

SAFEPLAY CODE



FOR



JUNIOR

RUGBY LEAGUE

(2002)

PHISOSOPHY

The **SAFEPLAY CODE** was developed to emphasise **SAFETY** and **GOOD CONDUCT** within the Game of Rugby League.

The Code is designed to provide the best on-the-field environment possible for the 'junior' game of Rugby League by actively controlling undesirable actions.

It has been introduced for players up to and including the Under 15 years age group. The ARL trusts that players, coaches, parents and supporters will wholeheartedly embrace the Code for the benefit of the players and the Game.

IMPORTANT NOTE

IT IS MANDATORY THAT A PENALTY KICK FOLLOW ANY ACT THAT TRANSGRESSES THE CODE OF SAFE PLAY.

ACTION, IN ADDITION TO A PENALTY FOR A BREACH, (I.E. SIN BIN OR REPLACEMENT IN MINI FOOTY OR MOD LEAGUE), IS DISMISSAL AT THE DISCRETION OF THE REFEREE.

Refer International Laws, Section 13, 1 (a) and Section 15 – Players Misconduct

THE CODE AND ITS APPLICATION**1. TACKLE ZONE**

- The Code:** TACKLES ABOVE THE ARMPITS ARE NOT PERMITTED.
- Application:**
- (a) When a ball-carrier is **running with an upright posture**, any tackle in which the defender's arms makes contact ABOVE the armpit, constitutes an infringement.
 - (b) It is an infringement for a defender/tackler to set upon the head or neck region of a ball-carrier.
 - (c) A defender, in front of a ball-carrier who is **diving or running** with a "**burrowing**" or "**stooped**" posture, is permitted to come in contact with the ball-carrier's shoulder through a "**block**" and tack provided the defender's arm extends down the **shoulder and trunk**, i.e. underneath the ball carrier.

2. DANGEROUS TACKLES

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (b), Page 38.

The Code: 2.1 THE TACKLER'S LEGS CANNOT BE USED TO TRIP OR IN A
(Use of Legs) THROW.

Application: The use of the legs in a tackle is not permitted. Using the LEGS (even if the defender has a hand hold on the ball-carrier) to TRIP or in a THROW constitutes an infringement.

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Note to Law 1 (a), Page 38.

The Code: 2.2 ADOPTING A CROTCH HOLD IS MISCONDUCT
(Lifting)

Application: Adopting a crotch hold i.e. by placing either hand or arm in the crotch region, is an **infringement**.

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (d), Page 38.

The Code: 2.3 NO VERTICAL LIFTING IN A TACKLE IS PERMITTED.
(Lifting)

Application: **VERTICAL LIFTING** in a tackle is an infringement.

No defenders, during the course of a tackle, are permitted to **vertically** lift the ball-carrier.

If a **vertical lift** is anticipated (by the referee) or is obvious, i.e. both feet of the ball-carrier have left the ground, the referee must immediately blow his whistle to prevent the tackle from continuing.

(This is not to be confused with tackles that, in the same motion, “knock” players off their feet).

A BALL-CARRIER CANNOT BE LIFTED AND DRIVEN

Application: A tackle that results in the ball-carrier being lifted and remaining off the ground while the tackler takes two (2) or more steps to drive the player, (in any direction and while the ball-carrier’s feet are off the ground) is an infringement.

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (d), Notes 1 (d), Page 38.

3. “SHOULDER CHARGE”

The Code: A DEFENDER CANNOT “**SHOULDER CHARGE**” A BALL-CARRIER TO EFFECT A TACKLE.

Application: A defender who RUNS at a ball-carrier and, **without attempting to tackle, grab or hold the ball-carrier**, charges to make contact with the shoulder or with the upper arm (tucked into the side), is guilty of an infringement.

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Considered “Misconduct” or “Dangerous Play”.

4. VICIOUS PALM

The Code: AN **ATTACKING** PLAYER CANNOT “**THRUST**” OUT AN ARM TO CONTACT THE DEFENDER ABOVE THE SHOULDER.

Application: Any **attacking** player who violently **PUNCHES** or **THRUSTS** out an arm or uses an outstretched stiff arm so that a hand or a fist contacts the neck, face or head of a defender commits an infringement.
(This section does not state that a player cannot legitimately ‘PALM’ the head, neck or face).

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (a), Page 38.

5. SLINGING

The Code: THE USE OF THE BALL-CARRIER’S ARM OR GUERNSEY TO SLING OR SWING THE PLAYER IS PROHIBITED.

Application: A defender who uses the arm or guernsey of the ball-carrier to SLING or SWING the player commits an infringement.

Law Book Reference: Section 11, Note to Law 1, Page 23.

6. SANDBAGGING (Flopping)

The Code: A DEFENDER CANNOT DROP OR FALL ON A PRONE PLAYER.

Application: It is an infringement for a defender to drop, dive or fall on a player in possession of the ball who is prone or stationary on the ground and not attempting to play-on.

