



RULE BOOK 2020

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RULE 1 - THE FIELD AND SIREN

1. Field of play

The field of play is rectangular in shape and measures 65 metres in length from try line to try line and 38 metres in width.

2. Siren blasts

One siren blast

This indicates the commencement and end of each half. If the ball is in 'play' when the single siren is heard, the game will continue until the ball is deemed out of play by the referee.

Two siren blasts

Two siren blasts indicate to players to take the field. Play will commence in one minute. The referee will ask to speak with the captain of each team and decide which team is in possession of the ball first. This can be done either by a mutual decision by the captains or guessing, which hand the whistle is in (hand hidden behind the referee's back).

Five siren blasts

Game has been discontinued due to player safety. Please make your way to the canteen area for further instruction.

RULE 2 - PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND ATTIRE

1. Eligibility

All participating players are to be registered with the Rouse Hill Rams Touch Football Division (RHRTF). Teams playing unregistered or unauthorised players (fill ins) will forfeit such matches and be warned of disqualification if future impeachments occur. Registered players must have played 4 games to be eligible for the finals games.

2. Permanent player replacements

Two (2) players may be permanently replaced in the normal rounds (1-10) with permission from the Club if they are injured or can no longer play. Changes must be emailed (prior to allowance) with the replacement players information, and evidence as to why they are replacing a registered player. The Club will advise if accepted. *Note: All players must have played a minimum of 4 games in the normal rounds to be eligible for the finals. If a player is a replacement this also applies. If a player is not on the Club's registration list the player cannot play.*

3. Playing Uniforms

All participating players must wear the playing shirt supplied by RHRTF as part of registration. Shorts (or bike shorts) and socks with footwear must not carry defamatory wording, slogans or pictures.

4. Footwear

Shoes with screw-in studs or cleats are NOT to be worn by any player. Light leather or synthetic boots with soft moulded plastic soles are permitted, provided individual studs are no longer than 10 mm in length, the measurement being taken from the sole of the boot.

5. Jewelry and fingernails

Players are not to participate in any match while wearing any item of jewelry, which might prove dangerous or become lost. Long or sharp fingernails are to be trimmed, taped or gloves worn. If jewelry with sharp edges i.e. rings cannot be removed they must be taped before the game commences. RHRTF accepts no responsibility for lost or damaged jewelry.

RULE 3 - GAME TIME, DURATION, WASHOUTS AND SCORING

1. Object of the game

The object of the game of Touch Football is for each team to score tries and to prevent the opposition from scoring.

2. Game time

The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between onside players of the attacking team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial advantage and score. Defending players prevent the attacking team from gaining a territorial advantage by touching the ball carrier either defending or attacking players may initiate touches upon which, play stops and is restarted with a play the ball between the legs, unless other rules apply. Each team has 6 attempts with the ball.

3. Duration

The match consists of 2 x 20 minute halves separated by a 5-minute break.

4. End of play

When time expires play is to continue until the ball is deemed dead by the referee. Should a penalty be awarded during this period, the penalty is to be taken.

5. Scoring

A try is awarded when a player (without being touched and other than the dummy half) places the ball on the ground or over the team's try line. A try is worth one (1) point. Upon scoring a try, you may be asked by the referee what your shirt number is.

We record each try scorer to ensure the final score is accurate.

6. The winner

The team who at the end of play has scored the most tries is declared the winner. In the event of neither team scoring or in the event of both teams scoring the same number of tries, a draw is declared.

7. Competition points

Points are awarded in competition matches as follows:

WIN: 3 POINTS

BYE: 3 POINTS

DRAW: 2 POINTS

LOSS: 1 POINT

FORFEIT: -1 POINT (score losing 5-0)

8. Washouts

In the event where a division only plays each team once in that season, a split round night will occur. The first half will be the washed out round and the second half will be the actual round.

If a split round cannot be played, the score at half time of the duplicate round in the currently run competition will account for and be recorded as the washout round's results. In the event of this not being possible, the washout round will be deemed no game points to either side.

9. Abandoned matches

If a match is abandoned due to any circumstances, the RHRTF shall decide the result based on individual circumstances.

10. Drawn matches

Each team shall receive 2 points for a drawn standard round match. For drawn finals please see Rule 18 - The Drop Off procedure.

