



Australian Rugby Union

2011 TryRugby Kids Pathway Review
2012 TryRugby Kids Pathway Laws

National Pathway Final Report

7 December 2011



Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission



Everyone Plays a Part

Contents

Introduction		3
Section 1	Pathway Review Process 2011	4
	<i>➤ Purpose of National Review Group</i>	
	<i>➤ Methodology</i>	
	<i>➤ National Review Group Report</i>	
Section 2	Response to National Review Group Report	5
Section 3	2012 Modifications	6
	<i>➤ Overview</i>	
	<i>➤ Recommended Squad Sizes</i>	
	<i>➤ Age Group Splits</i>	
Section 4	2012 Laws Summary	8

Introduction

In early 2009 ARU commissioned a two-year review to establish a clear vision across Australia for the Rugby Player Pathway, U6 through U12 Age Groups; one that the rugby community believed was in the best interests of kids.

The aim of the review in its first year was to provide a comprehensive report on the current state of play for the Rugby Player Pathway within Australia. The aim in its second year was to develop and pilot a common set of strategies that could be used to form the framework for an improved Rugby Player Pathway. The review involved wide ranging research and consultation.

In September 2010, ARU commissioned a 'white paper' outlining the vision for the Australian Rugby Player Pathway. It detailed the recommendations for improvements to the Pathway from 2011 and how and why these recommendations had been established. Formal feedback was provided by the States and Territories to ARU. With support of Member Unions, the TryRugby Kids Pathway was adopted nationally for the 2011 season.

2011 saw the roll-out of the National Pathway which included education sessions, distribution of resources and Law dissemination across all States and Territories. A Review Group was commissioned to evaluate Year 1 of the Pathway, and to advise any changes for 2012 based on:

- a) Feedback provided through the National Pathway Survey Results
- b) Member Union and Stakeholder feedback
- c) Video analysis and coding of NSW U11 and U12 age groups at the request of NSWRU

Given 2011 was the inaugural season where the changed game modifications and Laws were uniformly applied to each age group across the country, ARU conducted an online survey between Wednesday 10 and Monday 29 August. The survey was accessible online and was distributed to parents, coaches, referees and other stakeholders who were invited to participate.

In addition, at the request of NSWRU there was filming and analysis conducted on various U11 and U12 age group games, the results of which contributed to the National Review Group's evaluation.

The following report outlines the 2012 Pathway Laws and game styles. Member Unions were presented with the National Review Group Report and their responses have been acknowledged in the following document. Included in this Report is the 2012 Laws Summary table.

Section 1 – Pathway Review Process 2011

Methodology

There were three components of information gathered for the National Pathway Review Group to consider which were:

- a) Review the results of the National Survey. The survey was targeted at all stakeholders in the U6 to U12 age groups, and included specific questions regarding Pathway Law or game modifications. These responses offered insight into how the inaugural year of the TryRugby Kids Pathway had been accepted by the rugby community.
- b) Consider feedback from Member Unions and their affiliates and other key stakeholders.
- c) Results of video analysis and coding of NSW U11 and U12 age groups at request of NSWRU. Ten x U11 games and 16 x U12 games across NSW were captured and coded to produce empirical evidence relating to the NSW Working Party Terms of Reference.

Purpose of Review Group

Following a thorough appraisal of the above considerations, the National Review Group was tasked to provide recommendations for each TryRugby Kids Pathway age group regarding Law and game modifications for 2012.

National Review Group Report

This report was disseminated to Member Unions and affiliates on Monday 24 October 2011 for review. Formal feedback was requested by ARU and the responses can be noted in Section 2 below.

Section 2 – Response to National Review Group Report

The Member Unions were asked to provide consolidated, formal feedback on behalf of themselves and their affiliates in relation to the National Review Group Report which outlined the recommendations for the National Pathway 2012.

The responses of Member Unions and rugby community to the recommendations were supportive, enabling the few minor modifications of the National Pathway to be implemented for 2012 as proposed.

Below notes the replies ARU received:

Member Union Responses	
ACT	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations
NSW	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations Proposed 1m push at scrum in U12, subsequently agreed by National Review Group on grounds of consistency
NT	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations
QRU	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations
SA	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations
TAS	No Pathway Rugby Played
VIC	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations
WA	Fully supportive of 2012 recommendations

The above showcases the positive support of the rugby community to the proposed modifications and serves to re-iterate the endorsement from Member Unions for the National Pathway. ARU would like to thank these affiliates for their considerations as Pathway Rugby continues to be enhanced.

ARU acknowledges there may be factors that require Unions (or Associations) to request a Law modification from time to time. Requests for a Law modification are to be submitted on a 2012 Pathway Law Variation Submission Form. The ARU Pathway Committee will assess each submission on its merit as was the case through the 2010 season.

ARU is committed to providing the framework for competitions to be managed effectively supported by the facilitation of education courses and the provision of resources to support stakeholders and volunteers to implement the Pathway successfully.

