



TACKLE SAFETY PROJECT - REFEREES

THE RATIONALE FOR LOWERING THE LEGAL TACKLE HEIGHT



Our aim is to reduce the risk of concussions for both tacklers and ball carriers.

Tackles above the sternum pose a **4.2** times higher risk of causing concussions to both ball carriers

and tacklers, in contrast to tackles made below the sternum.

For tackles above the sternum, the risk of concussion is **280%** higher for the tackler compared to when they make tackles below the sternum.

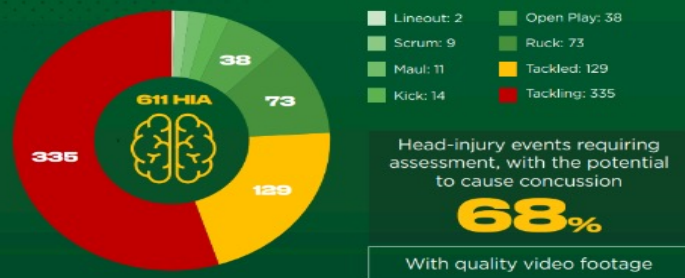
SUMMARY "HIGH" VS "LOW" LEGAL TACKLES



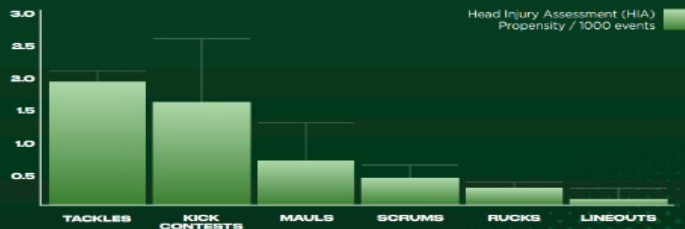
MAIN OBJECTIVES

1. Reduce risk of injury for both the tackler and tackled player
2. Reduce head contact collisions
3. Reduce the sharing of head space between tacklers and ball carriers

PHASE OF PLAY/MATCH ACTIVITY THAT CARRIES HIGHEST RISK



HIA PROPENSITY (/1000 EVENTS):



BOTH TACKLERS AND BALL CARRIERS SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO AVOID HEAD-TO-HEAD CONTACT.

Most concussive events stem from making and taking tackles, with **tackling** responsible for more than

70%
of them.

2.6x
greater risk of sustaining a concussion event while **making the tackle** compared to carrying the ball into contact.

THE TACKLER

- Must be bent at the knees and hips
- (Definition: Tackler must be bent in knees and hips with a realistic chance of tackling below the base of the sternum)
- Tackle between the knees and sternum
- May tackle lower than the knees provided that he or she clearly wraps their arms around the ball carrier



KEY CHANGES FOR THE TACKLER IN OPEN PLAY

The tackler must bend knees and hips. The tackle must be made below the base of the sternum and above the knees. A tackle may be made below

the knees, but then there must be a CLEAR wrap of the arms around the legs. An attempted wrap will not be acceptable.

All contact above the shoulder line will be managed according to the **Head Contact Process**.

Maximum legal tackle height is below the base of the sternum.

Head and neck contact may be carded



Above the base of the sternum may be penalized



BELOW THE BASE OF THE STERNUM

Target the belly



Target the thighs



Avoid the knees



THE BALL CARRIER

- May brace for contact and lower his or her body position
- May not run into contact with his or her head lower than his or her hips
- May not dip headfirst into contact



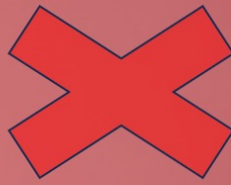
THE ACTIONS OF A BALL CARRIER

The ball carrier may brace for contact, but may not run into contact with their body fully bent or horizontal, or with the head lower than the hips, or lead headfirst into contact with an opponent during open play.

This could be described as **"LATE AND LOW"** and may be penalized for contributing towards dangerous play.



HEAD AND NECK
CONTACT MAY BE
CARDED



ABOVE THE BASE
OF THE STERNUM
MAY BE PENALISED



BELOW THE BASE OF THE
STERNUM

Target the belly

Target the thighs



AVOID the knees!



The ball carrier may NOT run with their body fully bent or horizontal, or with head lower than the hips, or lead headfirst into contact during open play.

GENERAL

1. In the situation where there is a clear dip or sudden change in direction by the ball carrier, it will be expected that the tackler must be bent at the knees and hips not to be liable to penalty.
2. **None** of the above is applicable to **assistant tacklers** provided they don't make head contact with ball carriers
3. It is expected from double hit tacklers to still tackle below the sternum on a front on tackle



EXCLUSIONS

The new tackle safety application is **not** applicable to:

- Pick and drive scenario's
- In the act of scoring a try
- Assistant tacklers (provided they do not make head contact)



LAWS APPLICABLE

Law 9.11

- Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others including leading with the elbow or forearm, or jumping into, or over, a tackler.

Amendment:

- *9.11 (a) Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others including leading with the head, elbow or forearm, or jumping into, or over, a tackler.*
- *9.11 (b) A ball carrier may not run with his/her body fully bent or horizontal, or head lower than hips or lead headfirst into contact in open play. (Sanction: Penalty Kick)*

Law 9.13

- A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.

Amendment:

- *A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the base of the **sternum** even if the tackle starts below **the base of the sternum**.*



CLARIFICATIONS

Law 9.11

- The term 'open play' refers to any phase in the match where the ball is being passed or kicked between team-mates and both teams are contesting for the ball. In open play, the team in possession tries to get the ball to players in space who can make forward progress towards the opposing goal line
- Therefore, Law 9.11 is **not** applicable to “pick and drive” scenario’s or in the act of scoring a try

THE CANNON ARM





PRINCIPLES

Ball carriers go to ground either **voluntarily** or **involuntarily**

Involuntarily means:

A ball carrier going to ground through the actions of an **opposition player or accidental**. The ball carrier either

1. gets tackled (as per definition) or
2. pushed (but not held),
3. ankle tapped (but not held) or
4. through an attempted tackle (but not held) or
5. slips (accidental)

Voluntarily means

A ball carrier goes to ground **not** through the actions of an opposition player (the ball carrier **chooses** to go to ground)

- Therefore “*Cannon Arm*” is **not applicable** to ball carriers going to ground **involuntarily**.

LAW 13

Law 13: Players on the ground in open play

Principle

1. The game is played only by players who are on their feet.

- 1. Players, who go to ground to gather the ball or who go to ground with the ball, must **immediately**:*
 - a. **Get up** with the ball; or*
 - b. **Play** (but not kick) the ball; or*
 - c. **Release** the ball.*
- **Sanction: Penalty.***

Amendment

A ball carrier that voluntarily goes to ground may not use any body part to propel him or herself forward in the field of play



GENERAL REFEREEING PRINCIPLES

- If the referee is unsure, then PLAY ON
- A tackle that starts below the sternum, BUT ends higher than the sternum must be penalized
- The Head Contact Framework will apply even when a tackle that starts below the sternum, BUT head contact is made
- All forms of head contact should be guided by the Head Contact Framework
- The key idea is to remove heads from sharing head space



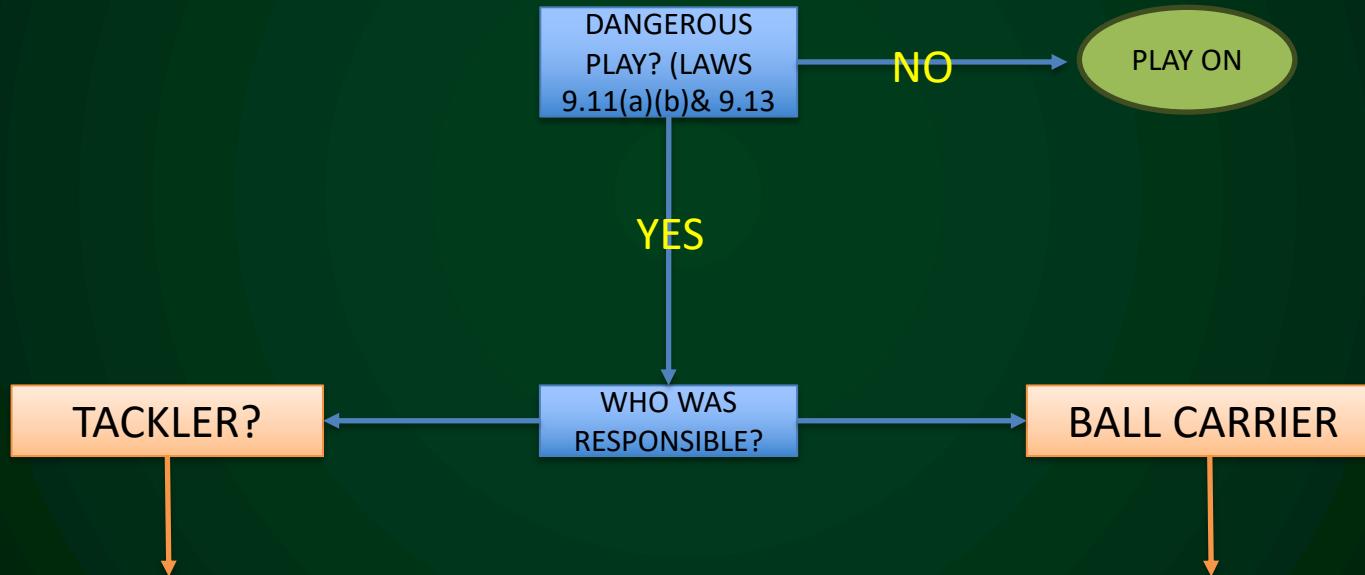
THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS BY PLAYERS ARE **NOT** ALLOWED

- No arms tackles below the hips (**attempted wraps not enough mitigation**)
- Cannon Arm to project forward by ball carriers (even in pick and drive scenario's)
- Neck rolls
- Supporters latching pre contact (Definition of Latching: Bound shoulder to arm). Supporter may latch post contact

FRAMEWORK - APPLICATION AND SANCTIONS



FRAMEWORK





Has contact been made
above the sternum by
the TACKLER?

