

SMALL BLACKS U11 REFEREEING



LEARNING RUGBY LAWS

UNDER 8 - UNDER 11

These laws complement laws outlined in the Small Blacks Development Model.

Scoring/Restart

- A try is scored by grounding the ball on or over the goal line.
- The scoring team will restart play with a punt or drop kick from halfway.
- Under 8 only - The non-scoring team will restart play with a tap kick from halfway.
- The opposing team will be back five metres from halfway.

Tackle

- A player must not tackle an opponent whose feet are off the ground.
- The tackled player must release the ball when either the player or the ball is grounded.

Scrum

- The side throwing the ball in to the scrum wins the ball, except in U11 where the ball is contested.
- The opposing team cannot advance until the halfback has run or played the ball.
- There is an offside line five metres behind the hindmost feet of the scrum.
- The opposing halfback must not advance past the middle line i.e. tunnel.

Lineout

- The side throwing the ball in to the lineout wins the ball, except in U11 where the ball is contested. If the ball is not caught or goes over the back, the ball becomes “fair game”.
- If the throw isn’t straight, advantage applies to the non-offending team, otherwise normal law applies.
- The two lines of players must be one metre apart.
- Backlines must stand five metres from the line of touch (centre line).
- The catcher in the lineout can run or set up a maul

Ruck And Maul

- Players must not join from the side.
- Players must be bound to the maul or behind the last player.
- Players must not collapse a maul.

Penalty Tap Kick

- The defending team will be five metres back from the infringement mark.
- All penalties are tapped on the ground.

Rugby Laws

- All other domestic safety law variations apply.

Appointment Of The Referee

- The home team will provide a referee or Learning Rugby referee to officiate.
- If no referee or Learning Rugby referee from the home team is available, then a referee or Learning Rugby referee from the visiting team will officiate.
- It is recommended that one referee will control the entire match.
- All grades up to U8 are allowed coaches on the field during the game to help with coaching.

LEARNING RUGBY REFEREE

INTRODUCTION

NZ Rugby has prepared this module with the view to provide you - the parent, coach, club player, or fan, with a basic understanding of the principles of refereeing a game of rugby.

Small Blacks rugby is the starting point for most of our future All Blacks and it is at these grassroot levels that the skills and knowledge is fostered for future years. Therefore, the role that you, as the referee in these matches play, is very important.

The Small Blacks Development Model has different focuses and Law features, which you will have to familiarise yourself with.

To assist you further, it is strongly recommended you visit the World Rugby website laws.worldrugby.org or contact your local provincial union to obtain a copy of Rugby - The Laws of the Game.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

“That two teams of ten players, each observing fair play according to the Laws and sporting spirit, should, by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible. The team scoring the greater number of points to be the winner of the match.”

SAFETY is the absolute key. Nothing must be allowed to happen which is unsafe in any phase of the game. Safety takes precedence over any aspect of the game. **IF IT LOOKS DANGEROUS - STOP IT!**

EQUITY - is also important. Players and spectators must see the referee adjudicating both sides in the same way.

LAWS - are an integral part of the game and it is important to attempt to learn and understand them. Knowledge brings confidence.

ENJOYMENT - is paramount to both players and the referee.

REFEREE CODE

1. Apply laws to match the skills and age of the players.
2. Use common sense to ensure that the 'spirit of the game' for children is not lost by 'over refereeing' the game.
3. Actions speak louder than words. Ensure that both on and off the field, your behaviour is consistent with the principles of good sportsmanship.
4. Compliment both teams on their good play, whenever such praise is deserved.
5. Be consistent, objective and courteous.
6. Condemn the 'deliberate foul' as being unsportsmanlike, thus retaining respect for fair play.
7. Be a good communicator.
8. Have empathy with the players.
9. Be unobtrusive, but exercise firmness.
10. Be calm when player/spectator passions are high.

ENJOY YOURSELF

WHISTLE! SIGNALS! VERBALS!

The Communication Mode Is Sequential

1. Whistle
2. Signal
3. Decision (Verbals)

Whistle

The most efficient and recommended whistle is an ACME THUNDERER, either narrow or wide mouth.

