

OFFICIAL 2026



# Junior Rugby League Laws

6-12 years





# RUGBY LEAGUE PARTICIPATION - INTRODUCTION

What I love most about Rugby League is that it is much more than a game.

It is a place to express yourself, to have fun, stay healthy, make friends and be part of a community.

Rugby League played a big part in my life from a young age, providing me with an opportunity to connect with my local community that no other sport could.

That's the beautiful power of this great game. Teammates can become lifetime friends. Your family, just fans in amongst the crowd and your local club another pleasant extension of your family.

Central to my role as Chairman of the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) is ensuring as many people of all ages and abilities enjoy themselves playing rugby league. Whatever the program, format and team they are involved in.

As our game evolves, we must continue to improve and enhance our guidelines to ensure rugby league offers simple, safe formats for everyone to enjoy.

It is why the ARLC, together with the NRL and States, worked tirelessly to develop and establish a suite of modernised game modules across all age groups that focus on player safety, teamwork, and most importantly, fun.

We have also invested significantly into making the most efficient technology, training and coaching available to all rugby leagues participants, clubs and schools online, for free and all at the touch of a button.

The results have been pleasing to date, with female participation leading the charge, but we have much more work to do.

We will continue to invest in the research and resources that our game and community require and expect, just as we will continue to value everyone involved in our game, at all levels, equally.

Thank you for being playing your part already, and I trust you, like me, will continue to enjoy your rugby league, whichever way you like, for life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peter V'landys'.

**Peter V'landys AM**  
**Chairman, Australian Rugby League Commission**

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# PART ONE

## 6 & 7 YEARS GAME MODEL

UNDER 6



Tag Rugby  
League  
(6 Tags)



40x20m  
Field Size



6 Players  
Per Team



8 mins x 4  
Game Time



No Scrums



1 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(No Markers)



No Kicking  
or Conversions



Tap Restart  
on 5m Line



Chance Rule

## UNDER 7



6 Tags/  
Tackles



40x20m  
Field Size



6 Players  
Per Team



8 mins x 4  
Game Time



No Scrums



1 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(No Markers)



No Kicking  
or Conversions



Tap Restart  
on 5m Line



TackleReady  
Program

## NOTE

The Laws of the International Game of Rugby League shall apply in the 6 & 7 Years Game Model subject to the following modifications, where applicable.

## GENERAL

- (1) Classification of competitions are aligned with Development Competitions. Matches are not to be scored, no competition tables are to be recorded, finals series entered in to, or premierships awarded.
  - (a) Talent equalisation across teams where clubs have more than one (1) team in the competition,
  - (b) For leagues with a high number of teams:
    - (i) Similar ability teams/players against each other as often as possible, and
    - (ii) Teams divided in to 'pools' rather than 'divisions' noting revision of talent equalisation across teams is a necessity.
  - (c) Providing an equal number of games for all teams within the competition.

Classification of playing format is Rugby League Tag in Under 6. Prior to the completion of a tackle readiness program by teams participating in Under 7 competitions, Rugby League Tag is the format to be played. Following completion of the program, the tackle format can be adopted.

**NOTE:** It is recommended the program be delivered across a minimum of a 10-week period.

- (2) Classification of groups is by age. Age applies as on January 1 of each year. Players, in each age level of competition, must be of the same age group. Players are not to play "up an age" (to a maximum of one age group) or in higher age groups without parental approval. Where combined age competitions exist state governing bodies may apply playing criteria

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (3) Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is 6. When more than 6 players are in attendance at a match then all players MUST play in accordance with Law 6. Where possible, team numbers should not exceed 10, in order to allow maximum opportunity for all players to participate in game time.
- (4) Minimum number of players allowed on the field per team per match is 4. Games should commence with two teams of equal numbers on the playing field. If there is a discrepancy between team numbers that doesn't allow this in the first instance, to facilitate a game, it is permissible and recommended that the team with greater playing numbers provides players to the team with fewer players.

If recommended minimum playing numbers cannot be satisfied a game may commence at the discretion of the local league.

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

During a game, should the number of players on the field for a team fall below the stipulated minimum number, and the team has no further replacements that can be used the game may continue at the discretion of the local league.

- (5) All matches are to be played over four eight (8) minute quarters with a one (1) minute interval between quarters. This may be extended to 3 minutes for half time.
- (6) Each player is to play a MINIMUM OF TWO UNBROKEN QUARTERS of eight (8) minutes. [This is a MINIMUM playing time only and, should numbers allow, all present should be given a maximum amount of time possible on-field.]
- (7) A player may be temporarily replaced if injured - but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent (for the purpose of compliance with Law 6). The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play (to comply with Law 6).

**NOTE:** Temporary replacement of three (3) minutes is to count as part of the injured player's playing time. (Refer to Law 6 ). The injured player may return to the field later in the match if able to do so.

## FIELD/BALL

- (8) The field at ages 6 & 7 years measures 40 metres x 20 metres. A full description is in Appendices under "Size of Field/Field of Play".
- (9) A smaller ball (size 3) is used in the 6 & 7 years age groups.

## TAGS, TACKLES & PLAY COUNT

- (10) Each team shall use a maximum of 6 pairs of tags per game. If a player is substituted during the game, the player leaving the field shall hand the tags to the player entering the field.
- (11) Possession is retained for a period of six (6) plays unless a nullification of the count occurs in that time. The Referee will both signal and call out the number of plays with the "5th and last" being signaled by the raising of an arm vertically with five fingers fully extended. On the sixth (6th) play the Referee will blow the whistle and signal the change of possession in accordance with International Law. The count will commence after each set play or change of possession.

Zero occurs as per the International Laws of Rugby League.

**NOTE (1)** There is no "stripping" or stealing the ball in any contact situation at any time.

**NOTE (2)** For under 6 years, when a player knocks-on, runs into touch, or passes the ball forward to a teammate in the field of play, the Referee shall call "chance" (and then direct the ball to be played) and the number of the plays advanced by one, so that the team in possession retains possession, other than after the 5th (and last), at which time a handover will occur. Should a player lose possession forward and an opposing player gain possession, it should be play on, and zero. Should a player knock-on and the ball is gathered by an onside teammate, then the "Chance Rule" shall apply.

