

The Laws of Football as Played at Rugby School 28th August 1845

Resolutions

That only in cases of extreme emergency, and only by the permission of the heads of the sides, shall any one be permitted to leave the close, after calling over, till the game be finished, and consequently, that all dressing take place before that time.

That the punishment for absenting oneself from a match, without any real and well-grounded reason, be left to the discretion of any praepostor.
That whenever a match is going to be played, the school shall be informed of it by the Head of school in such manner as he shall think fit, some time before dinner on the day in question.

That no unnecessary delay take place in the commencement of the matches, but as soon as calling over be finished, the game be commenced.
That the old custom, that no more than two matches take place in the same week be strictly adhered to, of which, one must always take place on Saturday, without some strong cause to the contrary.

That all fellows not following up be strictly prohibited from playing and game in goal, or otherwise conducting themselves in any way which shall be deemed prejudicial to the interests of their side.

That in consequence of the great abuse in the system of giving notes to excuse fagging, &c. and otherwise exempt fellows from attendance at the matches, no notes shall be received which are not signed by one of the Medical officers of the school, and countersigned by the Head of house, or by a master when the case specified is not illness.

That all fellows at Tutor during calling over, or otherwise absent, shall be obliged to attend as soon after as possible.
That the Head of school take care that these resolutions be generally known among the school, and as far as the case may be they shall apply equally to the big sides.

That Old Rugbaeans shall be allowed to play at matches of Football, not without the consent, however, of the two heads of the sides.

RULES

- i. FAIR CATCH, is a catch direct from the foot.
- ii. OFF SIDE, A player is *off his side* if the ball has touched one of his own side behind him, until the other side touch it.
- iii. FIRST OF HIS SIDE, is the player nearest the ball on his side.
- iv. A KNOCK ON, as distinguished from a *throw on*, consists in striking the ball on with the arm or hand.
- v. TRY AT GOAL. A ball touched between the goalposts may be brought up to either of them, but not between. The ball when *punted* must be within, when caught without the line of goal: the ball must be place-kicked and not dropped, even though it touch[ed] two hands, and it must go over the bar and between the posts without having touched the dress or person of any player. No goal may be kicked from touch.
- vi. KICK OFF FROM MIDDLE must be a place.
- vii. KICK OUT must not be from more than ten yards out of goal if a place-kick, not more then twenty-five yards, if a punt, drop, or knock on.
- viii. RUNNING IN is allowed to any player on his side, provided he does not take the ball off the ground, or take it through touch.
- ix. CHARGING is fair, in case of a place-kick, as soon as the ball has touched the ground; in case of a kick from a catch, as soon as the player's foot has left the ground, and not before.
- x. OFF SIDE. No player being off his side shall kick the ball in any case whatever.
- xi. No player being off his side shall hack, charge, run in, touch the ball in goal, or interrupt a catch.
- xii. A player when off his side having a fair catch is entitled to a fair *knock on*, and in no other case.
- xiii. A player being off his side shall not touch the ball on the ground, except in touch.
- xiv. A player being off his side cannot put *on his side* himself, or any other player, by knocking or throwing on the ball.
- xv. TOUCH. A player may not in any case run with the ball in or through touch.
- xvi. A player standing up to another may hold one arm only, but may hack him or knock the ball out of his hand if he attempts to kick it, or go beyond the line of touch.
- xvii. No agreement between two players to send the ball *straight out* shall be allowed on big side.
- xviii. A player having touched the ball straight for a tree, and touched the tree with it, may drop from either side if he can, but the opposite side may oblige him to go to his own side of the tree.
- xix. A player touching the ball off his side must *throw it straight out*.
- xx. All matches are drawn after five days, but after three if no goal has been kicked.
- xxi. Two big side balls must always be in the Close during a match or big-side.

- xxii. The discretion of sending into goals rests with the heads of sides or houses.
- xxiii. No football shall be played between the goals till the Sixth match.
- xxiv. Heads of sides, or two deputies appointed by them, are the sole arbiters of all disputes.
- xxv. No strangers, in any match, may have a place kick at goal
- xxvi. No hacking with the heel, or above the knee, is fair.
- xxvii. No player but the first on his side, may be hacked, except in a *scrummage*.
- xxviii. No player may wear projecting nails or iron plates on the heels or soles of his shoes or boots.
- xxix. No player may take the ball out of the Close.
- xxx. No player may stop the ball with anything but his own person.
- xxxi. Nobody may wear cap or jersey without leave from the head of his house.
- xxxii. At a big-side, the two players highest in the School shall toss up.
- xxxiii. The Island is all in goal.
- xxxiv. At little sides the goals shall be four paces wide, and in kicking a goal the ball must pass out of the reach of any player present.
- xxxv. Three Praepostors constitute a big-side.
- xxxvi. If a player take a punt when he is not entitled to it, the opposite side may take a punt or drop, without running if the ball has not touched two hands.
- xxxvii. No player may be held, unless he is himself holding the ball.