Use of the whistle is a form of communication and tends to be either a combination of LONG and LOUD or SHORT and SOFTER blasts.

- LONG and LOUD blast, e.g. try, penalty kick, mark (free kick)
- SHORT and SOFTER blast, e.g. knock-on, throw forward, unplayable ball.

Signals

There are five primary signals:

- Penalty Kick
- Free Kick
- Scrum
- Penalty Try
- Advantage

REFEREE'S SIGNALS



Verbals (Delivering The Decision)

- Always refer to the captain by title, and players by number/position.
- When the ball is in play, use simple short instructions, e.g. “Roll away Red 6”.
- KICK-OFF (start of game and after halftime)
 - ▶ “Ready Blue Captain?” (non-kicking team)
 - ▶ “Ready Red Captain?” (kicking team)
- KNOCK-ON
 - ▶ “Knocked-on Blue Number 9”
 - ▶ “No advantage”
 - ▶ “Scrum”
 - ▶ “Red Ball”

WHERE DO I STAND AND WHAT DO I LOOK FOR?

Penalties, Free Kicks, Kick-Offs And Drop-Outs

- Ensure that the kick-off is taken at the centre of the halfway line OR anywhere along the 22m line for a drop-out and is the correct form of kick.
- The kicker's team are all behind the kicker when the ball is kicked.
- The opponents are on or behind the 5m line (not required for a drop-out).
- Observe that the ball reaches the opposing team's 5m line unless an opponent plays it first OR for a drop-out it must cross the 22m line.
- The ball cannot be kicked directly on the full into touch.
- Opposing players must be 5m back from a penalty or free kick.

Kicks At Goal

- Follow the kick in to accurately judge whether it is successful or not. This is particularly important with short goal posts and no touch judges.

SCRUM SAFETY

The basic tenant is SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT.

Referees must manage the formation, engagement and subsequent scrum in action. At this level of the game, the referee, in the interests of safety, must ensure the front row engage in the sequence of:

“CROUCH - BIND - SET”

The call “Set” is not a command, but rather an indication that the front rows may engage when ready.

Some key points relating to management of the scrum assembly are:

- Once the hooker is at the mark, the loosehead prop binds onto the hooker, followed by the tighthead prop.
- The locks bind tightly together and then bind onto the front row.
- The referee will call “crouch” then “bind”. The front rows crouch and using their outside arm each prop must bind. A loose head prop must bind on the opposing tight head prop by placing the left arm inside the right arm of the tight head and gripping the tight head prop's jersey on the back or side. A tight head prop must bind on the opposing loose head prop by placing the right arm outside the left upper arm of the opposing loose head prop and gripping the loose head prop's jersey with the right hand only on the back or side. The props must not grip the opponent's chest, arm, sleeve, or collar. Following a pause

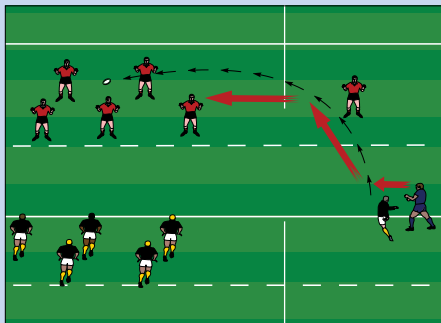
the referee will then call “set” when the front rows are ready. The front rows may then engage. The “set” call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

- Ensure the respective props bind correctly onto each other.
- In the event of a scrum wheeling beyond 45° or the ball becoming unplayable, the referee must blow the whistle and reset. The team that previously threw in will have to throw in to the new scrum, unless the referee considers the wheel was intentional, and then play is to restart with a penalty kick to the non-offending team. NB: At this level of the game, scrums are non-contestable and wheeling should not occur.
- If a scrum collapses, blow the whistle IMMEDIATELY and reset. Should a player be unable to move, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE THAT PLAYER. Seek appropriate medical assistance.
- In the event of a suspected spinal or other serious injury -

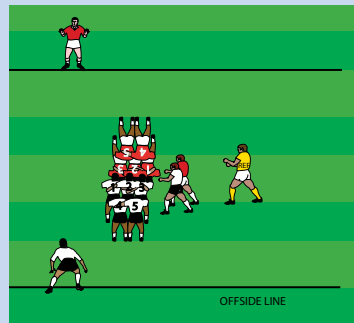
GET HELP FIRST, AND GET IT FAST CALL AN AMBULANCE - DIAL 111

Scrum Formation

- Ensure you are in a position to see the correct scrum engagement sequence - stand about 1-2m behind the halfbacks with a clear view of the scrum feed and front rows.



