



LAWS

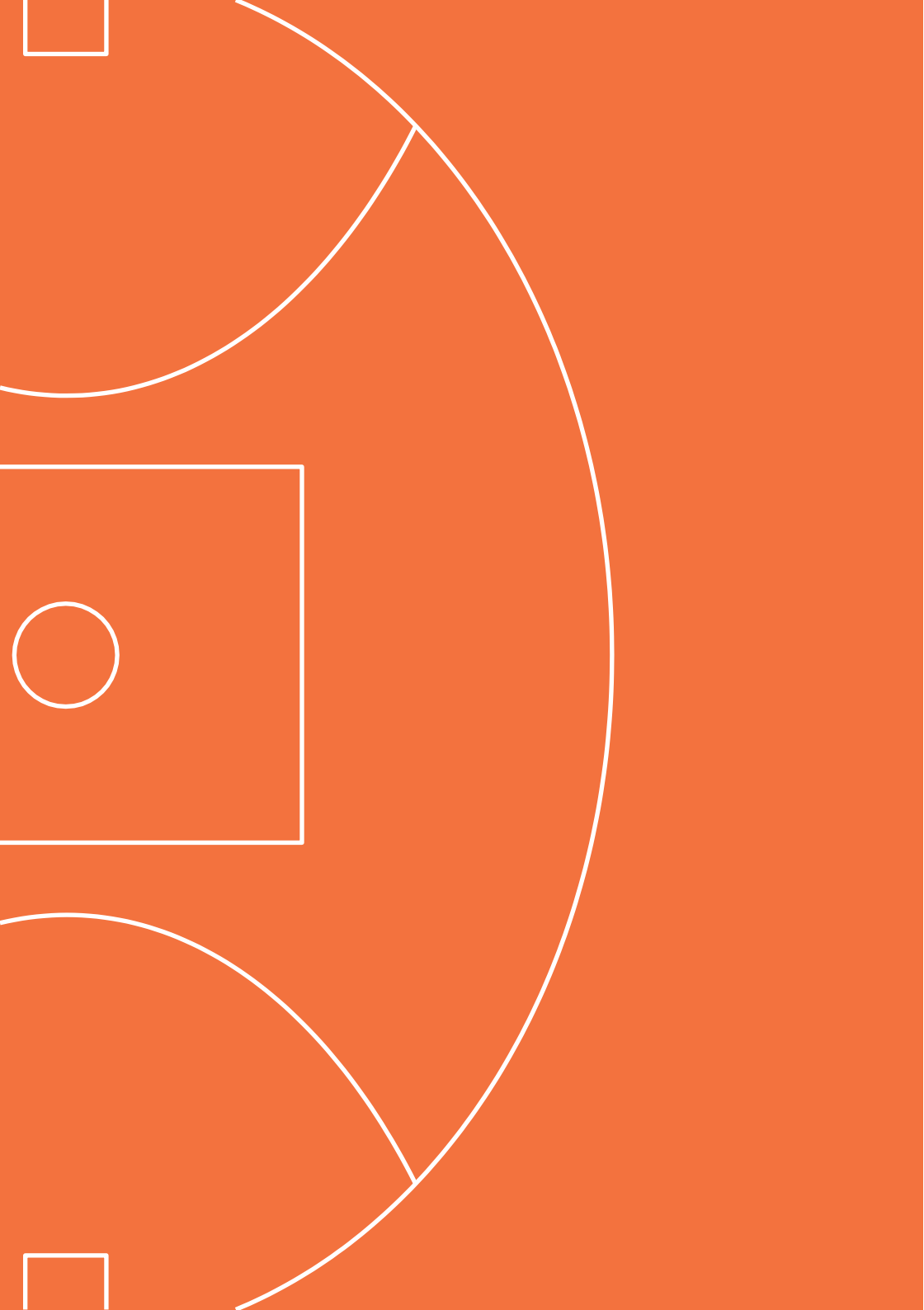
OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

