



# SOUTH AFRICAN RUGBY UNION ("SARU")

## Ball Retrievers Guideline

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Prepared by: Eugene de Villiers  
 Checked by: Kobus Oelofse, Theuns Naude  
 Reviewed by: Deon van Blommestein, Eugene Daniels, Banks Yantolo, Rudlyn Barnes,  
 Charles Wessels, Coris Zietsman, Steven Roos & Gabriel Pappas  
 Approved by: SARU Council

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Scope .....	3
2. Purpose .....	3
3. Definitions .....	3
4. Criteria .....	3
5. Discipline Code .....	4
6. Dress Code .....	4
7. Logistical Requirements .....	5
8. Ball Retriever Operations .....	5
9. Compliance .....	7



## **1. Scope**

This guideline applies to all members of SARU, including the members of the South African Rugby Referee Association (SARRA), responsible for administrating the operations of the Ball Retrievers in SARU competitions and tournaments (Includes World Rugby and SANZAAR).

## **2. Purpose**

The need for a “Ball Retriever” service is to ensure that the official match balls are immediately available for the match to restart or for line-outs to commence without any delays, thus preventing any time wasting which could have an effect at the outcome of the match.

The individuals who want to fulfil this role needs to be educated and trained so that no teams achieve an unfair advantage from this service and that the match flows without any unnecessary stoppages, thus providing the best professional service.

## **3. Definitions**

*Ball Retriever Liaison Officer:* Reports to the Match Manager and oversees the operations, performances and logistics of the Ball Retrievers.

*Ball Retrievers:* Performs the ball retrieval service and is administrated either by the Local Union or by the Referee society.

*Referee Society:* Refers to the referee Society/Association affiliated to the local Rugby Union that coordinates this service.

*Union:* Refers to a Provincial Rugby Union that is a member of SARU.

## **4. Criteria**

This task can be fulfilled either by a male or by a female. However, they need to adhere to the following criteria:

4.1. Age from 10 years - His or her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday year will be deemed as the initial year of providing the service.

4.1.1. However due consideration should be taken when appointing Ball Retrievers to high profile matches which include Tests, Super Rugby, Currie Cup Premier and 1<sup>st</sup> Division. It’s suggested that experienced Ball Retrievers and from the age of 13 years provide the service to these high profile matches.



- 4.2. Undergo a Ball Retrievers course that includes a very basic Assistant Referee Course;
- 4.3. The parent or guardian signed a consent and indemnity form.

## 5. Discipline Code

The following discipline code needs to be adhered to by the Ball retrievers on and during match day:

- 5.1. Be Punctual: Punctuality is very important and therefore the individuals fulfilling the “Ball Retriever” services need to report to the appointed venue one (1) hour prior to the kick-off time;
- 5.2. Dress Accordingly: The individuals fulfilling the Ball Retriever services will adhere to the dress code as mentioned in paragraph 6;
- 5.3. Refrain from Unnecessary Interactions:
  - 5.3.1. Not engage in unnecessary discussions with other Ball Retrievers, match officials or with the spectators.
  - 5.3.2. Not play around in any form. This implies that the match balls may not be kicked or played around in any form prior to the kick-off starting time and during the match;
- 5.4. Use Acceptable Language: Use of foul language will not be allowed;
- 5.5. Not Use beverages or meals: Use of beverages and meals will be taken at a dedicated area catered for this.

## 6. Dress Code

The following dress code needs to be adhered:

- 6.1. When reporting to the venue, the individuals fulfilling the Ball Retriever service will arrive in suitable attire or as directed by the hosting Union or local Referee society responsible for this service;
- 6.2. The Ball Retriever Liaison Officer will provide the following match kit<sup>1</sup> according to the competition sponsorship requirements:
  - 6.2.1.1. Jacket / Tracksuit (pending weather condition)
  - 6.2.1.2. Jersey / “T” Shirt
  - 6.2.1.3. Shorts
  - 6.2.1.4. Socks(Above dress wear will be neat, clean and respectable)
- 6.3. The Ball Retriever footwear will either be Running Shoes (Tekkies) or Togs as directed by the hosting Union or local Referee society responsible for this service.

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<sup>1</sup> If kitted - This serves as a guideline when determining match day attire for the Ball Retrievers.