**PENALTIES, FREE KICKS, KICK-OFFS
AND DROP-OUTS**



SCRUM FORMATION

- Call the scrum engagement sequence “Crouch - Bind - Set”.
- The halfback throwing the ball into the scrum must do so with little delay, the ball is thrown in straight and the hooker’s feet remain on the ground until the ball has left the halfback’s hands.
- All scrum participants are bound to the scrum for the full duration of the scrum (binding means using full arm).

Lineout

- Usually in age-grade rugby, the ball will be thrown short, so the front positions are preferable.
- Be able to observe that the lineout gap is established and that non-participants in the lineout (backs) are back 5m until the lineout ends.
- The key is to be able to observe that the jumpers have a clear jump for the ball.

NB: At all levels of domestic rugby in grades under 13 and below, supporting (lifting) of the jumper at the lineout is not permitted.

Tackle

- The key to refereeing the tackle is to be close enough to observe actions of the tackled player, the tackler(s) and arriving players.

Ruck / Maul

DEFINITIONS

A ruck is a phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet, in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. Open play has ended.

A maul occurs when a player carrying the ball is held by one or more opponents, and one or more of the ball-carrier’s teammates bind on the ball-carrier. A maul therefore consists of at least three players, all on their feet; the ball-carrier and one player from each team. All the players involved are on their feet and moving towards a goal-line. Open play has ended.

- Do not get too close. The tendency is to want to get in to see where the ball is and thus become unaware of everything else that may go on, i.e. offside.
- Take up a position that enables you to observe offside players and those not bound to the ruck or maul, whilst also being able to observe where the ball is and its availability for play to continue.

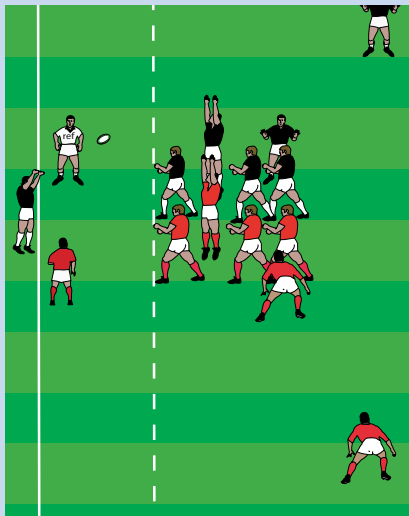
- Take up a position that enables you to observe the play. A good position is side on. That is, with your back to the goal posts, not the touchlines, this makes observing offside lines easier.
- Do not stand at the middle line of the ruck/maul, but move to either side, depending on what you want to observe. Then move away in the direction of subsequent play.

Open-Field Running

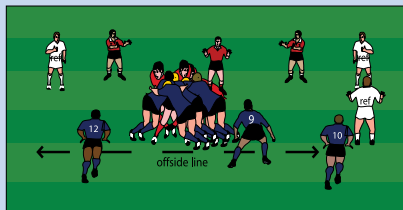
- When the ball is being passed amongst players, try and take up a running line that places you in-line with the play. It is in the best interest of you as the referee and the players to keep up with the play at all times.

