



## **U12 LAWS OF THE GAME (REVISED FEB 2017)**

The object of the game is that to teams of seven players each, observing fair play according to the Laws and sporting spirit, should by carrying, passing and grounding the Ball score as many tries as possible.

The Under 12 variations on the Laws of The Game are complete and contain all that is necessary to enable the Game to be played correctly and fairly.

Rugby Union is a sport that involves physical contact. It is important that players play the Game in accordance with the Laws and be mindful of the safety of themselves and others.

It is the responsibility of players to ensure that they are physically and technically prepared in a manner that enables them to play the Game, comply with the Laws and participate in accordance with safe practices.

It is the responsibility of those who coach or teach the Game to ensure players are prepared in a manner that ensures compliance with the Laws and in accordance with safe practices.

It is the duty of the referee to fairly apply all Laws in every match.

It is the duty of the Unions to ensure that the Game at every level is conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour. The referee cannot uphold this principle solely; its observance also rests on Unions, affiliated bodies and clubs.

The Under 12 game is to be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws and observing the variations & clarifications indicated in this document.

### **Before the Match**

#### **Law 1: The Ground**

1.2 – The playing enclosure shall span the width of a senior field to serve as the length of the U12 playing surface. The 5 metre line of a senior pitch shall serve as the goal line, and the touchline of a senior pitch shall serve as the dead ball line. The 10 metre lines and the 5 metre lines shall mark the field width respectively.

Alternatively, if field space is limited, fields can be narrowed to 25 metres wide, from the above 35 metres, using the same lengths as the standard pitch, with not less than 5 metres between each pitch. This allows for three fields to be played on one senior pitch. This should only be



used when the above regulation size is impractical, based on the number of games to be played and the number of fields available.

## **Law 2: - The Ball**

2.7 Balls of different sizes may be used for matches between younger players. The conventional size for U12 shall be a standard size 4 ball.

## **Law 3: Number of Players - The Team**

3.1 Each team must have no more than 7 players on the playing area during play.

3.2 At any time before or during a match a team may make an objection to the referee about the number of players in their opponents' team. As soon as the referee knows that a team has too many players, the referee shall request the coach of that team to reduce the number appropriately.

3.4 Substitutions shall be unlimited and only made at times that the ball has become dead.

3.9 If the referee decides – with or without the advice of a medically qualified person – that a player is so injured that the player should stop playing, the referee may order that player to leave the playing area. The referee may also order a player to leave the field to be medically examined.

## **Law 4: - Players' Clothing**

Players shall wear clothing that complies with World Rugby Law 4 and Regulation 12.

## **Law 5: - Time**

5.1 A match lasts no longer than 30 minutes (tournament specified), plus lost time, extra time and any special conditions. A match is divided into two halves of no longer than 15 minutes.

5.2 After half time the teams change ends. There is an interval of not more than 5 minutes. The match organizer, the Union, or the recognized body that has jurisdiction over the game decides the length of the interval. During the interval, the players may leave the playing enclosure.

## **Law 6: - Match Officials**

6.A A match official who is accredited by World Rugby shall officiate the match. This is the responsibility of the host to organize.

6.A.4 (a) The referee is the sole judge of fact and of Law during a match. The referee must apply fairly all of the Laws of the Game in every match.

## Method of Playing

### Law 7: - Playing a Match

- A match is started by a kick-off.
- After the kick-off, any player who is onside may take the ball and run with it.
- Any player may throw it or kick the ball, but may only kick it when restarting the match.
- The only kicking allowed shall be a kick off at the beginning of the game, at the beginning of the second half and to restart after a score.
- Any player may give the ball to another player.
- Any player may tackle, hold or push an opponent holding the ball.
- Any player may fall on the ball.
- Any player may take part in a scrum or lineout.
- Any player may ground the ball in in-goal.
- Possession of the ball shall be turned over if after 6 successive phases (tackles/ball distribution) the attacking team has not scored.
- A ball carrier may not hand off an opponent.
- Kicking is only permitted at the kick off. There is no kicking in general play.

### Law 9: - Scoring Points

#### 9.A.1 Try -5 points.

- When an attacking player is first to ground the ball in the opponents' in-goal, a try is scored.

#### Penalty Try – 5 points.

- A penalty try is awarded when a try probably would have been scored, but for foul play from an opponent.

#### Goal Kicks

- No kicks at goal shall be taken.

### Law 10: - Foul Play

10.6 If a referee, who in a higher match grade, would temporarily suspend or send off a player for foul play, that referee shall communicate to the coach of that player the nature of the offence. The coach shall then substitute the player at the request of the referee. The replacement shall last a minimum of 5 minutes. This is a replacement and not a suspension, thus there will still be 7 players on the field from both teams at all times.

## **Law 11 - Offside and Onside in General Play**

There is no kicking, therefore all laws pertaining to offside as a result of a kick are deemed irrelevant.

