

### 3.3 Super Rugby Aotearoa Season Structure

The competition will be a Home and Away Round Robin structure. Each team will play the other 4 teams both at home and away. Each Team will play 8 matches during the Regular Season with four matches played at home venues and four matches played at away venues.

Each team will have two byes during the regular season.

There will be a final between the number 1 and 2 ranked teams on the competition ladder at the completion of the regular season. The team ranked first will host the final.

### 3.4 Points Tabulation

Competition points will be awarded in all Regular Season matches on the following basis:

Win 4 points

Draw 2 points

Loss 0 points for loss of more than 7 points

Bonus 1 point for loss by 7 points or less

Bonus 1 point for 3 tries or more than opponent

Bye 0 Points

SANZAAR will maintain and publish the official competition table.

### 3.5 Determining regular season table placing

#### 3.5.1 Tie breaking rules

In the event of two or more teams being equal on competition points for any position on either the Competition table, either during or at the end of the season, such position will be decided upon using the following steps until the tie is broken:

- a) Most wins from all matches;
- b) Highest aggregate points difference from all matches;
- c) Most tries from all matches;
- d) Highest aggregate difference of total tries for versus tries scored against from all matches;
- e) Coin toss

### 3.6 Super Rugby Aotearoa Competition Finals Series

#### 3.6.1 Super Rugby Aotearoa Final

There will be a final between the number 1 and 2 ranked teams on the competition ladder at the completion of the regular season. The team ranked first will host the final.

#### 3.6.2 Determining Winners of Super Rugby Aotearoa Final - if the teams are tied at fulltime in any Finals Series Match then the following will apply until a winner is found:

- a) **Extra Time** - the procedure will be:
  - i) After a five minute rest period, the extra time is played in two 10 minute periods with a two minute halftime;
  - ii) Before the extra time begins, the match Referee will do a coin toss with the two captains one minute before the new kick-off. The winner of the coin toss decides if his team wants to kick-off or if his team wants to choose the side of the pitch it wants to play on for the first 10 minute period;
  - iii) For the second 10 minute period, the teams change sides and the team that did not kick off in the first period does so;
  - iv) Coaches are not permitted on the field during the rest period or halftime.
  - v) Teams and match officials must remain on the field during the rest period and at halftime.

vi) Injury time is added to the two 10 minute periods.

b) **Sudden Death** – if the match is still tied at the end of extra time, the procedure will be:

- i) An up to 10 minute sudden death period is played after another five minute rest period;
- ii) The first team to score (by a penalty, drop-goal or try) will be the winner;
- iii) As for extra time, one minute before sudden death begins, the match Referee will do a coin toss to choose which team kicks-off and on which side of the pitch they will play.
- iv) Teams and match officials must remain on the field during the rest period.
- v) Injury time is added to this period of play.

c) **Kicking Competition** – if the match is still tied at the end of sudden death, the Referee will conduct a place kicking competition to determine the winner of the match, according to the following procedures:

i) All Players and Match officials will remain on the Playing Area. The Referee will call the captains of the two teams together and will conduct a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss then may either choose which Team kicks first (in which case the loser chooses the end at which all place kicks will be taken) or choose the end at which all place kicks will be taken (in which case the loser chooses which Team kicks first).

ii) Each Team must nominate five Players to take part in the competition. Only Players on the Playing Area at the final whistle of Sudden Death may be nominated. No substituted Players, injury-replaced Players or Players who have been shown a red card may take part at any time. For clarification purposes, any Player who has received a yellow card and who remains in the sin bin at the time of the final whistle of Sudden Death may not take part in the place kick competition. The order in which the nominated Players will kick does not have to be predetermined.

iii) The Match Officials and the ten nominated Players (five from each team) will assemble on the halfway line. Team management and Players not nominated must remain behind the halfway line in the side of the Playing Area not used. No one other than the Match Officials, the Match Manager, two Ball persons and the participating Players are allowed in the part of the Playing Area being used for the competition (including around the Playing Area, behind the posts, etc).

iv) The five Players from each Team will place kick from three different points, all on the 22 metre line, as follows:

- |               |                                                              |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| First point:  | directly in front of the posts                               |
| Second point: | on the 15 metre line on the left hand side facing the posts  |
| Third point:  | on the 15 metre line on the right hand side facing the posts |

v) The Referee will start the competition by calling the first Player selected from the Team kicking first to the first kicking point. Once the Player has taken the place kick, the Referee calls a Player from the opposing Team to take his place kick from the same point.

vi) The next two Players (one from each Team) will place kick from the second point in turn. This will continue until all five Players from each Team have place kicked (the next players place kicking respectively from the third point, the first point and finally the second point), or until one Team is unable to equal the score of the other Team within the remaining number of kicks (at which time the Referee will declare the winner).