## TAGS, TACKLES & PLAY COUNT

**NOTE (3)** Any breaches in goal by the team in possession normally resulting in a drop out will result in the team in possession retaining it, the tackle count being advanced by one and a play-the-ball in line with the breach, 5 metres out from the goal line. Should the breach in goal by the team in possession occur on the last tackle, a change of possession will result with the non-offending team receiving possession 5 metres out from the goal line, in line with the breach and the game restarting with a play-the-ball.

- (12) A player in possession is tagged when:
- at least one of the tags is removed by an opposing player;
  - a tag is accidentally removed by the player in possession (or when the tag accidentally falls off the player).

**NOTE:** A defending player cannot make a "tag" unless both of their tags are attached.

- (13) The player in possession cannot:
- fend off defenders or protect the tag by using the arm or ball to fend.
  - jump through/at the defensive line to avoid being "tagged".
  - run directly at a defender and should be penalised if a collision occurs in this situation (instigator of contact to be penalized)
  - perform a 360 degree turn through/at the defensive line to avoid being tagged.
  - surrender prior to being tagged.
  - play-the-ball before being tagged.
  - remain on the ground waiting to be tagged if he/she has time to regain their feet and continue play (after dropping on a loose ball).

Clauses (a) – (d) will result in a penalty being awarded against the player in possession (unless otherwise stated).

If the Referee calls 'tagged' and a player simultaneously continues to run or offloads, as he/she has not heard the call, the Referee will stop play and send the player back to the play-the-ball.

Where a tag has been intentionally removed, after the ball has been passed, a penalty to the non-offending team shall be awarded (unless the Advantage Law applies). Yes/No Calls and deliberate grabbing of clothing will also result in a penalty.

## PLAY-THE-BALL

- (14) As soon as a tag has been removed from the ball-carrier he/she must play-the-ball at the point where the tag occurred. The ball-carrier **should not replace his/her tag** until the play-the-ball has been completed. Both tags must be in place for this player to take any further active part in play.

The play-the-ball shall be as normal in the International Laws. However:

- No markers are allowed.
- The Dummy Half (DH) may, on receiving the ball, either pass the ball or run themselves. Should they elect to run, not score and be tagged/tackled, then their team forfeits possession. A member of the opposite team will then play the ball for play to recommence. (One Pass Law)
- At the play-the-ball, no member of the team not in possession is to move forward until the ball is in the hands of the First Receiver or the Dummy Half elects to run or mishandles the ball. Each member of the team not in possession must retire 5 metres from the play-the-ball and any player who is within this area shall be deemed to be offside. Members of the team in possession must retire behind the Dummy Half.

## SCRUMS/HANDOVER

**NOTE:** Scrums are not to be formed in the 6 – 12 year age groups.

- (15) Where an infringement, or an error, has occurred and a scrum normally be formed (in the International Laws), the non-offending team shall play the ball to recommence play, but no closer than 5 metres from the touch line and goal line.

Where the Referee accidentally blows the whistle, or the ball bursts, the team which would have had the scrum feed (in the International Laws of the Game) will be awarded a play-the-ball. The initial play-the-ball will not be counted for the purposes of the tag count (i.e. A new set of 6 tags will begin).

**NOTE:** Refer to page 6 for Chance Rule (Under 6's only)

## TRY/CONVERSIONS

- (16) A try is scored in the normal way and is worth 4 points. There are no conversion attempts after a try in the 6 & 7 years age groups.

When scoring a try, two tags must be intact. If the ball is grounded with only one tag (unless the tag came off when the player made contact with the ground in the act of scoring), it shall result in a "no try" (unless advantage applies, see below "late tag") and play will be re-started with a play-the-ball to the attacking team 5 metres out from where the ball was grounded. The tag count shall continue unless after the 5th tag, which shall result in a handover, 5 metres out from where the ball was grounded. In the event of a late tag (i.e. where a tag has been removed, whether intentional or not, after the ball has been passed) the advantage rule should apply. The Referee shall indicate a "late tag" and award the try.

A player may only dive through a gap in a defensive line (not directly at players, which may cause a collision). The defender must have an opportunity to remove a tag. Attacking players cannot drop to their knees and reach through to attempt to score a try.

If the ball-carrier is tagged while in the opponent's in-goal before being able to ground the ball, play is re-started with a play-the-ball 5 metres out from the point at which he/she was tagged unless it is the 6th tag (this is similar to being "held-up" in-goal in the International Laws of Rugby League), at which time a handover will occur 5 metres out from the goal line and no closer than 5 metres from the touch line.

## STARTS/RE-STARTS OF PLAY

- (17) The kick off to commence each quarter is by place kick from the centre of the halfway line. The ball must travel at least 5 metres toward the opponent's goal line and land in the playing field. Following a try, the non-scoring team will re-start play with a tap kick. The ball must be placed on the ground in the centre of the field 5m forward of the non-scoring teams goal line. The ball need not travel any prescribed distance. Ground cannot be made from the tap kick re-start.

**NOTE:** Should a team kick the ball downfield, the Referee will blow the whistle and instruct the team to retake the tap kick re-start in a correct manner.

The only option available for a team receiving a penalty is to restart play with a tap kick. The non-kicking team must retire 5 metre from the penalty mark. If a player takes the ball back from a penalty kick, the original mark will be cancelled, and the new mark is where the ball is to be tapped and opponents may advance within 5 metres of the new mark.

## STARTS/RE-STARTS OF PLAY

(18) Penalties for any breach in the in goal will be taken 5 metre from goal line in line with the infringement.

## KICKING

(19) Kicking is NOT ALLOWED in the 6 & 7 year age groups except at -

» starts of period of play - i.e. kick off

\*\* See Clause 17 for Penalty restarts

**NOTE 1:** Should a kick (other than the above) be attempted during a match there will be a change of possession at the spot at which the kick was taken unless ADVANTAGE LAW applies.

## PLAYER MISCONDUCT – ROTATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS

(20) Should a player be guilty of such conduct that it “merits” a suspension from the field, then the Referee is to advise the player’s team coach of the problem and direct that the player be replaced for either the remainder of the quarter or remainder of the game. A player replaced for the remainder of the quarter, who resumes playing in a later quarter and is guilty of further misconduct must be dismissed for the remainder of the game but may be replaced.