AFL EUROPE EDITION

SHORTENED
VERSION

2021





LAWS **OF AUSTRALIAN** **FOOTBALL**

**SHORTENED
VERSION**



AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

GPO Box 1449, Melbourne, VIC, 3001



AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE EUROPE

Level 3, Australia Centre, Strand, London, WC2B 4LG

This shortened version of the Laws of the Game AFL Europe Edition includes the key laws for players, umpires and coaches to know going into a game or tournament. The Laws included in this document are listed exactly the same as they are in the Laws of the Game AFL Europe Edition. Where a Law is not listed in this shortened version, does not mean that it hasn't been adopted by AFL Europe. The AFL Europe Laws Committee believe the select Laws included in this document are those that are relevant to players, umpires and coaches who are specifically learning the game or attending an AFL Europe tournament for the first time. Please refer to the Laws of the Game AFL Europe Edition for a full list of Laws adopted by AFL Europe.

Additional and amended laws listed in **green**, removed laws listed as **red-strikethrough**.

18. FREE KICKS

18.1 INTRODUCTION

18.1.1 Spirit and Intention of Awarding Free Kicks

It is the spirit and intention of these Laws that a Free Kick shall be awarded to:

- (a) ensure that a Match is played in a fair manner and spirit of true sportsmanship;
- (b) where possible in a contact sport, protect Players from sustaining injury;
- (c) provide a Player, who makes obtaining possession of the football their sole objective, every opportunity to obtain possession; and
- (d) a Player who executes a Legal Tackle which results in an opponent failing to dispose of the football in accordance with these Laws.

18.3 PROHIBITED CONTACT

18.3.1 Spirit and Intention

A Player who makes the football their sole objective shall be provided every opportunity to do so.

18.3.2 Free Kicks - Prohibited Contact

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player when that Player makes any of the following Prohibited Contact with an opposition Player:

- (a) executes a tackle that is not legal (refer to the definition of Legal Tackle);
- (b) pushes or bumps an opposition Player in the back;
- (c) makes high contact to an opposition Player (including the top of the shoulders) with any part of their body;
- (d) holds an opposition Player who is not in possession of the football;
- (e) executes an illegal Shepherd;
- (f) Charges an opposition Player;
- (g) trips or attempts to trip an opposition Player, whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;

- (h) kicks or attempts to kick an opposition Player;
- (i) kicks or attempts to kick the football in a manner likely to cause injury;
- (j) strikes or attempts to strike an opposition Player, whether by hand, fist, arm, knee or head;
- (k) bumps or makes forceful contact to an opposition Player from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football.

18.3.3 Permitted Contact

A Player may use their hip, shoulder, chest, arms or open hands provided that the football is no more than five metres away from the Player and the Player does not make Prohibited Contact as per Law 18.3.2 above.

18.4 RUCK CONTESTS

18.4.1 Spirit and Intention

The Ruck whose sole objective is to contest the football shall be permitted to do so.

18.4.2 Number of Rucks

Each Team must have no more than one Ruck contesting any centre bounce, throw-up or boundary throw-in.

18.4.3 Free Kicks - Ruck Contests

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Ruck contest against a Player where the Player:

- (a) who is not a Ruck, contests a throw-up or boundary throw-in;
- (b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Ruck;
- (c) blocks an opposition Ruck;
- (d) makes contact with an opposition Ruck prior to the football leaving the field or boundary Umpire's hand;
- (e) who is a Ruck, enters their attacking half or steps outside the Centre Circle prior to the field Umpire bouncing or throwing up the football; or
- (f) hits the football Out of Bounds On the Full from a throw-up by a field Umpire or a throw-in by a boundary Umpire.

18.5 MARKING CONTESTS

18.5.1 Spirit and Intention

The Player whose sole objective is to contest or spoil a Mark shall be permitted to do so.

