RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

U13 Girls Tag

Aged 11 and 12 at midnight on the 31st August 2012

Players and match officials must endeavour to ensure the iRB Law of the Game, modified by the following playing rules, are observed when playing rugby at Under 9:

1. Object:

   a) The object of the game is to score a try (5 points) by placing the ball with a downward pressure on or behind the opponents' goal line. A penalty try will be awarded if a try would probably have been scored but for foul play by the defending team.

   b) For safety reasons, where U13 Girls Tag Rugby is played indoors or in restricted areas, a try can be scored by the ball carrier crossing the vertical plane of the goal-line without grounding the ball. This allows players to have their head up and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

   c) When a try is scored, the game is restarted by a free pass from the centre of the pitch by the non-scoring team.

2. Teams:

   d) Under 13 Girls Tag Rugby is played between teams of equal numbers of players, containing not more than seven players and not less than six players. Each side can have an agreed number of substitutes. Substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions can only take place when the ball is "dead" or at half time and always with the referee's knowledge.

3. Pitch size

   a) 60 metres by 30 metres, plus 5 metres for each ingoal area.

4. Duration

   - Fixture (2 Clubs are present): 15 minutes each way, 1 game = 30 minutes
   - Fixture (3 Clubs are present): 10 minutes each way, 2 games = 40 minutes
   - Festival: 6 minutes each way, maximum of 5 games = 60 minutes (total playing time)

5. Passing:

   a. The ball can only be passed sideways or backwards through the air, not handed to another player. If the ball is handed to another player or passed or knocked forwards (towards the opponents' goal-line) then a scrum is awarded to the non-offending side, unless advantage occurs to the non-offending side. In order to keep the game flowing, referees should play advantage wherever possible.

6. Free Passes:

   b. A free pass is used to start the match at the beginning of each half from the centre of the pitch, or when there has been foul play (eg contact)

   c. At a free pass, the opposition must be 7 metres back from the mark. They cannot start moving forward until the ball leaves the hands of the passer. At a free pass, the player must start with the ball in both hands and, when instructed by the referee who will call "PLAY", pass the ball backwards through the air to a member of their team. For safety reasons, no player may run until the pass is made. The player taking the free pass must pass the ball when the referee calls "PLAY".

7. The Tag:

d. All players wearing a Tag belt around their waist with two tags attached to it by Velcro positioned over each hip. Tag belts are to be securely fastened and any excess belt is to be tucked away so that this cannot be pulled by mistake. Tag belts are to be worn outside of shirts and not obscured in any way. Referees are to be watchful for tags being wrapped around the belt preventing them from being pulled off.

e. The standard dimensions for a Tag are 38 cms in length by 5 cms in width although slight variations of a few millimetres should not be cause for concern. They should be made of a flexible plastic or plastic/canvas material. Tags are generally provided in red, blue, green and yellow. Colours should be chosen so that they stand out against the player's strip eg teams with yellow shirts or shorts should not use yellow tags. Coaches are reminded that the tags are to be positioned on the hips, not at the front or back, which may require the belt to be adjusted slightly for players with particularly small waists. Placing a knot in between the two Velcro pieces on the belt often brings the tags into the correct position.

f. A "TAG" is the removal of one of the two tags from the ball carrier's belt. Only the ball carrier can be tagged. The ball carrier can run and dodge potential taggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their tags in any way. The ball cannot be pulled out of the ball carrier's hands at any time.

g. If a player does not have two tags on their belt, one on each hip, they will be penalised if they become a ball carrier or if they tag an opponent and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

h. Actions by the ball carrier:

   i. When the ball carrier is tagged the ball must be passed to a team mate within 3 seconds, this includes stopping time. The ball carrier must attempt to stop as soon as possible; within 3 strides is a reasonable guide for referees, but the ball can be passed in the act of stopping. If the pass takes longer than 3 seconds or the player takes more than 3 strides they must be penalised and a scrum awarded to the non offending side at the place where the tag occurred.

   ii. After the ball has been passed, the player must go to the tagger, retrieve their tag and place it back on their belt before re-joining play. If the player continues to play and influences the game without collecting their tag, they must be penalised and a scrum awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

   iii. Players are however only allowed one step to score a try after being tagged.

   iv. If the ball carrier is tagged whilst standing inside the goal area they must ground the ball immediately in order to score. Referees should help this part of the game along by advising the ball carrier "Touch the ball down and I'll award the try", or similar.

i. Actions by the tagger:

   i. (1) When a tag is made, the tagger must stop running, hold the tag above their head and shout, "TAG". At this stage the referee must shout, "TAG - PASS".

   ii. (2) If the ball carrier stops running within 1 metre of the tagger, the tagger must move back towards their own goal-line, at least 1 metre, to allow room for the ball to be passed. If the tagger fails to retire at least 1 metre before rejoining the game, they are to be considered "offside" and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

   iii. (3) Once the ball has been passed, the tagger must hand back the tag to the player and cannot re-join the match until this has been done. If a tagger continues to play and

influences the match with an opponent's tag in their hand, or throws it to the floor, they must be penalised and a free pass awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

j. To reward good defence and to promote the attacking side keeping the ball alive by passing the ball before being tagged, the side in possession of a ball will only be allowed to be tagged a maximum of 6 times before scoring a try. At the 7th tag, the referee will stop the game and give the ball to the other side by awarding a scrum at the point that the tag took place. If the 7th tag takes place one step from the try line and the ball is grounded, the try will be disallowed and the opposition will be given the ball for a scrum 7 metres out from the goal line, in line with the point the goal line was crossed.

k. Note: Coaches of the teams may agree to reduce the maximum number of allowable tags to provide more of a challenge to their players, both in attack and defence. If coaches cannot agree then the 7th tag ruling must be enforced.