Any further action would be taken at the discretion of the match’s controlling body.

**NOTE:** Match officials should signal whether a player has been rotated until the end of the period or permanently dismissed for the duration of the match. To differentiate between the two, the Referee will rotate his/her arms several times for a player needing to be rotated; a permanent dismissal shall be signalled as per the International Laws of the Game.

## GAME FACILITATION

The game may be facilitated by an accredited coach with an active accreditation in the 6-7 years age group. One coach from each of the opposing teams will be on the field at the same time. The coach / facilitator from the team that is defending will be the lead facilitator while the coach/facilitator from the team with the ball should be helping their players play the game.

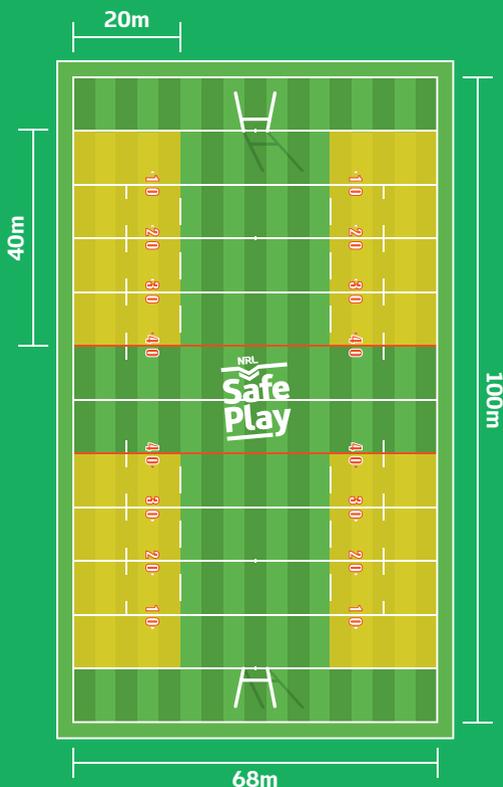
The role of the lead facilitator will swap when possession is changed over.

- Two coaches / facilitators are on the field at the same time
- The coach / facilitator who’s team is defending becomes the primary facilitator
- The coach / facilitator who’s team has the ball should be helping their team play the game
- The role of the facilitator swaps when possession is changed over

# APPENDICES

## 1. SIZE OF FIELD/FIELD OF PLAY

40x20m – 4 Field Matrix



**NOTE 1:** When using witches' hats or cones, care must be taken in their placement to ensure the safety of the players.

**NOTE 2:** In-goal depth is normally 5 metres (maximum) to be added to the ends of the fields.

## 2. 6 & 7 YEARS: THE BALL

- A. A Size 3 football is to be used in all 6 & 7 years matches.
- B. The WIDTH of the ball is to be 154mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- C. The LENGTH of the ball is to be 250mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- D. The colour of the ball may either be yellow or white.
- E. The ball should be inflated to a pressure of approx. 60kpa





# PART TWO

## 8 & 9 YEARS

### GAME MODEL

#### UNDER 8



6  
Tackles



68x30m  
Field Size



8 Players  
Per Team



8 mins x 4  
Game Time



No Scrums



2 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(No Markers)



No Kicking  
in General Play



Tap Restart  
on Halfway



Conversions  
Allowed

#### UNDER 9



6  
Tackles



68x30m  
Field Size



8 Players  
Per Team



8 mins x 4  
Game Time



No Scrums



2 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(1 Marker)



Kicking in  
General Play  
(No Bombs)



Tap Restart  
on Halfway



Conversions  
Allowed

## NOTE

The Laws of the International Game of Rugby League shall apply in the 8 & 9 years age groups subject to the following modifications, where applicable.

## GENERAL

- (1) Classification of competitions are aligned with Development Competitions. Matches are not to be scored, no competition tables are to be recorded, finals series entered in to, or premierships awarded.
  - (a) Talent equalisation across teams where clubs have more than one (1) team in the competition,
  - (b) For leagues with a high number of teams:
    - (i) Similar ability teams/players against each other as often as possible, and
    - (ii) Teams divided in to 'pools' rather than 'divisions' noting revision of talent equalisation across teams is a necessity.
  - (c) Providing an equal number of games for all teams within the competition.
  
- (2) Classification of groups is by age. Age applies as on January 1 of each year. Players, in each age level of competition, must be of the same age group. Players are not to play "up an age" (to a maximum of one age group) or in higher age groups without parental approval. Where combined age competitions exist state governing bodies may apply playing criteria

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (3) Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is 8. When more than 8 players are in attendance at a match then all players MUST play in accordance with Law 6. Where possible, team numbers should not exceed 12, in order to allow maximum opportunity for all players to participate in game time.
  
- (4) Minimum number of players allowed on the field per team per match is 6. Games should commence with two teams of equal numbers on the playing field. If there is a discrepancy between team numbers that doesn't allow this in the first instance, to facilitate a game, it is permissible and recommended that the team with greater playing numbers provides players to the team with fewer players.

If recommended minimum playing numbers cannot be satisfied a game may commence at the discretion of the local league.

- (5) The game is played over four eight (8) minute quarters with a one (1) minute interval between quarters (this may be extended to 3 minutes for half time).

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (6) Each player is to play a MINIMUM OF TWO UNBROKEN QUARTERS of eight (8) minutes. [This is a MINIMUM playing time only and, should numbers allow, all present should be given a maximum amount of time possible on-field.]
- (7) A player may be temporarily replaced if injured - but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent (for the purpose of compliance with Law 6). The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play (to comply with Law 6).

**NOTE:** Temporary replacement of three (3) minutes is to count as part of the injured player's playing time. (Refer to Law 6). The injured player may return to the field later in the match if able to do so.

## FIELD/BALL

- (8) The field at ages 8 & 9 years measures 68 metres by 30 metres. A full description is in the Appendices.
- (9) A smaller ball (size 3) is used in the 8 & 9 years age groups.

## TACKLES/TACKLE COUNT

- (10) Each team, upon gaining possession, has six (6) tackles during which to maximise the use of this possession unless the tackle count is nullified in that time.

The tackle count will commence after each set play or change of possession.

Zero tackle occurs as per the International Laws of Rugby League.

The Referee will count the tackles and signal the "5th and last" tackle in a fashion similar to the International Laws prescription. On the sixth tackle, the signal for the change of possession is in accordance with the International Laws.