18.5.2 Free Kicks - Marking Contests

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Marking contest against a Player where the Player:

- (a) holds or blocks an opposition Player;
- (b) unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Player;
- (c) deliberately interferes with the arms of an opposition Player;
- (d) makes contact to an opposition Player from front-on and whose sole objective is not to contest or spoil a Mark; or
- (e) makes an unrealistic attempt to contest or spoil a Mark which interferes with an opposition Player.

18.5.3 Permitted Contact

Incidental contact in a Marking contest will be permitted if the Player's sole objective is to contest or spoil a Mark.

18.6 HOLDING THE BALL

18.6.1 Spirit and Intention

The Player who has Possession of the Football will be provided an opportunity to dispose of the football before rewarding an opponent for a Legal Tackle.

18.6.2 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Prior Opportunity

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if that Player does not Correctly Dispose of the football immediately when they are Legally Tackled.

18.6.3 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Incorrect Disposal

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has not had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if that Player elects to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Player does not elect to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when:

- (a) the Player genuinely attempts to Correctly Dispose of the football;
- (b) the Legal Tackle causes the football to be dislodged from the Player's possession.

18.6.4 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: No Genuine Attempt

Where a Player in Possession of the Football has not had Prior Opportunity, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick if the Player is able to, but does not make a genuine attempt to Correctly Dispose of the football within a reasonable time when Legally Tackled.

18.6.5 Free Kicks - Holding the Ball: Diving on Top of the Football

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who dives on top of or drags the football underneath their body and fails to immediately knock clear or Correctly Dispose of the football when Legally Tackled.

18.7 ROUGH CONDUCT

18.7.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be protected from unreasonable conduct from an opposition Player which is likely to cause injury.

18.7.2 Free Kicks - Rough Conduct

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player when that Player engages in rough conduct against an opposition Player which in the circumstances is unreasonable, which includes but is not limited to:

- (a) executing a dangerous tackle on an opposition Player;
- (b) making forceful contact below the knees of an opposition Player or executing a forceful action towards the lower leg of an opposition Player causing the opposition Player to take evasive action;
- (c) sliding knees or feet first into an opposition Player;
- (d) using boot studs in a manner likely to cause injury.

18.8 UMPIRES

18.8.1 Spirit and Intention

Umpires shall be protected from unreasonable contact and behaviour whilst performing their duties and their decisions should be respected and followed by Players and Officials.

18.8.2 Free Kicks - Umpires

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player or Official who:

- (a) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;
- (b) behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire;
- (c) intentionally, unreasonably or carelessly makes contact with an Umpire;
- (d) disputes a decision of an Umpire;
- (e) fails to follow the instruction of an Umpire; or
- (f) intentionally or carelessly engages in conduct which affects, interferes with or prevents an Umpire from performing their duties.

18.10 OUT OF BOUNDS

18.10.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play.

18.10.2 Free Kicks - Out of Bounds

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who:

- (a) Kicks the football Out of Bounds On the Full;
- (b) Kicks, Handballs or forces the football over the Boundary Line and does not demonstrate sufficient intent to keep the football in play; or
- (c) fails to immediately hand the football to the boundary Umpire or drop the football directly to the ground once the football is Out of Bounds.

18.10.3 Taking Free Kick

A Free Kick awarded under Law 18.10 shall be taken at the point where the football crossed the Boundary Line.

18.11 DELIBERATE RUSHED BEHINDS

18.11.1 Spirit and Intention

Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play.

18.11.2 Free Kicks - Deliberate Rushed Behinds

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player from the Defending Team who intentionally Kicks, Handballs or forces the football over the Attacking Team's Goal Line or Behind Line or onto one of the Attacking Team's Goal Posts, and the Player:

- (a) is greater than nine metres from the Goal Line or Behind Line;
- (b) is not under immediate physical pressure;
- (c) has had time and space to dispose of the football; or
- (d) from a Ruck contest, hits the football over the Goal Line or Behind Line on the full.