## **In the Field of Play**

### **Law 13: - Kick-off and Restart Kicks**

The kick-off occurs at the start of each half and after each score.

13.1(a) A team kicks off with a drop kick, which must be taken at or behind the centre of half way. The kickoff must travel 7 metres from halfway.

13.1(b) If a kick-off is taken incorrectly twice, a scrum shall be awarded to the receiving team at the centre of halfway.

13.8 If the ball crosses the touchline and has bounced in the field of play, the defending team has a choice – (1) lineout on the halfway line; or, (2) a scrum on the halfway line.

### **Law 15: - Tackle: Ball Carrier Brought to Ground**

A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is:

- held by one opponent and is brought to ground; or
- is held by multiple opponents and is stationary; or
- has been held by multiple opponents for 3 seconds; or
- is being driven backwards by one or multiple opponents.

Once a player in possession of the ball is tackled, the referee will immediately call “Tackle (and add the successive number) one” (and subsequent tackles two through six) and on the “Tackle Six” follow with “turnover”.

After the call “Tackle” the defending players must release the tackled player. One defender may remain at the tackle in an onside position, the rest must retire at least 3 metres towards their own try line or to the try line if the tackle is completed less than 3 metres from the try line.

The tackled player (whether brought to ground or still standing) must place the ball on the ground behind them for a team mate to pick up and commence the next phase/tackle. The ball becomes live when the team mate picks up the ball. That player may run or pass.

After the 6<sup>th</sup> tackle, the referee shall call scrum and award the feed to the defending team.

### **Law 16: - Ruck**

Rucks shall not be a part of the game.

### **Law 17: - Maul**

Mauls shall not be a part of the game.

### **Law 18: - Mark**

Marks cannot be taken as kicking in open play is not permitted.

## **Restarts**

### **Law 19: - Touch and Lineout**

Lineouts are not contested. Any player may take part in a lineout.

Quick throws are not permitted.

19.8(a) The lineout is made up from the three forwards from each team and the two scrum halves. Two players from each team will stand between 2 and 7 metres from the touchline, 1 metre apart.

A receiver of each team (i.e. scrum half) shall stand behind the lineout, not closer than 2 metres to their own lineout players. The third defender from the defending side shall stand between the line of touch and the receiver, not closer than 2 metres to the lineout.

19.9(a) The lineout begins when the ball leaves the throwers hand. One of the three forwards from the throwing team catches the ball and passes/hands the ball to the scrum half.

19.9(b) The lineout ends when the scrum half receives the ball. The scrum half **must** pass the ball. The ball will be "live" when the scrum half receives the ball.

19.14(a) A player who oversteps the lineout is offside. The line for participants of the lineout is the line of touch, or in the case of the receiver and third defender, is 2 metres from the line of touch.

19.15(a) A player who oversteps the offside line before the lineout has ended is offside. The offside line for non-participants of the lineout is 7 metres from the line of touch.

### **Law 20: - Scrum**



Scrum is awarded for knock-ons, forward passes, in-goal defensive touch downs and possession changeovers to restart the game.

In the case of a in-goal touchdown, if the ball was carried over the line by the attacking side and lost, a scrum will be awarded to the other side at approximately the quarter field mark. If the ball is carried by a team into its own in-goal and touched down, a scrum is awarded to the attacking side 5 metres from the goal line.

Scrum must take place no less than 5 metres from the try line of the defending team and no less than 2 metres from the touchline.

Scrum is uncontested with no pushing by either side and no striking by the defending team. The feed must still be straight. Referees are to manage this and reset if necessary. Any player may take part in a scrum.

Three players will make up the scrum with the scrum half putting the ball into the middle of the tunnel. All other players must retreat 3 metres except the opposing scrum half, who should stay behind his own hooker. The forwards must keep their hips below their shoulders at all times.

The cadence to the scrum will be: “crouch-bind-set”.

The scrum half **must** pass the ball. The ball will be “live” when the scrum half receives the ball.

Safety is paramount and scrums may be re-formed at the referee’s discretion.

## **Law 21: - Penalties**

Penalties are awarded for dangerous and/or foul play. When a penalty is awarded, the tackle count resets to zero.

21.1 Penalties are taken at the place of infringement. The defenders must retreat 7 metres, or to the try line, whichever is closer to the mark.

21.2 Penalties are taken in the field of play, and not closer than 5 metres to an opponents try line.

21.3 Penalties are taken by tapping the ball off the foot or through the mark at the place of infringement. Any player from the team that was awarded the penalty can take the penalty.

## **What is Penalized:**

- Offside - Accidental offside is reset with a scrum to the opposite team;



- High or late tackle - Any tackle above armpit level is a high tackle;
- Dangerous play, including shirt pulling and scragging;
- Handoff/fend by the ball carrier;
- “Ball Tackling” - defending players cannot strip the ball from the ball carriers hands;
- More than 2 players in any tackle;
- Obstruction - Holding, blocking and running behind a “screen” is not permitted.