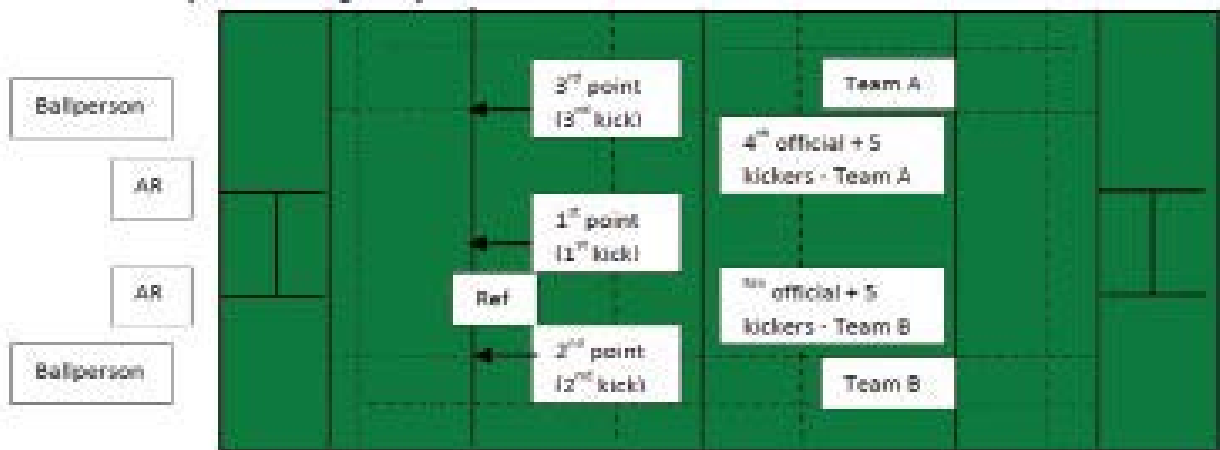
vii) If there are an equal number of successful kicks once each Team has completed its five place kicks, the competition continues on a 'sudden death' basis, following the same order of kickers used in the first five kicks.

viii) The competition will continue two kickers at a time (one from each Team), going progressively through the three kicking points as stated above (and repeating the process if necessary) until one player succeeds with a place kick and the player from the other Team taking the same place kick misses it. Once this occurs, the Team of the player who succeeded with the place kick will be declared the winner. Each of these additional kicks shall be taken by the same 5 players in rotation.

ix) Throughout the place kicking competition:

- a) Once a Player has positioned the ball on the kicking tee, he must take the kick within one minute. Should he take longer, the Referee shall declare the kick unsuccessful.
- (b) After each kick, the Referee records the number of the Player and whether or not the attempt was successful. The Sideline Manager / Substitution Recorder will record the same details on the official Match report.
- (c) Whether or not the kick is successful in each case is the sole decision of the Referee, who may at his sole discretion rely on the assistance of his assistant Referees. The Referee's decision shall be final and binding.
- (d) Once a Player has completed their place kick, they shall return to stand with their Team behind the halfway line in the side of the playing area not used.

Please refer to the diagram below, which demonstrates the operation of the place kicking competition.



## Section 3 - Appendix 3: Super Rugby Aotearoa Law Innovations

### Sky Super Rugby Aotearoa 2021 – Game Innovations

#### Red Card

- If a player is red carded they may be replaced after 20 minutes by another player. The 20mins from when a player is red carded to when they may be replaced is measured as “game time”. This follows the same measurement of time already in place for a yellow carded player in the sin bin (mean sin bin clock is stopped when the game clock is stopped).
- A player receives a yellow card and is sin binned for 10mins. If the same player then returns to the field after serving their 10mins suspension and subsequently receives a 2<sup>nd</sup> yellow card, which equates to an automatic red card. After a further 20mins the red carded player can be replaced.
- A player who has been tactically replaced, is able to return to the field to replace a red carded player. Note if you have unused replacements (eg #23) still sitting on the bench you do not have to use them to replace a red carded player before you use players who have already been substituted tactically (eg #12).
- If a player is red carded and all eight replacements have already been used, then any players who have been tactically replaced can then replace the red carded player after 20mins (note players replaced due to injury are not permitted to replace a red carded player). *While need to plan for all eventualities the reality of this situation happening is unlikely given the team would have had to have used all 8 replacements and had a player red carded prior to the 60<sup>th</sup> minute of the match.*
- If the red carded player was a front rower, and the replacement was off for an HIA, then the red carded player is unable to return (note this could lead to uncontested scrums if no further suitably trained front rowers were still on the replacements bench). To be clear, any red carded player cannot return under any circumstance.
- The usual replacement laws continue to apply in that a replaced player may return for an injured front rower, injury due to foul play, HIA or blood.

