

## **Penalties**

I won't go into details why a penalty is given at this point. So the question to answer is;

### **What to do when the referee has signalled for a penalty?**

Firstly **the signal**, (see below) the referee will give a loud long blast on his whistle, secondly, he will then raise his arm pointing it to the non-offending team and lastly he will make a mark with his foot on the ground.

This will be done very rapidly, almost together.



### **Your Penalty.**

The referee will look to your Captain who will need to decide, what to do from the 'mark' from these options;

1. Kick at goal
2. Kick into touch where you will have the throw in.
3. Take a scrum
4. Or any player can 'tap and go' ie take a quick penalty.

If you have decided to take a quick penalty, the referee should allow you to go straight away (he might be looking at your Captain for an option, but he will also be looking to allow the quick penalty also) as long as there isn't an injury or there was serious foul play he will let you 'tap and go' close to the mark, he should allow the attacking team to take advantage of the situation. Most referee's will not allow you to tap and go from behind them.

If its your penalty, get the ball to your scrum half quickly, this gives you options and you have control of the situation. If the opposition have the ball they should not do anything to prevent or delay you getting the ball, they can't throw or kick the ball away. Get it off them, if the delay is obvious the referee will move the penalty 10m forward.

**Penalty against you.**

If the penalty is against you, **get back!** The rule book states you must retreat 10 metres or to the goal line if the penalty is within 10m of it. If you are already 10m away it would be a good idea to shout something like

**"on me!"** this will help your team mates focus on where to go and also let the opposition know you are organised and ready.

If you have the ball, don't be in a rush to give it to them, this has to be tempered with not hampering the opposition (as described above) but don't throw the ball to them and make it easy for them. If for example you are 5m away and have the ball just drop it. By the time they have ran 5m to get the ball this gives you time to retreat the full 10m. Don't say 'here you are' and throw a nice spin pass to there scrum half!!

Taking the **quick penalty (tap and go)**, the player has to take it from the mark, either putting the ball on the ground and tapping it with his foot then he can pass it or dropping it from his hands onto his foot and kicking it back up and catching it.

**As soon as the ball is** tapped with the foot if you are back 10m you can run forward and tackle. This is clearly why its important to get back quickly and get organised if defending.

One more thing, if you are defending and you have gone forward to tackle too fast, not retreated the full 10m or infringed in any other way the referee will award another penalty 10m closer to your try line. The second penalty will **not** be allowed until the referee has made a new 'mark'. At this point if attacking you can change your option say take a kick at goal if you are now in kicking distance.

So next time you are playing particularly against a team that like to take quick penalties you have no excuses!!