New Rules of Play
(U11 Pilot)

Transitional Contact (Under 11)

Main Changes from U10:

- **9-a-side**
- **3 player contest for the ball (Ball carrier + 2, tackler +2)**
- **Tactical kicking & restarts**

RULES

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 11:

1. Object:

- The object of the game is to score a try (5 points) by placing the ball 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.
- When a try is scored, the game is restarted by a drop kick from the centre of the pitch by the scoring team.
- The ball, when kicked must travel 7 meters unless played first by the opposition. Scrum back on the half-way, put in to the non-kicking team or option for the kick to be retaken
- If the ball goes directly into touch without touching the ground, or player the non-kicking team will have the option to receive the kick again or have a scrum on the half-way to the non-kicking team

2. Teams:

- Under 11 Transitional Rugby is played between teams of equal numbers of players, containing not more than nine players and not less than seven 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" and always with the referee's knowledge.

3. Pitch size

The maximum pitch size is

- 60 meters by 35 meters, plus 5 meters for each in-goal area.

    i) For the purposes of Law 19 a line parallel to the goal line 15 meters from each sides goal line shall form the “22”

- Reduced pitch sizes are acceptable provided this is agreed between the referee and coaches, and the smaller pitches do not materially increase the risk of injury to players.
- Adjacent pitches should be no closer than 5 metres

4. Duration

a) Fixture (2 Clubs present) : 20 minutes each way, 1 game = 40 minutes

b) Fixture (3 Clubs present): 15 minutes each way, 2 games = 60 minutes

c) Festival (More than three Clubs present):-7 minutes each way, maximum of 5 games = 70 minutes (total playing time)

d) No extra time is permitted in any match except that added for injury time.

e) If the try difference rises to more than six coaches should be encouraged to find solutions to challenge the players (eg the winning team might have a “tackle number restriction” – 4 tackles lose possession etc). Where this is not possible/agreed the game must not continue.

5. Starts:

- (a) A drop kick from the centre line will be used to start the game, the second half, and for all restarts after a score. After the score has been made the team which scored will kick to opposing team. The kicker's team must be behind the ball until it has been kicked and the receiving team must be at least 7 metres back from the half-way line.

- If, from the kick off, unless caught by the opposition, the kicking side play the ball before it has travelled 7 metres, the non-kicking team shall have an option of a put-in to a scrum on the halfway line, or for the kick to be retaken

- (b) If, from the kick off, the ball is kicked directly into touch, the opposition has the choice of:

  i) A put in to a scrum by the non-kicking at the centre spot.

  ii) The kick to be re-taken

- (c) Where players are in front of the kicker at the kick off the non-kicking team shall have a choice of a put into a scrum on the half-way line, or to receive the kick again

- (d) If from the kick off the ball is kicked into the in goal, without having touched or been touched by a player, the ball goes directly into in goal and is then immediately touched down or made "dead", or the ball goes into touch in goal, the non-kicking side has the choice of:

  i) A put in to a scrum by the non-kicking side at the centre of the half way line.

  ii) The kick to be re-taken

- (e) Following an infringement for the following offences a free kick will be awarded to the non offending side:

  i) Foul Play

  ii) Offside

- (f) A free kick is a kick from hand. This can either be a tap by the player to himself, or a kick to gain ground. The opponents must be 7 metres back, towards their own try line.

6. Passing:

- The ball can only be passed sideways or backwards through the air. If the ball is 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. .

7. The Tackle:

- 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 (Free kick).

(b) ACTIONS BY THE BALL CARRIER in contact:

i) The ball carrier if on their feet, can pass the ball to a supporting player from their own team, continue to drive or make the ball available to a team mate.

ii) If the ball carrier drives over their opponents try line and grounds the ball on or over the try-line, a try should be awarded

iii) The ball carrier if tackled to ground must immediately pass or release the ball and must get up or move away from the ball. The tackled player may put the ball on the ground in any direction, or may push the ball along the ground in any direction except forward (towards the opposition try line), providing this is done immediately (Free kick).

- (c) ACTIONS BY THE TACKLER:

i) The tackler must grasp the ball carrier below the line of the arm pits, on the shirt, shorts or around the legs.

Note 1: Any tackle level with or above the armpit is to be considered a high tackle.

Note 2: The scrag type tackle (ie swinging the player round by the shirt) must be considered dangerous play and must be penalised.

i) If the tackle is made to ground, the tackler must release the ball carrier, move away and get to their feet as soon as possible. If a ruck has not formed the tackler may contest the ball.

- (d) Actions by the attacking team:

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

ii) When the ball carrier is held on their feet not more than TWO supporting players, 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 (mini-maul).

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

a) Drive over the ball, taking their immediate opponent away from the ball (mini ruck)

b) Pick up the ball if the ruck has not formed or if the ball is out

iv) A supporting player may rip the ball from the ball carrier.