6.4. The Ball Retriever kit provided will be handed in immediately to the Ball Retriever Liaison Officer after the last match.

## **7. Logistical Requirements**

The Ball Retriever Liaison Officer:

7.1. Will coordinate the Ball Retrievers requirements with the Match Manager. This includes:

7.1.1. Accreditation.

7.1.2. Beverages and Meals – these are supplied as per fixture and only those Ball Retrievers appointed to these specific fixtures may help themselves to the beverages and meals provided at the dedicated area and time.

7.1.3. Kit for Ball Retrievers.

7.1.4. Match Balls – three (3) in total.

7.1.5. Towels for wiping off match balls in foul weather.

7.2. Will coordinate the management of the Ball Retriever Changing room Facility. The following is recommended:

7.2.1. Dedicated changing room adequate to accommodate nine (9) persons with locking facility.

7.2.2. Access to Toilet facilities.

*(No other persons are allowed to enter the Ball Retrievers changing room on match days)*

## **8. Ball Retriever Operations**

8.1. A minimum of six (6) Ball Retrievers are required to provide the services.

8.1.1. Pending the outlay of the playing enclosure in relation to the stadium structure, a maximum of eight (8) Ball Retrievers may be required to provide the services.

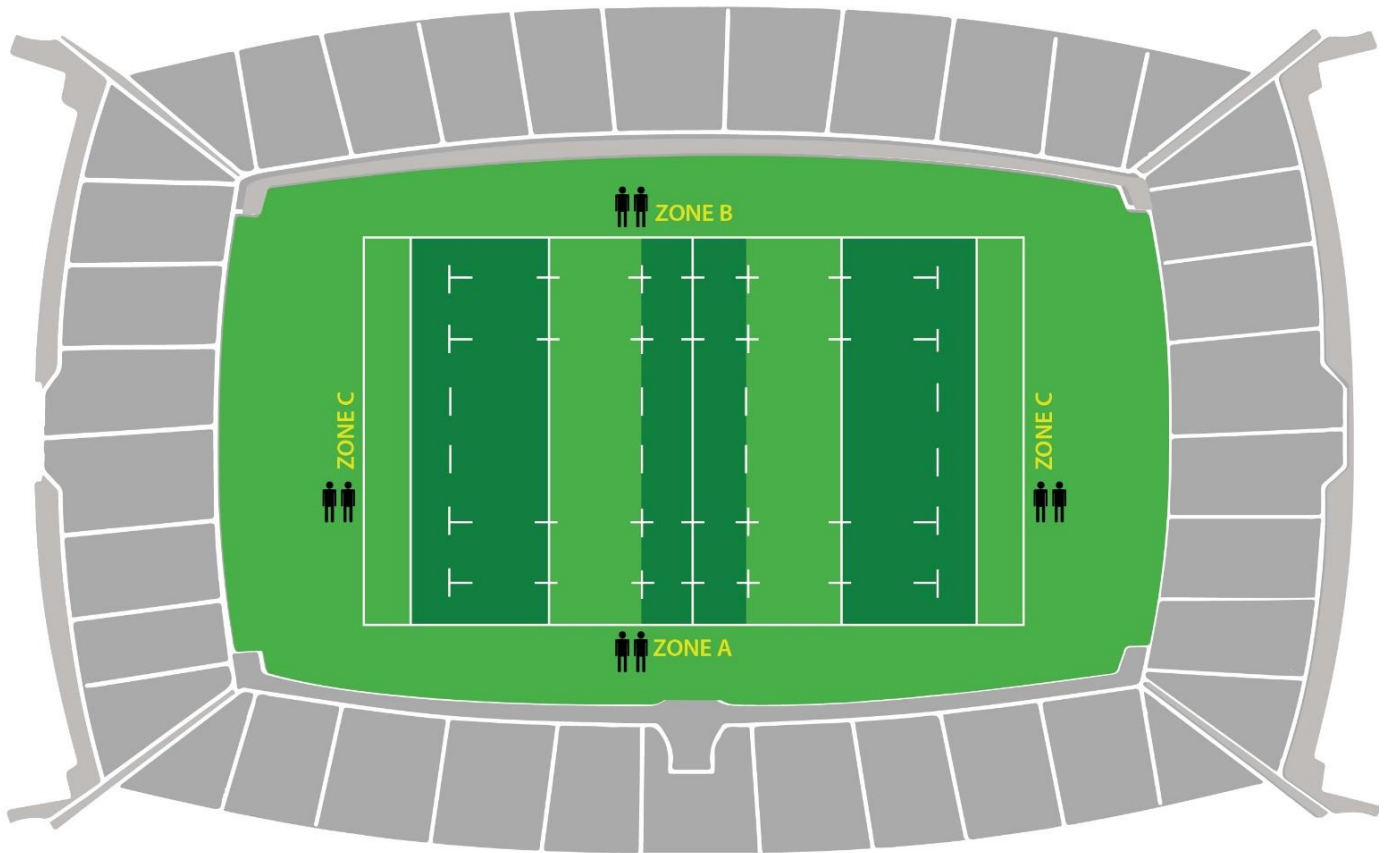
8.1.2. To simplify the operations, the field is marked into three Zones serviced by Ball Retrievers as follows:

