New Rules of Play

Under 10

Key points:

- 8-a-side
- 1 v 1 contest for the ball, introduction of ball carrier + 1 and tackler + 1
- Introduction of uncontested scrum
- Nearest 3 players in scrum (all players trained, late specialisation)
- Pitch 60 x 35

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 10:

- 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) 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:

  a) Under 10 Transitional Rugby is played between teams of equal numbers of players, containing not more than 8 players and not less than 7 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

  The maximum pitch size is;

  a) 60 metres by 35 metres, plus 5 metres for each in-goal area.

  b) Reduced pitch sizes are acceptable provided this is agreed between the officiating referee and coaches, and the smaller pitches do not materially increase the risk of injury to players.

  c) Adjacent pitches should be no closer than 5 metres

- 4. Duration

  a) Fixture (2 Clubs/Schools are present): 15 minutes each way, 1 game = 30 minutes

b) Fixture (3 Clubs/Schools are present): 10 minutes each way, 2 games = 40 minutes

c) 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. If the ball is handed to another player who is in front 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.

b) Where the ball has been ripped from the ball carrier – attacker or defender – the ball must be passed away from the contact area.

- 6. Free Passes:

A free pass is used:

a) to start the match at the beginning of each half from the centre of the pitch

b) where the ball or ball carrier has gone into touch

c) where there is off-side and no advantage

d) where a fend or “hand-off” has been used

e) when there has been foul play

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 Tackle:

a) Only the ball carrier can be tackled. The ball carrier can run and dodge potential tacklers but cannot fend them off using their hands (hand off) or the ball.

b) A "TACKLE" in the transitional game is deemed to be:

Any contact below the arm pits of the ball carrier which results in a grip, by the opponent of the ball carrier. Where the ball carrier is taken to ground, the referee must call “TACKLE- RELEASE”

ACTIONS BY THE BALL CARRIER in contact or tackle:

c) Once the ball carrier has been held in contact and remains on their feet they may continue to progress forward. Once an additional player has from either the defending or attacking team has joined this becomes a mini- maul and the ball must be made available within 5 seconds. The referee should call “use it” and the ball should be moved away from the contact area. If neither team can pass the ball away a scrum should be awarded to the defending team.

d) The ball carrier if taken to ground and on hearing “tackle- release” from the referee, can pass the ball to a supporting player from their own team, roll or place the ball towards their own team.

e) Once forward momentum has been stopped the ball must be played away from the contact area. (Free pass to opposition)

f) If the ball carrier drives over their opponents try line and touches the ball down over the try-line, a try should be awarded

ACTIONS BY THE TACKLER:

g) The tackler must grasp the ball carrier below the arm pits, on the shirt, shorts or around the legs

h) If the tackle is on the feet the tackler may contest the ball by grabbing it or blocking the pass.

i) If the tackle is made to ground, the tackler should get to their feet as soon as possible, and can contest the ball or block the pass and must endeavour to get in an on-side position (between their own try line and the tackled player)

ACTIONS BY THE BALL CARRIER'S TEAM:

j) When the tackle is made the ball carriers team should support from behind.

k) When the tackle is made and the ball carrier is on their feet ONE supporting player, joining from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line) may assist the ball carrier by ripping the ball or driving forward.

l) When the tackle is made and the ball carrier is on the ground, ONE supporting player may join from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line)

i. Drive over the ball, taking their immediate opponent away from the ball

ii. Pick up the ball and pass away from the contact area

iii. Pick up the ball and run

m) A supporting player may rip the ball from the ball carrier but must then move the ball immediately to a team mate.

n) Once l) i) above has taken place, the next arriving player acting as scrum half must pass the ball to another player

o) When the ball has been clearly won by a team at a ruck and the ball is available to be played the referee will call "use it" after which the ball must be played within five seconds. If the ball is not played within the five seconds the referee will award a scrum and the team not in possession of the ball at the ruck is awarded the throw-in.

p) Support players must not deliberately stand either side and in close proximity to the ball carrier to prevent defenders from making the next tackle

ACTIONS BY THE DEFENDING TEAM

q) When contact is made and the ball carrier remains on their feet, ONE additional defender, joining from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line), can join the 'maul' and compete for the ball

r) When the tackle is made and the ball carrier goes to ground, ONE additional defender, joining from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line) can contest the ball.

s) The tackled player represents the off side line and defenders must endeavour to retreat to stay between their own try line and the tackled player until the pass is made (off side)

If the ball is not made available from a mini-maul a scrum should be awarded to the defending team. Where the ball is not made available from a mini-ruck the scrum should be awarded to the attacking team, other than where rule o) above applies

- 8. Offside:

a) Occurs at the time of the tackle where the offside line is the hindmost part of the tackled player. When a Tackle is made, all the other players from the tackler's team must attempt to retire towards their own goal-line until they are behind the hindmost part of the tackled player. If a player, in an offside position, intercepts, prevents or slows down a pass from the tackled 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.

b) Where contact is made and the ball carrier stays on their feet and a mini-maul is formed (7c above) the offside line is the hindmost feet of the players in the maul. If a player, in an offside position makes interferes in the maul or intercepts the pass, prevents forward movement, 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 tacklers but cannot fend them off using their hands (hand off).

b) The tackler can only make contact with the ball carrier below the arm pits.

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

- 10. Scrums:

A scrum will be awarded for:

a) Forward pass

a) Knock forward

b) Where the ball does not emerge from a mini-maul/ruck

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.

c) At Under 10, 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.

d) The players from each team will bind together approximately half a metre apart. Each prop will touch the upper arm of his/her opponent and then pause before the engagement. The referee will talk the players through the engagement procedure in

the sequence CROUCH, TOUCH, SET. On the grounds of safety, it is important that the referee manages the engagement of every scrum in this way.

e) 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.

f) Although unlikely at this age referees and coaches MUST be aware of the following: 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.

g) Although unlikely at this age referees and coaches MUST be aware of the following: Any player at any stage in a scrum who has or causes an opponent to have his shoulders lower than his 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 his hip joint can only move downwards unless he 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.

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

i) 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.

j) The scrum-half must pass from the base of the scrum

k) Referees should pay particular attention to ensure that the scrum half putting the ball into the scrum is not "feeding" his own players: the scrum half must hold the ball with both hands, with its major axis parallel to the ground/the touchline, midway between his 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.

- 11. Kicking:

a) There is no kicking of any kind.

- 12. Ball on the Ground:

a) Players play 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.

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

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.

- 13. Prohibited Play:

In Transitional Rugby, there is total emphasis for the attack; on running with the ball, evasion, running in support of the ball carrier and passing; and for the defence: on running to tackle the ball carrier, prevent them going forward, and to get back into the game. In Transitional Rugby :

a) no contact above the shoulder

b) no line-out;

c) no kicking;

d) no hand off/fend off (a 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 tackle);

e) no more than the tackler, tackled player plus one other from each team in contact