**NOTE (1)** There is no "stripping" or stealing the ball in any contact situation at any time.

## PLAY THE BALL

- (11) The play-the-ball shall be as normal to the International Laws game except for the following:

- (a) No marker to be present in the under 8's game;
- (b) One marker only should be present in the under 9's game. The marker is not to touch the ball-carrier or ball or interfere with the play-the-ball in any way. The marker is not to move until the ball has been received by the first receiver - UNLESS the dummy half elects to run, kick or mishandles the ball;
- (c) At the play-the-ball, no member of the team not in possession is to move forward until the ball is in the hands of the First Receiver or the Dummy Half elects to run, kick or mishandles the ball.

Players of the side not in possession - apart from the marker, must retire five (5) metres from the play-the-ball area. Members of the team in possession must retire behind their Dummy Half.

## VESTED PLAYERS

- (12) The Two Pass Law applies, with the following exemption that applies to ALL parts of the field:

### **FOR 8 YEARS:**

The player at First Receiver (FR) will be identified with a vest of one colour (i.e. yellow). FR vests must be used in all 8 years matches, with nominated FR's to be substantially active in those positions. Players identified with vests are permitted to run from their nominated position, and be tackled before a minimum of two passes is performed, without their team turning over possession (unless it is after the 5th play-the-ball).

If any player without the FR vest runs from First Receiver, is tackled in possession without a minimum of two passes being performed, then his/her team will forfeit possession.

At a minimum in 8 years matches, players will be required to rotate vests following each period of play. A player who has worn a vest and rotates with another player, may not wear the vest again during the game.\*

### **FOR 9 YEARS:**

The player at First Receiver (FR) will be identified with a vest of one colour (i.e. yellow) and a player at Dummy Half will be identified with a vest of another colour (i.e. pink). DH and FR vests must be used in all 9 years matches, with nominated DH and FR's to be substantially active in those positions.

Players identified with vests are permitted to run from their nominated position, and be tackled before a minimum of two passes is performed, without their team turning over possession (unless it is after the 5th play-the-ball).

If any player without the DH vest (including the player nominated as First Receiver) runs from Dummy Half, is tackled in possession without a minimum of two passes being performed, then his/her team will forfeit possession.

If any player without the FR vest (including the player nominated as Dummy Half) runs from First Receiver, is tackled in possession without a minimum of two passes being performed, then his/her team will forfeit possession.

At a minimum in 9 years matches, players will be required to rotate vests following each period of play. A player who has worn a vest and rotates with another player, may not wear the vest again during the game.\*

**NOTE:** Vested players must be "substantially active" in these positions. Referees shall enforce this Law in the following manner, where there is a need to do so on field by:

- i) issuing a warning to offending players;
- ii) if the warning is not heeded, a penalty may be given against the offending team at the ruck, and a warning issued to the coach of the offending team;
- iii) If warnings continue to go unheeded the Referee may award further penalties, and subsequently write an incident report at the completion of the match. The team may be the subject of sanctioning by the League's governing body under the Code of Conduct.

## VESTED PLAYERS

**NOTE 1:** In the case where a player wearing a vest is injured and leaves the field, the vest may be provided to another player who may only wear the vest until the expiry of that period of play. The injured player may not wear the vest again. (Remember - one vest worn once during a match).

**NOTE 2:** A kick in general play can be regarded as a pass if re-gathered by an onside teammate.

## SCRUMS/HANDOVER

**NOTE:** Scrums are not to be formed in the 8 & 9 year age groups.

- (13) Where an infringement or an error has occurred – and where the advantage law cannot be applied – the non-offending team shall play-the-ball to recommence play (Note: No closer than 10m from the goal line and 10m from the touchline).

Where the Referee accidentally blows the whistle, or the ball bursts, the team which would have had the scrum feed (in the International Laws of the Game) will be awarded a play-the-ball. The initial play-the-ball will not be counted for the purposes of the tackle count (ie. A new set of 6 tackles will begin).

## TRY

- (14) A try is scored in the normal way and is worth 4 points.

## GOALS/CONVERTING A TRY

- (15) A goal may be attempted **ONLY** after a try has been scored.

The attempt may be taken by either place kick or drop kick. Once a player has attempted a kick at goal (whether successful or not), that player may not attempt another until all others of the same team (on the field at the time) have been given an attempt at a goal. This also applies at the awarding of an additional kick at goal following the awarding of a try when the try-scorer has been fouled in the act of scoring the try.

**NOTE:** In the event that a player, who has already attempted a kick at goal, attempts another kick at goal, prior to all other players (on the field at the time) being given a chance to kick, the points will not be awarded, if successful, and another attempt will not be provided to the team to convert that try.

All attempts at goal are taken from immediately in front of the goalposts. There is no minimum distance that the goal kicker is required to go back to from the goal line (as per International Laws). The kicker must, by either place or drop kick, kick the ball between the uprights and over the cross bar of the goalposts. The goal is worth two points.

## STARTS/RE-STARTS OF PLAY

- (16) The kick off to commence each quarter is by place kick from the centre of the halfway line. The ball must travel at least 5 metres toward the opponent's goal line and land in the playing field. Once a player has taken a kickoff to start the quarter that player may not take another kickoff until all other players of the same team have been given an opportunity to kick.

For kicks to start or re-start play, the non-kicking team is to retire five (5) metres. The quarter-way re-start is by tap-kick only.

Following a try, the non-scoring team will re-start play with a tap kick. The ball must be placed on the ground at the centre of the halfway line. The ball need not travel any prescribed distance. Ground cannot be made from the tap kick re-start. The initial tackle after the tap kick re-start will be tackle 1.

**NOTE:** Should a team kick the ball downfield, the Referee will blow the whistle and instruct the team to retake the tap kick re-start in a correct manner.

If a player takes the ball back from a penalty kick, the original mark will be cancelled and the new mark is where the ball is to be tapped and opponents may advance to within 5 metres of the new mark.

Penalty for any breach in the in goal will be taken 5 metre from goal line in line with the infringement.

## KICKING

- (17) Kicking is allowed with the following considerations:

- (a) Where a player on the attacking (kicking) team applies pressure to a player attempting to receive the ball on the non-kicking team and there is an increased risk of injury.