YES

Tackler bent at
knees and hips?

YES

PLAY ON

NO

Degree of
Danger?

HIGH

LOW

PENALTY ONLY

MITIGATION?

NO

RED CARD

YES

YELLOW CARD

Ball carrier into contact

Ball carrier's
head lower than
hips?

NO

PLAY ON

YES

Degree of
Danger?

HIGH

LOW

PENALTY ONLY

MITIGATION?

NO

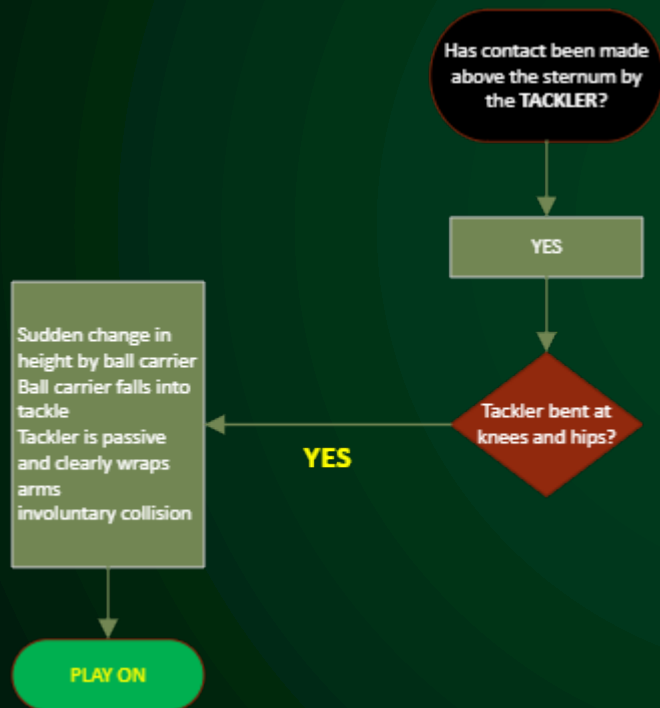
RED CARD

YES

YELLOW CARD

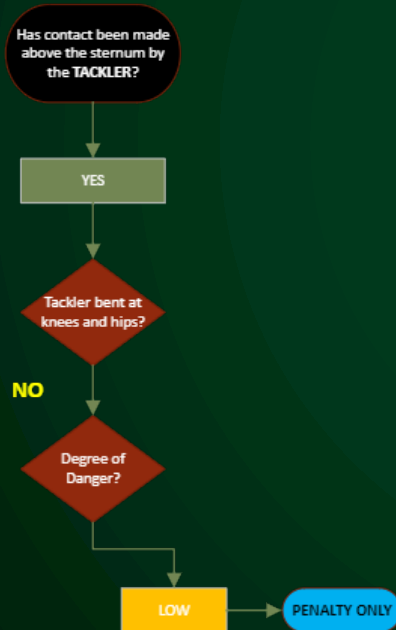
Sudden change in
height by ball carrier
Ball carrier falls into
tackle
Tackler is passive
and clearly wraps
arms
involuntary collision

FRAMEWORK - ACTIONS OF THE TACKLER



- If the tackler is in a legal tackle position at point of contact (clearly bent at knees and hips and wraps with arms), that player cannot be sanctioned
- (NB, it is not how the tackler starts, but how the tackler finishes)
- The examples mentioned above is but a few to indicate that even if these events occur, a tackler that is legal will not be penalised

FRAMEWORK - ACTIONS OF THE TACKLER



Examples of **low** degree of danger are as follows:

- Tackler upright and passive. No head contact
- Tackler upright and passive and tackles ball carrier from behind above the sternum

FRAMEWORK - ACTIONS OF THE TACKLER



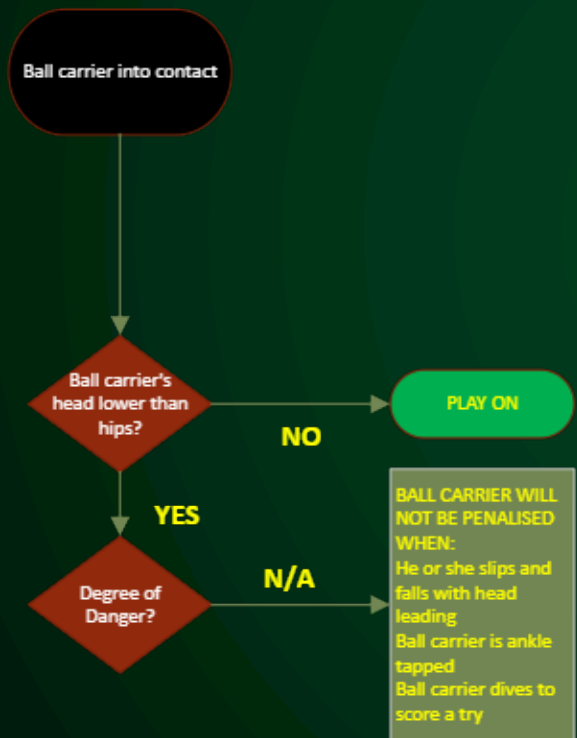
Examples of **high** degree of danger are as follows:

- The tackler does not wrap and shoulder makes contact above sternum. Movement is dynamic
- The tackler initially is bent at knees and hips, but then drives upwards and makes contact above the sternum. There is no clear wrap with the arms
- Stiff arm tackle above the sternum
- Shoulder charge

Examples of **mitigation**

- A sudden change in height by the ball carrier
- A sudden change in direction by the ball carrier
- Tackler's view is obstructed

FRAMEWORK - ACTIONS OF THE BALL CARRIER



The ball carrier will not be penalised going with heads lower than his or her hips when:

- The ball carriers slips
- The ball carrier is ankle tapped
- In an attempt to score a try
- In a pick and drive scenario around the ruck and not in open play

FRAMEWORK - ACTIONS OF THE BALL CARRIER



Examples of LOW degree of danger

- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes no contact with any player
- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Examples of HIGH degree of danger

- The ball carrier makes contact with the head of a defender
- The ball carrier is dynamic

Examples of mitigation

- The tackler suddenly changes height
- The ball carrier is pushed into contact



FRAMEWORK IN ACTION



SECTION 1

BALL CARRIER SITUATIONS



PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

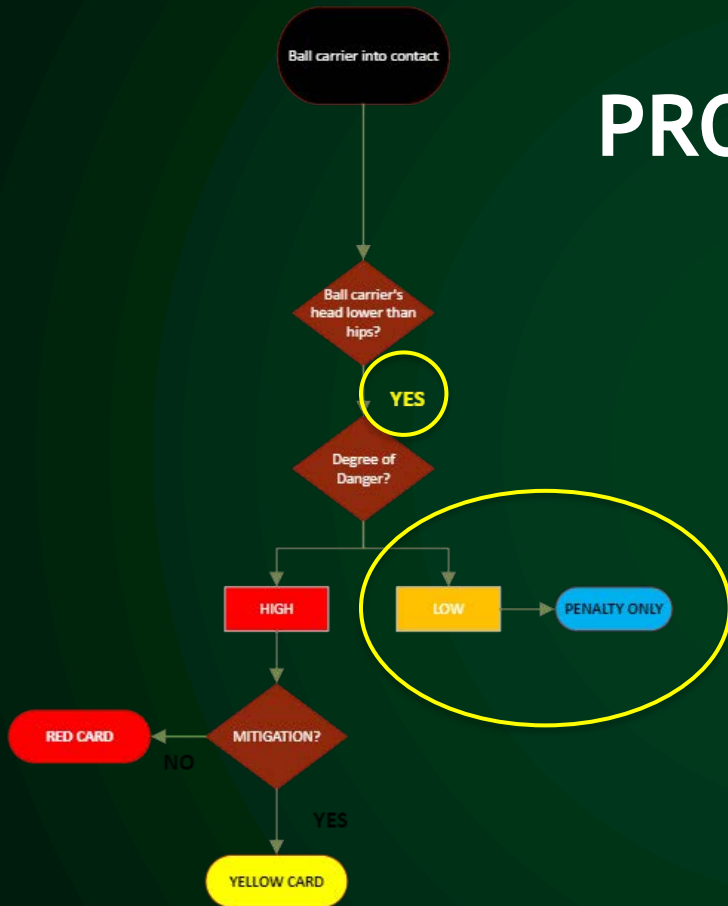
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Outcome:

- Penalty only
- Low degree of danger





PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

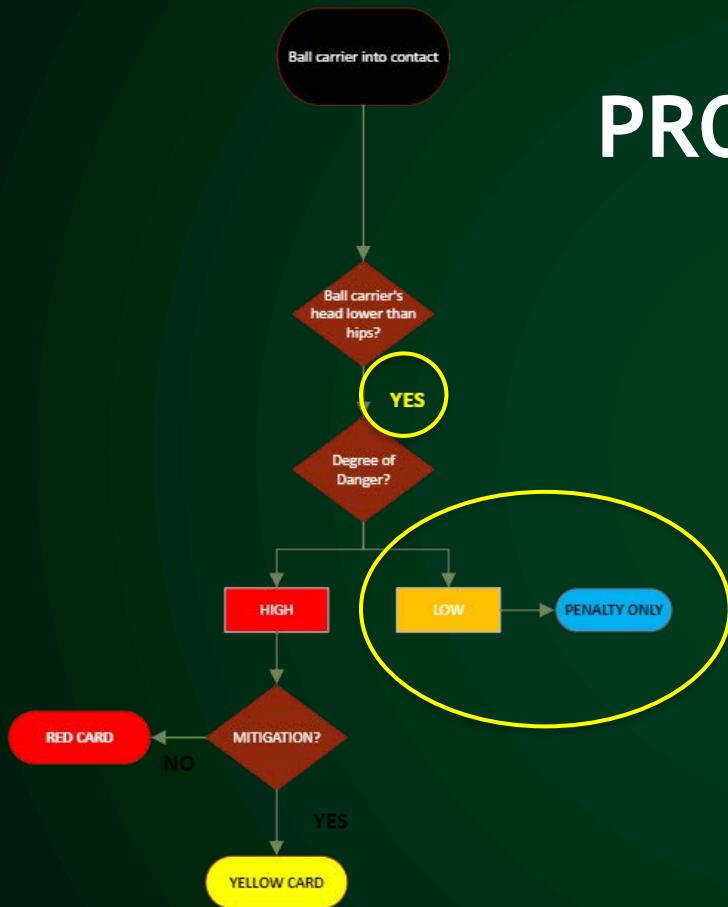
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender
- It is not an attempt to score a try

