

VRU Rules of the Competition 2013 Junior Competitions – Additional and Special Requirements

Preamble

[The Junior Competition rules as listed below should be read in conjunction with the VRU Competition Rules 2013. The additional and special requirements below shall be regarded as forming part of the VRU Competition Rules 2013 but with provision for the Junior Competitions of the Under 11 to the Under 18 year Age groups. Under 6 to Under 9s Rugby, VRU Player ID and age compliance rules are also covered in these addendums although these age groups do not compete for points].

*Please refer to the following website for further information on the TryRugby Kids Pathway Laws
<http://www.rugby.com.au/tryrugby/Refereeing/LawsOfTheGame.aspx>*

[Please note that the penalty provisions for playing unregistered or ineligible players is covered under the VRU Competition Rules 2013 – Clause 12].

Minimum Requirements (Prior Understanding)

Before your child plays a game of rugby the club/school shall organise that each coach attend an ARU instructed SmartRugby session so that your child is then taught safety techniques and thoroughly prepared for the physical requirements of the game.

It is recommended that players train for a minimum of four sessions prior to playing a game. In these training sessions the coach should concentrate on the appropriate contact aspects of the game including, the tackle for both the tackler and ball carrier, falling to ground with a ball, scrummage (for forwards) and preparation for contact situations including ruck and maul. The coach should also practice the universal 'Mayday' call for safe scrum collapse situations.

Ideally your coach should have attended an Australian Rugby Union accredited coaching course which includes, Coaching Kids Rugby (CKR), Foundation, Level 2 or Level 3. This means that your coach is aware of best practice procedures. All coaches and Match Officials from Under 8s, where contact commences to Under 18s must be SmartRugby compliant.

Each player is required to fill out a registration form so that he/she is covered by the ARU Insurance policy. If your child is under 18 years of age, a guardian/parent is required to counter sign the registration document.

As a safety consideration, no player should participate in a game more than two years above his or her chronological age. All Clubs are to ensure that they sight a copy of the players' proof of age and note the document number and type on the players registration form.

1. Law 10 – Foul Play or VRU Game Management Policy

- 1.1 It is a mandatory Red Card for any junior player sighted by the Referee or Assistant Referee striking, or indiscriminately rucking or stomping upon an opponent. Striking is defined as, but not limited to, punching with a clenched fist or open hand, kneeling, gouging, biting, backhanding or clenching the private parts of an opponent. This is in accordance with the IRB Reg 17.
- 1.2. The Referee needs only to be satisfied that the offence as described in 1.1 was carried out with clear intent.
- 1.3. Players sent off (Red Card) in the Under 11s & 12s Age Groups may be replaced for the match . **Players issued a Red Card in the Under 14, Under 16 & Under 18 Age groups shall not be replaced for the match.**
- 1.4. Players sent off (Red Card) shall be required to attend a Judicial Hearing at the State Rugby Centre, AAMI Park commencing at **6.30pm**, on the Wednesday immediately following the Match.

- 1.5 The player sent off shall be entitled to a copy of the Referee or Assistant Referee's Report (or both) prior to the Hearing. The player shall be entitled to suitable and authorised representation at the Hearing from Team or Club Management.
- 1.6 All Junior matches have a no foul language or sledging policy. The Referee shall warn the first offender with the Captain present, then, if it continues with any team member, move to penalties and/or Yellow Cards.
- 1.7 Temporary suspension (Yellow Cards) for Junior players is as follows:
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|-------|-----------------|--|
| 1.7.1 | U8, 9, 11 & U12 | 5 minutes of actual time, expires at half time, players may be replaced. |
| 1.7.2 | U14 | 5 minutes of playing time, players may not be replaced |
| 1.7.3 | U16 & U18 | 10 minutes of playing time, players may not be replaced. |
2. **Size of Playing Field**
- 2.1 The playing field for competition matches, (which excludes U6s to U9s), shall be a full-sized pitch for U12 to U18. **The playing field for U11 matches shall be a full-sized pitch, less 10 metres width (5 metres each side).**
3. **Safety Directives**
- 3.1 Each half of Junior matches up to Under 18s match shall last no longer than 35 minutes playing time. i.e. play in a match shall last no longer than 70 minutes. After a total of 70 minutes playing time, the referee shall not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition. The exception to this is the Junior Grand Final match of each respective age group.
- 3.2 The maximum playing time in any one day is to be 90 minutes. No matter what the game is called (a trial or a knockout game or tournament), the total amount of playing time in any one day is to be no more than 90 minutes. The number of games in the day is not an issue; the playing time is the issue. It is expected that proper duty of care is exercised by coaches with regards to substitution or replacement of players and that the time issue is always the overriding consideration.
- 3.3 All Junior competitions played within Australia are bound to adhere to a Two Year Window where no player should participate in a game more than two years above his or her chronological age. The Two Year Window allows players to participate in a game with those of similar skill and maturation level thus providing a safe playing environment. No Junior Player should be permitted to play outside his/her age group two-year window or Pathway modified rules program.
- 3.4 A junior age rugby player must be younger than the age group in which he/she is playing as of the 1st January of the playing year. For example: In the 2013 playing season a player in the Under 16's must be turning **15 or 16 years** of age during the calendar year. As a safety consideration, no player should participate in a game more than two years above his or her chronological age. **Therefore as another example, a nine year old turning nine years of age in calendar year 2013 shall not play in the Under 11 years age group where there are players turning 11 years in 2013. This can be explained in the following schedule as it relates to the VRU age groups:**

