

REGULATION 22. STANDARD RELATING TO THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL RUGBY TURF

22.1 Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation 22 the terms below shall have the following meanings assigned to them:

Artificial Rugby Turf means an artificial playing surface for training and playing the Game, which meets the requirements of the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification and Regulation 22.

Field Tests means testing of an installed artificial playing surface(s) by a Test Institute in accordance with the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification means the IRB standard relating to Artificial Rugby Turf which is available on the IRB website at www.irb.com.

IRB Artificial Turf Expert Group means the group appointed by the IRB to be responsible for the management of the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

IRB Preferred Turf Producer means any IRB accredited entity which is responsible for the manufacture, construction, installation and maintenance of Artificial Rugby Turf surfaces.

Laboratory Tests means tests conducted on sample(s) of artificial playing surfaces by a Test Institute in accordance with the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

Manufacturer means a manufacturer of artificial playing surfaces intended for use in rugby.

Test Institute means an entity approved by the IRB to provide Laboratory Tests.

22.2 Introduction

Technology in the area of artificial playing surfaces has improved over time and artificial playing surfaces are widely used including in rugby. The IRB has produced the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification to set a minimum standard for artificial playing surfaces which may be used in rugby. The IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification stipulates the testing and approval procedures which Manufacturers and other entities involved in the installation of artificial playing surfaces must comply with in order for their products to be approved for use in rugby. The Game may not be played on any artificial surface which does not meet the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification, the requirements of Regulation 22 and Law 1 of the Laws of the Game. The IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification will be amended over time as technology and research evolves in the area of artificial playing surfaces.

22.3 Testing Protocol

The suitability of an artificial playing surface for rugby depends on the surface layer, the preparation of the sub-base and the composition of the existing sub-soil. Therefore, testing of the surface will necessarily involve Laboratory Tests and Field Tests. A surface can only be certified as meeting the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification upon the successful completion of both the Laboratory Tests and Field Tests. Accordingly, only installed Artificial Rugby Turf surfaces which have been tested and proved to meet the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification will be permitted for use in rugby.

Step 1	Manufacturer and/or IRB Preferred Turf Producer submit product sample to Test Institute
Step 2	Product sample subjected to the Laboratory Tests - if it passes it moves to step 3
Step 3	A surface comprising the material of the product sample which satisfied the Laboratory Tests is installed
Step 4	The installed surface undergoes the Field Tests
Step 5	If the surface passes the Field Tests it is certified as meeting the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification by the Union

22.4 IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification Tests

22.4.1 Laboratory Tests

Manufacturers and/or IRB Preferred Turf Producers must submit an artificial playing surface sample of approximately 2.0 metres x 2.0 metres of each product type/model proposed for classification as an Artificial Rugby Turf to a Test Institute. Successful completion of the Laboratory Test phase will enable progression to Field Tests.

22.4.2 Field Tests

- (a) Field Tests are carried out upon the artificial playing surface once it has successfully completed the Laboratory Tests and has been installed.
- (b) The date set for the Field Tests will take into account that artificial playing surfaces often require some time to settle following installation. Field Tests will ordinarily be conducted by the Test Institute within three months of installation of the artificial playing surface.
- (c) Taking into consideration that the Laboratory Tests may take several weeks and that there will be a gestation period before the Field Tests may occur, the final approval of an artificial playing surface may take up to six months (if no re-testing is required).

22.4.3 Test Evaluations

There are three basic categories of test which determine the suitability of an artificial playing surface for rugby. These may be broadly identified as:

1. The reaction of a ball to the artificial playing surface (Ball/Surface Interaction)
2. The reaction of a Player to the artificial playing surface (Player/Surface Interaction)
3. The resistance of the artificial playing surface to wear and tear, and the environment (Durability)

The IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification sets out that the testing process as a minimum will include:

Laboratory Tests

- (i) Identification
- (ii) Durability
- (iii) Climatic Resistance
- (iv) Player/Surface Interaction
- (v) Ball/Surface Interaction

Field Tests

- (i) Construction (Slope, Evenness, Base Permeability)
- (ii) Player/Surface Interaction
- (iii) Ball/Surface Interaction
- (iv) Identification

22.5 Test Procedures

The test procedures and methods are outlined in the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification and may vary from time to time as determined by the IRB Artificial Surfaces Expert Group. The IRB Artificial Surfaces Expert Group is appointed by the IRB to monitor developments in technology with respect to Artificial Rugby Turf and amend the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification as appropriate.

22.6 Inherent Dangers

Rugby is a contact sport and there are inherent dangers in playing the Game on any surface including Artificial Rugby Turf.

22.7 Modifications

Any minor modifications in the profile or composition of an artificial playing surface which has passed the Laboratory Tests must be submitted to a Test Institute together with relevant evidence that the surface continues to satisfy the requirements of the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification. Any significant change will require a complete re-evaluation of the surface by a Test Institute.

22.8 Maintenance

The party acquiring and/or responsible for the maintenance and/or management of the Artificial Rugby Turf surface must demonstrate to the Test Institute on a periodic basis as required by the Union and/or the IRB, that it is maintaining the Artificial Rugby Turf surface such that it continues to meet the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification, the requirements of Regulation 22 and Law 1.1 of the Laws of the Game.