Goal Line Area

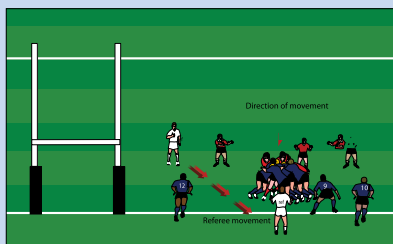
- This is the area where few players, parents, coaches or fans willingly accept errors. Raise your level of alertness.
- Get into in-goal area quickly and have play come to you.
- Endeavour to see the ball clearly so you can rule accurately.
- Be aware that there is no such Law as “Too many hands on the ball”. The ball carrier either forces/places the ball on the ground (TRY) or is prevented from doing so by opponents (Held Ball in Goal, Scrum 5m)



LINEOUT



RUCK/MAUL

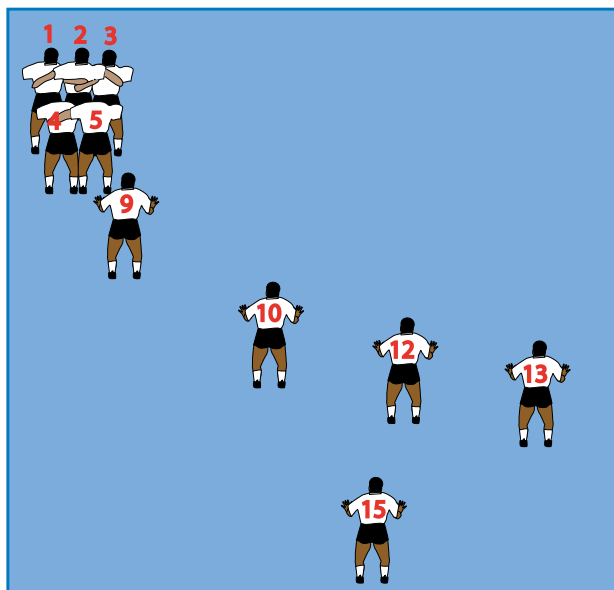


GOAL LINE AREA

THE TEAM BY PLAYING POSITION

Throughout the manual, positions will be referred to by the number of the player in that position. This will avoid confusion when more than one name is given for a particular position. These variations are shown to the right.

A full team of ten has the following playing positions and numbers:



The Backs

- 15 Fullback
- 13 Centre
- 12 Second Five-eighths
- 10 First Five-eighths
- 9 Halfbacks

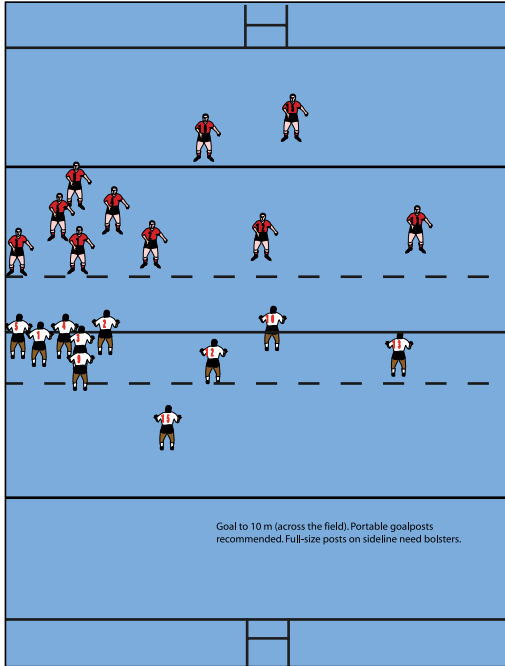
The Forwards

- 5 Right Lock/Second Row
- 4 Left Lock/Second Row
- 3 Tighthead
- 2 Hooker
- 1 Loosehead

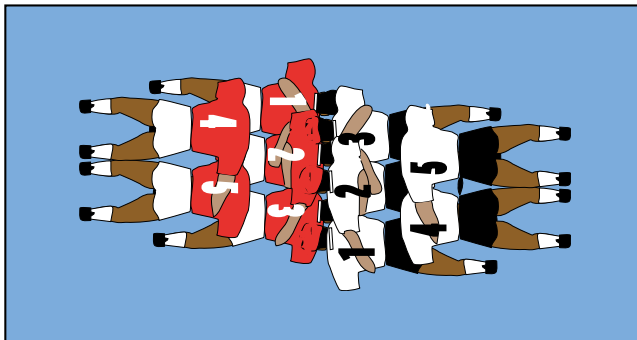
Variations in the names given to a position have little effect on the role expected of the player in a game.