Age Player turning or has turned in 2013**Playing Age Group**

6	U6 or U7
7	U7 only, non- tackle.
8	U8 or U9
9	U9
10	U11
11	U11 or U12
12	U12
13	U14
14	U14
15	U16
16	U16
17	U18
18	U18

- 3.5 Players turning 7 years of age in 2013 shall not be permitted to play U8s. Under 7s is a non-contact age group, Under 8s is the first year of contact so in this case the two year window does not apply on the grounds of safety.
- 3.6 Female players shall be permitted to play in the Under 6 – Under 12 Age Groups up to and including the calendar year (1 January - 31 December) in which they turn 12 years of age only.
- 3.7 The minimum age for which male and female players are eligible to participate in senior rugby shall be eighteen years. That is – no player should participate in Colts or Open Grades until after he or she has turned eighteen years of age. The Rationale behind this directive is:
- The IRB guideline circulated to all Unions on 3 December 2004 confirming that the existing guideline on the age at which young players be allowed to participate in senior rugby should remain at eighteen years of age
 - Common Law age of consent being eighteen years of age
 - Child protection legislation prevents parents / guardians signing away the rights of children.
- N.B. Please refer to the VRU Competition Rules Clause 2.3 and 2.6 for exceptions to this Rule.

4. Team Numbers, Substitutions, Replacement and Interchange

- 4.1. Teams taking part in the Under 11 competition are capped to twenty (20) players for any one match. This includes the starting twelve (12) and a maximum of eight (8) replacements.
- 4.2 Teams taking part in the competitions from Under 12 to Under 18 are capped to twenty-five (25) players for any one match. This includes the starting fifteen (15) and a maximum of ten (10) replacements.
- 4.3. The U11-U14 age groups shall play with unlimited Rolling Substitutions.
- 4.4 The U16-U18 age groups shall be allowed a maximum of 12 substitutions.

5. Forfeits

- 5.1 The Under 11 Age group shall be permitted a maximum of 12 players per team on the field at any one time. A forfeit shall be awarded to the non-offending team if one team has less than ten (10) eligible players available to commence the match.
- 5.2 The Under 12 to Under 18 Age groups shall be permitted a maximum of 15 players per team on the field at any one time. A forfeit shall be awarded to the non-offending team if one team has less than eleven (11) eligible players available to commence the match.

- 5.3 A forfeit by any team in any junior grades shall incur a penalty of minus two (-2) competition points. The minus four (-4) penalty listed for a late forfeit under Clause 4 of the VRU Competition Rules 2013 is rescinded for all junior grades.

6. **Playing Numbers**

Expectation Guidelines

The VRU expects all team coaches and managers to allow the game to be played in the true spirit of Rugby. In this regard:

- Maximising participation and enjoyment should be the main priority and major objective of every Club and junior team management.
- This should include working with opposition team management to encourage, as much as possible, equal playing numbers on the field for the match, even allowing for the provisions of Clause 6.1 below.

6.1 Under 14s to Under 18s

A team shall not be permitted to have playing in excess of one additional player more than its opponent. For example:

6.1.1 If one team has 20 players available, and the opposition has only 11, then the team with the most players shall be required to give the opposition team a minimum of 3 players so they can play 15 v 14 a side, or:

6.1.2 If one team has 11 players available and the other has only 15, then the team with the most players shall only field 12, not 15 (if not offering players to the opposition).

6.2 The exception to clause 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 is that :-

6.1 scrums shall be played with equal numbers and in accordance with the Under 19 Laws of the Game, and

6.2 non offending teams are not required to reduce playing numbers if opposition team players are Red or Yellow carded.

6.3 Under 11s and 12s – Equal numbers on field and played in accordance with the Pathway Laws.

7. **Two-Team Clubs in the same Age Group**

7.1 Other than its nominated 15 players, clubs with two teams in the same age group (A & B) shall be permitted to switch a player from one team to another. The club has to nominate its 15 players by Round 4 who will be restricted to the A team. All other players shall be permitted to play in the A or the B team.

