

## **The Field**

The rugby field is 100 meters long from try line to try line and 70 meters wide. The 50 meter line marks the half way point of the field. There is a 10 meter and a 22 meter line on either side of the field. Two lines are marked 5 meters and 15 meters out for either touch line. The goal posts stand 6.4 meters tall and 5.6 meters wide. The distance from the crossbar to the ground is 3 meters.

## **Number of Players**

Each team must have no more than fifteen players on the playing field. Some matches may be played with fewer than fifteen players on each team. Matches between teams with less than fifteen players are covered by variations of the Laws of the Game specific to modified versions of the game.

## **The Scoring System**

### **Try**

A try is scored by grounding the ball in the opponent's in-goal area. Grounding the ball can be accomplished by holding the ball and touching the ground with it, pressing down on the ball when it is on the ground, or falling on the ball so that it is under the front of the body anywhere for the waist to neck. Five points are awarded for a try.

### **Conversion Kick**

When a player scores a try, it gives their team the right to score a goal by taking a kick at goal. The kick is a conversion kick. It can be a place kick or a drop kick. The conversion kick must be taken on a line through the place where the try was scored but parallel to the touchline. Two points are awarded for a successful conversion kick.

### **Penalty Kick**

When a team is awarded a penalty, it gives that team the right to attempt a penalty kick at goal. It can be a place kick or a drop kick. The kick must be taken on a line through the place where the penalty was awarded, no closer to the try line, and parallel to the touch line. Three points are awarded for a successful penalty kick.

### **Drop Goal**

A drop goal is scored by kicking a goal from a drop kick in open play. Three points are awarded for a successful dropped goal.

## **The Set Piece**

The set piece is a means of restarting the game. It includes scrums, line-outs, and restarts.

## Scrum

A scrum consists of 8 players from each team. Each team supplies 3 rows in the scrum:

Front Row: 2 Props (Numbers 1 and 3) and Hooker (#2)  
Second Row: 2 Locks (Numbers 4 and 5)  
Back Row: 2 Flankers (Numbers 6 and 7) and Number 8

- All players must remain bound in the scrum until the ball has left the scrum.
- All players who are not part of the scrum must remain behind the off-sides lines except the scrum-halves (# 9).
- The scrum-half from the team awarded the scrum feeds the ball into the left hand side of their scrum where it is hooked by the hooker (#2) to the Number 8's feet.
- The defending scrum-half may follow the ball as it progresses through the scrum so long as they stay behind the ball.
- The scrum is over when the ball emerges from the scrum.
- The ball may not be handled by any player while in the scrum (This includes the scrum-halves).

Scrum are awarded for the following offenses:

Knock-on:	The ball is fumbled towards the opposition's goal line.
Forward-pass:	A pass is received by a player in front of the passer.
Touch-down:	A player grounds the ball in their own try zone or propels the ball over their own dead-ball line after carrying the ball or propelling the ball over their own goal line.
Breakdown:	A contact situation that becomes static and the ball does not emerge from it.
Line-out:	The throw into a line-out is not straight. The non-offending side has the option of a scrum.
Restarts:	The ball does not travel the designated distance or goes directly out of play on a restart. The non-offending side has an option of a scrum.

## Line-out

- A line-out is awarded when the ball is carried or kicked over the touch-line. The team not responsible for the ball going out of play is awarded the line-out.
- The line-out takes place in an area marked 5 meters from the touch line and 15 meters from the touch line.
- The line-out usually consists of 7 players from each team standing a single file perpendicular to the touch line with a 1 meter gap between each team.
- The ball is thrown in from the touch line and must pass straight down between both lines of players who must compete for the ball by jumping.

- Players not in the line-out must remain behind the off-sides line (10 meters back from the line-out) until the line-out is over. The exceptions are the thrower (usually #2) and their opposite number and both scrum-halves (#9).
- Line-outs take place where the ball crosses the touch line. An exception to this is when a ball is kicked from outside the 22 meter line and does not land in play before crossing the touch line. In this case, the line-out occurs back in line from where the ball was kicked. The ball may be kicked directly into touch outside the 22 meter line only from a penalty.

## Restarts

There are three types of restarts:

- Kick-off
- Drop-out
- Fair catch or Mark

## Kick off

The purpose of a kick-off is to start the match, or to restart it after half-time interval or after a score. The team with the right to start the match shall kick-off with a place kick. After the half-time interval, their opponents shall kick-off with a place kick. The place kick is taken from the center of the field. The kicker may place the ball on sand, sawdust, or an approved kicking tee. After a score, the opponents of the scoring team shall kick-off with a drop kick. The drop kick is taken from or behind the center. (The center indicates the center of the 50 meter line)

- Ball must reach the opponent's 10 meter line, if not (and it is not first played by an opponent), the opposing team can:
  - re-kick
  - scrum at center field
- If the ball does not reach the 10 meter line and is first played by an opponent, the play continues.
- If it is kicked directly into touch, the opposing team has three choices:
  - The ball can be re-kicked
  - Scrum at center field
  - Accept the kick, then the throw in where it goes into touch.
- If the ball is kicked into the In-goal without having touched or been touched by a player, the opposing team has three choices:
  - Re-kick
  - Continue play
  - Scrum at center field
- Kicker's team: All of the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, a scrum shall be awarded to the opponents at the center.
- Opposing team: All of the opposing team must stand on or behind the 10 meter line. If they are in front of the line or if they charge before the ball is kicked, it shall be kicked off again.

## Drop-out

The purpose of a drop-out is to restart play after an attacking player has put or taken the ball into the In-goal, without infringement, and a defending player has made the ball dead there, or it has gone into touch-in-goal or on or over the dead-ball line. A drop out is a drop-kick taken by the defending team. The drop-out must be taken anywhere on or behind the 22 meter line, with a drop kick and the ball must cross the 22 meter line.