22.9 Continued Testing

Each Artificial Rugby Turf surface will be re-tested by a Test Institute every two years during its lifetime to ensure that through an appropriate maintenance regime it continues to meet the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification, the requirements of Regulation 22 and Law 1.1 of the Laws of the Game.

22.10 Contact

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APPENDIX 1. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTALLATION AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL RUGBY TURF SURFACES

Rugby Bodies, Clubs, organisations or other entities seeking to install an Artificial Rugby Turf surface must adhere to the following conditions in addition to the testing and approval regime established by Regulation 22 and the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification:

1. Permission to install or use an artificial playing surface must be sought in writing in advance of installation or the first use from the Union in whose territory the surface is intended to be installed or used. The Union must ascertain:
 - (a) in the case of a request for installation, that the Union has received a report of the Test Institute confirming that the artificial playing surface has passed the Laboratory Tests; or
 - (b) in the case of a request for use, that the Union has received a report of the Test Institute that the artificial playing surface has passed the Field Tests and has been certified in accordance with the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

Where the artificial playing surface has met the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification, the requirements of Regulation 22 and Law 1.1 of the Laws of the Game, the Union shall grant such permission. Where a Union is the party seeking to install or use an artificial playing surface then permission shall be sought from the IRB.

2. The permission of the Union pursuant to Section 1 above shall be granted for a period of two years, following which the Artificial Rugby Turf surface shall be re-tested by a Test Institute. Where the Artificial Rugby Turf surface continues to meet the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification, the requirements of Regulation 22 and Law 1.1 of the Laws of the Game, the Union shall grant permission for use of the surface for a further period of two years. The Artificial Rugby Turf surface shall then be re-tested by a Test Institute every two years of its lifetime and Unions shall grant permission for use of the surface for further periods of two years accordingly.
3. This permission does not constitute and/or imply an endorsement by the granting Union or the IRB of the artificial playing surface(s) concerned.
4. During the period for which permission is granted, the Artificial Rugby Turf surface may be used for the playing of the Game including International Matches.



5. The IRB Preferred Turf Producer and/or entity contracted to install the artificial playing surface shall be responsible for the supply of equipment and training in relation to maintenance of the artificial playing surface. The IRB Preferred Turf Producer and/or entity contracted to install/maintain the artificial playing surface shall indemnify and hold harmless the IRB and its associated companies and the Union, and its and their officers, employees and agents from and against all demands, claims, legal actions, damages, costs (including without limitation, legal costs and the fees of any expert witness(es) incurred in connection with any action(s) or proceeding(s)), loss, interest, or expenses in connection with any injury sustained by a Player as a result of the surface and/or any failure to comply with the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification and/or any other act or omission by or on behalf of the IRB Preferred Turf Producer and/or Manufacturer and/or installer of the artificial playing surface and/or the entity responsible for maintenance of the artificial playing surface (as the case may be).
6. The IRB Preferred Turf Producer and/or entity contracted to install/maintain the Artificial Rugby Turf surface shall have in place and shall maintain public liability insurance cover with a reputable insurer to meet any claim that may arise in the sum of £5 million sterling save where a particular Union shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the IRB that its national government has in place a comprehensive, no-fault, government-funded public liability scheme which covers, without limitation, any and all treatment and compensation arising from any injury occasioned through participation in rugby Matches.
7. The Union in whose territory the Artificial Rugby Turf surface is to be used should ensure that all participants playing on the Artificial Rugby Turf surface understand and appreciate that there are inherent dangers in participating in the sport on any surface including Artificial Rugby Turf.
8. The Union shall log injuries sustained by Players participating on the Artificial Rugby Turf surface.
9. The IRB may request sample injury surveys and such further and supplemental information as it requires from Unions to monitor the ongoing safety of Artificial Rugby Turf. Unions requested to undertake such surveys shall not unreasonably withhold permission and will make best endeavours to facilitate the surveys and requests for information. In response to such requests Unions shall use the form attached (Appendix 2) modified as appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Union concerned to obtain the requisite consents, in accordance with local law, of Players, coaches and medical personnel, as appropriate, for the collection of personal information and provision of such information to the relevant Union, the IRB, its associated companies and any other entity designated



by the IRB for use in connection with Regulation 22 and the IRB Artificial Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

10. Manufacturers shall not in any way seek or promote any association with the IRB. IRB Preferred Turf Producers shall only be allowed to associate with the IRB to the extent granted in their agreement with the IRB.
11. The IRB shall be entitled to impose such further conditions as it considers appropriate in the best interests of Players and the Game.



APPENDIX 2. ARTIFICIAL RUGBY TURF INJURY INFORMATION FORM

Match: _____ versus _____

or

Training: Yes No Venue: _____

Date/KO Time: _____ Referee: _____

Conditions: _____

Type of Surface/Manufacturer/IRB Preferred Turf Producer: _____

Player Name: _____ Position: _____

Nature and Cause of Injury: _____

Attention Required: _____

Period of Time Player Unable to Play Rugby: _____

Attending Doctor Name: _____

Signed by Union Medical Officer: _____

(Print Name in Block Capitals)

Confirmation by Union official of consent of Player/coach/medical officer to personal information sharing:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

