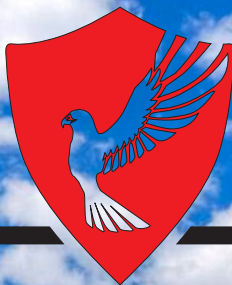


HAMILTON

GIRLS



RUGBY

BEGINNERS GUIDE



RUGBY'S HISTORY & ETHOS



Legend has it that in 1823, during a game of school football in the town of Rugby, England, a young man named William Webb Ellis picked up the ball and ran towards the opposition's goal line.

Two centuries later, Rugby Football has evolved into one of the world's most popular sports, with millions of people playing, watching and enjoying the Game.

At the heart of Rugby is a unique ethos which it has retained over the years. Not only is the Game played to the Laws, but within the spirit of the Laws.

Through discipline, control and mutual self-respect, a fellowship and sense of fair play are forged, defining Rugby as the Game it is.

From the school playground to the Rugby World Cup final, Rugby Union offers a truly unique and thoroughly rewarding experience for all involved in the Game.

World Rugby Core Values & Playing Charter

In 2009, member unions of World Rugby —the sport's governing body — identified **Integrity, Passion, Solidarity, Discipline and Respect** as the defining characteristics of Rugby. These are now collectively known as the World Rugby Core Values and are incorporated within the World Rugby Playing Charter, a document which aims to ensure that Rugby maintains its unique character both on and off the field of play.

The Core Values enable participants immediately to understand the character of the Game and what makes it distinctive as a sport which is played by people of all shapes and sizes.

The World Rugby Playing Charter is incorporated within the World Rugby Laws of the Game and can be downloaded from worldrugby.org/laws.



THE GAME

Rugby is a game in which the object is to carry the ball over the opponents' goal line and force it to the ground to score.

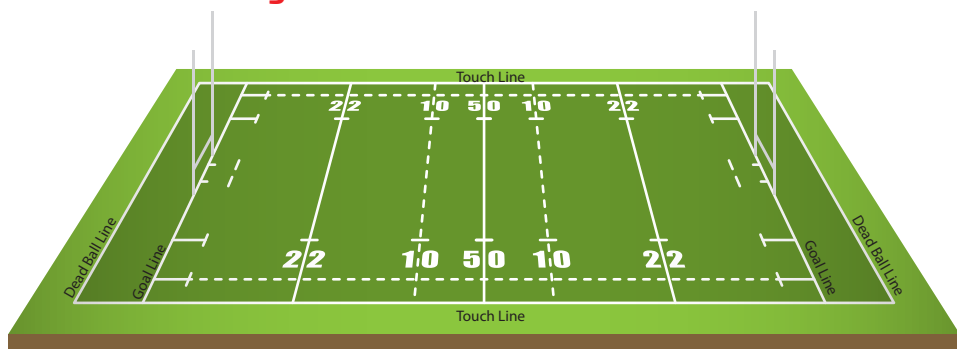
It's simple... but complex

The above description may sound simple - but there is one catch. In order to go forward, the ball must be passed backwards. This apparent contradiction creates a need for fine teamwork and great discipline. Little can be achieved by any one individual player.



Rugby has its unique aspects but like many other sports it is essentially about the creation and use of space. **The winners of a game of Rugby will be the team who can get themselves and the ball into space and use that space wisely, while denying the opposing team both possession of the ball and access to space in which to use it.**

The Field of Play



Scoring points

Try - 5 points

A try is scored when the ball is grounded over the opponents' goal line.



Conversion - 2 points

After scoring a try, that team can attempt to add two further points by kicking the ball over the crossbar and between the posts from a place in line with where the try was scored.

Penalty - 3 points

When awarded a penalty after an infringement by the opposition, a team may choose to kick at goal.

Drop goal - 3 points

A drop goal is scored when a player kicks for goal in open play by dropping the ball onto the ground and kicking it on the half-volley.

Kicking

A player may kick the ball instead of running or passing. The kick can travel forwards, but any team mates in front of the ball at the moment the ball is kicked are out of play until either they retire behind the kicker or are played onside by a team mate.



Retaining possession of the ball following a kick is a challenge. Kicking strategies include:

- kicking into space, so that team mates have time to reach ball before their opponents.
- kicking out wide, at an oblique angle to the field, so that the wing or outside centre can catch the ball
- kicking the ball to touch (off the field of play) resulting in a lineout (see page 8). Although this concedes possession with the throw-in to the opposition, there can be a large territorial advantage.