18.11.3 Taking Free Kick

A Free Kick awarded under Law 18.10.2 shall be taken from the middle of the Goal Line if the football crossed the Goal Line or hit the goal post, or at the point where the football crossed the Behind Line.

18.12 INTENTIONALLY SHAKING, CLIMBING OR OTHERWISE INTERFERING WITH A GOAL POST OR BEHIND POST

18.12.1 Free Kicks – Intentionally Shaking, Climbing or Otherwise Interfering with a Goal Post or Behind Post

Unless Law 18.12.3 applies, a field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player or Official who intentionally shakes, climbs or otherwise interferes with a goal or behind post (either before or after a Player has disposed of the football).

18.12.2 Taking Free Kick

The following shall apply to a Free Kick awarded under Law 18.12.1:

- (a) if a Free Kick is awarded against a Player or Official of the Defending Team and a Goal is not scored, the Player from the Attacking Team who was about to or who has Kicked for Goal shall take the Free Kick at the centre of the Goal Line;
- (b) if the Free Kick is awarded against a Player or Official of the Attacking Team, the Player on the Defending Team who was nearest to the position from where the football will be or has been Kicked shall take the Free Kick from that position. For the avoidance of doubt, any Goal or Behind which would have been recorded in favour of the Attacking Team but for the awarding of the Free Kick, shall not be recorded.

18.12.3 Goal Scored

If a Player or Official of the Defending Team contravenes Law 18.12.1 but a Goal is still scored, the field Umpire shall not award a Free Kick. In such cases, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' and a Goal shall be recorded.

18.13 OTHER

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player who:

- (a) Throws the football;
- (b) hands the football to another Player;
- (c) whilst in possession of the football, does not bounce or touch the football on the ground at least once every 15 metres, irrespective of whether such Player is running in a straight line or otherwise. For the purposes of this Law, a Player shall be deemed to be in possession of the football during the period when the Player kicks or handballs the football to himself and regains possession without the football touching the ground;
- (d) engages in Time Wasting;
- (e) makes unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured opposition Player;
- (f) intentionally lifts a Player from the same Team to interfere with play;
- (g) engages in misconduct;
- (h) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language; or
- (i) uses an obscene gesture.

18.14 OFFICIALS

A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against an Official who:

- (a) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language;
- (b) uses an obscene gesture;
- (c) interferes with the football, an opposition Player, an Umpire or general play; or
- (d) is located within the Fifty Metre Arc during the time when a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a Behind is scored, unless attending to an injured Player or making every endeavour to immediately vacate the area.

19. FIFTY METRE PENALTY

19.1 SPIRIT AND INTENTION

After a Mark or Free Kick has been awarded to a Player, a Fifty Metre Penalty (or Twenty Five Metre penalty depending on the format) will be awarded against the opposing Team which delays or impedes the play, or behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner.

19.2 WHEN IMPOSED

Where a field Umpire has awarded a Mark or Free Kick to a Player, or a Player is preparing to bring or bringing the football back into play after a Behind is scored, a Fifty Metre Penalty (or Twenty Five Metre penalty depending on the format) in favour of that Player will be awarded if the field Umpire is of the opinion that any Player or Official from the opposing Team:

- (a) has moved off The Mark;
- (b) when in the immediate contest, unreasonably holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;
- (c) when not in the immediate contest, holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;
- (d) enters or does not make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area, except when the Player is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent;
- (e) has not returned the football directly and on the full to the Player awarded the Mark or Free Kick;
- (f) engages in any conduct which delays or impedes the play; or
- (g) engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would ordinarily be awarded.

19.3 PREVENTING A PLAYER TAKING PART IN THE NEXT ACT OF PLAY

If a Player intentionally makes Prohibited Contact against an opposition Player who has disposed of the football for the purpose of preventing that Player from taking part in the next act of play, the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick and a Fifty Metre Penalty to that Player.

