

## RFUW: Age Grade Regulations and Law Variations

Variations for RFUW age grade rugby are detailed below. The variations are specifically for young women, and should be read in conjunction with the guidelines from the RFU regarding youth rugby and 'The Laws of the Game of Rugby Union' written by the IRB, in particular, IRB Variations **for all who play and all who manage players aged under 19 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.** (\* see footnote)

### 9.1 Please note the following:

- It is mandatory to wear a pre-formed gum shield for all players aged U18 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.
- Mismatches can be avoided by talking to the Coach in charge of the opposition before the game.
- No player should be asked to play outside her age group.
- **No player aged 17 and below should be permitted to play against any team in which there are adult players i.e those aged 19 years or over.**
- Clubs must exercise great care and close supervision over the playing of those who, although 18, are eligible to play in adult teams and ensure adequate preparation and training. They should ensure their duty of care by supervising a sensible competition programme for these players taking care that they are not overplayed. Liaison with the coach of the adult team to manage the player's competition programme would be advisable.

### 9.2 RFUW Special Dispensation:

**There will be NO dispensations allowed between age grades. The RFUW's age grades differ from the RFU's in that they cover three year age bands. Following consultation with the RFU/RFUW's insurers we have been informed that insurance cover will not be extended to those girls playing outside their specific age band. There will be no exceptions therefore to the age band regulations.**

### 9.3 U7 to U12 age grades (Continuum Rugby)

Playing regulations for these age grades are detailed in the RFU/RFUW's Rugby Continuum, which can be found on the RFU's web site in the Community Rugby/Refereeing Section. Boys and girls can play mixed rugby within the Continuum.

### 9.4 Girls U12's Rugby

The RFU and RFUW have worked together to provide a number of options for U12 girls in order to provide opportunities for the range of experience of female players at this level.

- U12 girls may continue to play U12's mixed rugby in the RFU continuum.
- U12 girls may apply for a dispensation to play down in the U11 age group of the RFU continuum. (Application to be made to the RFU under rule 6.2.3 of the Continuum.)
- Clubs can set up girls only U12 sides which can be formed of U12's and U11's girls and will play to the same laws and variations as U10's Mini rugby detailed in the RFU Continuum. This includes contact rugby with a maximum of 9 players. Contested scrums (3 a side) and lineouts are permitted where both coaches are satisfied that the players involved have been suitably prepared. This therefore provides the next steps from Tag and non-contact rugby being played in schools.
- Coaches at all times should bear in mind their duty of care in regard to player safety and appropriate introduction to the demands of the game.

Website link:

<http://www.community-rugby.com/communityrugby/index.cfm/Fuseaction/Home.Story/StoryTypeId/149/SectionId/590/StoryId/14098.cfm>

## **9.5 Girls Rugby U13 –U18 Age Groups**

**All matches should be played to the IRB's U19 variations with the additional RFU/W variations below**

### **Under 15 and U18 inclusive** **Squeeze ball – law 14 and 15**

No player involved in a match at any age level from under 18 downwards shall use in training or in a match the technique known or referred to as Squeeze ball.

Note: "Squeeze ball" is a technique where the ball carrier goes to ground, head forward (touching or close to the ground), irrespective of immediate contact with opponents, usually keeping parallel to the touchline, holding and protecting the ball close to the chest and when on ground, pushes the ball back between the legs.

Penalty: penalty kick

### **Rolling Substitutions – Law 3**

A player who has been substituted may replace any player, whether or not that player has been injured.

Players may be exchanged at any time during the match, when the ball is dead, and with the knowledge of the referee.

### **Temporary Suspension Sin Bin Protocol – Law 10**

As per the adult game the player will remain in the sin bin for ten minutes actual playing time. The player will stand out of the field of play, in the vicinity of the half way line, at a place readily identifiable to the referee. Then player must be under the control of the teachers and coaches. The player should not be isolated and should be given warm clothing to wear whilst serving the temporary suspension.

#### **9.5.1 Girls (U15 Rugby)**

This age band takes into account players aged 12, 13 and 14 on 1<sup>st</sup> September. The RFUW's U15 matches should be played to the RFU U14 variations but with the following difference: **U15's girls matches will be 13 a side.**

#### **13 aside - 6 in scrum & 7 backs**

The game is played between teams having a maximum of thirteen players, six of whom will be forwards and form the scrum, with the remaining players forming the back line. Each side can have a number of substitutes agreed by mutual consent. Substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions may only take place when the ball is 'dead' or at half time and always with the referee's knowledge.

