

## LAW 14 – BALL ON THE GROUND - NO TACKLE

### DEFINITION

This situation occurs when the ball is available on the ground and a player goes to ground to gather the ball, except immediately after a scrum or a ruck.

It also occurs when a player is on the ground in possession of the ball and has not been tackled.

The game is to be played by players who are on their feet. A player must not make the ball unplayable by falling down. Unplayable means that the ball is not immediately available to either team so that play may continue.

A player who makes the ball unplayable, or who obstructs the opposing team by falling down, is negating the purpose and spirit of the game and must be penalised.

A player who is not tackled, but who goes to ground while holding the ball, or a player who goes to ground and gathers the ball, must act immediately.

### 14.1 PLAYER ON THE GROUND

The player must immediately do one of three things:

Get up with the ball, or  
Pass the ball, or  
Release the ball.

A player who passes or releases the ball must also get up or move away from it at once. Advantage is played only if it happens immediately.

**Penalty: Penalty Kick**

### 14.2 WHAT THE PLAYER MUST NOT DO

(a) Lying on or around the ball. A player must not lie on, over, or near the ball to prevent opponents getting possession of it.

**Penalty: Penalty Kick**

- (b) Falling over the player on the ground with the ball. A player must not intentionally fall on or over a player with the ball who is lying on the ground.  
**Penalty: Penalty Kick**
  
- (c) Falling over players lying on the ground near the ball. A player must not intentionally fall on or over players lying on the ground with the ball between them or near them.  
**Penalty: Penalty Kick**