11. Forfeit

If a team is not ready to play with a minimum of 4 players (mixed rule applies for mixed comps) when the single toot occurs, your team will incur the forfeit. This means a -1 point for the game and a 5-0 loss. The game may still be played if both teams want to play but the loss will still be recorded.

RULE 4 - TEAM COMPOSITION AND SUBSTITUTION

1. Number of players

A team consists of up-to fourteen (14) players, no more than six (6) per team of whom are allowed on the field at any time.

2. Composite competition (any mix of males and females)

In composite competitions (all junior comps), any combination of males and females can be on the field, as long as the maximum is six (6) players.

3. Mixed competition

In mixed competitions, the maximum number of males allowed on the field of play is three (3). The minimum male requirement on the field of play is one (1).

4. Game substitution procedure

Substitute players must remain on the side line area for the duration of the match. A substitute CANNOT enter the field of play until the player being substituted has crossed the side line. Substitutes can be made as many times as necessary. Players leaving or entering the field must not obstruct play and must enter from an onside position. All substitutes must be made on the one side of the field and without delay. The substitute must take place during active play. Contact does not need to be made between substituting players. Following the scoring of a try, players may substitute at will without having to wait for the substituted player to leave the field.

The start of play can only begin when there is six (6) or fewer players on the field of play.

RULE 5 - COMMENCEMENT/ RECOMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

1. Game start

Team captains are to toss a coin or choose the hand holding a whistle by the referee, the winning captain choosing to start the game with the tap or defending for the commencement of the first half.

The winning captain has the choice of direction of play for his team for the commencement of the match or tap off. The kickoff may not be quickly taken until at least four (4) defending players are onside or the attacking team is directed to so by the referee.

2. Attacking team

The attacking team is to start the match with a tap at the centre of the halfway line following the indication to begin play by the referee. All players of the attacking team are to remain behind the ball.

3. Method

The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball with either foot a distance of not more than one (1) metre, and retrieving the ball cleanly. Any player of the attacking team may take the tap.

4. Defending team

All players of the defending team are required to remain a distance of at least ten (10) metres from the tap off mark. Once the ball has been tapped with the foot the defending players can move forward from their positions to defend.

5. Recommencement of play

For the recommencement of play following a try, the team scored against will restart the match with a tap as described in Rules 6.1 and 6.2. The recommencement may not occur until at least four (4) defending players are onside or directed to so by the referee. Where the number of players on the field from the defending team falls below four (4), all players onside unless directed to do so by the referee.

6. Kicking

The ball cannot be kicked or played with the foot except when taking a tap or a play the ball. The dummy half can use the foot to control the ball.

RULE 6 – POSSESSION

1. General

Providing other rules do not apply, the team with the ball is entitled to six (6) touches prior to changing possession with the opposition.

2. Change over

Following the sixth touch or the loss of possession due to any other means, players of the team losing possession are to hand, or pass the ball to the nearest opposition player, or place the ball on the ground at the mark immediately.

Attacking players who request the ball are to be given the ball.

3. Ball to ground

If the ball is dropped to the ground a change of possession occurs. The spot for a change of possession is where the ball first made contact with the ground or where the attacking player dropped or passed the ball, whichever is of greater advantage to the team gaining possession. If a player places the ball on the ground and releases it short of the try line while attempting to score a try, the player is required to perform a rollball to restart play and a touch is counted. If a player does not release the ball from their hands, the match continues and no touch is counted.

4. Mishandled ball

If a player mishandles the ball and providing the ball does not go to ground, play is to continue.

5. Dummy half

If the ball, while still under the control of the dummy half contacts the ground in the in-goal area, possession is lost.

6. Intercepts

Intercepts by onside defending players are permissible. Following an intercept, play continues until the first touch is effected, a try is scored, or a stoppage occurs as a result of other actions.

7. In possession

In the attempt of catching the ball, a player is deemed in possession once the player first touches the ball. If the player is juggling the ball whilst attempting to control the ball in the catch and the ball is in the air, the player is still in possession of the ball and can be touched.

RULE 7 - PASSING

1. General

A player in possession may pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any onside player in the attacking team.

2. Forward pass

A player in possession is not to pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise propel the ball in a forward direction. Also, a player cannot deliberately pass, flick or throw the ball forward and regather the ball.

3. Passing into opposition

A player who deliberately passes the ball at or towards a defending player and thereby causes the ball to go to ground shall lose possession. However, if the defending player attempts to catch the ball or play at the ball and the ball touches the ground, the attacking team retains possession.