19.4 IMPOSING A FIFTY (OR TWENTY FIVE) METRE PENALTY

When the field Umpire imposes a Fifty (or Twenty Five) Metre Penalty, the following procedure shall apply:

- (a) ~~the field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to stop the clock used for the timing of the Match;~~
- (b) the field Umpire shall advance The Mark by 50 (or 25) metres in a direct line with the centre of the Goal Line of the Team awarded the Fifty Metre Penalty;
- (c) if the Player who received the Fifty (or Twenty Five) Metre Penalty is less than 50 (25) metres from the Goal Line, The Mark shall become the centre of the Goal Line;
- (d) once The Mark has been advanced, the field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to re-start the clock used for the timing of the Match;
- (e) if any Player from the opposing Team impedes or delays the Player with the football whilst The Mark is being advanced, a second Fifty (or Twenty-Five) Metre Penalty shall be imposed by the field Umpire after the initial 50 (25) metre advancement; and
- (f) ~~the Player who is awarded the Fifty Metre Penalty may elect to Play On at any stage whilst The Mark is being advanced.~~

19.5 LOCAL CONDITIONS

A Controlling Body may reduce the distance of a Fifty Metre Penalty to 25 metres for the Matches played in the competition conducted by the Controlling Body.

20. DISPOSAL AFTER MARK OR FREE KICK

20.1 STANDING THE MARK AND THE PROTECTED AREA

20.1.1 Standing The Mark

When a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick, one Player from the opposing Team may:

- (a) stand on The Mark; or
- (b) otherwise be directed by a field Umpire.

For the avoidance of doubt, all other Players from the opposing Team must be positioned behind The Mark or otherwise outside the Protected Area defined in Law 20.1.2.

20.1.2 Protected Area

- (a) The Protected Area after a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick is a corridor which extends from **40 5** metres either side of The Mark and five metres behind, to **40 5** metres either side of, and five metre arc behind, the Player with the football, as illustrated in Diagram 7.
- (b) No Player shall enter and remain in the Protected Area unless the field Umpire calls 'Play On' or the Player from the opposing Team is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent. Any Player caught in the Protected Area must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area.

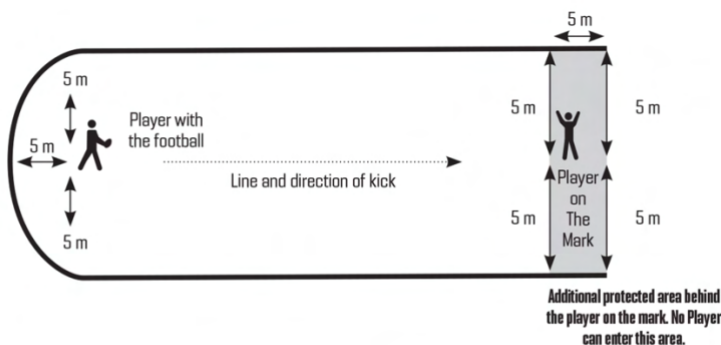


DIAGRAM 7

20.2 DISPOSAL FROM BEHIND THE MARK

- (a) A Player who has been awarded a Mark or Free Kick shall be directed by a field Umpire to dispose of the football within a reasonable time in a direct line from The Mark to the centre of their Goal Line.
- (b) If a Player does not dispose of the football within a reasonable time, or attempts to dispose of the football other than in a direct line over The Mark, the field Umpire shall call 'Play On' and the football shall immediately be in play.
- (c) This Law does not apply if a Player is disposing of the football from beyond the Goal Line, Behind Line or Boundary Line, in which case Law 20.3 or 20.4 shall apply.

20.3 DISPOSAL FROM OUT OF BOUNDS

20.3.1 Bringing the Football Back Into Play

- (a) A Player who is awarded a Mark or Free Kick and attempts to bring the football back into play or is called to play on from beyond the Boundary Line must bring the football back into play.
- (b) If a Player breaches Law 20.3.1(a), including being tackled, the football shall be deemed Out of Bounds and a boundary throw-in shall result from the location of The Mark or Free Kick.