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

- (e) Actions by the defending team

    i) When the tackle is made the tackler's team should support from behind the tackler.

    ii) When the ball carrier remains on their feet in contact, not more than TWO additional defenders, joining from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line), can join the contest (mini-maul)

    iii) When the tackle is made and the ball carrier goes to ground, not more than TWO additional defenders, joining from their own side (ie from the direction of their own try line) can

    iv) Contest the ball

    v) Drive over the ball, taking their immediate opponent away from the ball (mini ruck)

    vi) Pick up the ball if the ruck has not formed or if the ball is out

- (f) General

    i) 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.

    ii) 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.

    iii) No player shall use the technique known or referred to as "Squeezeball" and no person involved in the teaching or coaching of Mini-Midi Rugby may teach or coach to encourage Under 11 or Under 12 players to use the "Squeezeball" technique. Penalty: Free kick

    Note: "Squeezeball" is a technique where the ball carrier goes to ground, head forward (touching or close to the ground), irrespective of immediate contact with opponents, usually keeping parallel to the touchline, holding and protecting the ball close to the chest and, when on the ground, pushes the ball back between the legs.

    ii. It is illegal for any player to voluntarily fall on or over a player lying on the ground with the ball in his possession or to voluntarily fall on or over players lying on the ground with the ball between them, or near them. Penalty: Free kick.

    Note: *no advantage shall be played;*
    A player is assumed to have fallen voluntarily unless the reference is absolutely certain the fall was accidental.
    In the very rare instances when the fall is accidental, play must be stopped and a scrum awarded to the side previously in possession. The object is to keep players on their feet and to prevent them from falling to the ground, thus removing a dangerous area of play. This will create proper rucks and mauls through encouraging players from each team to remain on their feet.

8. Kicking

- a) Kicking in Open Play

    i) Players may only kick the ball out of their hands.

ii) Outside of the “22” if the ball is kicked directly into touch it will result in a scrum in line with where the ball was kicked and 5 meters in from the touch-line

iii) The kicker's team must either be behind the kicker or behind a line 7 metres in front of the receiving opponent (or the place where the ball will land), or they are offside., They must make an attempt to retire,

iv) Kicking a loose ball when it is on the ground (often called fly hacking) is not permitted - this includes a front row player deliberately kicking a ball out of the scrum. Penalty: Free kick.

v) Other from a restart (including a free kick) – if a ball is caught directly from a kick anywhere on the pitch, by any player of the opposing team , one of the following options applies:

i) Play on

ii) A “mark” is called and the referee awards a free kick to the receiving team.

vi) Other than from a restart (including a free kick), if from a kick, the ball is touched flight by a player of the opposing team, (other than a charge down), and is not caught a scrum will be awarded to the non kicking team from where the ball is touched.

i) If the ball is knocked forward a scrum should be awarded immediately – but to the receiving team

ii) If the ball is touched and goes backwards, advantage can be played to the receiving team. Where no advantage is gained a scrum should be awarded to the receiving team

- (e) Drop goals are not permitted.

Actions inside the 22 meter area

- a) If the ball is caught inside the 22 from an opponent’s kick rule 8a) v) above should be applied
- b) If the ball is touched in flight inside the 22 from an opponent’s kick rule 8a) vi above should be applied
- c) If the ball is kicked from within the “22” by the defending team and goes directly into touch a scrum will be awarded to the opposition 5 meters in from where the ball crossed the line of touch unless

  i) it has been passed back into the 22 and there has been no subsequent mini ruck or maul

- d) Drop out 22

  A drop out 22 will be awarded

  i) when the ball is kicked into the in-goal by the attacking team area and grounded by a defender

  ii) when the ball is kicked into the in-goal area by the attacking team and touches or crosses touch-in-goal or touches or crosses the dead ball line

  iii) when the ball is carried into the in-goal by the attacking team and dropped backwards and grounded by a defender

NOTE: Where the kick goes into touch the receiving team has the option to take a quick throw in preference to the scrum unless it has been touched by a spectator (including coaches/replacements). It must be the same ball that was kicked into touch.
For a quick throw-in, the player may be anywhere outside the field of play between the line of touch and the player's goal line.
If the ball is brought back into the field of play, or players from the kicking team are in close proximity before the throw can be taken the referee should award a scrum in accordance with the rules above.

10. Offside:

- Offside in general play is penalised in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Game. A player offside in general play is to be penalised for being offside unless that player is making an obvious attempt to return to an onside position. Penalty: A free kick restarts to the non-offending side.

- Once a mini maul is formed, other players may only join the maul from behind the foot of their hindmost team mate in the maul. Players joining the maul from in front of this e.g. from the side are offside and should be penalised. Penalty: free kick.

- Once a mini ruck is formed, other players may only join the ruck from behind the foot of their hindmost team mate in the ruck. A player may join alongside this hindmost player. Players joining the ruck from in front of this (eg from the side) are offside and should be penalised. Penalty: Free kick

- Where the player , other than the scrum-half or part of the scrum is less than 5 metres back from the scrum before the ball is out

11. Foul Play:

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

- b) The tackler can only make contact with the ball carrier below the shoulders.

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

12. Ball on the Ground:

- 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 kick 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.

13. Scrums:

- (a) 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.

- (b) At Under 11, 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 kick restart is awarded to the team throwing the ball into the scrum.

- (c) The players from each team will bind together approximately half a metre apart. Each prop will touch the upper arm of his 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) If the scrum collapses, the whistle must immediately be blown and the appropriate sanction (free-kick) 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) 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 kick. 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 the ball 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.

14. 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 :

  i) no contact above the shoulder

  ii) no line-out;

iii) 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)

iv) no more than the tackler, tackled player plus two others from each team in contact