be turned into will be set by the match organizer of each event. For example, for the National Championship match, USA Rugby will designate when a team is to turn in their match roster and to whom it is given.

Specific IRB LAW:

3.4 PLAYERS NOMINATED AS SUBSTITUTES

For international matches a Union may nominate up to seven replacements/substitutes. For other matches, the Union with jurisdiction over the match decides how many replacements /substitutes may be nominated.

A team can substitute up to two front row players and up to five other players. Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

DEFINITIONS

A Team. A team consists of fifteen players who start the match plus any authorised replacements and/or substitutes.

Replacement. A player who replaces an injured team mate.

Substitute. A player who replaces a team mate for tactical reasons.

Law 3 Number of Players -

3.5 SUITABLY TRAINED AND EXPERIENCED PLAYERS IN THE FRONT ROW

(a) The table below indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, 21 or 22	5 players who can play in the front row

(b) Each player in the front row and any potential replacement(s) must be suitably trained and experienced.

(c) When 19, 20, 21 or 22 players are nominated in a team there must be five players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required and, on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

(d) The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

The laws of the game apply to the Under 19 game, subject to the following variations:

LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS - THE TEAM

3.5 (c) If a team nominates 22 players, it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop.

If a team nominates more than 22 players it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. There must also be three players who can play in lock position.

Number of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, or 21	5 players who can play in the front row 0
22 or more	6 players who can play in the front row and 3 players that can play lock

3.12 SUBSTITUTED PLAYERS REJOINING THE MATCH

If a player is substituted, that player must not return and play in that match even to replace an injured player.

Exception 1: a substituted player may replace a player with a bleeding or open wound.

Exception 2: a substituted player may replace a front row player when injured, temporarily suspended or sent off.