Play is restarted at the mark where the ball touched the ground or at a position of best advantage to the non-offending team. The touch count is restarted.

RULE 8 - THE PLAY THE BALL

1. When required

A player is to perform a play the ball under the following circumstances:

- When a touch has been effected.
- When possession changes due to the sixth touch.
- When possession changes due to the ball going to ground.
- When so directed by the referee.
- When possession changes due to an infringement.
- By an attacking player at a penalty or tap.
- When possession changes when the dummy half is touched (or places the ball on or over the try line) whilst in possession of the ball.
- When possession changes due to a player in possession of the ball running across the sideline.

2. How to play the ball

- The attacking player is to position themselves on the spot they were touched, face the opponent's try line, stand parallel to the sidelines, and can roll the ball backwards along the ground between the feet a distance of not more than one (1) metre.
- Alternatively, if the ball is on the mark, the attacking player may step over the ball without the ball rolling backward.

3. Attacking team

- Any other player of the attacking team may receive the ball from the play the ball and thus become the dummy half. The dummy half may pass or run with the ball. However, if touched, loses possession.
- The dummy half is not to hesitate in picking up the ball. The player who performs the play the ball is not allowed to block the defending team from gaining possession or touching the dummy half.



4. Defending team

All players of the defending team are to remain a distance not less than eight (8) metres from the mark for a play the ball. Defending players are not permitted to move forward of the eight (8) metre position until the dummy half has made contact with the ball.

5. Dummy half not in position

When the player in possession is required to play the ball without a dummy half in position, players of the defending team may move forward of the eight (8) metre position as soon as the ball leaves the hand/s of the player in possession and the referee calls play on. Should a defending player gain possession or the player that rolled the ball pick up the ball, the match is recommenced with a play the ball at the same mark to the defending team.

6. Voluntary play the ball

A player in possession is not to perform a play the ball unless a touch has been affected.

RULE 9 - THE TOUCH

1. General

Players of both teams are to use the minimum force necessary to effect touches. A touch may be made by either a defending player or a player in possession.

2. Ball accidentally knocked out of hands

If the ball is accidentally knocked from the hands of a player in possession during a touch, the touch counts and the player retains possession, and they are required to perform the play the ball. The touch count continues, unless it is the sixth (6th) touch in which a change over occurs.

3. Deliberately knocking the ball from the hands

A defending player CANNOT deliberately knock a ball from the attacking player in the act to slow play or achieve a change of possession.

4. Actions after a touch

After a touch has been effected, the player in possession is required to perform a play the ball. If the player does not roll the ball immediately at the touch mark, the player must return to the mark where the touch was performed as indicated by the referee.

5. Passing after a touch

A player is not allowed to pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a touch has been effected.

6. False claimed touch

A player must not call a touch unless a touch has actually been effected. If a defender claims a touch has been made, and the attacker claims they have not been touched, and the referee is unsure, the touch will count.

7. The mark

The mark for the play the ball is dependent on the position of the player in possession at the time of the touch not the defending player making the touch. When a team is attempting to gain a momentum the roll can only be performed within one (1) stride of the touch contact being performed.

8. Interference after a touch

Following a touch, the ball is deemed to be dead and is brought into play at the play the ball when the dummy half touches the ball or, if there is no dummy half in position, when the ball leaves the hands of the attacking player performing the play the ball. Defending players are not to interfere the play the ball, after a touch is made.

9. Touched while attempting to score

On the rare occasion, a player places the ball on the ground on or over the try line at the same time a touch is effected, the touch counts and a try is not awarded.

10. Touch on an offside defender

Should a player in possession of the ball initiate a touch with an offside defender who is making every effort to retire in a straight line backwards and remain out of play and not initiate a touch, the touch is to count.

5. Actions near the attacking try line

When a touch is effected within eight (8) metres of the attacking try line, a player in possession may move directly behind the mark a distance of up to eight (8) metres to the broken line to restart play with a play the ball.

6. Actions within eight (8) metres from defending try line

When a defensive player enters its defensive eight (8) metre zone, the defending team must move forward at a reasonable pace in an attempt to effect a touch on the player in possession. Once an attacking player enters the defending teams' eight (8) metre zone, the defending team is not obliged to move forward but cannot retire back towards their try line until a touch is made.