7.2 Any exceptions to the above clause are only eligible after gaining prior approval from the VRU.

7.3 Failure to obtain prior approval from the VRU shall result in the provisions of Clause 12.2 of the VRU Competition Rules 2013 being applied for playing an ineligible player.

8. **Transfers and Dispensations**

8.1 Applications for Junior transfers from one Club to another will only be accepted provided that the player has not played a Home and Away competition match for their current club in the junior competition, unless special circumstances are demonstrated to and approved by the VRU.

- 8.2 Applications for Junior dispensations shall not be accepted after the Monday following Round 3 of the Junior Club Competition in any year, OR one week following the player's registration if registered after commencement of the season, unless special circumstances are demonstrated to and approved by the VRU.
- 8.2.1 All clubs need to be aware that the VRU has a strict policy of not approving dispensations for players to play **above** their respective Two Year Age window unless the player is part of a VRU/Rebels elite development program and it is part of his development for future opportunities as an elite player.
- 8.2.2 A thorough process must be followed before any consideration will be given to playing below their respective Two Year Age window.
- 8.2.3 A **Thirty Dollar (\$30)** administration fee shall be payable to the VRU when the application form is submitted.
- 8.3 Clubs that breach these provisions shall be subject to the penalty clauses, which are listed under Clause 12 of the VRU Competition Rules 2013.

9. **Player Identification – Eligibility Check**

- 9.1 In accordance with the Clause 12.3 of the VRU competition Rules 2013, Junior players participating in VRU competitions from **Under 11s** to Under 18s shall be required to have a VRU Player Identification Card or similar acceptable format, **for every competition match from the start of the 2013 season**. The player's card can be made from the VRU ID template supplied to every junior club or from the ARU MYRugbyAdmin online system.
- 9.2 It is the responsibility of the club Junior Coordinator to ensure that their Junior players have supplied authentic documentary evidence of their birth dates, of which a registered number or Reference is to be entered onto the ARU Membership Form (beneath the "verified proof of identity and age") on the lower right hand side of the Registration form.
- 9.3 This evidence must consist of an original of either:
- 9.3.1 A birth certificate; or
- 9.3.2 An extract of entry of birth; or
- 9.3.3 A current passport; or
- 9.3.4 Official documentary proof from their country or state of birth; or
- 9.3.5 A current driver's licence or permit.
- Please Note: Baptism Certificates are not to be used as proof of birth.
- 9.4 For all Junior grades from **Under 11s** to Under 18s there shall be a formal process of checking player eligibility, as follows:
- 9.4.1 The principle of No Card, No Play is to be observed except in the following instance;
- i) a newly registered player has a three-week period of grace, from the date of registration on the ARU Form, to obtain a Player ID Card.
 - ii) the newly registered player must produce copies of his/her signed ARU registration form which should also state the players reference number from their proof of age document.
 - iii) The newly registered player will be indicated on the Team Sheet by placing an asterisk next to his/her name and a note made that a photo ID is pending.
- 9.4.2 At least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement time of each Junior match, team managers shall inspect the opposition Match Report and identify/reconcile opposition players, standing with their ID cards, against the Name and ARU Registration numbers.

- 9.4.3 If an ID Card is not presented for a player, the player concerned cannot participate in the match, except under the provisions of Clause 9.4.1. If more than one player in a team does not have an ID Card the provisions of forfeits and playing numbers (clauses 4 and 5 above) shall be invoked.
- 9.4.4 Any discrepancies or irregularities shall be reported on the Form 'Registration and Player Identification Irregularities' provided and submitted to the VRU Office with own Match Report on the Monday immediately following the Match.
- 9.4.5 If a Team Manager, who has a player/s with an existing ID Card challenged for eligibility by the opposition Team Manager, is satisfied that his player/s are correctly identified, registered and playing in the correct Age group then the player/s concerned shall be permitted to play. No player who has an ID Card shall be refused permission to play unless both managers agree that the player or players concerned are unable to be proven eligible.
- 9.4.6 The failure of a Team Manager to check the eligibility of opposition players when the opposition Match Report, players and ID cards were available prior to the commencement of the match, rescinds the right of that Manager to either challenge or report any potential ineligibility of an opposition player both during and following the match.
- 9.4.7 The failure of a Team Manager to present to the opposition Manager the Match Report, players and ID cards within a reasonable period prior to the commencement of a Match shall invoke the provisions of the Forfeit as covered under Clause 4. A reasonable period is defined as up to 15 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement time of the Match but can be reduced to five minutes if special circumstances permit.
- 9.4.8 Following the match and after the referee has signed the match reports, both Team Managers shall present the duplicate (blue) copy of his/her Match Report to the opposition Manager to retain for their record.
- 9.4 Non competition games – Under 6s, 7s, 8s and 9s.
- 9.4.1 Every player in the Under 6, 7, 8 and Under 9 age groups shall be registered on MyRugbyAdmin. Their team manager/coach must produce copies of every player's signed registration forms, on request by any VRU Officer or appointed VRU Official.
- 9.4.2 It is the responsibility of the Club Junior Coordinator to ensure that their Junior players have supplied authentic documentary evidence of their birth dates, of which a registered number or Reference is to be entered onto the ARU Membership Form (beneath the "verified proof of identity and age") on the lower right hand side of the Registration form.
- This evidence must consist of an original of either:
- (i) A birth certificate; or
 - (ii) An extract of entry of birth; or
 - (iii) A current passport; or
 - (iv) Official documentary proof from their country or state of birth; or
- Note: Baptism Certificates shall not be accepted proof of birth age.
- 9.4.3 Random checks shall be undertaken by duly authorised personnel appointed by the VRU to ensure compliance by all teams.
- 9.4.4 The failure for any player or his/her team management to produce the required information on request shall result in that player not being permitted to participate in matches on the day.

