



COMBINED UNDER 8 & UNDER 9 GRADE

Rippa Rules

These rules are based on the official New Zealand Rugby Rippa Rules however have been varied to suit a weekly club based Rippa programme.

If teams are in a NZ Rugby Rippa event all Provincial Unions must strictly enforce and apply the New Zealand Rugby Rippa Rules, not these varied rules.

RULES FOR THE PLAYING OF RIPPA RUGBY

PLAYING AREA

- The playing area will not exceed 70 metres in length and 40 metres in width (same as U8 field configuration)
- The playing area will be clearly marked.
- The 7 players on a team will be the only people entitled to be on the playing area during a game. Coaches, substitutes and spectators must not be on the playing area during a game.

DURATION OF PLAY

- A game is made up of two halves of 20 minutes each.
- There will be a 2minute interval between the two halves.
- After half time the teams will change ends.
- A half can only end at the next stoppage in play after 20 minutes.
- A half cannot end on a penalty. If a penalty is signaled the team awarded the penalty shall be entitled to a free pass and the game will continue until the next stoppage in play.
- A rip is not a stoppage in play.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- There will be no more than 11 players in each team.
- Games will be played with a minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 9 players on the playing area at any one time. Both teams must have even playing numbers on the field.
- Except in the case of injury or a sending off, every player must play at least one half of each game.

SUBSTITUTES

- As per the National Rugby Policy the Half Game Rule must be adhered to.
- Substitutions can be made in either half, but only when the ball is out of play.
- An injured player can be substituted but only once the injured player has left the playing area. Any substitution of an injured player must be approved by the referee, and an injured player who has been substituted cannot rejoin the game.
- Players who are substituted at half time may rejoin the game when replacing an injured player under the above rules.

REFEREES

- The referee will carry a whistle.
- The referee will shout, "PASS!" when a rip has been made, and "TURNOVER!" after a sixth rip.
- The referee will blow the whistle to signal the start of the two halves or when play is to stop.
- The referee will signal to the team who is starting with a free pass, by pointing with an outstretched arm towards that team.

THE RIPPA BELT

- The belt is adjusted to fit the waist of the player and fastened so that two flags hang, one from each side.
- Velcro attach the flags, so they are positioned one on each hip.
- Care needs to be taken to ensure that for safety the tail of the belt is tucked away.
- Each team is distinguished by their playing jerseys.
- The belt must be worn outside the clothing, shirts tucked in and flags free so they can be ripped off.
- If a player accidentally loses a flag when they have the ball, the game will be stopped to allow the player to replace the flag. Once the flag has been replaced the game will restart with a free pass by the player in possession. The stoppage will not count towards the rip count.

BALL SIZE

- Size 3 Ball

ATTACKERS

- The ball carrier cannot fend defenders off using their hands, or the ball.
- The ball carrier cannot guard or shield their flags in any way.

DEFENDERS (RIPPERS)

- There is no contact in Rippa Rugby. Defenders (Rippers) ripping the flag off the belt of the ball carrier stops the ball carrier's progress.
- Defenders (Rippers) cannot physically touch the ball carrier.

STARTING PLAY

- One team starts each half of the game from the centre of the field with a tap and free pass.
- When a try is scored, the non-scoring team starts at the centre of the field with a tap and free pass.
- Tap & Pass for start of game or restarts to be rotated throughout the team.

FREE PASS

- To make a free pass, the player making the pass starts with the ball on the ground, moves the ball slightly forward using the side of their foot, then picks up the ball and passes the ball backwards to a member of their own team.
- The Defenders (Rippers) must remain five metres back from the player making the free pass. They cannot start moving forward until the ball leaves the hands of the player making the free pass.
- A free pass is also used to restart play at any time that play has halted and needs to be restarted.
- If the ball travels out of the field of play, the game is restarted with a free pass to the opponents of the side that was last to touch it immediately prior to the ball travelling out of play.
- Free passes cannot take place less than five metres from the try line.
- A free pass is also awarded to the non-offending team when their opposition infringes the rules, such as a forward pass, an offside or for not returning the flag to the ripped player.

RIP

- To complete a rip one of the two flags from the ball carrier's belt must be removed.
- The only person who can be ripped is the ball carrier.
- The Defender (Ripper) must stop, hold the flag above their head and shout "RIP!"
- The ball carrier must then pass the ball immediately (within three strides). He or she does not have to stop, return to the mark or roll the ball between their legs.
- Six rips in a row leads to a turnover in possession.
- After the ball carrier has passed the ball the Defender (Ripper) must hand the flag back to the player who then reattaches it to their belt before they rejoin play. If either of these players doesn't adhere to this, they will be penalised and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending team at the place of the infringement.
- If a player is ripped before the try line and doesn't pass before they get over the line, they restart play five metres out from the try line with a free pass. Restarting the rip count occurs when there is a turnover or when either team is penalised.

KNOCK ON

- When a player knocks the ball towards the opponents' try line and does not regain control of the ball before it touches the ground, another player or the referee, a free pass is awarded to the non-offending team unless an advantage occurs.

OFFSIDE

- Offside only occurs at a rip.
- When a rip is made, all players from the Defender's (Ripper's) team must get back until they are behind where the rip was made. Failure to do so results in a free pass to the team in possession and the rip count will restart at zero.
- If a player is offside and they intercept, prevent or slow down a pass, they will be penalized and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending team, unless an advantage can be played.

PASSING THE BALL

- The ball can only be passed by the ball carrier in a backwards direction.
- Attackers must not pass the ball forward, towards the Defenders' (Rippers') try line.
- Attackers cannot hand the ball to another Attacker.
- A free pass will be awarded to the opposition if an Attacker passes the ball forward or hands the ball to another Attacker.
- If the ball is not caught to conclude a pass but is not knocked on, play can continue.

KICKING

- There is no kicking of any kind in Rippa Rugby.

ADVANTAGE

- Not stopping the game when an infringement happens is called 'advantage'.
- Referees should play 'advantage' to the non-offending team if there is any chance that team may gain an advantage by there being no stoppage in play; i.e. if the non-offending team gains possession of the ball or retains the ball in circumstances that are more favourable than if the referee ruled a free pass.
- The referee should call 'advantage' followed by 'advantage over' if an advantage is deemed to have occurred.
- If no advantage occurs within a reasonable period, play restarts with a free pass.

GOING TO GROUND

- If the ball carrier intentionally goes to ground or a player dives on the ball, a free pass is awarded to the opposition.
- Players can dive for a try or dive on the ball for a try.

FAIR PLAY

- All players must play games in a positive spirit following the principles of good sportsmanship.
- In instances of verbal abuse, physical abuse, poor sportsmanship, intentional offending, repeated offending or any other actions deemed unfair play, dangerous play or misconduct, a referee may send a player from the playing area.
- If a player is sent from the playing area by the referee they must remain off for the remainder of that game. However, that player can be replaced by another player who has not been sent off.
- There shall be no intentional physical contact between players.

KEY POINTS

- Referees clearly call the "RIP" and the rip number
- Players must pass within three steps of a rip
- Ball must be passed backwards
- A knock on or forward pass results in a handover to the other team
- Penalties and restarts start with a tap and pass
- The ball must be forced on the ground for a try, just like tackle rugby
- Play as much advantage as possible
- Free kicks to restart play must have the ball placed on the ground, released and tapped with the foot
- Spinning to avoid a rip is ok but continuous spinning is not allowed