8.1.2.1. Zone A – Main Grand Stand (2 Ball Retrievers)

8.1.2.2. Zone B – Opposite Stand (2 Ball Retrievers)

8.1.2.3. Zone C – In Goal Stand (1 or 2 Ball Retrievers)

8.1.3. The following positions are taken within the playing enclosure:



**(Should six (6) Ball Retrievers be used – only one (1) Ball Retriever is required in ZONE C)**

8.2. The ball placement is as follows:

8.2.1. One at Zone A – Main Grand Stand

8.2.2. One at Zone B – Opposite Stand

8.2.3. One in the middle of the field with the following exceptions:

8.2.3.1. A team mascot usually runs with the home team onto the field with the kick-off ball.

Should there be no team mascot the Ball Retriever will place a ball on the middle mark before the start of the First half.

8.2.3.2. However, in the presence of foul weather or heavy dew (evening matches), the ball must not be placed on the middle of the field. The ball will be given to the team kicking off prior to them running onto the field.



- 8.2.3.3. In the following events the Ball Retriever from Zone A will place a ball on the middle mark:
- 8.2.3.3.1. Before the start of the Second Half.
  - 8.2.3.3.2. After a successful goal kick is completed.
  - 8.2.3.3.3. After a successful penalty goal is completed.
  - 8.2.3.3.4. After a successful drop kick is completed
- 8.3. The Ball Retrievers rotate among each other to collect the ball kicked beyond the playing enclosure or playing area.
- 8.4. Towels to be used in foul weather to assist in providing a dry ball.
- 8.5. When the ball is kicked into touch from general play or from a free kick, the Ball Retrievers may not under any circumstances touch the ball until it's out of play.
- Key: observe the players running towards the ball or who are in close proximity to play it quickly.
- 8.5.1. The ball is out of play when:
- 8.5.1.1. The ball has gone outside the playing area and remains there.
  - 8.5.1.2. The referee has blown the whistle to indicate a stoppage in play.
- 8.6. When the ball is being kicked into touch from a penalty kick, the Ball Retriever anticipates where the ball will land to retrieve it as quickly as possible.
- 8.6.1. The second Ball Retriever stands ready to place the spare ball or hand the spare ball over to the hookers where the Line-out will commence.
- 8.7. When an attempted Penalty or drop goal takes place, the ball must not be touched until the ball is out of play.
- 8.7.1. Should the attempted Penalty or drop goal be successful the ball may be retrieved.
  - 8.7.2. One of the Ball Retrievers in Zone A or B move to the corner flag to retrieve the ball from Zone C to ensure that a ball is always available along the touch-line at all times.
- 8.8. When a conversion goal is attempted, the ball may be retrieved.
- 8.9. The Ball Retrievers must ensure, where practically possible, that they do not move in front of the video and photographic cameras (including not stepping on video cables), technical zones and in front of spectators.
- 8.10. The Ball Retrievers assist by ensuring all the balls provided for the match are retrieved at Half Time and at the conclusion of the match.

## **9. Compliance**

All members of "SARU" and "SARRA" shall ensure compliance to the implementation and further development of the Ball Retrievers Guideline as prescribed. For further information or advice regarding this guideline, please contact the Referees Office.