In these instances, the referee will stop the game immediately and award a play-the-ball to the non-kicking team at the point of the kick. The play-the-ball to re-start play will be counted as "zero".

The referee should consider if reasonable space is given to the player receiving the ball (therefore contesting the ball), and if so, will allow play to continue. Should reasonable space be provided to the player receiving the ball and they are unsuccessful in their attempt to gain possession, play shall be allowed to continue.

**NOTE:** This rule is designed to remove the potential for injury to the participants who are in a vulnerable position when receiving kicks in general play.

Goal Kicks are prescribed in Law 15. A kick at goal at a penalty is NOT ALLOWED and no points will be awarded for drop / field goals.

## PLAYER MISCONDUCT – ROTATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS

- (18) Should a player be guilty of such conduct that it “merits” a suspension from the field, then the Referee is to advise the player’s team coach of the problem and direct that the player be replaced for either the remainder of the quarter or remainder of the game. A player replaced for the remainder of the quarter, who resumes playing in a later quarter and is guilty of further misconduct must be dismissed for the remainder of the game but may be replaced.

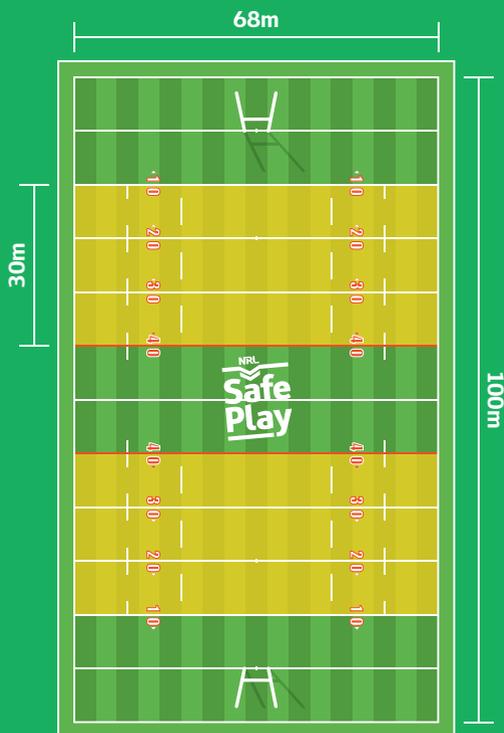
Any further action would be taken at the discretion of the match’s controlling body.

**NOTE:** Match officials should signal whether a player has been rotated until the end of the period or permanently dismissed for the duration of the match. To differentiate between the two, the Referee will rotate his/her arms several times for a player needing to be rotated; a permanent dismissal shall be signalled as per the international Laws of the Game.

# APPENDICES

## 1. SIZE OF FIELD/FIELD OF PLAY

68x30m



**NOTE 1:** When using witches' hats or cones, care must be taken in their placement to ensure the safety of the players.

**NOTE 2:** In-goal depth is normally 5 metres (maximum) to be added to the ends of the fields.

## 2. 8 & 9 YEARS: THE BALL

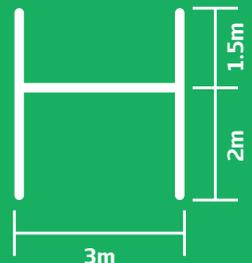
- A. A Size 3 ball is to be used in all 8 & 9 years matches.
- B. **WIDTH** of the ball is to be 154mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- C. **LENGTH** of the ball is to be 250mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- D. The colour of the ball may be either yellow or white.



Figure 1

## 3. UNDER 8 & 9 YEARS: GOAL POSTS

- » The posts and crossbar are to be made of 50mm diameter PVC tubing.
- » Heights, distances apart, etc., are as shown in Figure 1.
- » The crossbar is held in place by PVC tubular "T" pieces/junctions to suit.
- » Conversion attempts at goal may be taken by either drop or place kick.
- » Kicks are to be taken from immediately in front of the goalpost, with no minimum required distance (as per International Laws).
- » Goalposts must always be erected (and padded) in a fashion which ensures players' safety.





# PART THREE

## 10, 11 & 12 YEARS GAME MODEL

### UNDER 10/11



6  
Tackles



80x48m  
Field Size



11 Players  
Per Team



20 mins x 2  
Game Time



No Scrums



2 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(1 Marker)



Kicking in General  
Play Allowed  
(No Bombs)



Tap Restart  
on Halfway



Conversions  
Allowed

### UNDER 12



6  
Tackles



100x68m  
Field Size



13 Players  
Per Team



20 mins x 2  
Game Time



No Scrums



2 Pass  
Minimum



Defenders Stand  
Back 5m  
(1 Marker)



Kicking in General  
Play Allowed  
(No Bombs)



Tap Restart  
on Halfway



Conversions  
Allowed

## NOTE

The Laws of the International Game of Rugby League shall apply in 10 11 & 12 years subject to the following modifications, where applicable.

## GENERAL

- (1) Classification of competitions are aligned with Development Competitions. No competition tables are to be recorded, finals series entered in to, or premierships awarded. Matches may be scored, but results are not to be published.

Talent equalisation across teams where clubs have more than one (1) team in the competition,

- (a) For leagues with a high number of teams:
    - (i) Similar ability teams/players against each other as often as possible, and
    - (ii) Teams divided in to 'pools' rather than 'divisions' noting revision of talent equalisation across teams is a necessity.
  - (b) Providing an equal number of games for all teams within the competition.
- (2) Classification of groups is by age. Age applies as on January 1 of each year. Players, in each age level of competition, must be of the same age group. Players are not to play "up an age" (to a maximum of one age group) or in higher age groups without parental approval. Where combined age competitions exist state governing bodies may apply playing criteria

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (3) Maximum number of players per team on the field at any one time is -

- (a) eleven (11) at ages 10 & 11 years;
- (b) thirteen (13) at age 12 years. At each game all players must play in accordance with Law 6.

At each game all players must play in accordance with Law 6.

Games should commence with two teams of equal numbers on the playing field. If there is a discrepancy between team numbers that doesn't allow this in the first instance, to facilitate a game, it is permissible and recommended that the team with greater playing numbers provides players to the team with fewer players.