#### Golden Point

If the match is tied at the end of normal time, the procedure will be:

- An up to 10 minute golden point period is played after a five minute break;
- The first team to score (by a penalty, drop-goal, try, or penalty try) will be the winner;
- One minute before golden point begins, the match Referee will do a coin toss to choose which team kicks-off and on which side of the pitch they will play;
- Teams and match officials must remain on the field during the break;
- Coaching staff are not permitted onto the playing enclosure (ie those coaching staff in coaches boxes are not permitted down pitchside);
- Injury time is added to this period of play;
- The Laws governing Tactical Replacements, Temporary Replacements and Permanent Replacements apply for the entire duration of the match, inclusive of the Golden Point-period (ie teams are not entitled to "reset" their replacements).

If no points are scored in the Golden Point period then the match is declared a draw.

Points allocation from matches that go to Golden Point  
For example:

Team A	Team B
3 tries = 15 points	5 penalties = 15 points
<b>Golden Point</b>	
	Penalty – <b>Team B</b> wins the match by scoring first in extra time
<b>Team A</b> earns 1 competition point for scoring 3 more tries than their opposition and also earns a 2 <sup>nd</sup> bonus point for losing within 7	

1) Drawn match at fulltime goes to Golden point. If no-one scores any points in the 10min period then both teams retain the competition points earned in regular time (ie 2 competition points each for the draw, plus if one team has scored 3 or more tries than the opposition then they would get an extra bonus point).

2) Drawn match at fulltime goes to Golden point. Team “A” scores first in golden point. Team A gets 4 competition points for the win (plus any bonus points for scoring 3 or more tries than the opposition, which for clarity could be 2 tries in regular time and 1 in golden point). Team B gets 1 competition point for losing within 7 points. Note in another example if a team scores 3 or more tries in normal time, but normal time ends in a draw, and then that team loses in Golden Point then they would get 1 point for the 3 or more tries and a further 1 point for losing within 7. The winning team in this example would get 4 points.

## Goal Line drop out

### Purpose:

Reward the attacking team who have put themselves into an attacking position, and put some emphasis on the defending team to clear the ball from their in-goal.

### Rationale:

Currently there is no real positional advantage of a drop out from the 22m line for the attacking team, and it potentially puts them in a defensive position from the restart.

### Scenarios:

1. When an attacking player carrying the ball is held up in the in-goal or knocks the ball on in the in-goal, play restarts with a goal line drop-out.
2. When a kick (excluding a penalty kick or drop kick at goal, kick off or kick restart) goes into the in-goal area and is grounded or otherwise made dead by the defending team, play restarts with a goal line drop-out.

### Note:

- If the kick is taken on the full by a defender in their in- goal area, the defender may claim a mark and play restarts with a free kick on the 5m line in line with the place of the mark.
- If the attackers cause the ball to go touch in goal or over the dead- ball line, then the defenders will have the option of taking a 22m drop out or a scrum at the place where the ball was kicked.

### Application:

- The drop-out is taken anywhere on or behind the defending team's goal line.
- The drop-out must be taken without delay. The ball must cross the goal line and travel 5m.

**Sanction:** The non-kicking team has the option of the kick being retaken or a 5m scrum in line with the place where the kick was taken.

- If the ball crosses the 5m line but then bounces back, is blown or deflected back, play continues.
- If a goal line drop out goes out on the full the attacking team have the option for;
  - a scrum on the 5m for the attacking team in line with where the kick is taken;
  - a lineout on the 5m line for the attacking team;
  - re-kick
- The attacking team must be back at least 5m and not charge over the 5m line before the ball is kicked.

**Sanction:** Free kick to the defending team 10m up field from the place of the kick.

- Defending players must be onside (behind the kicker) before they are allowed to move forward. Offside players must not move forward until they are put onside.