OPEN PLAY

The term 'open play' refers to any phase in the match where the ball is being passed or kicked between team mates and both teams are contesting for the ball. In open play, the team in possession tries to get the ball to players in space who can make forward progress towards the opposing goal line.

Kick off

Each half of the match is started with a drop kick from the centre of the half way line. The non-kicking team must be 10 metres back from the ball when it is kicked and the kick must travel 10m towards the opposition goal line before hitting the ground.



Passing

A player may pass to a team mate who is in a better position to continue the attack, but the pass must travel either directly across the field, or back in the direction of the passer's own goal line. By carrying the ball forwards and passing backwards, territory is gained. If a forward pass is made, the referee will stop the game and award a scrum (see page 7) to the other team. In this way, a forward pass is punished by that team losing possession of the ball.

Knock-on

When a player mishandles the ball, i.e. drops it or allows it to rebound off a hand or arm, and the ball travels forwards, it is known as a knock-on. This is punishable by a scrum to the opposition and therefore a turnover of possession.



CONTACT

As well as being an evasion game which requires creation and use of space, Rugby is also a contact sport. In fact, contact situations can be the very mechanism by which players create the space they need to attack. The three most common contact situations which occur in open play are tackle, ruck and maul.

The Tackle

Only the ball carrier can be tackled by an opposing player. A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to ground, i.e. has one or both knees on the ground, is sitting on the ground or is on top of another player who is on the ground. After a tackle the ball carrier must release the ball immediately, the tackler must release the ball carrier, and both players must roll away from the ball. This allows other players to come in and contest for the ball, start a new phase of play, an allow continuity of the game.



The Ruck

A ruck is formed if the ball is on the ground and one or more players from each team who

are on their feet close around it. Players must not handle the ball in the ruck, and must use their feet to move the ball or drive over it so that it emerges at the team's hindmost foot, at which point it can be picked up.

The Maul

A maul occurs when the ball is off the ground and the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and one or more of the ball carrier's team mates holds on as well. The team in possession can by drive their opponents back towards their own goal line, pass the ball backwards between players in the maul, pass to a player not in the maul, or leave the maul while carrying the ball and run with it.



Advantage

Sometimes during a game, an infringement of the Laws may be committed where a stoppage in play would deprive the non-offending team of an opportunity to score or to gain a territorial or strategic "advantage".

In this instance, the referee will allow play to continue rather than penalise the offence. This advantage Law allows the game to be more continuous and have fewer stoppages.

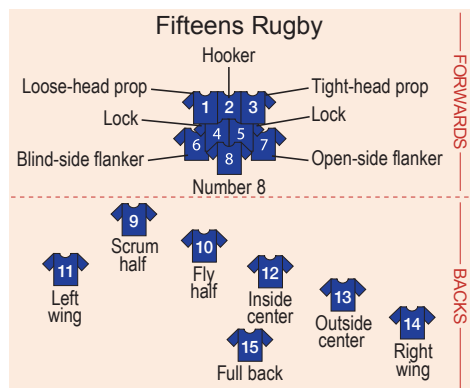
Offside

Rugby's offside Law restricts where on the field players can be, to ensure there is space to attack and defend.

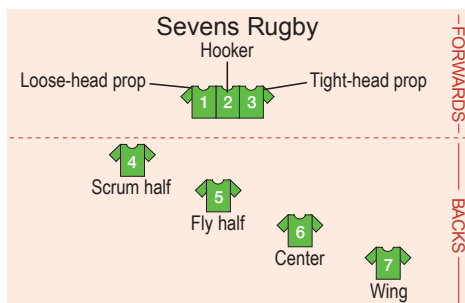
In general, a player is in an offside position if that player is closer to the opponents' goal line than their team mate who is carrying or last played the ball.

Being in an offside position is not, in itself, an offence, but an offside player may not take part in the game until they are onside again. If an offside player takes part in the game, that player will be penalised.

POSITIONS



Rugby Union is a game for all shapes and sizes. Each position requires a different set of physical and technical attributes and it is this diversity which makes the game so accessible to all.



Props



What they do: Their primary role is to anchor the scrummage and provide lifting strength and support for the lineout jumpers. Also pivotal in rucks & mauls.

What they need: Upper-body strength to provide stability in the scrum, endurance, mobility and safe hands to maintain continuity of play.