- (4) Minimum number of players per team to be on the field per game is -

- (a) eight (8) at ages 10 & 11 years;
- (b) eleven (11) at age 12 years.  
If recommended minimum playing numbers cannot be satisfied a game may commence at the discretion of the local league.  
During a game, should the number of players on the field for a team fall below the stipulated minimum number, and the team has no further replacements that can be used the game may continue at the discretion of the local league.

- (5) The game is played over two twenty (20) minute periods or halves with a five (5) minute interval between.
- (6) Each player in the team is to play a MINIMUM of ONE UNBROKEN HALF of a match (i.e. twenty (20) minutes).  
A player, having played an unbroken half of a match and been replaced, may be used in the latter half of a match to replace a player who has also completed an unbroken half or for a player who has been injured or suspended.

## TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (7) A player may be temporarily replaced if injured - but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent (for the purpose of compliance with Law 6). Any replacement player, coming on in the first half, shall play out the match (to comply with Law 6). The injured player may return to the field later in the match if able to do so.

**NOTE:** Temporary replacement of three (3) minutes is to count as part of the injured player's playing time (refer to Law 6.) The injured player may return to the field later in the match if able to do so.

## FIELD/BALL

- (8) The field at ages 10 & 11 years measures 80 metres by 48 metres. A full description is in the Appendices under "SIZE OF FIELD".  
The field at 12 years is the International Laws field. i.e. 100 metres by 68 metres.
- (9) A smaller ball (size 4) is used in under 10, 11 & 12 years age groups.

## TACKLES/TACKLE COUNT

- (10) Each team, upon gaining possession, has six (6) tackles during which to maximise the use of this possession unless the tackle count is nullified in that time [Reference : International Law; Section 11, Note to Law 6 should be noted here re tackle completed].

The tackle count will commence after each set play or change of possession.

Zero tackle occurs as per the International Laws of Rugby League (Glossary, pg 7; Section 11, pg 25, Law 7(c); Section 8, pg 18; Law 2 – last paragraph.)

The Referee will count the tackles and signal the "5th and last" tackle in a fashion similar to the International Laws prescription. On the sixth tackle, the signal for the change of possession is in accordance with the International Laws.

**NOTE 1:** There is no "stripping" or stealing the ball in any contact situation at any time.

## PLAY-THE-BALL

- (11) The play-the-ball shall be as normal to the International Laws game except for the following:
- (a) One marker only should be present. The marker is not to touch the ball-carrier or ball or interfere with the play-the-ball in any way. The marker is not to move till the ball has been received by the first receiver – UNLESS the Dummy Half (DH) elects to run, kick or mishandles the ball;
  - (b) The Two Pass Law applies, with the following exemption that applies to ALL parts of the field: The player at First receiver (FR) will be identified with a vest of one colour (i.e. yellow) and a player at Dummy Half will be identified with a vest of another colour (i.e. pink).
  - (c) At the play-the-ball, no member of the team NOT IN POSSESSION is to move forward until the ball is in the hands of the FIRST RECEIVER or the Dummy Half elects to run, kick or mishandles the ball.

Players of the side not in possession - apart from the marker, must retire five (5) metres from the play-the-ball area. Members of the team IN POSSESSION must retire behind their Dummy Half.

## VESTED PLAYERS

- (12) The Two Pass Law applies, with the following exemption that applies to ALL parts of the field:

DH and FR vests must be used in all 10-12 Year matches, with nominated DH and FR's to be substantially active in those positions.

Players identified with vests are permitted to run from their nominated position, and be tackled before a minimum of two passes is performed, without their team turning over possession (unless it is after the 5th play-the-ball).

If any player without the DH vest (including the player nominated as First Receiver) runs from Dummy Half, is tackled in possession without a minimum of two passes being performed, then his/her team will forfeit possession.

If any player without the FR vest (including the player nominated as Dummy Half) runs from First Receiver, is tackled in possession without a minimum of two passes being performed, then his/her team will forfeit possession.

At a minimum, in ages 10-12 years, players will be required to rotate vests following each period (i.e. half) of play. A player, who has worn a vest and rotates with another player, may not wear the vest again during the game.\*

**NOTE 1:** Vested players must be "substantially active" in these positions. Referees shall enforce this Law in the following manner, where there is a need to do so on field by:

- i) issuing a warning to offending players;
- ii) if the warning is not heeded, a penalty may be given against the offending team at the ruck, and a warning issued to the coach of the offending team;
- iii) If warnings continue to go unheeded the Referee may award further penalties, and subsequently write an incident report at the completion of the match. The team may be the subject of sanctioning by the League's governing body under the Code of Conduct.

**NOTE 1:** In the case where a player wearing a vest is injured and leaves the field, the vest may be provided to another player who may only wear the vest until the expiry of that period (i.e. half) of play. The injured player may not wear the vest again. (Remember - one vest worn once during a match).

**NOTE 2:** A kick in general play can be regarded as a pass if re-gathered by an onside teammate.

## SCRUMS/HANDOVER

**NOTE:** Scrums are not be formed in the under 10, 11 & 12 years.

- (13) Where an infringement or an error has occurred – and where the advantage law cannot be applied – the non-offending team shall play-the-ball to recommence play. (Note: No closer than 10m from the goal line and 10 m from the touchline).

Where the Referee accidentally blows the whistle, or the ball bursts, the team which would have had the scrum feed (in the International Laws of the Game) will be awarded a play-the-ball. The initial play-the-ball will not be counted for the purposes of the tackle count (i.e. A new set of 6 tackles will begin).

## TRY

(14) A try is scored in the normal way and is worth 4 points.

## GOALS/CONVERTING A TRY

### (15) **FOR 10 AND 11 YEARS**

A goal may be attempted **ONLY** after a try has been scored.

The attempt may be taken by either place kick or drop kick. Once a player has attempted a kick at goal (whether successful or not), that player may not attempt another until all others of the same team (on the field at the time) have been given an attempt at a goal.

**NOTE:** In the event that a player, who has already attempted a kick at goal, attempts another kick at goal, prior to all other players (on the field at the time) being given a chance to kick, the points will not be awarded, if successful, and another attempt will not be provided to the team to convert that try.

Goalposts are those of the International Laws field.

Method for use is outlined in Appendices.