Section 3 – 2012 Modifications

Overview

The National Review Group was convened to evaluate Year 1 of the Pathway, and to recommend any changes for 2012 based on:

- a) Feedback provided through the National Pathway Survey Results
- b) Member Union and Stakeholder feedback
- c) Video analysis and coding of NSW U11 and U12 age groups at request of NSWRU

The group's recommendations are as follows:

Age Group	Change	Rationale
U6	Altered game-day structure from 1 x 15min small sided games and 1 x 15min tag rugby game to two (2) small-sided games (approx 10 mins) followed by 2 x 10 min halves of tag rugby.	Response to strong feedback approving of small-sided games (63% nationally) but requests for more game time and two halves of tag rugby.
	Removal of scrums and line-outs.	Proved difficult to implement effectively at U6 for coaches and participants.
	Stricter application of two handed tag on the shorts.	Will reduce the number of tags effected resulting in more running play.
U7	Stricter application of two handed tag on the shorts.	Will reduce the number of tags effected resulting in more running play.
U8	No change.	-
U9	No change.	-
U10	No change.	-
U11	No change.	-
U12	Scrum push reduced from 1.5m to 1m.	Brings the U12 age group scrum Law in line with the U10 and U11 Pathway Law.

Following confirmation from Member Unions on the recommended changes as outlined in the National Pathway Review Group Report 2011, ARU confirms the above recommendations for the 2012 TryRugby Kids Pathway.

Recommended Squad Sizes

The National Pathway Review Group also considered the suggestion of recommending squad sizes for Pathway teams. This was intended to address some concerns which were raised in the National Survey that players in teams with particularly large squads may receive reduced game time.

The below outlines what the Review Group and Pathway Committee believe will maximise the enjoyment of the participants and will ease pressure on coaches. Clubs can apply these suggestions to help their squad management through the 2012 registration period.

Competitions may determine a minimum number of players for competition purposes, or a maximum squad size should they wish. The following are ARU recommendations.

Age Group	Player Numbers	Recommended Maximum Squad Size
U6, U7 and U8	7	10
U9	10	14
U10 and U11	12	17
U12	15	20

Age-Group Splits

In some regions, ARU understands the number of players may prevent Unions from fielding competitions in all age groups. The Pathway currently has game styles and Laws largely common across two-year bands, those being U6 and U7, then U8 and U9, then U10 and U11, then U12.

Previously, ARU recommendation has been that when there is a competition in every second age group, the game style played should match the youngest player playing in the competition. For example, where a competition has fielded U8s and then U10s, this has meant playing the U10 age group using U9 Laws to cater for the U9 players playing U10s. With this arrangement, there is the potential for players to miss a game style and this would not be ideal for their development as players.

Therefore, following review, the new ARU recommendation is that where there is a competition in only every second age group, the age groups to be played should be U7, U9 and U11 as per the table below. This allows for the two-year window to operate, but ensures no game style is missed, and there is no need for older age groups to play a younger set of Laws.

U7 Laws	U6 players play U7
U9 Laws	U8 players play U9
U11 Laws	U10 players play U11
U13 playing U19 Laws	U12 players play U13

Section 4 – 2012 Laws Summary

LAWS SUMMARY FOR U6 TO U12

	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12
Player Numbers	7		7	10	12		15
Playing Area	1/4 field L:40m, W:25m		1/2 field L:60m, W:35m		Full field less 10m L:100m, W:60m		Full field L:100m, W:70m
Playing Time	2 x small-sided games, then 2 x 10min halves	2 x 15mins	2 x 15mins	2 x 20mins	2 x 20mins		2 x 25mins
Ball size	Size 2		Size 3		Size 4		Size 4
Conversions	No		Optional In front, 10m back		Yes Not past 15m-line		Yes Not past 15m-line
Kick-off	Punt 5m Exclusion zone		Punt or drop 5m Exclusion zone		Drop		Drop
Restart after score	Tap on half way by non-scoring team		Tap on half way by non-scoring team		Kick-off by non-scoring team		Kick-off by non-scoring team
Kicking	No		No		Yes		Yes
Tackle	2 handed tag on shorts No offside line for defence		Yes		Yes		Yes
Lineout	Tap restart	2 players No contest	2 players No contest	4 players No contest	5 players Contested No lifting		7 players Contested No lifting
Lineout receiver		Must pass		Must pass		All options	
Scrum	Tap restart	3 players No contest	3 players No contest	5 players No contest	6 players Contested 1m push		8 players Contested 1m push
Scrum half		Must pass		Must pass		All options #8 moves illegal	
When is Lineout and Scrum over?	Played by fly-half or bounces		Played by fly-half or bounces		Ball out		Ball out
PK + FK	Tap only Opp 5m back		Tap only Opp 5m back		All options Opp 10m back		All options Opp 10m back

Common Pathway Laws for U6 to U12

Player Numbers	Equal number of players on each team. If one team is short, teams MUST share players to reach the maximum number of equal players possible. Unlimited rolling substitutions		
Scoring	No Drop Goals No Penalty Goals	Tackle	Slinging tackles, fending to the head and squeeze ball illegal
Lineout	No Quick Throw-ins No variation in numbers allowed Must have a lineout receiver	Foul Play	Yellow card = 5 minutes YC and RC player may be replaced
Scrum	Defending scrum-half can't go past midline and cannot leave scrum	Advantage	Should be played as much as possible to ensure continuity