Hooker



What they do: The hooker has two unique roles on the pitch as the player who wins possession in the scrum and usually throws the ball in to the lineout.

What they need: Great strength to withstand the physicality of the front row coupled with speed to get around the pitch and good throwing technique.

Locks



What they do: Locks win ball from lineouts and restarts. They drive forward momentum in the scrum, rucks and mauls providing a platform for attack.

What they need: The key characteristic is height. The locks are the giants of the team and combine their physicality with great catching skills and mobility.

Flankers



What they do: Their key objective is to win possession through turn-overs, using physicality in the tackle and speed to the breakdown.

What they need: An insatiable desire for big tackles and a nofear approach to winning the ball. A combination of speed, strength, endurance and handling.

Number 8



What they do: Secure possession at the base of the scrum, carry the ball in open play, provide the link between the forwards and backs in attacking phases and defend aggressively.

What they need: Good handling skills are essential, as is a great awareness of space. Power and pace over short distances is crucial to gain territory and field position for a quick release to the backs in attack.

Scrum half



What they do: Provides the link between forwards & backs at the scrum and lineouts. The 9 will judge whether to distribute quick ball to the backs or keep it close to the forwards.

What they need: The scrum half must be powerful, have explosive speed, & all-round handling and kicking skills. The great 9s are highly confident players, with excellent game understanding.

Fluy half



What they do: As the player who orchestrates the team's performance, the 10 will receive the ball from the 9 and choose to kick, pass or make a break based upon the situation.

What they need: The ability to kick well out of hand, deft handling & communication skills, pace, vision, creativity, tactical awareness and the ability to perform under pressure.

Centers



What they do: In defence they will attempt to tackle attacking players whilst in attack they will use their speed, power and creative flair to breach defences.

What they need: The position demands strength, speed, great attacking prowess, and an intensity in contact to either retain or steal possession.

Wings



What they do: The wings are on the pitch to provide the injection of out-and-out pace needed to outrun an opponent and score a try. Also important to be solid in defence.

What they need: Pace. Wings often find themselves in space when their top priority is to press the accelerator and run for the line. Strength & good handling are an advantage.

Fullback



What they do: Generally perceived as the last line of defence, the full back must be confident under a high ball, have a good boot to clear the lines & make try-saving tackles.

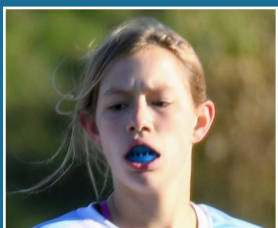
What they need: Great handling skills, pace in attack and power in defence. An ability to join the line at pace to create an overlap and try-scoring opportunities for the winger.

Equipment

Before playing Rugby, it's important to understand the equipment you'll need.



Firstly, you'll need a sturdy pair of boots with studs or cleats which are appropriate to the conditions. These are essential to providing the traction required, especially in contact situations.



You must wear a mouth guard to protect the teeth and jaw, and some players choose to wear World Rugby approved head gear and/or padded equipment, worn under the shirt.



THE SCRUM

The scrum is a means of restarting play after a stoppage which has been caused by a minor infringement of the Laws (for example, a forward pass or knock on) or the ball becoming unplayable in a ruck or maul. The scrum serves to concentrate all the forwards and the scrum halves in one place on the field, providing the opportunity for the backs to mount an attack using the space created elsewhere.



Signals for scrum awarded (left) & forming a scrum (right).



The ball is thrown into the middle of the tunnel between the two front rows, at which point the two hookers can compete for the ball, attempting to hook the ball back in the direction of their team mates. The team who throws the ball into the scrum usually retains possession, because the hooker and scrum half can synchronise their actions.

Once possession has been secured, a team can keep the ball on the ground and in the scrum and attempt to drive the opposition down field. Alternatively, they can bring the ball to the hindmost foot of the scrum, where the ball is then passed into the back line and open play resumes again.

The scrum half



The key player at the scrum is the scrum half. This player throws the ball into the scrum, moves to the hindmost foot of the scrum, and is usually the player who picks the ball up and passes out to the fly half who then distributes the ball to the back line.

THE LINEOUT

The lineout is a means of restarting play after the ball has gone into touch (off the field of play at the side). The lineout concentrates a selection of forwards in one place near to the touch line, so the backs have the rest of the width of the field in which to mount an attack. The key for the forwards is to win possession and distribute the ball effectively to the back line.