PLAYER POSITIONING

1. Positioning At Kick-Off And Restart Kicks

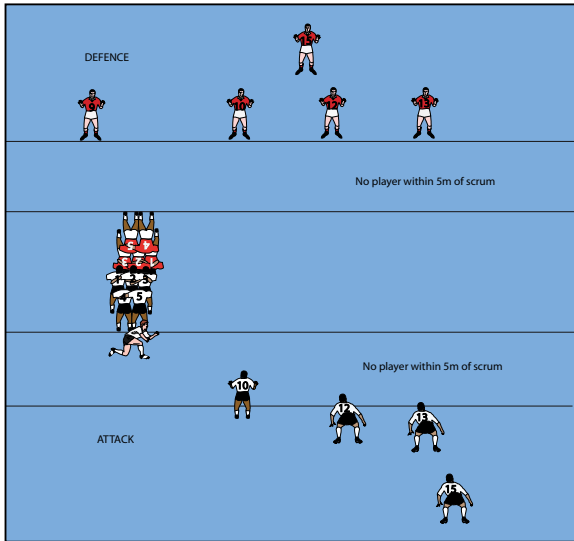


2. Positioning By Forwards At Scrum

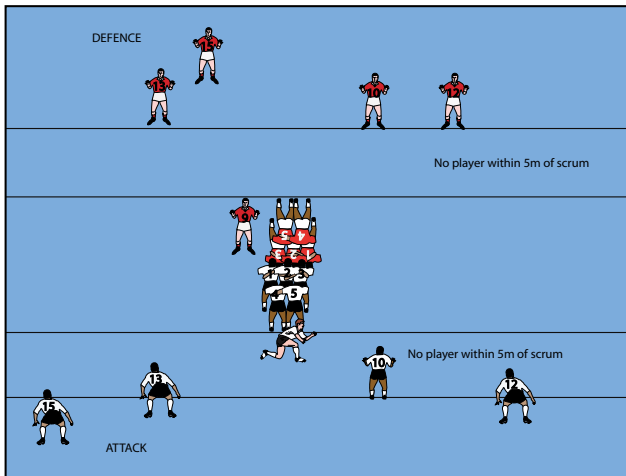


3. Positioning Of Backs

Example 1 - Near touch-line



Example 2 - Scrum in mid-field

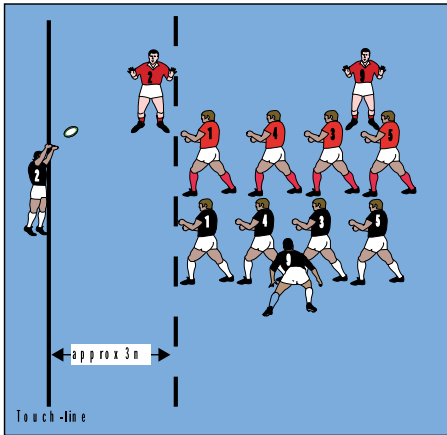


4. POSITIONING AT LINEOUT

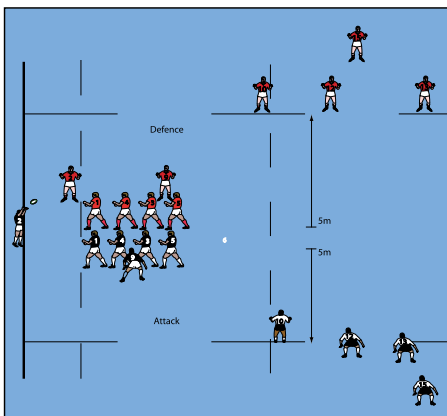
Forwards

Positioning can vary based on the composition of the team and the players' individual abilities.

The players with the exception of #2 line up behind the 3 metre line. #2's role is to throw the ball into the lineout and all the others should jump if the ball is coming to them.



5. POSITIONING BY BACKS AT LINEOUT



RULES OF RIP RUGBY

1. PLAYING AREA

- 1.1 The playing area will be approximately 70 metres in length and approximately 40 metres in width.
- 1.2 The playing area will be clearly marked.
- 1.3 The seven players on a team and the referee will be the only people entitled to be on the playing area during a game. Coaches, substitutes and spectators must not be on the playing area during a game.