8. Offside:

a. Offside only occurs at the time of the Tag where the offside line is through the centre of the ball except for the tagger for whom it is 1 metre further back, as described in Section 5(f) above. When a Tag is made, all the other players from the tagger's team must attempt to retire towards their own goal-line until they are behind the ball. If a player, in an offside position, intercepts, prevents or slows down a pass from the tagged player to a team mate, a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side. A player can, however, run from an onside position to intercept a floated pass before it reaches the intended receiver.

9. Obstruction:

a. The ball carrier can run and dodge potential taggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their tags in any way.

b. Similarly, the ball carrier or a potential tagger must not deliberately make contact with an opponent.

c. If such contact is made the game must be stopped, the offender spoken to, reminded of the non-contact rules of tag and a free pass awarded to the nonoffending side.

d. If the ball is pulled from the ball carrier's grasp, a free pass is awarded to the ball carrier's side.

10. Kicking:

a. There is no kicking of any kind

11. Ball on the Ground:

a. Players play Tag Rugby on their feet, with the ball in hand. If the ball goes to ground, players should be encouraged to pick it up. If they dive to recover the ball they must either get up or play the ball (pass) immediately & be allowed to do so by their opponents.

b. Penalty: free pass to non-offending side and the following rules will apply:

i. (a) If the ball was lost forward, a scrum is awarded to the non-offending side unless advantage occurs to the non-offending side.

ii. (b) If the ball is passed other than forward and goes to ground play will continue and either side may pick up the ball. If the passed ball rolls into touch a scrum will commence from the touchline to the non-passing side.

12. No Contact:

The only contact allowed between the two teams is the removal of a tag from the belt of the ball carrier. Any other type of contact on the ball carrier, such as shirt pulling, running in front of or

barging the ball carrier, forcing the ball carrier into touch, etc must be penalised with a free pass and the players concerned reminded of the rules.

13. Scrums:

The scrum will be made up of one row of three players from each team, ie a prop on either side of the hooker. They will be the nearest 3 players from either side, with the 4th nearest acting as scrum half.

a. At Under 13 Girls, the scrum is uncontested by both sides: the team awarded the scrum will throw the ball into the scrum and must be allowed to win it without contest. Opponents cannot push or strike for the ball. If they do, a free pass restart is awarded to the team throwing the ball into the scrum.

b. The players from each team will bind together approximately half a metre apart. Each prop will touch the upper arm of her opponent and then pause before the engagement. The referee will talk the players through the engagement procedure in the sequence Crouch, Touch, Pause and Engage. On the grounds of safety, it is important that the referee manages the engagement of every scrum in this way.

c. Front rows must not be allowed to charge at each other. If they start to engage too close together and with their necks and backs bent, they must be stopped and the scrum reformed. Props' body positions must be parallel to the touchline (not boring in). There must be no downward pressure exerted by hands or arms. Shoulders must always be above the level of the hips.

d. If the scrum collapses, the whistle must immediately be blown and the appropriate penalty awarded or the scrum reset. If a player is persistently involved in collapsing or illegal binding they must be replaced. If a player's lack of technique or strength is a danger then they must be replaced. All players, including replacements, should be suitably trained and experienced.

e. Any player at any stage in a scrum who has or causes an opponent to have his shoulders lower than her hip joint must immediately be penalised by awarding a free pass. The object of this rule is to prevent the collapse of a scrum. It is to help the coach to teach good technique and the referee to penalise bad technique. Any player who has his shoulders lower than her hip joint can only move downwards unless she has very great strength. The force through the shoulders should be directed forwards and upwards; all players should remain on their feet, thus preventing a pile up and possible injury.

f. The back line of both teams must remain 5 metres behind the scrum until the ball emerges or the opposing scrum half places her hand on it. Until this happens, their scrum half must remain directly behind her scrum, in the pocket edged by the two props. .

g. If a scrum is awarded within 5 metres of the goal line, the scrum is to be taken at a mark such that the middle line of the scrum is 5 metres from the goal line. In this case the defending backs must stay on or behind the goal line.

h. Referees should pay particular attention to ensure that the scrum half putting the ball into the scrum is not "feeding" her own players: the scrum half must hold the ball with both hands, with its major axis parallel to the ground/the touchline, midway between her knees and ankles. The scrum half must release the ball from outside the tunnel so that it lands midway between the two front rows and beyond the width of the nearer prop's shoulders.

14. Prohibited Play:

a. In U13 Girls Tag Rugby, there is total emphasis on running with the ball, evasion, running in support of the ball carrier, passing and running to tag the ball carrier. In U13 Girls Tag Rugby there is:

iii. no tackling;

iv. no line-out;

v. no kicking;

vi. no hand off/fend off - hand off being the placing of an open palmed hand by the ball carrier against an opponent's face or body while a fend off is an outstretched arm by the ball carrier towards an opponent to discourage that person making a tag);

vii. no ripping of the ball.