The forwards assemble in two lines, perpendicular to the touch line, one metre apart. The hooker throws the ball down the corridor between these two lines of players. Because the thrower's team mates know where the throw is likely to go, that team has an advantage in retaining possession. However, with speed of thought and movement, the opposition can contest for the ball and the lineout frequently results in a turnover of possession.

The player who successfully catches the ball can keep it and set up a maul, or can pass to the receiver (a player who stands next to the lineout to wait for such a pass) who then passes to the fly half and on to the back line.

Lineout support

To allow players to catch high throws in the lineout, it is permissible for the catcher to be supported by team mates while jumping to catch the ball. Safety is a prime concern here, and any player who is off the ground must be supported until that player returns to the ground. A player may not be tackled while in the air, and holding, shoving or levering on an opponent are all offences punishable with a penalty kick.



The touch judge signals that the ball is in touch and which team has the throw in.

Penalty Kick

Infringements of the Laws which have a significant impact on the opposition are punished with the award of a penalty kick.



If the penalty is awarded is within range of the posts, the team may choose to kick for a goal from a place kick from a kicking tee.

Three points are awarded for a successful kick between the posts and over the crossbar.

A team may also choose not to kick for goal. Other options include a scrum, a 'quick penalty' to bring the ball into open play, or kicking for touch where the kicking team has the throw in to the resulting lineout.

Free Kick



A free kick is awarded for less significant offences. A team may not score points directly from a free kick. A team may opt for a scrum, a 'quick penalty', or kicking for touch where the other team has the throw in to the resulting lineout.

TEAM TACTICS

The source of endless debate, controversy and acclaim alike, developing the right tactics can make or break a team's performance. Far from an easy proposition, but get it right, and you're the world's greatest Rugby visionary - to your players, at least.

Developing tactics requires a thorough understanding of your team's strengths. These tactics will be in part forward dominated and power based, and also reliant on the creation of space and use of pace. As important, is an awareness of the team and individuals you're up against - and the tactics they are likely to employ.



Using power

Using the physical strength of the forwards, in scrums and rolling mauls, can result in significant territory gain. Forward players can 'pick and drive' (gather the ball and take it forward with the support of team mates) until the moment is right to release it to the backs.

Creating space

For all its many complexities, Rugby remains a simple game in essence. Points will be scored when a player is put into space and when an attacking team out-numbers those in defence. As such, Rugby's holy grail lies in the creation of space. There are many tactics geared towards this, but primarily it's about winning quick ball to move the passage of play away from a concentration of players whilst injecting pace and creativity in attack to make space for a player to score.



WHY THE WHISTLE BLEW

Here are the most common reasons why the whistle may have blown with referee signals shown alongside. The signals for penalty and free kick are shown on page 8.

Advantage being played

Advantage can be applied to either minor infringements (e.g. knock-on), or offences which would result in a penalty (e.g. offside). The decision has to be made by the referee as to whether there may be more benefit to the non-offending team if play continues. If no advantage occurs, the referee will blow the whistle and bring play back to the place of the original infringement which occurred prior to advantage being played.



Forward pass or knock on

Sometimes an attack which seems to be heading towards the try line will be stopped by the referee's whistle.

If a pass has gone forwards, or a handling error has resulted in a knock on, a scrum will have been awarded to the non-offending team.



Forward pass



Knock on

Failure to release player or ball

Following a tackle, the tackler must release the ball carrier & the ball carrier must release the ball. If release does not occur quickly, the referee will award a penalty to the non-offending team.



Failure to release player



Failure to release ball

Failure to roll away

Any players on the ground when a ruck or maul is formed must immediately roll away from the ball to allow continuity of play. Failure to do so will result in the award of a penalty to the non-offending team.



Joining ruck/maul from the side

When joining a ruck or maul, all players must do so from behind the hindmost foot of their hindmost team mate. If they join from the side, they are in an offside position and taking part in the game, and this will immediately be penalised with the award of a penalty to the opposing team.



Unplayable ball at ruck or maul

If the ball becomes unplayable at a ruck the referee will award a scrum to the team going forward before the ball became unplayable.

For a maul the scrum goes to the team not in possession when the maul began.



Unplayable at ruck



Unplayable at maul

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BEGINNERS WELCOME

Integrity • Passion • Solidarity • Discipline • Respect