9.4.5 Clubs which are “repeat offenders” at playing non registered players or players without ID shall be, after the first written warning from the VRU, liable for a **fine not exceeding \$200** for each subsequent offence and shall be asked to show cause to the VRU as to why the team should not be excluded from any further participation.

10. **Mercy Rule**

10.1 Competition Age groups – **Under 11** to Under 14.

10.1.1 If the difference in score between two sides competing in the **Under 11s** to Under 14s Age group competitions reaches 50 points then the Referee shall stop the game and declare the match completed, irrespective of normal time remaining.

10.1.2 For recording purposes the match shall be declared a victory to the winning team with the appropriate competition and scoring points awarded to both teams based on the completed score.

10.1.3 If sufficient time remains before the commencement of scheduled following fixtures, both team coaches shall liaise with the Referee to arrange to play another friendly game of Rugby or ‘Ruck Touch’ or similarly suitable games pursuant to 10.1.4 below.

10.1.4 The “friendly” game of Rugby or Ruck Touch shall be conducted with both teams merging their players, with teams selected equal in numbers and ability, in order to achieve a fair balance.

10.2 Competition Age groups – Under 16 and Under 18.

10.2.1 If the difference in score between two sides competing in the Under 16 to Under 18 Age group competitions reaches 50 points then the Referee shall stop the game and declare the match completed, irrespective of normal time remaining.

10.2.2 For recording purposes the match shall be declared a victory to the winning team with the appropriate competition and scoring points awarded to both teams based on the completed score.

10.2.3 If sufficient time remains before the commencement of scheduled following fixtures, both team coaches shall liaise with the Referee to *either*

- arrange to play another friendly game of Rugby with the winning team reducing the number of players in their team to two less than the losing team (providing this still allows for a minimum of eleven players in that team), *or*
- comply with clauses 10.1.3 and 10.1.4 above.

10.3 Coaches, in conjunction with the Referee, shall be expected to encourage the development and enjoyment of the game for all participants by co-operating on such “friendly” initiatives as mentioned in clauses 10.1 and 10.2 above.

10.4 The Referee shall be required to report to the VRU any incidences of junior club officials not co-operating to offer such opportunities of enjoyment and participation to players. In such cases the VRU shall investigate and ask the Clubs to report on the matter and its proposed course of action.

10.5 The failure of any Club to satisfy the VRU regarding its course of action in accordance with Clauses 10.3 and 10.4 above, or a repeated infringement by the same team shall lead to the loss of competition points by the offending team for the match(es) concerned, or fines, or both.

11. Assistant Referee (Touch Judge) bonus point.

- 11.1 A Bonus Point will be awarded to a junior team (**Under 11-Under18**) who supply an accredited Assistant Referee (Touch Judge) to officiate their match.
- 11.2 **The Assistant Referee must document their Accreditation # and signature on the teams match report prior to the Match Referee signing off on the validity and accuracy of the Match Report.**

12. Re-Grading

- 12.1 Re Grading of the **U11**, U12, U14 and U16 competitions will take place after Round 4.
- 12.2 The VRU will determine if a team shall be regraded from the B Grade up to the A Grade or from the A Grade down to the B Grade.
- 12.3 Regrading shall take place once the VRU has investigated the team on the following criteria:
 - 12.3.1 On field performance after 4 competition rounds (including quality of opposition, Win/Loss ratio & % F/A).
 - 12.3.2 Number of registered players in the age group.
 - 12.3.3 Age of the registered players.

Note: The major determining factor for Re-Grading will be on field performance. Re-Grading will not be made solely on the age of the registered players. The age of players within their two year window, does not necessarily determine the teams capabilities or competitiveness in any grade.

- 12.4 Teams that are re-graded **shall** keep their competition points, when moving up or down a grade.
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