Outcome:

- Low degree of danger
- Penalty only





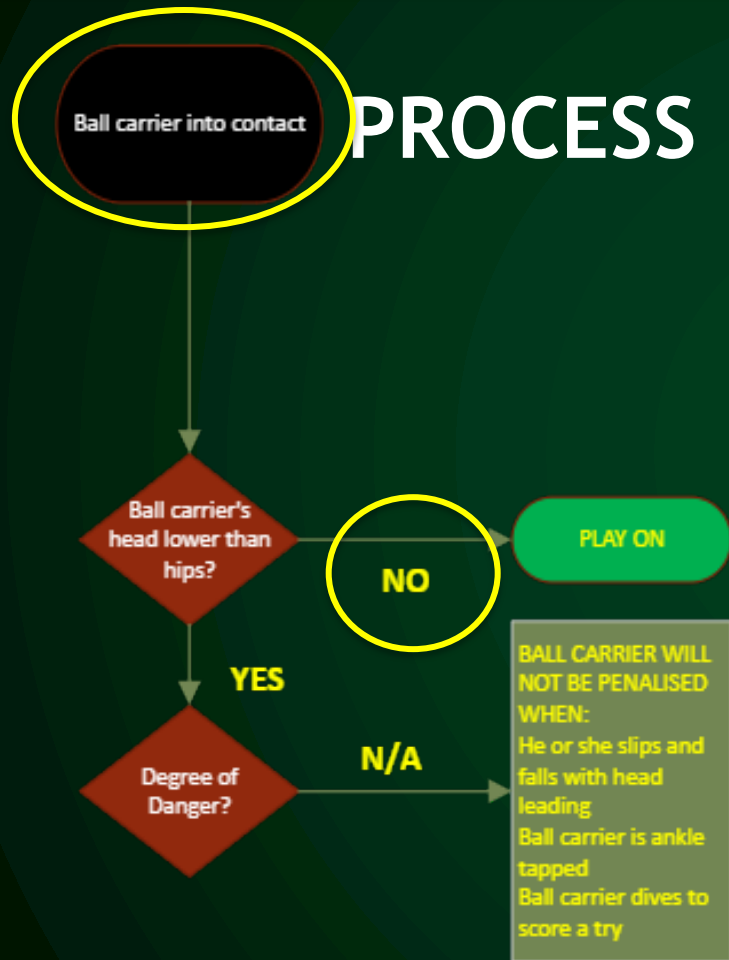
Rugby LIVE



PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height NOT lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION



The ball carrier's head is not lower than his hips

Play on



PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

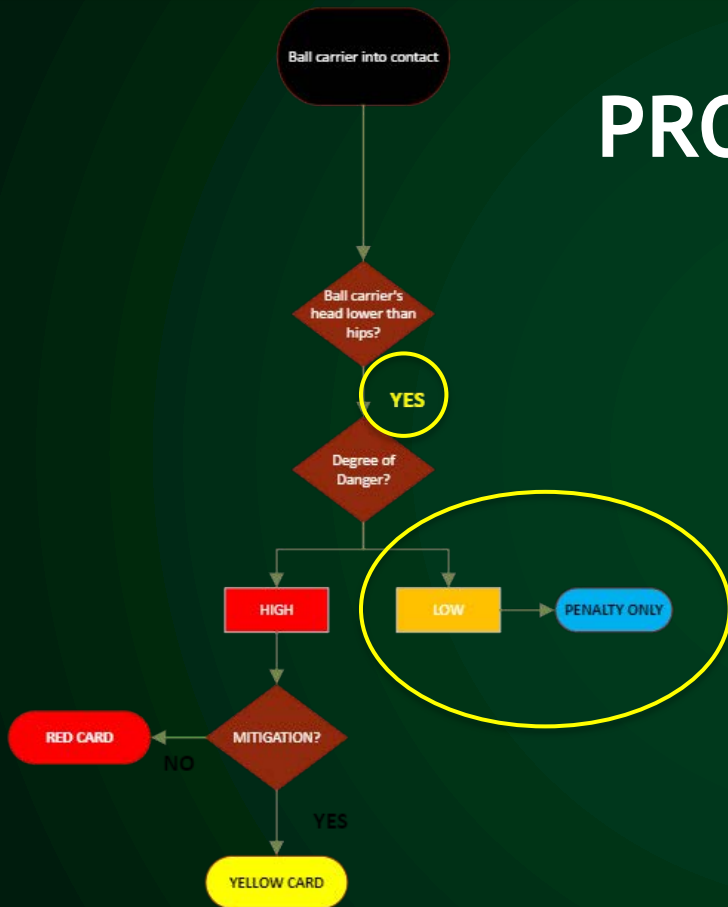
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Outcome:

- Penalty only
- Low degree of danger





U20 CHAMPIONSHIP			
	RSA	11	7
	ENG		3
1st Half		13:46	



PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

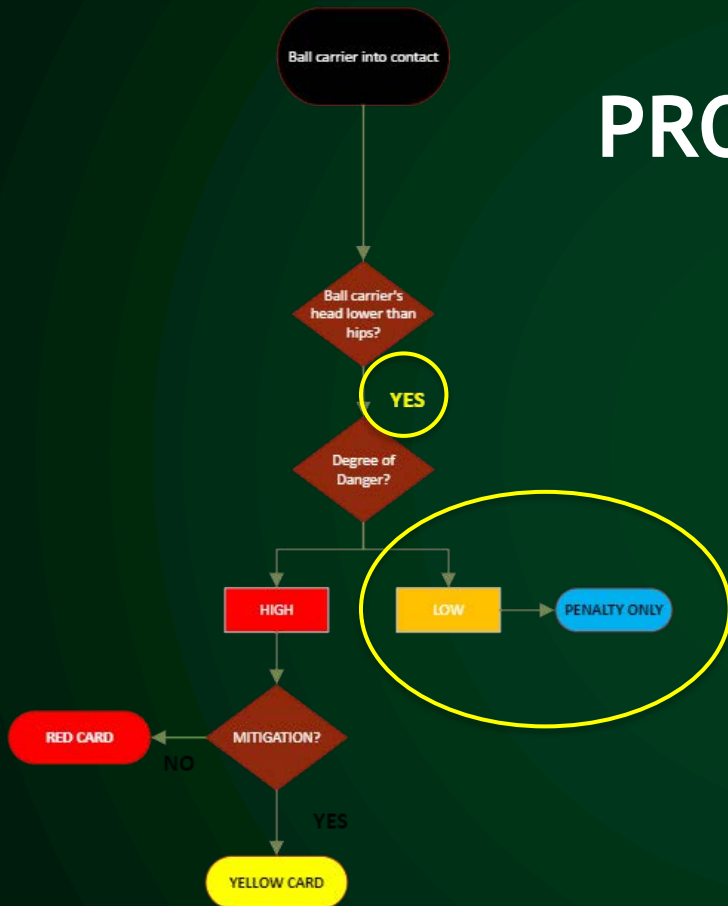
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Outcome:

- Penalty only
- Low degree of danger





U20 CHAMPIONSHIP			
	RSA	T3	22
	ENG	T2	15
2nd Half		58:02	



RED RUCSY PRODUCTIONS



PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

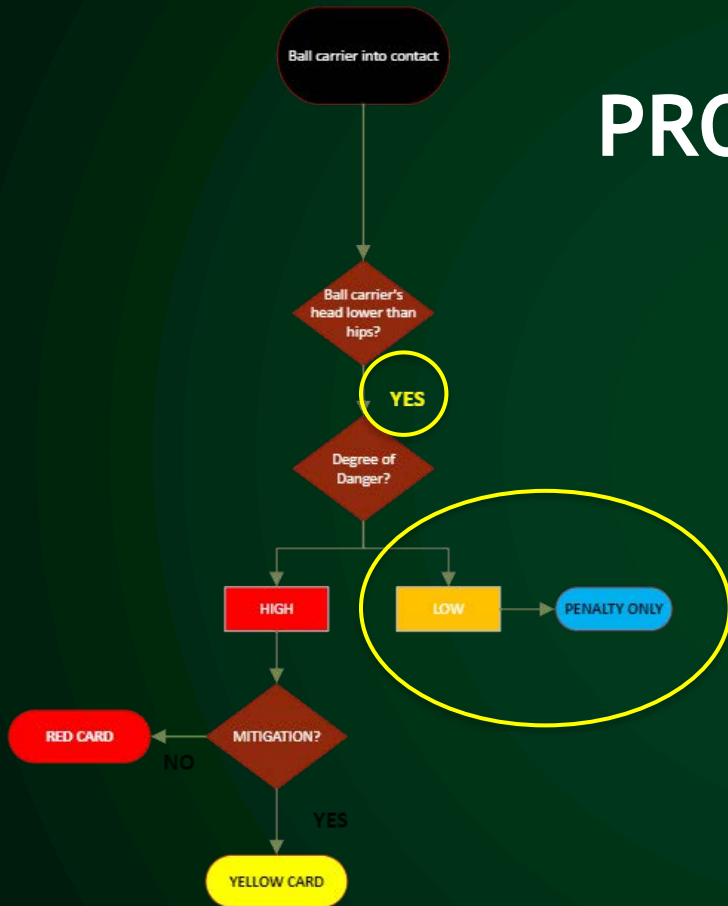
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Outcome:

- **Penalty only**
- **Low degree of danger**





PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

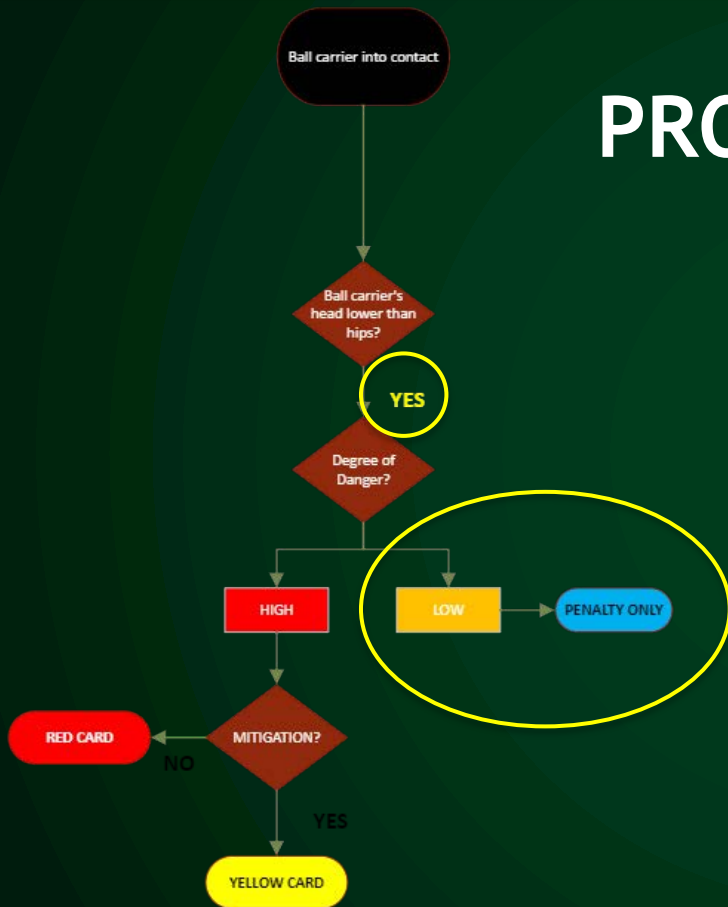
1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION

- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes soft contact with a defender

Outcome:

- Penalty only
- Low degree of danger

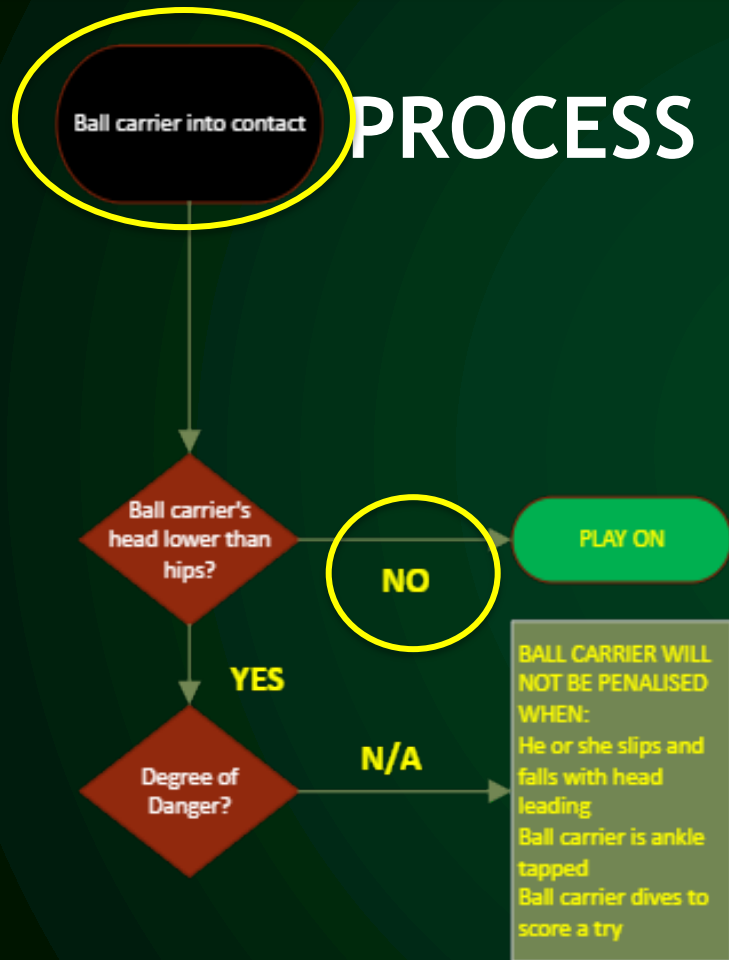




PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height NOT lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION



The ball carrier's head is not lower than his hips

Play on

3rd PLACE PLAY-OFF

	RSA	0
	ENG	3
1st Half		08:52

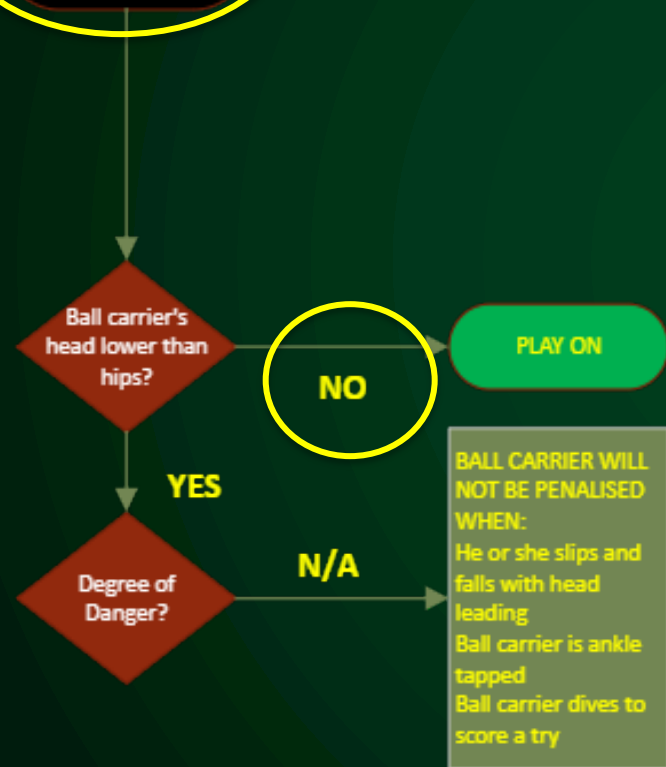


PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height NOT lower than 90 degrees going into contact

Ball carrier into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION



The ball carrier's head is not lower than his hips

Play on



Rugby LIVE

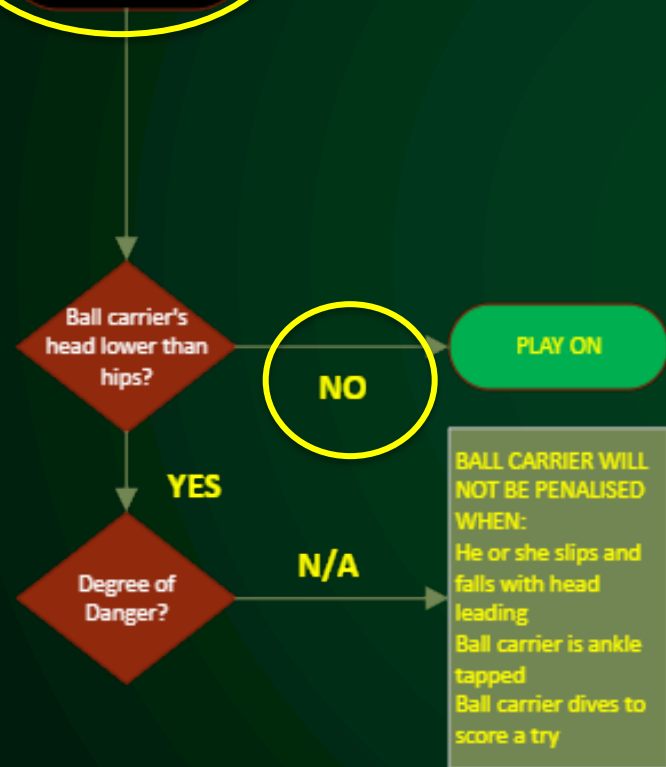


PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height NOT lower than 90 degrees going into contact

Ball carrier into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION



The ball carrier's head is not lower than his hips

Play on



Rugby LIVE

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POTEL YOUR HOLIDAYS STARTS HERE
www.campotel.com

CAMPOTEL

REENOW

Pin

#seeYourMark

BK

BK

00:54

CON

0



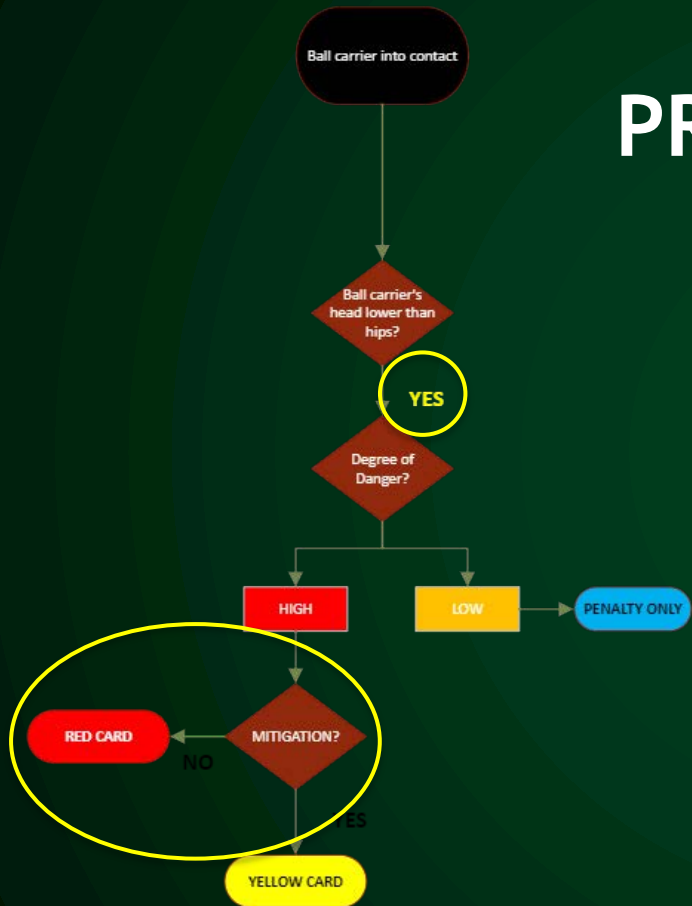
0

ULS

PROCESS - ACTIONS OF BALL CARRIER OR TACKLER?