The scrum will be made up of six players from each team - the front row (a row of three players, i.e. a prop on either side of the hooker, two locks forming the second row and a back-row player who shall bind between the two locks (3-2-1 formation). The locks must bind to each other using the inside arm, with the outside arm around the hips (not between the legs) of the front row (props). The back row player must have their head between the hips of the second row bound with the arms around the hips (not between the legs) of the second row (locks). No player may unbind to pick up the ball at the rear of the scrum but must remain bound onto the scrum until the ball is carried or passed out by the scrum half.

**Penalty:** Penalty kick

**Safety note:**

***Coaches must ensure that only players trained in the front row participate in contested scrums.***

## **RFU U14 Variations**

### **Time – Law 5**

Playing time not to exceed 25 minute each way with a size 4 ball. After 50 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in case of a drawn match on any occasion.

Festival and Tournaments: 80 minutes maximum per player in one day.

### **Line-out – Law 19**

Lifting/supporting is prohibited in these age groups, i.e. a player may not bind to a jumper until that player has returned to the ground.

### **Scrum – Law 20**

The scrum half not throwing the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrum or an opponent has placed their hands on the ball. In the event of a strike against the head, the scrum-half who has thrown the ball into the scrum is similarly restricted in not following the ball/.

## **9.5.2 Girls Rugby (U18)**

This age band takes into account players aged 15, 16 or 17 on September 1st. The RFUW's U18 matches should be played to the IRB U19 variations.

### **18 year old players**

From their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday players may elect to register as a senior player and may participate in senior training sessions and matches as well as U18 training sessions and matches. It is recommended that players do not play more than one match a week to avoid injury and player burnout. It is expected that coaches involved should pro-actively communicate on the development of an appropriate competition plan for 18 year old players to ensure their duty of care responsibilities are fulfilled.

***At all times the welfare and needs of the player should be at the centre of any selection decision.***

A player may attend trials for senior and junior regionals but cannot play for more than one age group (U15's, U18's or Seniors) in the regional competition.

If a player after their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday plays senior rugby and plays in a Senior Cup competition they are not permitted to then play in the U18 Cup competition and vice versa.

## **General – U19 Law Variations**

### **Law 3: Number of players - The Team**

If a team nominates 22 players, it must have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for Loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop.

If a team nominates more than 22 players it must have at least six who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for Loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. There must also be three players who can play in lock position (2<sup>nd</sup> Row)

A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player

### **Law 5: Playing Time**

Each half of an U19 match last 35 minutes playing time. Play in each match last no longer than 70 minutes. After a total of 70 minutes playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock out competition.

## **Law 20: Scrum**

In an 8 person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (The number 8) shoving on the two locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.

Exception: A team may have fewer than eight players in its scrum when either the team cannot field a complete team, or a player is sent off for Foul Play, or a player leaves the field because of injury.

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum.

### **If a team is incomplete, the scrum formation must be as follow :**

If a team is without one player, then both teams must use a 3-4 formation (i.e. No No8)

If a team is without two players, then both teams must use a 3-2-1 formation (i.e. No Flankers)

If a team is without three players, then both teams must use a 3- 2 formation (i.e. only front rows and locks)

When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front row positions and the two lock positions must have been suitably trained for these positions.

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

either they are not available, or a player in one of those five positions is injured or has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referees must order uncontested scrums.

In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting in the ball must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.

**Front rows coming together.** Each prop touches the opponents upper arm and then pause before the front rows meet. The sequence should be: crouch, touch, pause, engage.

**No wheeling.** A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped.

**Maximum 1.5 metres push.** A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents' goal line.

Penalty : Free Kick

**Ball must be released from scrum.** A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.

Penalty: Free Kick

## **9.6 Junior Match Day Forms**

Match day forms must be completed by both Managers (or their delegate) after every match a Junior side plays. Please ensure the both team names and the scores are entered in the appropriate boxes top of the sheet.

The Home team is responsible to ensure the match day form and red and yellow card form are completed and returned to the Competition Officer within 5 days of the fixture being played. If a team is uncooperative, the form must be completed as far as possible. The uncooperative team may be penalised.

Any member of the RFUW may challenge the legality or identity of any of the players playing/listed.

If a player is sent off, this information must be written on the red card form, and where possible, the referee report attached. Likewise if a player is yellow carded the form must be filled in.

Any club who fails to send in a Red and Yellow card form will find themselves liable to a mandatory RFUW fine and repeat offending can lead to a deduction in league points or removal from the Cup competitions.

Forms are readily available from the Competitions Officer and the RFUW headquarters. Not having a form is **not** an acceptable excuse for non-completion. In emergency an A4 Sheet of paper detailing the requirements is acceptable.