2. DURATION OF PLAY

- 2.1 A game is usually made up of four quarters of five minutes each. 20 minutes in total. (In Small Blacks grades, follow the time set for each age band).
- 2.2 There will be a one minute interval at each quarter for substitutions.
- 2.3 After half time the teams will change ends.
- 2.4 A quarter can only end at the next stoppage in play .
- 2.5 A half cannot end on a penalty. If a penalty is signalled, the team awarded the penalty shall be entitled to a free pass and the game will continue until the next stoppage in play.
- 2.6 A rip is not a stoppage in play.

3. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- 3.1 The game is played between teams of equal numbers of players.
- 3.2 Seven is ideal.
- 3.3 Except in the case of injury or a sending off, every player must play at least two quarters of each game.

4. SUBSTITUTES

- 4.1 Substitutions must be made at quarter time except in the case of injury defined in 4.2.
- 4.2 An injured player can be substituted but only once the injured player has left the playing area.
Any substitution of an injured player must be approved by the referee, and an injured player who has been substituted cannot re-join the game.
- 4.3 Players who are substituted at any quarter time may re-join the game when replacing an injured player under Rule 4.2.

5. REFEREES

- 5.1 The referee for each match will be agreed upon and appointed by the two teams.
- 5.2 The referee should have a whistle.
- 5.3 The referee will shout, “PASS!” when a rip has been made, and “TURNOVER!” after a fourth rip.
- 5.4 The referee will blow the whistle to signal the start of the four quarters or when play is to stop.
- 5.5 The referee will signal to the team who is starting with a free pass by pointing with an outstretched arm towards that team.

6. THE RIP RUGBY BELT

- 6.1 The belt is adjusted to fit the waist of the player and fastened so that two flags hang – one from each side.
- 6.2 Velcro attaches the flags so they are positioned on each hip.
- 6.3 Care needs to be taken to ensure that for safety the tail of the belt is tucked away.
- 6.4 Each team is distinguished by the colour of the flags they wear.
- 6.5 The belt must be worn outside the clothing, shirts tucked in and flags free so they can be ripped off.
- 6.6 If a player accidentally loses a flag when they have the ball, the game will be stopped to allow the player to replace the flag. Once the flag has been replaced the game will restart with a free pass by the player in possession. The stoppage will not count towards the rip count.

7. ATTACKERS

- 7.1. The ball carrier cannot fend defenders off using their hands, or the ball.
- 7.2. The ball carrier cannot guard or shield their flags in any way. A player can spin once (360) in a movement (no helicopters).

8. DEFENDERS (RIPPERS)

- 8.1 There is no contact in Rip Rugby. Defenders (Rippers) ripping the flag off the belt of the ball carrier stops the ball carrier’s progress.
- 8.2 Defenders (Rippers) cannot physically touch the ball carrier.

9. STARTING PLAY

- 9.1 One team start/restarts the match from the centre of the field with a punt kick if U9 above, otherwise it’s a tap and pass. Great if Kick-offs rotated through all players.
- 9.2 Kick must travel in a forward direction 5 metres minimum.

- 9.3 Kick not making the 5 metres - free pass on half-way to the receiving team.
- 9.4 When a try is scored, the team that scored starts at the centre of the field with a punt kick or tap and pass to those who didn't score.

10. FREE PASS

- 10.1 To make a free pass, the player making the pass starts with the ball on the ground, moves the ball slightly forward using the side of their foot, then picks up the ball and passes the ball backwards to a member of their own team.

The player who taps the ball **MUST** pass and cannot run with the ball.

- 10.2 The Defenders (Rippers) must remain five metres back from the player making the free pass.

They cannot start moving forward until the ball leaves the hands of the player making the free pass.

- 10.3 A free pass is used to restart play at any other time that play has halted and needs to be restarted other than with a lineout or scrum.
- 10.4 Free passes cannot take place less than five metres from the try line.
- 10.5 A free pass is also awarded to the non-offending team when their opposition infringes the rules, such as an offside or for not returning the flag to the ripped player. A free pass or kick for touch as in normal rugby applies here.