1. Ball carrier body height higher than 90 degrees going into contact? Or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Ball carrier body height lower than 90 degrees going into contact

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Ball carrier drives into contact with head lower than his/her hips and makes contact with a defender

Outcome:

- High degree of danger - puts tackler at risk of injury
- No mitigation
- Red card

END OF SECTION



SECTION 2

PICK AND DRIVE

Pick and drive is defined as *“a player picking up the ball and driving forward without passing the ball to another player”*

Tackle height safety change is **not applicable to Pick and Drive scenarios.**



WHAT ARE WE DEALING WITH?

- Pick and drive
- Not applicable
- **Play on**

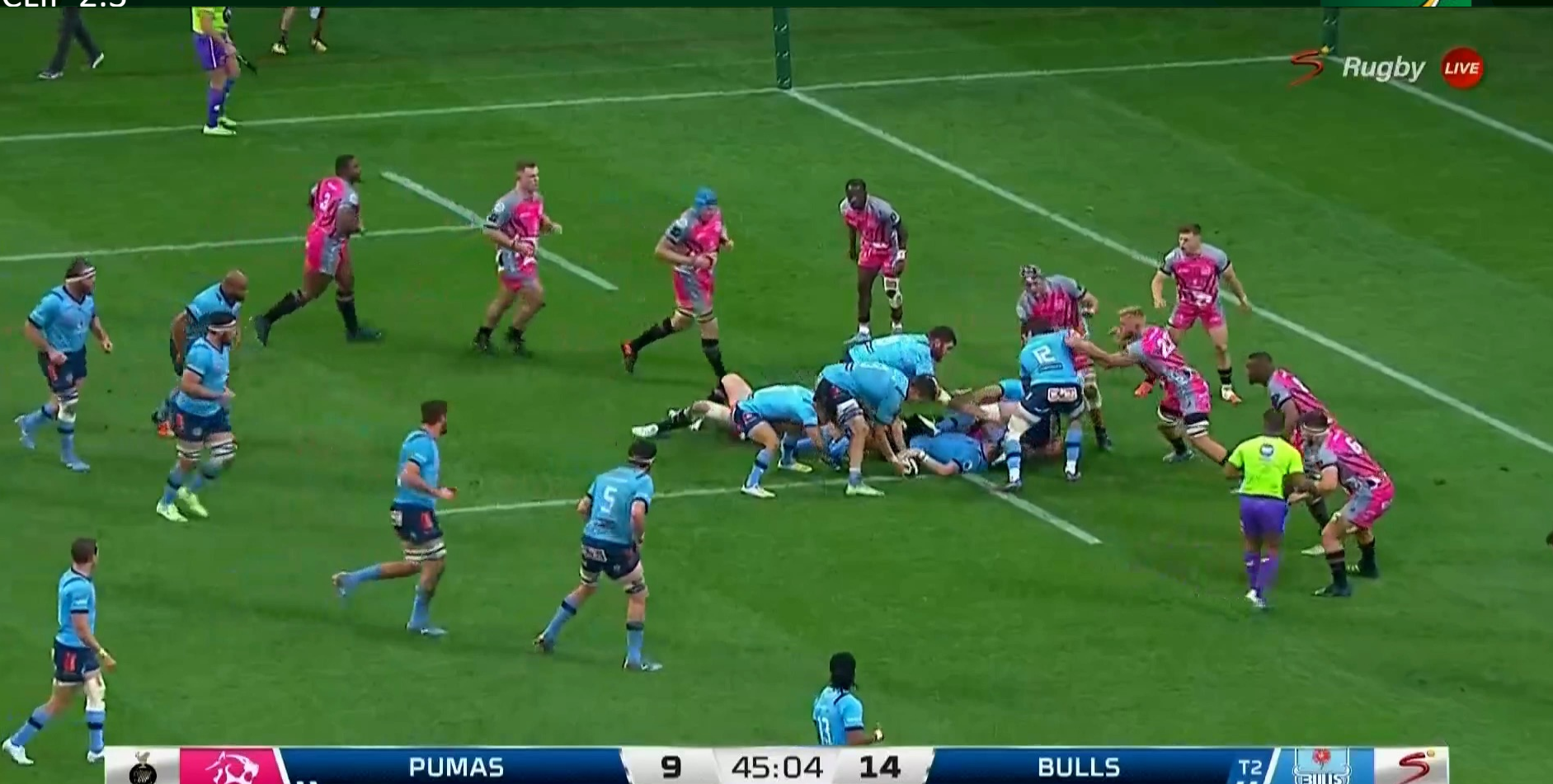


U20 CHAMPIONSHIP			
	RSA	0	
	ENG	3	
1st Half		10:03	



WHAT ARE WE DEALING WITH?

- The first action by G3 is an attempt to score a try
- The second action is a pick and drive
- Not applicable
- **Play on**



WHAT ARE WE DEALING WITH?

- All the actions are Pick and drives
- Not applicable
- **Play on**



Rugby LIVE

RINK



WHAT ARE WE DEALING WITH?

- Pick and drive
- Blue players latched prior to contact (Latch means bound to teammate prior to contact with full arm)
- **Penalty vs Blue**

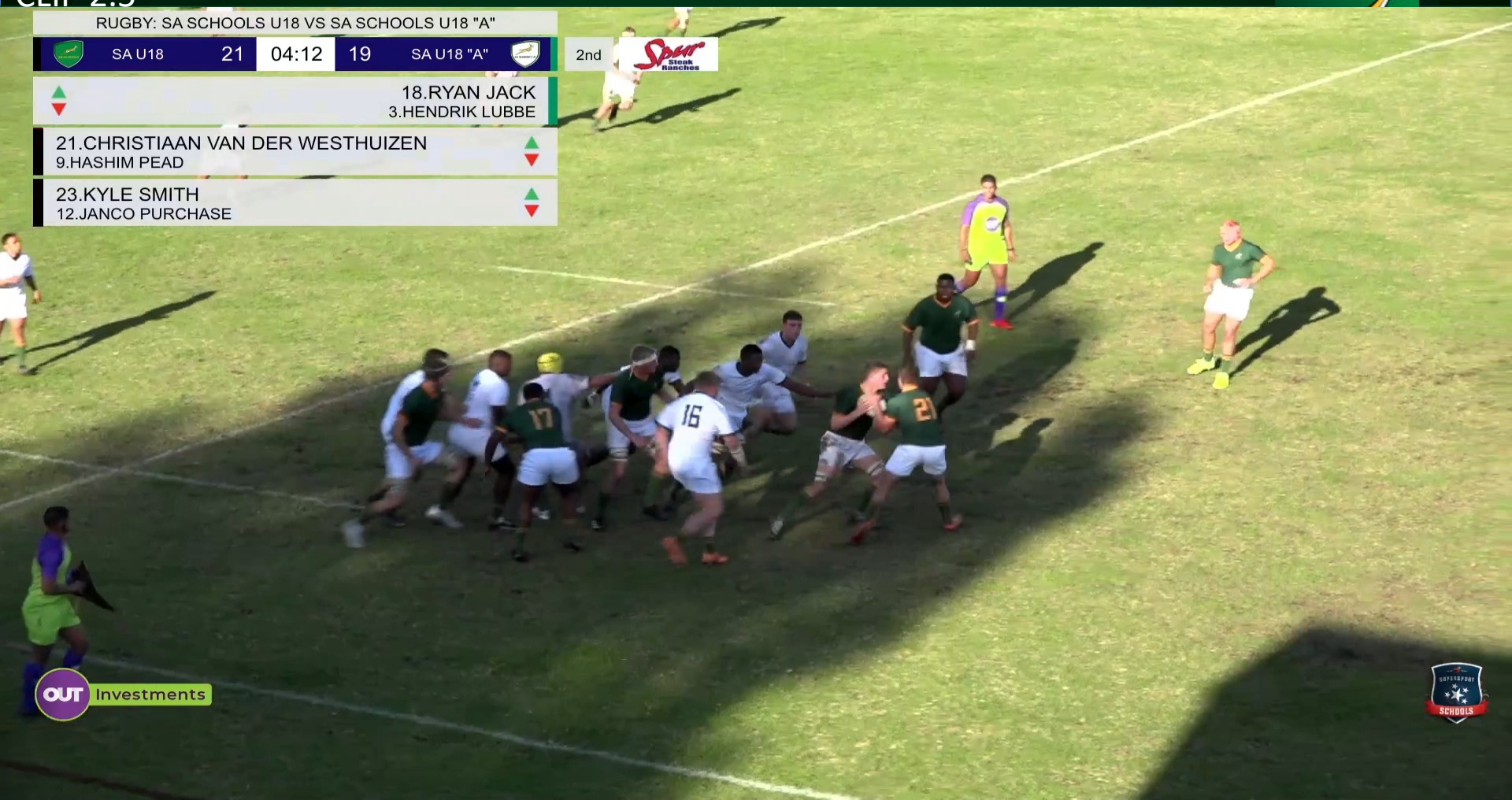
CLIP 2.5



RUGBY: SA SCHOOLS U18 VS SA SCHOOLS U18 "A"

	SA U18	21	04:12	19	SA U18 "A"	
						18.RYAN JACK
						3.HENDRIK LUBBE
21.CHRISTIAAN VAN DER WESTHUIZEN						
9.HASHIM PEAD						
23.KYLE SMITH						
12.JANCO PURCHASE						

2nd 



WHAT ARE WE DEALING WITH?