20.3.2 Moving in One Direction

- (a) A Player who is awarded a Mark or Free Kick may bring the football back into play from outside the Playing Surface beyond the Boundary Line provided that the Player moves in one direction off the line of The Mark in the process of re-entering the Playing Surface.
- (b) If a Player breaches Law 20.3.2(a), the football shall be deemed Out of Bounds and a boundary throw-in shall result.

20.4 DISPOSAL BY A DEFENDING PLAYER – WITHIN NINE METRES

Where a Player from the Defending Team is awarded a Mark or Free Kick within the shaded area shown in Diagram 8.

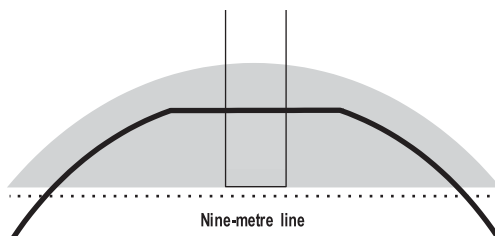


DIAGRAM 8

20.4.1 Setting the Mark

A field Umpire will set The Mark where the Nine Metre Line intersects the direct line between the location of the Mark or Free Kick and the centre of the Defending Team's Goal Line.

20.4.2 Crossing the Goal Line or Behind Line

- (a) In the event the Player from the Defending Team crosses the Goal Line or Behind Line and then elects or is called to play on:
 - (i) the Player must re-enter the Playing Surface by crossing the same Goal Line or Behind Line; and
 - (ii) the Player must move in one direction off the line of The Mark in the process of re-entering the Playing Surface.
- (b) If the Player breaches Law 20.4.2(a)(i) or (ii), including being tackled, a Behind shall be registered.
- (c) If the football hits either the goal or behind post after the Player disposes of the football, the Player shall be given the football again to recommence play.

20.4.3 Crossing the Boundary Line

- (a) In the event the Player from the Defending Team crosses the Boundary Line and elects to play on through the Goal Line or Behind Line, a boundary throw-in shall result adjacent to the behind post.
- (b) If the football hits either the goal or behind post after the defending Player disposes of the football, a boundary throw-in shall result adjacent to the behind post.

20.5 KICKING FOR A GOAL

20.5.1 Line of The Mark

Where a Player from the Attacking Team is Kicking for a Goal after being awarded a Mark or a Free Kick, the Kick shall be taken along a direct line from The Mark to the centre of the Attacking Team's Goal Line, except in the following cases:

- (a) where the Mark or Free Kick is awarded within or on a line of the Goal Square, the Kick shall be taken from directly in front of the Goal Line from a spot horizontally across from where the Mark or Free Kick was awarded;
- (b) where the Kick will occur after the siren, the Player shall be entitled to approach The Mark from any direction, as long as the location of the Kick does not improve the angle to the goal posts.

20.5.2 Moving Off The Mark While a Player is Kicking for a Goal

If the Player standing The Mark moves off The Mark whilst a Player is in the act of Kicking for a Goal, the following shall apply:

- (a) if a Goal is Kicked, the field Umpire shall signal 'All Clear' and a Goal shall be recorded; and
- (b) if a Goal is not Kicked, the Player may elect to take another Kick, in which case the Player shall also be awarded a Fifty (or Twenty-Five) Metre Penalty.

20.6 INJURY PREVENTING DISPOSAL

Where a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick and, in the opinion of the field Umpire, that Player is suffering from an injury which will prevent them from disposing of the football, the nearest Player from the same Team shall dispose of the football at the location of the Mark or Free Kick.

21. 'PLAY ON' AND THE ADVANTAGE RULE

21.1 'PLAY ON'

The football shall remain in play on each and every occasion when the field Umpire calls and signals 'Play On' or 'Touched Play On'.

21.2 THE ADVANTAGE RULE

A field Umpire will call and signal 'Advantage' where a Team offended against demonstrates an intent to continue with play within a reasonable time.