RULE 11 - BALL TOUCHED IN FLIGHT

- If the ball goes to ground following a defender's attempt to gain possession, the attacking team retains the ball and the touch count shall restart. This also applies if the defending player deliberately knocks the ball to the ground. The mark where the play the ball occurs is where the ball first makes contact with the ground or where the defender touched the ball, whichever is of best advantage to the attacking team.
- If a defending player touches the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play continues and the touch count restarts at the next touch.
- If an attacking player attempts to regather the ball after a deflection by a defender and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession and the touch count restarts.
- If the ball rebounds from a defending player, who has not made an attempt to retrieve it, and the ball goes to ground, a change of possession results. Play restarts with a play the ball where the ball first makes contact with the ground or where the ball rebounded from the defender, whichever is of best advantage to the team gaining possession.
- If a player mishandles the ball and even if in an effort to gain control, the ball is accidentally knocked forward into any other player, a change of possession occurs.



RULE 12 – OFFSIDE

1. Attacking team

A player in the attacking team is offside when a player is forward of the player who has possession or who last had possession.

Attacking players are to remain onside at a tap until the ball has been tapped.

2. Defending team

A player of the defending team is offside when the following rules are infringed:

- At the commencement.
- At the recommencement of play.
- At the play the ball.
- At the tap for a penalty.

RULE 13 - OBSTRUCTION

1. Attacking team

Players of the attacking team are not to obstruct defending players from attempting to effect a touch. A player in possession must not run behind the referee or other players in the in an attempt to avoid a touch.

2. Defending team

Players in the defending team are not to obstruct attacking players supporting the player in possession.

RULE 14 - PENALTY

1. General

A penalty is awarded for a breach by any player in accordance with these rules. The penalty may not be quickly taken until a mark is determined.

2. Penalty location

The mark for a penalty is normally at the location of the infringement unless otherwise detailed in specific rules. For infringements which occur on the boundaries, within eight (8) metres of the defending try line or outside the field of play, the location of a tap from a penalty is to be eight (8) metres in field (or on the eight (8) metre line) from where the breach occurred.

3. Method

The ball must be at or behind the correct mark prior to the tap being taken and tapped with the foot on the ground.

4. Attacking team

Players of the attacking team are to be behind the person taking the tap.

5. Defending team

Players of the defending team are to be 10 metres from the person taking at the tap unless defending their own try line and the penalty mark is closer than 10 metres.

6. Penalty try

A penalty try will be awarded if any action by a player or spectator deemed by the referee to be contrary to the rules or spirit of the game, prevented the attacking team from scoring.

RULE 15 – ADVANTAGE

The principle of advantage to the non-offending team is to apply at all times, providing some advantage is readily obvious. Once a team is given the advantage that team does not necessarily forfeit the right to other action as described in these rules.

RULE 16 - DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR

1. General

Players who breach the RHRTF rules are liable to penalties or other appropriate action according to the seriousness of the infringement. Penalties are to be awarded in accordance with applicable rules. Only team captains are permitted to seek clarification of a decision directly from the referee. An approach may only be made during a break in play or at the discretion of the referee.

2. Frequent breaches

A player who continually breaches the rules is liable for dismissal from the field. Team captains are responsible for the conduct of players in their respective teams.

3. Dismissals

Any player may be dismissed as follows:

Forced substitution

- In the case of minor issues, the referee may force a player to be substituted leaving equal number of players on the field in both teams. That player can only substitute another team mate after approximately five (5) minutes of play has passed.

Period of time

- A player dismissed for repeated infringements or any offence requiring more than a penalty is to move from the field of play and remain in a position behind the deadball line. The dismissed player CANNOT be replaced.

Remainder of match

- A player dismissed after any previous 'Period of Time' dismissal, or for an offence such as gross misconduct or a dangerous act is to take no further part in that match and is to move to and remain behind the deadball line.
- The dismissed player cannot be replaced and that player shall receive an automatic two (2) week suspension. If the said player plays in an other division then that player will also not be permitted to play in these divisions either until the two (2) week suspension is performed. If play is not scheduled due to a planned break in the season than that week will not be counted as part of the suspension.

4. Striking officials

Any player who is found guilty of striking and/or assaulting an official, referee or line judge is liable to de-registration from playing from the RHRTF competitions for life.

5. Disciplinary reports

Officials are required to submit dismissal reports.

6. Misconduct

Players guilty of misconduct will be penalised and could be excluded from the match.