- Pick and drive
- Green players latched prior to contact (Latch means bound to teammate prior to contact with full arm)
- **Penalty vs Blue**



SECTION 3

Examples where mitigation is applied



BLUE BULLS

0

07:57

5

BORDER

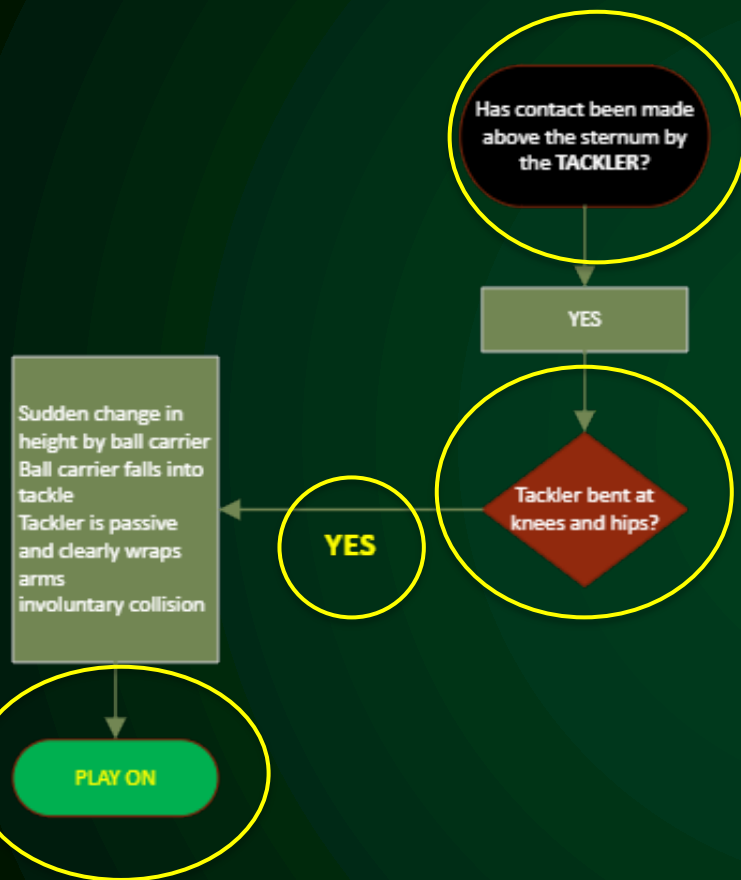
T1



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- **Play on**



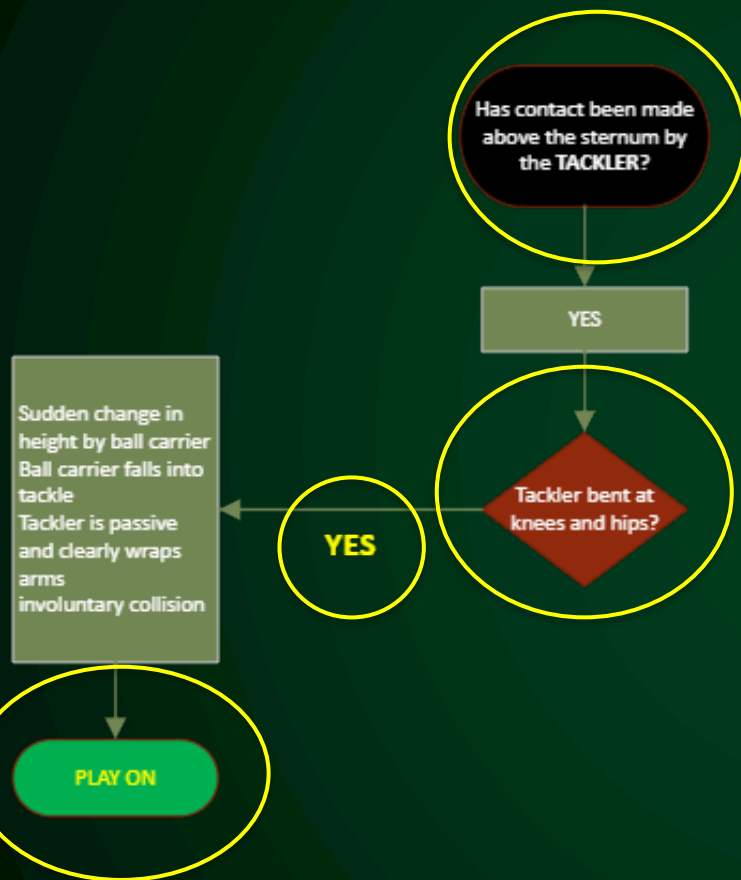
S Rugby LIVE



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- Play on



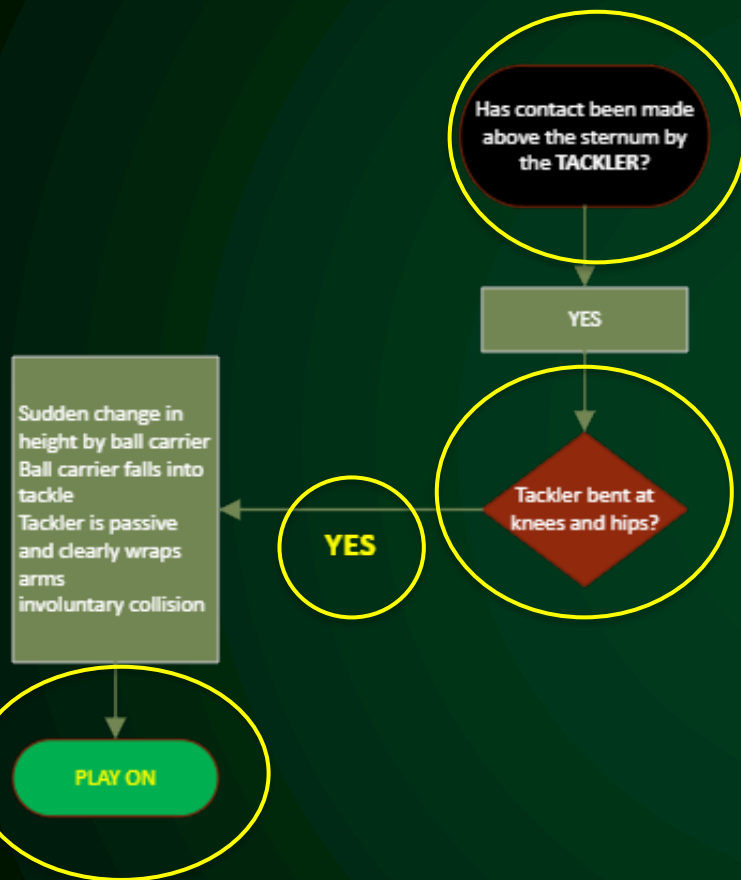
S Rugby LIVE



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- Play on



S Rugby LIVE



T2

MATIES

22

24:17

7

UP-TUKS

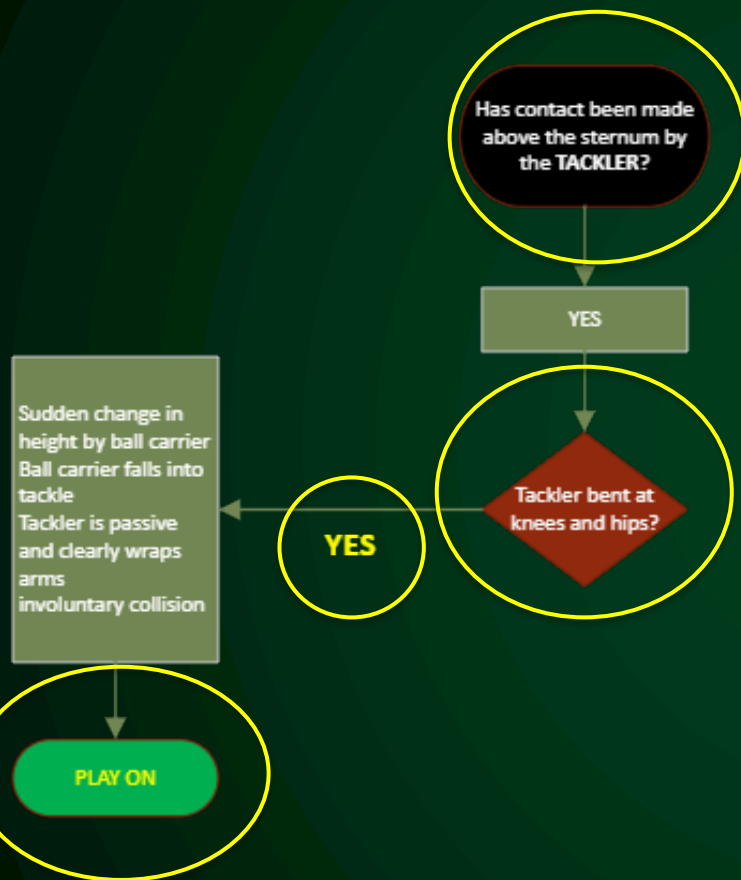
T1



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- **Play on**



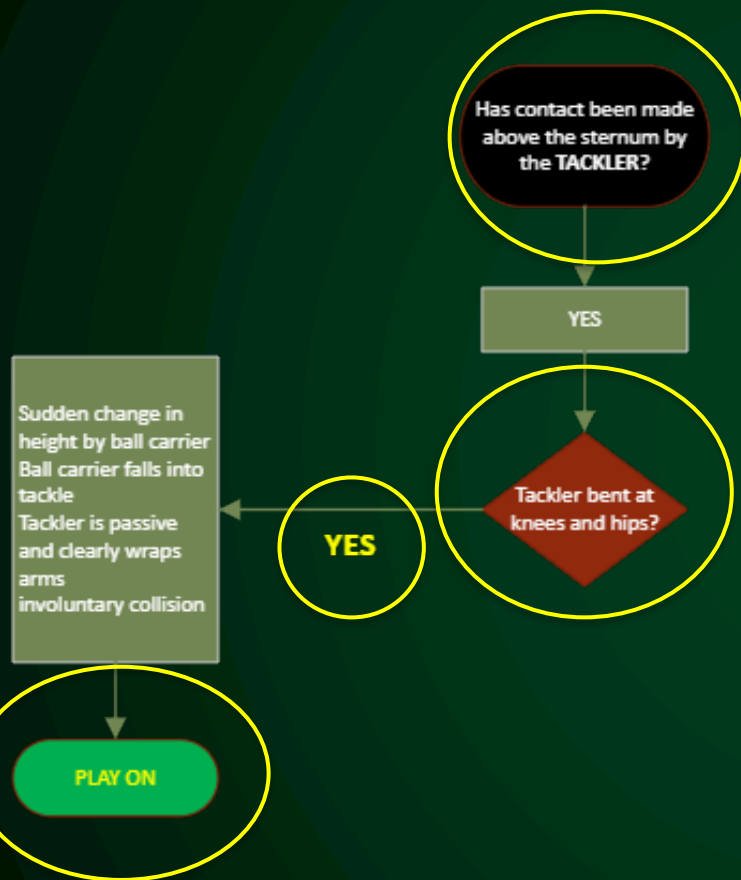
S Rugby LIVE



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



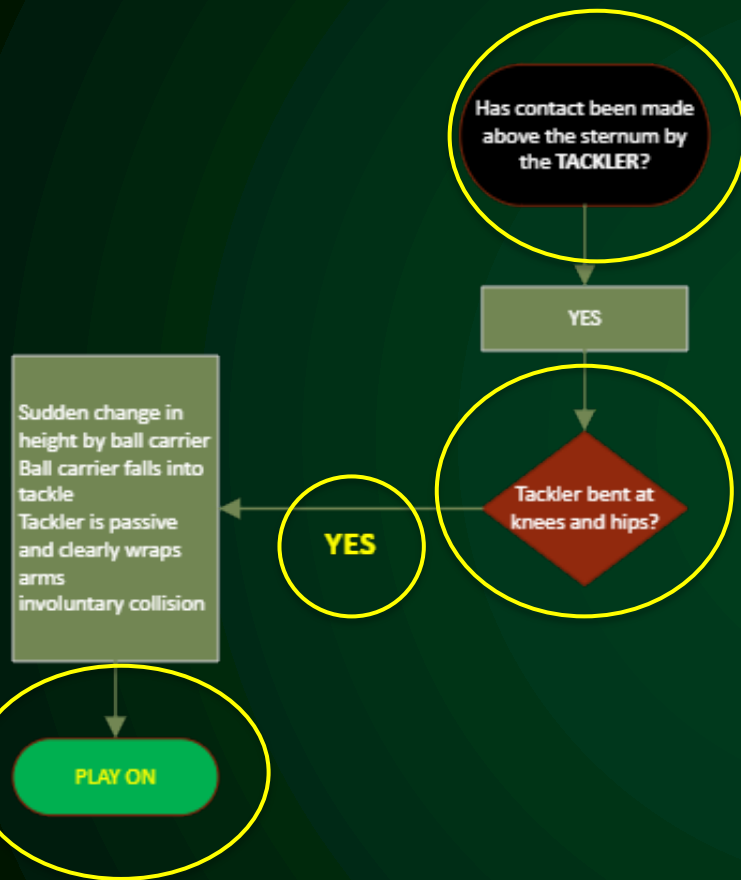
- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- Play on



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



- Tackler bent at knees and hips
- Late dip by ball carrier, but no head contact