**Sanction:** PK to the attacking team on the 5m in line with where the kick was taken.

- The team receiving the ball from a goal line drop out, cannot score a dropped goal until the ball next becomes dead, or until an opponent has played the ball, has touched it, or has tackled the ball carrier. Any such attempted dropped goal is deemed to be unsuccessful and play continues.
  - If the defending team pass, play or carry the ball into their own in-goal and it is 'held up', or they ground it or otherwise make it dead, the restart is a 5m scrum to the attacking team.
  - If the player taking a goal line drop out hits the post and the ball goes dead then the receiving team has the option of a 5m scrum in line with where the kick was taken or a re-kick.

## Captains Referral

**Purpose:** Provide a mechanism which allows team captains to be part of the on-field decision making process

### Outcomes:

- Team captains have shared ownership in decision making along with match officials
- Decision accuracy is enhanced
- Game outcomes are positively enhanced

### How it works (Captain)

- Captains/team gets one referral to use – this is an added layer on top of the current TMO protocol that referees will still apply during the game.
- If their referral is correct, then they get to keep that referral to use again. If they are incorrect and their referral is over-ruled, they lose it.
- The captain must make referral within 10 seconds of a try being scored, a whistled decision, or a stoppage in play.
- The captain must be specific about what they want referred to in Scenarios 1-3 below.
- Anything that is referred must be clear and obvious.
- Set piece play will be taken out of the review process.
- If the captain is off the field of play, he will nominate an acting captain to make any referrals.

### What can be referred (Three Scenarios)

1. Infringements before a try is scored anywhere within the last restart in play (remove requirement for within two phases). Otherwise current protocol applies and includes:

- a. Law 8.1. Scoring points
- b. Law 9.1 to 9.6 and 10.11 to 10.23. Foul play: obstruction, dangerous play, tackling a player without the ball
- c. Law 10.4 Offside: player in front of the kicker
- d. Law 11 Knock-on or throw forward
- e. Law 15.5 to 15.9 Ruck: offside at the ruck –players not joining the ruck
- f. Law 16.5. Maul: offside at the maul – players not joining the maul
- g. Law 18.1 and 2. Player in touch
- h. Law 18.3 to 18.7. Lineout: quick throw
- i. Law 21 In goal (including ball grounded by a defending player)
- j. Law 21.7 and 21.8 In goal: grounding the ball and double movement

2. Foul Play: Any decision under Law 9.1 to 9.6 and 10.11 to 10.23. This also includes whether the referee needs to increase their sanction from Penalty kick to yellow card, or yellow card to red card.

3. Any whistled decision in the last five minutes of regular match time and any extra time: Any decision that a referee blows their whistle for, a team could refer that decision to the TMO so that the end of the game is not influenced by an incorrect decision.

### What cannot be referred

- Anything which is outside of the above protocol
- A restart in play has happened including a quick tap or quick throw in has been taken, so the team has chosen to play quickly.
- Non-decisions - where a referee does not blow their whistle for a decision and play continues (unless there is foul play).

Note: The referee team may still want to check foul play which they have not penalised yet as per current protocol.

### How it works

- The captain signals their intent to refer and then describes exactly what they want to check
  - “We want to refer a potential High tackle”
  - “We want to refer a knock on at the last ruck before this try”
  - “We want to challenge the PK only for that high tackle as we believe it should be sanctioned higher”
  - “We want to challenge the holding on Penalty because he is not supporting his bodyweight” – in the last five minutes only
- The referee will clarify with the captain which decision is to be reviewed
- The referee will ask the TMO to review that decision and the TMO will decide if the decision was right or wrong.
- The TMO can only review the decision that was asked of them however if something else is picked up then a decision should be made on what has been seen.

Note: The footage must clearly show the referee decision is wrong in order to overturn the decision.

### Outcomes:

- The referee has made the incorrect decision – the referee withdraws their whistled decision, and restarts with the correct decision, or a scrum to the team who which should have the ball. The team that made the referral keeps it's referral.
  - “Referral accepted – scrum to blue”
  - “Referral accepted – PK to blue”
- The referee decision is correct – The team that made the referral loses its referral and play restarts with the referee’s original decision.
  - “Referral declined – team loses their referral – play restarts with original decision”

## Game Focus Areas - Super Rugby Aotearoa 2021

- Referee tackle/ruck/breakdown to the law with clear parameters for the whole 80 mins.
- If you are not clearly ONSIDE you are deemed OFFSIDE. Creating space is a priority across all areas of the game.
- Keeping the game moving by refereeing to the law and encouraging positive player behaviour.
- Set piece set up without delay, clear expectations and parameters.
- Respect of match officials and for the game shown by all.
- Note: Head contact / foul play is also a priority.