Misconduct includes:

- Continual breaches of the rules.
- Swearing.
- Back-chatting referees or other match officials.
- Bad sporting behaviour.
- Fighting.
- Using physical force in making a touch.
- Attacking the head of an opponent.
- Tripping.
- Any other action which is not in the spirit of the game.

RULE 17 - THE REFEREE, LINE JUDGES AND TRY AREA

1. Officials

Manner of appointment

The appointment of all referees, line judges is by the RHRTF Committee.

2. The referee

The referee is the sole judge on matters of fact and is required to adjudicate on the rules of the game during play. The referee may impose any sanction necessary to control the match and in particular, award penalties for infringements against the rules.

3. Authority of a referee

Players, coaches and officials of both teams are under the control of the officiating referee.

4. Area of control

The playing area under the control of the referee extends from the boundaries of the field of play, to an area which covers substitute players and officials involved in the particular match.

5. Line judges

Line judges should be appointed to assist the referee with tasks associated with sidelines, try lines, and other matters at the discretion of the referee. Their normal duties include, indicating the ten (10) metres distance for taps from a penalty, controlling substitutions, matters of back play and other advice when sought by the central referee. RHRTF only uses line judges for finals.



RULE 18 - THE DROP OFF PROCEDURE

- When a **finals** match is drawn at the expiration of full time, the referee will wait until the ball is dead, stop play, then signal to the canteen control area that the game is drawn. Each team will recommence the drop off period with **4 players**, defending the same end of the field as at the end of play. Senior mixed teams must reduce to 2 females and 2 males.
- The drop off commences with a tap off at half way by the team that did not commence the match with possession.
- The game will commence with a 3 minute period of extra time.
- Whichever team leading at the expiration of the 3 minute period of extra time then that team will be declared the winner and the match complete.
- Should neither team be leading when a siren at the expiration of 3 minutes is sounded, the match will pause at the next touch or dead ball. Each team will then remove another player from the field of play.
- The game will recommence immediately after the players have left the field at the same place where it paused (i.e. the team retains possession at the designated number of touches). The game will continue until a try is scored, the first team to score will be declared the winner.
- All normal substitution rules apply.

TERMINOLOGY

1. Advantage

When a referee allows play to continue after an infringement in an attempt to give the non-offending team a benefit.

2. Attacking team

Attacking team has possession of the ball.

3. Attacking the try line

The line in which a team has to place the ball to score a try.

4. Dead ball

Dead ball means when play has stopped which includes the period following a touch until the ball is brought back into play at a play the ball. The period following a try or penalty, until the match is recommenced, and when the ball goes to ground and/or outside the boundaries of the field of play.

5. Defending try line

The line in which a team has to defend to prevent a try.

6. Defending team

Defending team is the team without possession of the ball.

7. Possession loss

To part with the ball.

8. Dummy half

The player who takes possession of the ball behind the player who performs the play the ball.

9. Field of play

The playing area bounded by the sidelines and try lines.

10. Forward

In a direction towards a team's own attacking try line.

11. Full time

The expiration of the time allowed for play.

12. Play the ball

The area between the person performing the 'play the ball' and the dummy half.

13. Substitute's area

One sideline is designated for changes, and is from anywhere from try line to try line. Players cannot sub from both sides of the field. During finals, an area will be defined on one side of the field and changes will be made from this area.

14. Mark

The spot where the attacking player was in possession at the time of the touch, the halfway line in the middle of the field or where a penalty is awarded and the referee points to the position where a tap is to be performed.

15. Offside

In a position forward of the referee for an attacking player and in a position liable to penalty for a defending player.

16. Onside

Onside means in a position whereby a player may legally become involved with play.

17. Penalty

The action by the referee in awarding a tap when a player or team breaches the rules.

18. Play the ball

The normal act of bringing the ball into play following a touch or a change of possession.

19. Ruling

The decision made by the referee as a result of particular circumstances.

20. Try line

Try lines are the lines separating the scoring area from the Field of play.

21. Sidelines

The side boundaries of the field of play.

22. Tap

The method of commencing the match, recommencing the match after half time and after a try has been scored. It is also a method of recommencing play when a penalty is awarded.

23. Try

The result of an attacking player, except the dummy half, placing the ball on or over the opposition's try line.

24. Touch

Touch is contact on any part of the body between a player in possession of the ball and a defending player. A touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and can be made by a defending player or by the player in possession.