- **Play on**



SECTION 4

Examples where we will expect a
penalty

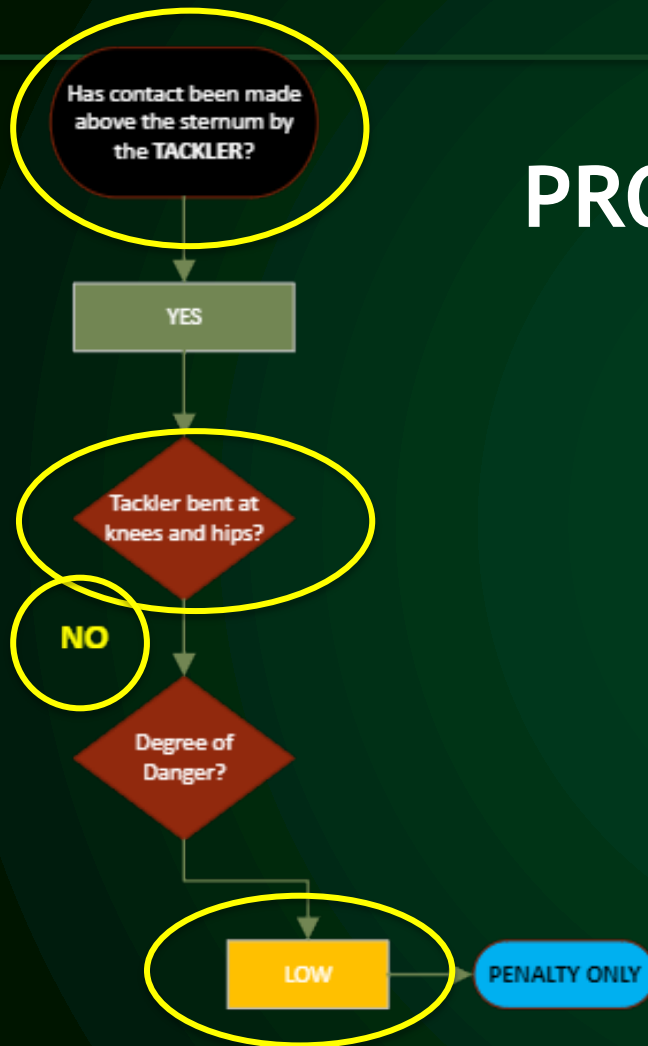


22 / 3		POINTS FROM VISITS TO OPPONENTS' 22				17 / 1				
		T3	SHARKS	22	50:44	17	WESTERN PROVINCE XV	T3		

TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **low** degree of danger are as follows:

- Tackler upright and passive. No head contact
- Tackler upright and passive and tackles ball carrier from behind above the sternum
- Penalty only



BLUE BULLS

0

08:53

5

BORDER

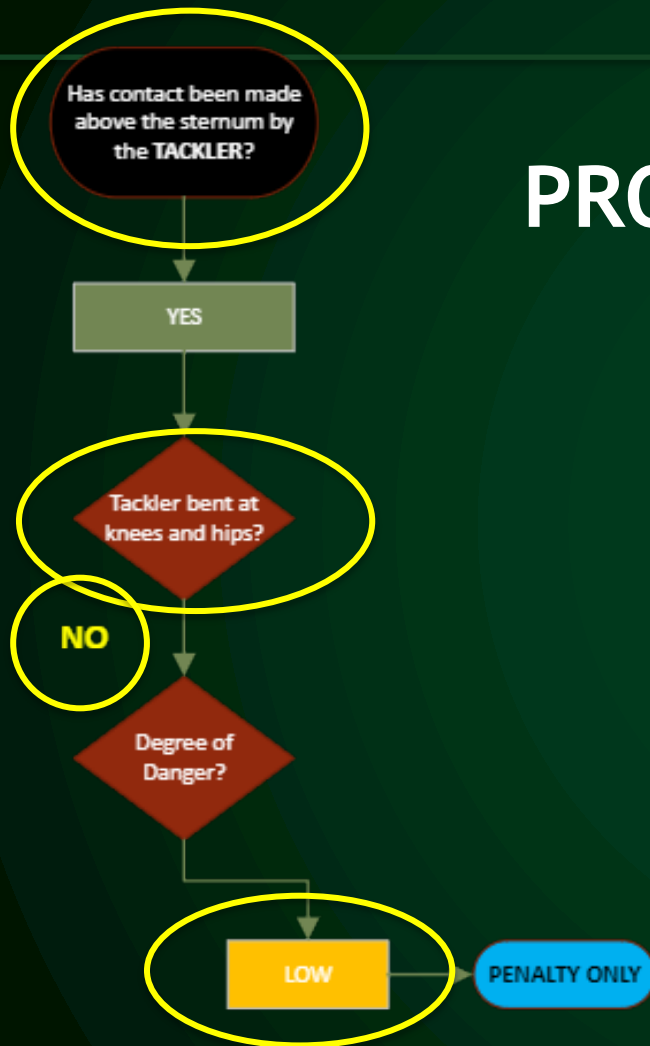
T1



TACKLER

- Tackle above the sternum?
- YES

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **low** degree of danger are as follows:

- Tackler upright and passive. No head contact
- Tackler upright and passive and tackles ball carrier from behind above the sternum
- Penalty only



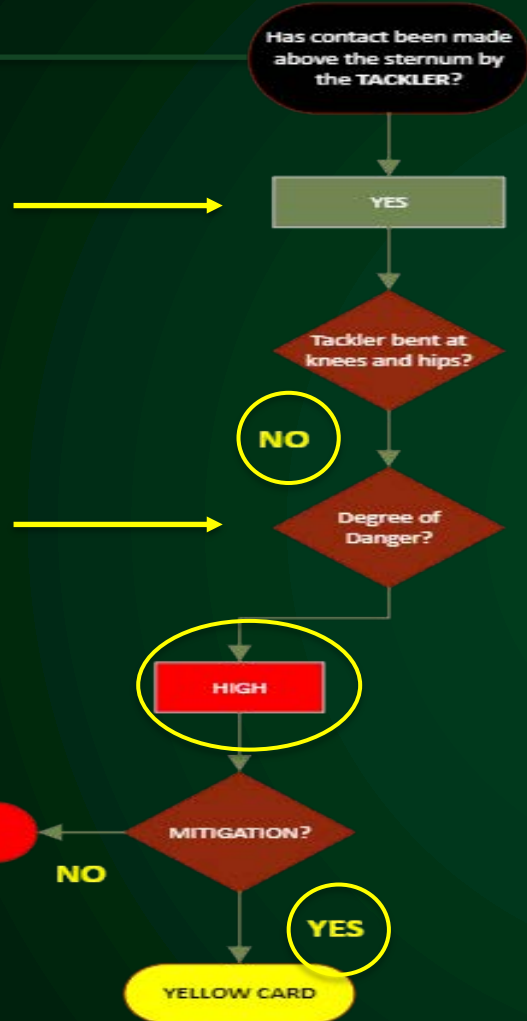
Rugby LIVE



STARTING POINT

1. Contact by ball carrier or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Tackle above the sternum

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **high** degree of danger are as follows:

- The tackler does not wrap and shoulder makes contact above sternum. Movement is dynamic
- The tackler initially is bent at knees and hips, but then drives upwards and makes contact above the sternum. There is no clear wrap with the arms
- Stiff arm tackle above the sternum
- Shoulder charge

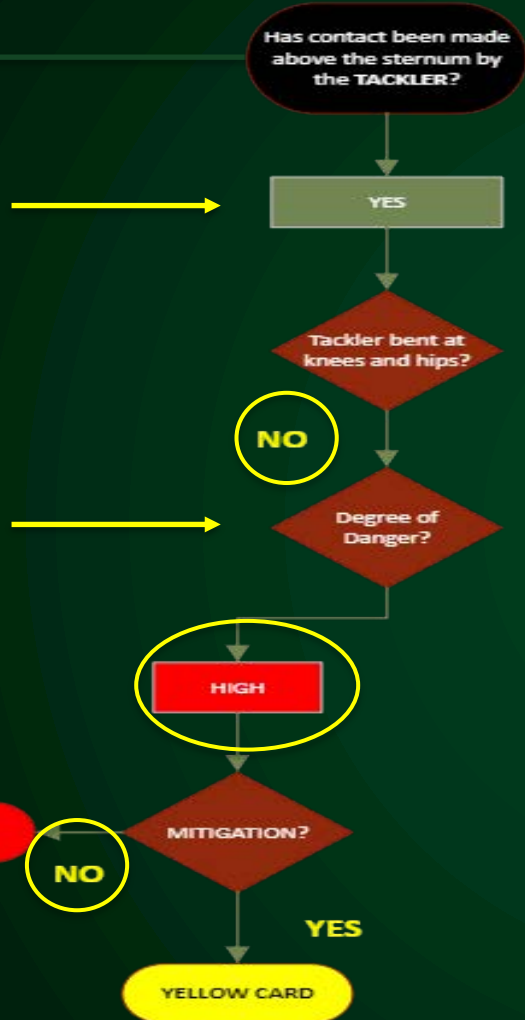
Examples of **mitigation**

- A sudden change in height by the ball carrier
- A sudden change in direction by the ball carrier
- Tackler's view is obstructed

Outcome: Penalty and YC



PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **high** degree of danger are as follows:

- The tackler does not wrap and shoulder makes contact above sternum. Movement is dynamic
- The tackler initially is bent at knees and hips, but then drives upwards and makes contact above the sternum. There is no clear wrap with the arms
- Stiff arm tackle above the sternum
- **Shoulder charge**
- **Head contact is made**

Examples of **mitigation**

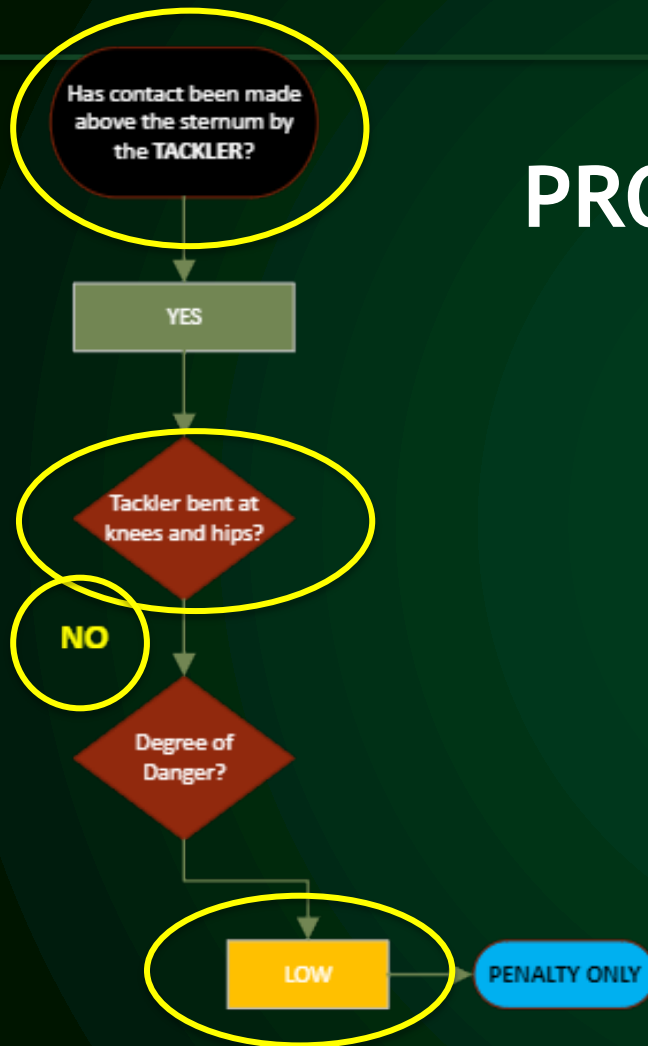
- A sudden change in height by the ball carrier
- A sudden change in direction by the ball carrier
- Tackler's view is obstructed

Outcome: Penalty and RC

STARTING POINT

1. Contact by ball carrier or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Tackle above the sternum

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **low** degree of danger are as follows:

- Tackler upright and passive. No head contact
- Tackler upright and passive and tackles ball carrier from behind above the sternum
- Penalty only

Shimlas
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UFS-SHIMLAS

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UCT IKEYS

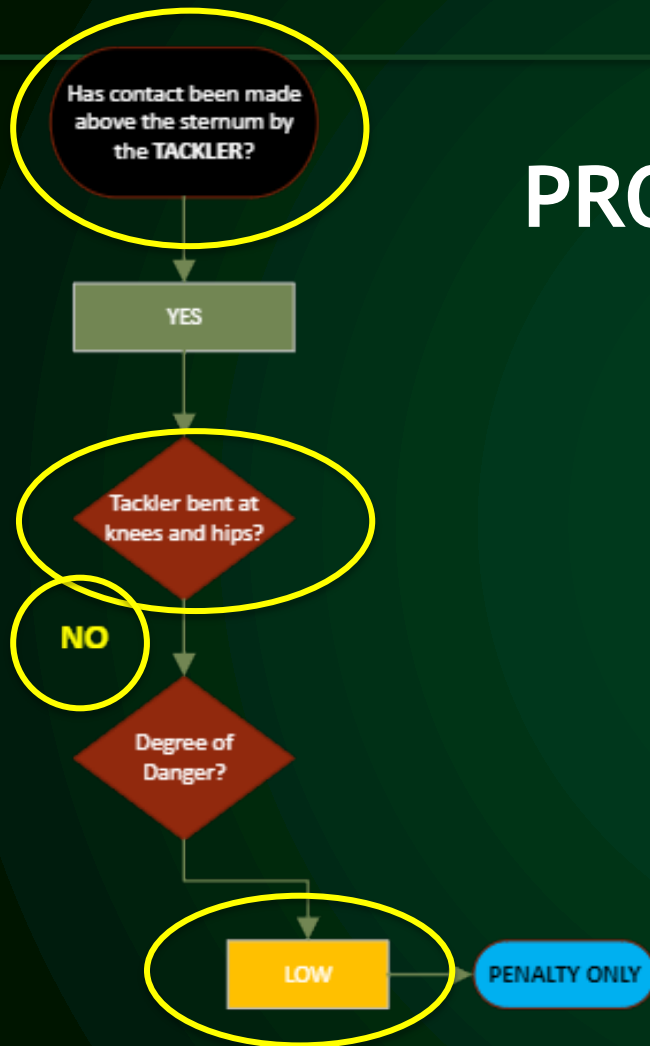
T2



STARTING POINT

1. Contact by ball carrier or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Tackle above the sternum

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **low** degree of danger are as follows:

- Tackler upright and passive. No head contact
- Tackler upright and passive and tackles ball carrier from behind above the sternum
- Penalty only



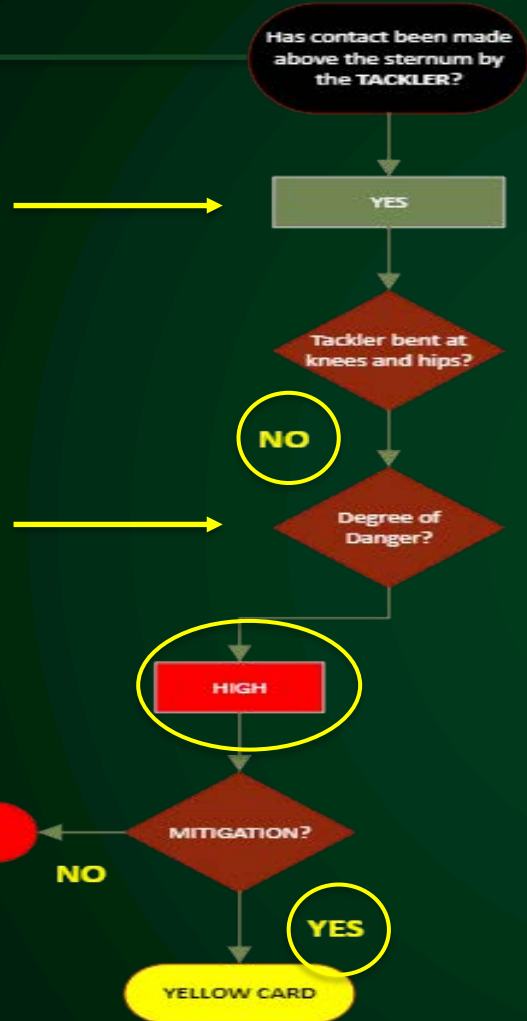
Rugby LIVE



STARTING POINT

1. Contact by ball carrier or
 2. Tackle above the sternum?
- Tackle above the sternum

PROCESS IN ACTION



Examples of **high** degree of danger are as follows:

- The tackler does not wrap and shoulder makes contact above sternum. Movement is dynamic
- The tackler initially is bent at knees and hips, but then drives upwards and makes contact above the sternum. There is no clear wrap with the arms
- Stiff arm tackle above the sternum
- Shoulder charge

Examples of **mitigation**

- A sudden change in height by the ball carrier
- A sudden change in direction by the ball carrier
- Tackler's view is obstructed

Outcome: Penalty and YC