All attempts at goal are taken from immediately in front of the goalposts. There is no minimum distance that the goal kicker is required to go back to from the goal line (as per International Laws). The kicker must, by either place or drop kick, kick the ball between the uprights and over the cross bar of the goalposts. The goal is worth two points.

### **FOR 12 YEARS**

A goal may be attempted **ONLY** after a try has been scored and is to be taken by a place kick only. Once a player has attempted a kick at goal (whether successful or not), that player may not attempt another until all members of the same team (on the field at the time) have been given an attempt at a goal. The goal is worth two points.

**NOTE:** In the event that a player, who has already attempted a kick at goal, attempts another kick at goal, prior to all other players (on the field at the time) being given a chance to kick, the points will not be awarded, if successful, and another attempt will not be provided to the team to convert that try.

Goalposts are those of the International Laws field.

There is no minimum distance that the goal kicker is required to go back to from the goal line (as per International Laws). The position from which the kick will be taken will alter:

- (a) For a try scored between the touch line and a line 20 metres in-field from touch, the conversion attempt will be taken along the 20 metre line in-field from the touch line.
- (b) For tries scored between the 20 metre lines inside each touch line, the conversion attempt will be taken in line with where the try was scored (as in International Law).

## STARTS/RE-STARTS OF PLAY

- (16) The kick off to commence each half is by place kick from the centre of the halfway line. The ball must travel at least 5 metres toward the opponent's goal line and land in the playing field. Once a player has taken a kickoff to start the half that player may not take another kickoff until all other players of the same team have been given an opportunity to kick.

For kicks to start or re-start play, the non-kicking team is to retire five (5) metres. The quarter-way re-start is by tap-kick only.

Following a try, the non-scoring team will re-start play with a tap kick. The ball must be placed on the ground at the centre of the halfway line. The ball need not travel any prescribed distance. Ground cannot be made from the tap kick re-start. The initial tackle after the tap kick re-start will be tackle 1.

**NOTE:** Should a team kick the ball downfield, the Referee will blow the whistle and instruct the team to retake the tap kick re-start in a correct manner.

If a player takes the ball back from a penalty kick, the original mark will be cancelled and the new mark is where the ball is to be tapped and opponents may advance to within 5 metres of the new mark.

Penalty for any breach in the in goal will be taken 5 metre from goal line in line with the infringement.

## KICKING

- (17) Kicking is allowed with the following considerations:

(a) Where a player on the attacking (kicking) team applies pressure to a player attempting to receive the ball on the non-kicking team and there is an increased risk of injury.

In these instances, the referee will stop the game immediately and award a play-the-ball to the non-kicking team at the point of the kick. The play-the-ball to re-start play will be counted as "zero".

The referee should consider if reasonable space is given to the player receiving the ball (therefore contesting the ball), and if so, will allow play to continue. Should reasonable space be provided to the player receiving the ball and they are unsuccessful in their attempt to gain possession, play shall be allowed to continue.

**NOTE:** This rule is designed to remove the potential for injury to the participants who are in a vulnerable position when receiving kicks in general play.

Goal Kicks are prescribed in Law 15. A kick at goal at a penalty is NOT ALLOWED and no points will be awarded for drop / field goals.

The 40/20 International Law applies (Under 12 Age Division only).

## PLAYER MISCONDUCT – ROTATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS

- (18) Should a player be guilty of such conduct that it "merits" a suspension from the field, then the Referee is to advise the player's team captain and/or coach of the problem and direct that the player be replaced for either the remainder of the half or remainder of the game. A player replaced for a half, who resumes playing in the second half and is guilty of further misconduct must be dismissed for the remainder of the game but may be replaced.

Any further action would be taken at the discretion of the match's controlling body.

**NOTE:** Match officials should signal whether a player has been rotated until the end of the period or permanently dismissed for the duration of the match. To differentiate between the two, the Referee will rotate his/her arms several times for a player needing to be rotated; a permanent dismissal shall be signalled as per the international Laws of the Game.

# APPENDICES

## 1. SIZE OF FIELD/FIELD OF PLAY

48x80m



**IN-GOAL:** The area between the International Laws goal line and the line 10 metres from, and in front of, it. The touch in-goal lines are the portions of the two lines 10 metres from the International Laws field's touch lines. Goalposts are part of the dead ball line (for 10 and 11 years ages. Full international size field is used in Under 12).

**NOTE:** When using witches' hats or cones, care must be taken in their placement to ensure the safety of the players.

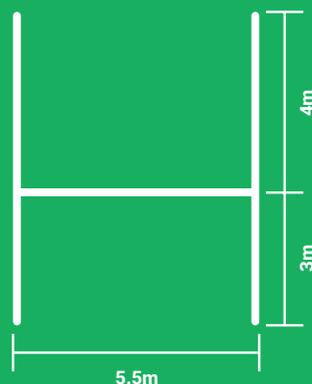
## 2. 10, 11 & 12 YEARS: THE BALL

- A. A Size 4 ball is to be used in all 10, 11 & 12 years matches.
- B. **WIDTH** of the ball is to be 162mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- C. **LENGTH** of the ball is to be 270mm (with up to 2mm variation).
- D. The colour of the ball may be either yellow or white.
- E. The ball should be inflated to a pressure of approx. 69kpa



## 3. UNDER 10, 11 & 12 YEARS: GOAL POSTS

- » Are to be those of the International Laws format:  
i.e. Cross-bar 5.5 metres long and 3 metres from ground.  
Upright to be greater than 4 metres long.
- » Kicks are to be taken from in front of the goalposts - using either place kick or drop kick (place kick only in Under 12's).
- » Kicker must attempt the conversion of the try as outlined in Law 16.
- » A player, having attempted a kick at goal, may not attempt another until others of the same team, on the field at the time, have been given an attempt at goal as in Law (16).



# APPENDICES (continued)

## 4. GOALS/CONVERTING A TRY (see Law 15) AT 12 YEARS

Plan of the Playing Field



- (a) For tries scored between X and Y or in the in-goal area behind XY, the conversion is to be taken in the playing field directly opposite the scoring point (as in the International Laws).
- (b) For tries scored "outside" X and Y or in the in-goal areas behind "X to the corner post" and "Y to the corner post", the conversion is to be taken in the playing field opposite X or Y.

