



01 May 2025

Tackle & Ruck Procedure for Age Grade Rugby: U11, U13 & U15

re: Introduction to Contact Procedure

PURPOSE:

To assist coaches, match officials, and players with a graduated return to full contact in match play. These pre-season match modifications are required for all U11s for the first two weeks and for the first series of games of week one for U13 and U15s. Law variations are provided for each age grade.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- ☒ Contact Confidence - we are allowing all players the opportunity to increase their confidence and competence!
- ☒ Coaches are to be on the field and active in managing contact areas - be vocal!
- ☒ Coaches are actively teaching the players to be safe and confident during the ruck and tackle.
- ☒ Coaches are encouraged to pause and slow the game down and provide teaching moments in the contact area
- ☒ Coaches with experienced players may agree to accelerate through the graded contact process as outlined in the age grade Tackle & Ruck procedures below.

DEFINITIONS:

Assist to Ground. For NEW to contact and/or less confident players

- Tackler makes noticeable contact with the ball carrier and the ball carrier's momentum is slowed but the tackle is not complete. The coach calls "PAUSE" to temporarily stop the game and then ALLOWS the tackler to COMPLETE the tackle. The ball carrier will go to ground and place the ball towards their own team, while the tackler takes them to the ground and rolls away from the tackle area.

Controlled Tackle. For FAMILIAR with contact and/or more confident players

- Increased physicality compared to "controlled take to ground" such that the ball carrier's momentum is visibly slowed and they leg drive through contact. The coach calls "Tackle" and the ball carrier falls to ground and places the ball while the tackler completes the tackle and rolls away. (Note: There is no PAUSE, the game is more free flowing)

U11 - coach on field / game manager

- Coaches on field are encouraged to manage the contact area and **teach as much as possible DURING the games!** In week 2 of the festivals begin including new/developing refs and allow them opportunities to work with this age group.

U13 & U15 - accredited match official where possible or coach/game manager

- Both Coaches and Match Officials are to be on field teaching and managing the contact area during the first match of pre season. Please meet with your match officials and coach of the opposition prior to the match to discuss contact concerns and processes.

CONCLUSION:

The Tackle & Ruck Procedure is ongoing indefinitely contingent upon annual review.



Tackle & Ruck Procedure: U11

COACH PROCESS: Prior to ALL MATCHES during Week 1 coaches MUST discuss the contact readiness level of their players and agree to the appropriate modifications outlined in the Introduction to Contact tables.

**** DURING THE HALF TIME BREAK COACHES MAY AGREE TO PROGRESS TO NEXT LEVEL**

U11 GRADED INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT - WEEK 1

MATCH 1 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 1st HALF **

TACKLE. Level 1 - Assist to Ground

- Defending player makes noticeable contact with the ball carrier BELOW the sternum **but** the tackle is NOT complete.
- Coach to allow the opportunity for the defending player to complete the tackle & ball carrier to place the ball properly and safely towards their own team.
- Coaches use the "PAUSE" option frequently - when contact is made, temporarily freeze the game enabling the tackle to be completed and build confidence in both the ball carrier and tackler.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! When a complete tackle occurs - great! Let the game play on as normal! Remember: We are building confidence which means we both ALLOW players opportunities to learn AND also demonstrate their tackle competency

RUCK. Level 1 - Uncontested, body position focus - 1v1.

- After the tackle is complete, Ball carrier to place the ball & remain in ruck. Tackler MUST roll away. east/west & join defensive line
- 1x support player from each team to come in contact over the ball.
- REQUIRED: Players make contact with shoulders in scrum/perfect rucking position but DO NOT CONTEST
- NO kneeling/hand touch/etc - Get them in the correct body position!
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

THESE LAW MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR 1ST HALF OF ALL WEEK 1 MATCHES.

MATCH 2 & 3 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 2nd HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!

RUCK. Level 2 - Semi-Contested, body position focus - 1v1

- After the tackle is complete, Ball carrier to place the ball & remain in ruck. Tackler MUST roll away. east/west & join defensive line
- 1x support player from each team to come in contact over the ball.
- REQUIRED: Players make contact with shoulders in scrum/perfect rucking position and may contest BUT ATTACK RETAINS POSSESSION. NO RUCK TURNOVERS.
- NO kneeling/hand touch/etc - Get them in the correct body position!
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

**THESE LAW MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR MATCHES 2 & 3 OF WEEK 1
GAMES WILL PROGRESS TO FULLY CONTESTED RUCKS IN WEEK 2.**



COACH PROCESS: Prior to ALL MATCHES during Week 2 coaches MUST discuss the contact readiness level of their players and agree to the appropriate modifications. Where appropriate they may agree to follow week 1 modifications.

**** DURING THE HALF TIME BREAK COACHES MAY AGREE TO PROGRESS TO NEXT LEVEL**

U11 GRADED INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT - WEEK 2

MATCH 1 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 1st HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!

RUCK. Level 2 - Semi-Contested, body position focus - 1v1

- After the tackle is complete, Ball carrier to place the ball & remains in ruck. Tackler MUST roll away. east/west & join defensive line
- 1x support player from each team to come in contact over the ball.
- REQUIRED: Players make contact with shoulders in scrum/perfect rucking position and may contest BUT ATTACK RETAINS POSSESSION. NO RUCK TURNOVERS.
- NO kneeling/hand touch/etc - Get them in the correct body position!
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

THESE LAW MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR 1ST HALF OF ALL WEEK 2 MATCHES.