11. RIP

- 11.1 To complete a rip one of the two flags from the ball carrier's belt must be removed.
- 11.2 The only person who can be ripped is the ball carrier.
- 11.3 The Defender (Ripper) must stop, hold the flag above their head and shout "RIP!"
- 11.4 The ball carrier must then pass the ball immediately (within three strides). He or she does not stop, return to the mark or roll the ball between their legs.
- 11.5 Four rips in a row leads to a turnover in possession.
- 11.6 After the ball carrier has passed the ball the Defender (Ripper) must hand the flag back to the player who then reattaches it to their belt before they re-join play. If either of these players doesn't adhere to this, they will be penalised and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending team at the place of the infringement.
- 11.7 If a player is ripped before the try line and doesn't pass before they get over the line, they restart play five metres out from the try line with a free pass.

11.8 Restarting the rip count occurs when there is a turnover or when either team is penalised.

11.9 If a player accidentally loses a tag when they have the ball, stop the game, replace the tag and restart with a free pass.

12. KNOCK ON

12.1 When a player knocks the ball towards the opponents' try line and does not regain control of the ball before it touches the ground, another player or the referee, a scrum is awarded to the non-offending team unless an advantage can be played.

13. OFFSIDE

13.1 Offside only occurs at a rip.

13.2 When a rip is made, all players from the Defender's (Ripper's) team must get back until they are behind where the rip was made.

Failure to do so, results in a free pass to the team in possession and the rip count will restart at zero.

13.3 If a player is offside and they intercept, prevent or slow down a pass, they will be penalised and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending team, unless an advantage can be played.

14. PASSING THE BALL

14.1 The ball can only be passed to the ball carrier in a backwards direction.

14.2 Attackers must not pass the ball forward; towards the Defenders' (Rippers') try line.

14.3 Attackers cannot hand the ball to another Attacker.

14.4 A scrum will be awarded to the opposition if an Attacker passes the ball forward or hands the ball to another Attacker.

14.5 If the ball is not caught to conclude a pass but is not knocked on, play can continue.

15. KICKING

15.1 There is kicking in Rip Rugby.

15.2 If you are 'Ripped' - you cannot kick the ball.

15.3 If a kick in general play crosses the dead ball line, it is a free pass at the mark from where the kick was made.

15.4 Normal off-sides from kicking situations apply.

15.5 There are no conversions or shots at goal.

16. ADVANTAGE

- 16.1 Not stopping the game when an infringement happens is called 'advantage'.
- 16.2 Referees should play 'advantage' to the non-offending team if there is any chance that they may be advantaged by there being no stoppage in play, for instance if the team gets the ball or retains the ball in circumstances that are more favourable than if a free pass was called.
- 16.3 The referee should call 'advantage' followed by 'play on' if an advantage is deemed by the referee to occur.
- 16.4 If no advantage occurs within a reasonable period play restarts with a scrum, penalty or free pass.

17. GOING TO GROUND

- 17.1 Subject to 17.2, if the ball carrier intentionally goes to ground or a player dives on the ball, a free pass is awarded to the opposition.
- 17.2 Players can dive for a try or dive on the ball for a try.

18. THE SCRUM

- 18.1 These consist of three players from each side.
- 18.2 No pushing - win your own ball.
- 18.3 Follow the ref's calls to 'crouch - bind - set'.
- 18.4 Both halfbacks must stand next to the scrum and can't advance past the middle of the tunnel.
- 18.5 Players who are not in the scrum and who are not the team's halfback, are offside if they remain in front of their offside line or overstep the offside line which is 5 metres behind the hindmost player of each team in a scrum.

19 THE LINEOUT

- 19.1 If the ball is carried or kicked out of the field of play, the game is restarted with a lineout with the non-offending side throwing the ball in.
- 19.2 The lineout must consist of three forwards from each team and a scrum half.
- 19.3 Lineouts follow contested laws to appropriate age. Lineouts not to be contested until U11 grade.
- 19.4 There is no lifting the jumper in Small Blacks grades.
- 19.5 The player catching the ball should hopefully pass it back to the player that threw it in as they run round to pass to the backs, but usual lineout law applies.
- 19.6 For players not taking part in the lineout, the offside line is 5 metres behind the line of touch or their goal line, if that is nearer.