# SAFE PLAY CODE

## 6 TO 15 YEARS (SUMMARY)

The Safeplay Code is to be enforced across all 6-15 years matches. In summary:

- » Tackles above the armpits are not permitted;
- » Dangerous tackles:
  - » The tackler's legs cannot be used to trip, or in a throw movement;
  - » Adopting a crotch hold is not permitted;
  - » Shoulder charges are not permitted;
  - » A ball-carrier cannot be lifted
  - » Ankle taps are not permitted
  - » Aggressive palms are not permitted. The ball-carrier cannot "thrust" out an arm to contact the defender above the shoulder.
- » Slinging/swinging is not permitted, nor is a player able to push an opponent.
- » Dangerous flops are not permitted. A defender cannot drop or fall on a player who is lying on the ground (placing a hand on the player to affect the tackle is most suitable).
- » Surrender (in the tackle). The ball-carrier may surrender in the tackle. Defenders must not complete the tackle.
- » Verbal abuse/Foul language is not permitted. The use of threatening or offensive language is not permitted.
- » Scrums: Pushing or pulling in, or rotating a scrum is not permitted.

## ADVANTAGE AND THE SAFEPLAY CODE

When a try has been scored in the same play in which the act of misconduct occurred, the penalty kick, additional to the conversion, will be awarded in front of the goal posts. A kick at goal must be taken from the penalty kick (place or drop) and play re-started from the centre on the half-way line irrespective of the outcome of the kick.

In the Under 6 and Under 7 age groups (in the absence of conversions, and subsequent penalty kick for goal) the act of misconduct must still be dealt with, and shall result in the offending player being cautioned, being asked to be replaced for the remainder of the period or, in more serious instances, for the duration of the match.



# GLOSSARY

## CHANCE:

As applied only in Under 6 age groups, is to be awarded to a team when one of their players knocks on or throws a forward pass in the field of play and the player, or an onside teammate, regathers the ball, or the ball/ball-carrier enters touch.

## DUMMY HALF (DH):

The player who first plays at, or takes possession of, the ball after a teammate completes a play-the-ball.

## FIRST RECEIVER (FR):

The player who first plays at, or takes possession of, the ball after it is transferred to that player by an onside transfer/pass from the Dummy Half.

## PERIOD OF PLAY:

The section of time during a quarter (6-9 years) or a half (10-12 years).

## QUARTERWAY LINE:

Is the line stretching from touchline to touchline, out from the goal line of the prescribed age group.

## REPLACE PLAYER:

Means for the Referee to direct a player, who is guilty of misconduct which merits suspension, from the playing field. This may be for the period of play, or for the remainder of the match. The player who is directed from the playing field is allowed to be replaced by a teammate.

## SAFEPLAY CODE:

A set of rules, additional to the Laws of the Game, to be applied from the Under 6 to Under 15 age groups (inclusive) which emphasises safety and good conduct within Rugby League. It is mandatory that a penalty be awarded for any infringement of the SafePlay Code.

## SUBSTANTIALLY ACTIVE:

Refers to the Two Pass Variation Law where DH and FR vests are used. Players are required to be in a position to perform these vested roles for the majority of plays in each set of tackles.

## TAP KICK RE-START:

Is the re-start taken from the centre of the Halfway Line, after points have been awarded, by the non-scoring team. The ball must be placed on the ground and released, and the player must make contact with the ball with the foot. The ball need not travel a prescribed distance. This re-start must be rotated amongst the players on the field.

## TRANSFERS/PASS:

Means for a player to intentionally pass, throw, hit or kick the ball to a teammate. A pass, throw, hit or kick to oneself is not a **transfer/pass**.

## UNBROKEN PERIOD OF PLAY:

Is from the start of the quarter/half through to when the Referee calls time on that quarter/half. Each player must play at least two full quarters or one full half (depending on age) unless prevented to do so through injury. A player may be temporarily replaced if injured – but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent. The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play (to comply with Law 7). Temporary replacement of three (3) minutes is to count as part of the injured player's playing time. (Refer to Law 7).

## VESTED PLAYER:

Refers to a player in the 8-12 years game who is wearing a vest to signify that they are the designated Dummy Half (DH) or First Receiver (FR).

At a minimum, vests must be rotated at the end of each period of play in the 8 – 12 year age groups.

## IMPORTANT NOTES 6 – 12 YEAR AGE GROUPS:

### 1. Law 6:

"Each player in the team is to play a MINIMUM of ONE UNBROKEN HALF of a match (i.e. twenty (20) minutes). A player, having played an unbroken half of a match and been replaced, may be used in the latter half of a match to replace a player who has also completed an unbroken half or for a player who has been injured or suspended."

#### **In the 10 - 12 year age groups, this means that:**

Players are able to be replaced in either half of the match, however:

- If a player replaces another player during the first half of a match, both these players must play the entire second half of the match.
- If no players are replaced in the first half, then all replacement players must play the full second half.
- A player who is replaced in the second half of a match must have played the full first half of the match.

#### **In the 6 – 9 years age groups, the above applies, but in respect to (two) quarters rather than halves.**

Please note that Law 7 refers to the replacement of injured players, and should be read in conjunction with the above.

### 2. Weight/Age Models – State Leagues

League Governing Bodies may choose to adopt weight/age models where the relevant (age-based) Laws shall apply.



# Rugby League Beliefs

## POSITIVE

- › The ability to see opportunities in the face of adversity.
- › The willingness to stand up for our beliefs and empowering others to do the same.
- › The commitment to stand up and be recognised as a brand ambassador.
- › The tenacity to do something despite how hard it is or how long it takes to achieve.

## UNITED

- › Recognising and respecting our differences in the pursuit of achieving a common goal.
- › Putting the game ahead of individual needs and personal agenda.
- › Be a source of motivation and support to those around me.
- › Commitment to a culture of respect, honesty, and trust.

## DISCIPLINED

- › Say what we are going to do and do what we say.
- › Have the strength to make the right decisions, placing facts ahead of emotion.
- › Take responsibility for your own actions and the impact they have on others and the wider game.
- › Champion processes, procedures, and the governing principles of the game.

## INCLUSIVE

- › Engaging and empowering everyone to feel welcome in our game.
- › Reaching out to new participants and supporters.
- › Promoting equality of opportunity in all its forms.
- › Respecting and celebrating diversity in culture, gender, sexuality and social background.



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