MATCH 2 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 2nd HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested - 1v1

- [Follow U11 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)
- Ball carrier to place ball & remain in ruck. Tackler to roll away east/west & join defensive line
- 1x player from each team in contest in correct body position AND with full ruck contest - players to clear out the opposition. RUCK TURNOVERS BY "CLEARING THE SPACE" ALLOWED
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

MATCH 3 - Full Game

TACKLE. Level 3 - Full tackle with NO Assist to Ground or Controlled Tackle pauses

- [Follow the U11 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)
 - Full tackle below the waist, ball CANNOT be ripped from the ball carrier.

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested - 1v1

- As outlined above



Tackle & Ruck Procedure: U13

COACH PROCESS: Prior to ALL MATCHES during Week 1 coaches MUST discuss the contact readiness level of their players and agree to the appropriate modifications outlined in the Introduction to Contact tables. Should these modifications be deemed too advanced, please follow the U11 guidelines.

**** DURING THE HALF TIME BREAK COACHES MAY AGREE TO PROGRESS TO NEXT LEVEL**

U13 GRADED INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT - WEEK 1

MATCH 1 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 1st HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!

RUCK. Level 2 - Semi-Contested, body position focus - 1v1

- After the tackle is complete, Ball carrier to place the ball & remain in ruck. Tackler MUST roll away. east/west & join defensive line
- 1x support player from each team to come in contact over the ball.
- REQUIRED: Players make contact with shoulders in scrum/perfect rucking position and may contest BUT ATTACK RETAINS POSSESSION. NO RUCK TURNOVERS.
- NO kneeling/hand touch/etc - Get them in the correct body position!
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

**THESE LAW MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR MATCH 1 OF WEEK 1
GAMES WILL PROGRESS TO FULL TACKLE & CONTESTED RUCKS IN MATCHES 2 & 3**

MATCH 2 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 2nd HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

Important! Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested - 1v1, progress to 2v2

- [Follow the U13 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)
- Ball carrier to place ball & remain in ruck. Tackler to roll away east/west & join defensive line
- 1x player from each team in contest in correct body position AND with full ruck contest - players to clear out the opposition. RUCK TURNOVERS BY "CLEARING THE SPACE" ALLOWED
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

MATCH 3 - Full Game

TACKLE. Level 3 - Full tackle with NO Assist to Ground or Controlled Tackle pauses

- [Follow the U13 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested

- Apply World Rugby Laws of the Game. Recommended 3v3 max but no variations mandated, pick & go allowed



Tackle & Ruck Procedure: U15

COACH PROCESS: Prior to ALL MATCHES during Week 1 coaches MUST discuss the contact readiness level of their players and agree to the appropriate modifications outlined in the Introduction to Contact tables. Should these modifications be deemed too advanced, please follow the U13 or U11 guidelines.

**** DURING THE HALF TIME BREAK COACHES MAY AGREE TO PROGRESS TO NEXT LEVEL**

U15 GRADED INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT - WEEK 1

MATCH 1 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 1st HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

***Important!** Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!*

RUCK. Level 2 - Semi-Contested, body position focus - 1v1

- After the tackle is complete, Ball carrier to place the ball & remain in ruck. Tackler MUST roll away. east/west & join defensive line
- 1x support player from each team to come in contact over the ball.
- REQUIRED: Players make contact with shoulders in scrum/perfect rucking position and may contest BUT ATTACK RETAINS POSSESSION. NO RUCK TURNOVERS.
- NO kneeling/hand touch/etc - Get them in the correct body position!
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (no pick & go)

**THESE LAW MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR MATCH 1 OF WEEK 1
GAMES WILL PROGRESS TO FULL TACKLE & CONTESTED RUCKS IN MATCHES 2 & 3**

MATCH 2 - Full Game

MATCH 1 - 2nd HALF **

TACKLE. Level 2 - Controlled Tackle AND Assist to ground

- Defending player stops the ball carrier (i.e. hold up -or- slow down considerably) but tackle is NOT complete
- Coaches on field encourage players to complete tackles at a faster pace
- Coaches are encouraged to choose to PAUSE and allow players to complete tackles in situations they deem appropriate.
- Ball CANNOT be ripped from the hands of the ball carrier

***Important!** Tackles are completed while maintaining controlled contact area & awareness of developing players - the games are just a bit more free flowing now. Again, if a complete tackle occurs - play on!*

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested - 2v2

- [Follow the U15 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)
- Ball carrier to place ball & remain in ruck. Tackler to roll away east/west & join defensive line
- 1x player from each team in contest in correct body position AND with full ruck contest - players to clear out the opposition. RUCK TURNOVERS BY "CLEARING THE SPACE" ALLOWED
- Next attacking player to pass the ball from base (yes pick & go), Ball MAY be ripped from ball carriers hands

MATCH 3 - Full Game

TACKLE. Level 3 - Full tackle with NO Assist to Ground or Controlled Tackle pauses

- [Follow the U15 Age Grade Law Variations:](#)

RUCK. Level 3 - Fully Contested - 2v2

- Apply World Rugby Laws of the Game. Recommended 3v3 max but no variations mandated (yes pick & go)