

# MINI RUGBY LAWS



\* Indicates new Experimental Law Variation for 2009

## **GAME MODIFICATIONS**

### PLAYING AREA

The maximum playing area for this age level is 70m x 35m. \* The corner posts are no longer considered to be touch in-goal except when the ball is grounded against the post.

### PLAYING TIME

Play consists of two 20 minutes halves.

### TEAM SIZE

A Mini team has ten (10) players.

### BALL SIZE

The recommended ball is size 3 Mini.

### SCORING

A try is scored when a player places the ball on or over the opponent's goal-line, and it is awarded 5 points.

Following a try a conversion is successful when a player place kicks the ball between the opponents' goal posts and over the cross-bar. It is awarded 2 points.

In Mini, penalty goals and drop goals are not permitted.

### PENALTIES & FREE KICKS

After an offence a penalty or free kick is awarded to the non-offending team. \* Under the Experimental Law Variations to be adopted by Australian Rugby across all levels of the game this season, selected offences will be reduced from penalty kicks to free kicks where possible.

In Mini, teams receiving a penalty are able to use a kick for touch, a scrum or a tap restart. Following a free kick, a scrum or tap restart are the available options. A tap restart is taken by placing the ball either on the ground or in two hands and propelling it by the foot in any direction before regathering.

### SUBSTITUTIONS AND REPLACEMENTS

Players may be substituted after a try is scored or at other times when the ball is dead with the permission of the referee. There is no limit to the number of substitutions that can be made in Mini.

Injured players should be replaced temporarily and returned to the field only if they are able to resume playing.

### FINALS SERIES

For this age level, it is not recommended to promote finals series. Maintaining a competition ladder and awarding a premiership to first past the post however is acceptable.

## **LAW MODIFICATIONS**

### **TACKLE**

A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to ground. Brought to ground includes being on one knee, sitting on the ground or being on top of another player on the ground.

At the tackle, the tackler must release the ball carrier and roll away or get to their feet. The ball carrier is then required to present the ball immediately by placing it, passing it or pushing it away.

To play the ball at the tackle, support players must arrive on their feet from their own side of the tackle and enter through the 'gate'. The gate is defined by the extremities of the tackled player and tackler/s across the field.

\* With the exception of incorrect joining and foul play, all offences at the tackle are reduced to free kicks.

### **RUCK**

A ruck is a phase of play where one or more players from each team, who are on their feet and in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. Players must use their feet to win possession of the ball and not their hands.

Players from both teams not taking part must retire to an offside line behind the player furthest back in the ruck on their side.

\* With the exception of offside and foul play, all offences at the ruck are reduced to free kicks. Therefore if the ball becomes unplayable, a free kick will awarded to the team not in possession of the ball when the ruck began.

### **MAUL**

After an incomplete tackle, in which the ball carrier is held but not brought to the ground, a maul forms when a team-mate joins onto the ball carrier and his immediate opponents. Players must use their hands to win possession of the ball.

Players from both teams not taking part must retire to an offside line behind the player furthest back in the maul on their side.

\* With the exception of offside and foul play, all offences at the maul are reduced to free kicks. Therefore if the ball becomes unplayable, a free kick will awarded to the team not in possession of the ball when the maul began.

### **SCRUM**

The Mini scrum restarts the game after a minor infringement. It is non-contested which means there is no pushing and the team in possession of the ball must retain it.

Five (5) players from each team bind up as a front row and second row and come together on the referees call – Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage. The scrum-halves from each team stand on the mid-line of the scrum.

After the ball is thrown in by the scrum-half, the scrum ends when the hooker strikes it backward and the scrum-half passes the ball to a team-mate.

At the scrum the defending scrum-half must not go past the mid-line of the scrum and the defending players not taking part in the scrum must retire 5 metres.

\* The offside line for the attacking players not taking part in the scrum is now 5 metres behind the hindmost foot of the scrum.

## LINEOUT

The Mini lineout restarts the game after the ball carrier or ball goes over the sideline. It is non-contested which means there is no competing for the ball and the team in possession of the ball must retain it.

Four (4) players from each team stand as catchers in a single line 4 metres away from the sideline. The thrower of the team in possession stands on the sideline at the point where the ball crossed the line.

After the ball is thrown in, the lineout ends when the ball is caught or deflected with both hands by the catchers and the scrum-half passes the ball to a team-mate. \* The receiver or scrum-half at the lineout must be 2 metres back and away from the lineout.

\* At the lineout, the thrower's immediate opponent must stand in the area between the sideline and the catchers but must be 2 metres away from the lineout. The defending players not taking part in the lineout must retire 5 metres.

\* A quick throw may be thrown in straight or towards the throwing team's own goal line.

## KICKING

In Mini, kicking is not permitted in general play. The kick-off to begin each half and following a try is taken using a punt kick or drop kick and it must travel 10 metres towards the opponent's goal-line. The receiver is to be given a 5 metre free-zone to retrieve the ball.

The 15m restart is taken using a drop kick only by the defending team.

## ADVANTAGE

It is recommended the referee allow play to continue after an infringement that is followed by an obvious advantage to the non-offending team. This is called advantage and is at the sole discretion of the referee.

## OFFSIDE

In general play, a player is offside if they are in front of a team-mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team-mate who last played the ball. A player who is offside is liable to be penalised if they take part in the game.