(A simple hand-on completes the tackle).

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (e) & (i), Page 38.

7. SURRENDER (in the tackle) RULE

The Code: BALL-CARRIERS MAY SURRENDER IN THE TACKLE. WHEN SMALL AND/OR INEXPERIENCED PLAYERS ARE INVOLVED IN A “SURRENDER”, DEFENDERS MUST NOT COMPLETE THE TACKLE.

Application: This rule is designed to protect beginners and small players by minimising risk and eliminating excessively robust play.

The referee, NOT the player, calls ‘held’. Players who are at an obvious disadvantage because of low levels of ability/experience, are of small stature or show a lack of skill are to be protected when in possession of the ball and being tackled.

A halt to play is to be called (BY THE REFEREE) when these players submit to the tackle or are held, subdued or their progress is halted by **bigger or more experienced players**.

Failure by a tackler to respond to the referee’s call is an infringement.

Law Book Reference: Section 11, Law 2 (c), Note to 2 (c), Page 23.

8. VERBAL ABUSE / FOUL LANGUAGE

The Code: THE USE OF OBSCENE AND FOUL LANGUAGE, THREATENING OR DENIGRATING WORDS IS NOT PERMITTED.

Application: Verbal abuse, obscene language and sledging – inclusive of comments or words that THREATEN or DENIGRATE an opponent, referee or supporter is an infringement. (If the individual cannot be identified, then the team through the captain, should be cautioned).

Law Book Reference: Section 15, Law 1 (f), Page 38.

9. SCRUMS

The Code: NO PUSHING OR PULLING OR ROTATING IN A SCRUM IS PERMITTED.

Application: All scrums are to be DE-POWERED.

Scrums will form as per the following instruction –

“FORM, ENGAGE & HOLD”.

A team that deliberately **pushes, pulls** or **rotates** in a scrum is guilty of an infringement.

Once the ball has been fed into the scrum, **only** hookers may strike for the ball.

Second row players can **LIFT** a foot to rake the ball out of the scrum BUT **cannot** step forward over the ball to cause the ball to come out of the scrum.

Law Book Reference: Section 12, Law 4, Page 30.

It should be noted that every penalty under the Code should be accompanied by a caution and instruction to the player responsible for the infringement.

ADVANTAGE PLAY & THE CODE

A penalty kick **must** follow any infringement.

1. IF **NO ADVANTAGE OCCURS** the penalty is to be awarded immediately.
2. IF **AN ADVANTAGE OCCURS** the penalty is awarded either at the breakdown in play immediately after the misconduct occurred (unless a try is imminent) or where the act of misconduct occurred, whichever is the greater advantage to the non-offending team.
3. WHEN A TRY HAS BEEN SCORED in the same play in which the act of misconduct occurred **OR** in the immediate play thereafter (the imminent factor), the penalty kick, additional to the conversion, will be awarded in front of the goal posts. A kick at goal **must** be taken from the penalty kick (place or drop) and play restarted from the centre on the half-way line irrespective of the outcome of the kick.

A NOTE FROM THE LAWS OF MODIFIED GAMES

The 'Sin Bin' does not apply in the Mini Footy or Mod League games. Should a player be guilty of such conduct that "merits" suspension from the field for a time, then the referee is to advise the player's team captain of the problem and direct that the player be replaced for the remainder of that period of play during which the misconduct occurred.

A player's captain may be directed to replace the player for the remainder of the game should that player's misconduct warrant such an action. In this case the offending player cannot take any further part in the match.

A player replaced for a period (Mini) or a half (Mod League 11 and 12 years) who resumed playing in a later period/half **AND** is guilty of **further** misconduct **MUST** be dismissed without replacement (International Laws apply here).

IMPLEMENTING THE SAFEPLAY CODE

Advertising the Code

All parents, players, coaches and referees should familiarise themselves with the “Safeplay Code” before the commencement of the season and subsequent matches.

A cope of the “Code” should be available to all present at match venues and training sessions.

Referees

Referees are the key to successful application of the “Safeplay Code”.

Referees must be fully briefed on the detailed workings of the “Safeplay Code”.

The most suitable personnel to do this are State-appointed Coaching and Development staff or Referees’ Co-ordinators/Providers.

Coaches

Coaches are the other vital factor in ensuring that the Code is applied successfully.

All coaches must ensure that their players are aware of, and fully understand, the “Safeplay Code”.

Initial Matches

To ensure that all parties fully understand the Safeplay Code, a pre-match meeting should be held between the match referee and coaches and, where possible, team captains (for International Law games).

It may take a few matches for referees and players to become accustomed to the Code. During this period there may well be a little “under enforcement”. However, the right balance will soon be achieved as long as all concerned work together and realise that the Code will benefit all platers and the Game.

The original Safeplay Code was written by Graham Chaffey – NSWRL – and trialled by the NSWCRL in 1995.

February 2002.