- If the ball does not cross the 22 meter line, the opposing team has two choices:
  - Have another drop-out
  - Have a scrum at the center of the 22 meter line and put in the ball
- The ball must land in the field of play. If it is kicked directly into touch, the opposing team can either:
  - Have another drop out
  - Have scrum at the center of the 22 meter line and put the ball in
  - All of the kicker's team must be behind the ball when it is kicked. If they are not, a scrum shall be formed at the center of the 22 meter line. The opposing team puts in the ball. However, if the kick is taken so quickly that the players of the kicker's team who are retiring are still in front of the ball, they will not get penalized. They must not stop retiring until they have been made on-side by an action of a teammate. They must not take part in the game until they have been made on-side in this way.

### **Fair Catch or "Mark!"**

The purpose of a fair catch (or "Mark!") is to give a defending player who is on or behind their 22 meter line an opportunity to stop play and protect themselves when fielding the ball from an opponent's kick. To make a fair catch, a player must be on or behind their 22 meter line. They must take a clean catch directly from an opponent's kick and at the same time shout "Mark!".

- A fair catch cannot be awarded from a kick-off.
- A free kick is awarded for a fair catch. The mark for the free kick is the place of the fair catch.
- A player may make a fair catch even though the ball touched a goal post or crossbar before they caught it.
- If an opponent unfairly charges the catcher after the referee has blown the whistle for a fair catch, a penalty kick shall be awarded.
- The player who made the fair catch takes the free kick. If they cannot take the kick within one minute, a scrum is formed at the mark of the fair catch and their team puts in the ball. If the mark is in the In-goal, the scrum is five meters from the goal line, on a line through the mark.
- Scrum alternative: The team of the player who made the fair catch may choose to take a scrum at the mark instead. They put in the ball.

### **The Tackle**

A player is tackled when carrying the ball in the field of play and a defender holds them and brings them to the ground or holds them so the ball touches the ground. When a player is tackled, the tackled player must play the ball immediately.

## The Breakdown

A breakdown occurs when a ball carrier makes contact with a defender and the ball is not passed to a support player. Breakdowns usually take two forms, a ruck or a maul.

### Ruck:

- A ruck occurs if a tackled player places the ball on the ground and one or more players from each team engage over the ball.
- Any player joining the ruck must stay on their feet and join the ruck from the hind-most foot
- The tackler and tackled player must not play the ball after it is set on the ground and should attempt to roll away from the ball.
- The ruck is over when the ball emerges from it.
- If the ball does not emerge from the ruck, the team going forward is awarded a scrum.

### Maul:

- A maul occurs when a player in possession is in contact with a defender while they are both on their feet and one or more players join the contact situation.
- Players joining the maul must do so from behind the hind-most foot and also stay on their feet.
- Players may not collapse the maul.
- If the ball does not emerge from a maul after it becomes stationary, a scrum is awarded to the team who did not carry the ball into the contact situation.

In summary:

Ruck: A bound mass with the ball on the ground

Maul: A bound mass with the ball off the ground

## Offside

In general play, a player is off-sides if they are in front of a teammate who is carrying the ball or a team-mate that last played the ball.

A player in an off-side position will not automatically be penalized but they must make an effort to get on-side. A player will be penalized if they interfere with play.

At a scrum, ruck, or maul, the offside line for each team is an imaginary line running through the hind-most foot of the last player in the scrum, ruck, or maul for the team or the player's goal line, whichever is nearer. The offside line extends across the pitch to both touch lines. The offside lines move with the scrum, ruck, or maul until they end.

### **Offsides at restarts:**

Kick-off: The 50 meter line is the offside line for the team kicking off. The 10 meter line is the offside line for the team receiving the ball.

Drop-out: The 22 meter line is the offside line for both teams.

## **Knock-on or Throw-forward**

### **Knock-on**

A knock-on happens when a player hits the ball forward with their hand or arm, or when the ball hits their hand or arm and goes forward. Also, when a player loses possession of the ball and it goes forward, and the ball touches the ground or another player before they can catch it. "Forward" means toward the your try zone.

### **Throw -forward**

A throw forward happens when a player throws the ball forward. "Forward" mean towards your try zone.

#### Outcomes

- For an unintentional knock-on or throw forward, a scrum is awarded at the place of infringement.
- For an unintentional knock-on or throw-forward at a line-out, a scrum is awarded fifteen meters from the touch line.
- Knock-on or throw-forward into the In-goal: If an attacking player knocks-on or throws-forward in the field-of play and the ball goes into the opponents In-goal and it is made dead there, a scrum is awarded where the knock-on or throw-forward happened.
- Knock-on or throw-forward inside the In-goal: If a player of either team knocks-on or throws-forward inside the In-goal, a 5 meter scrum is awarded opposite the place on infringement.
- Intentional knock-on or throw-forward: A player must not intentionally knock-on or throw-forward. A penalty kick or a penalty try will be awarded to the opposite team.

## **Role of Players**

There are a number of core skills that all players should have. As the game becomes more fluid, it is necessary for all players to have a higher degree of proficiency than was previously required.

The key skills are:

- Handling-the ability to receive and give a pass correctly timed under pressure
- Tackling
- Contact skills as a ball carrier
- Contact skills as a support player
- Kicking
- Ability to beat defender in a 1 on 1 situation
- Tactical awareness
- Positioning in attack (support play) and in defense
- Discipline and knowledge of the Laws of Rugby

Some skills are needed to a higher degree in players who play certain positions.

## Positional Role

A suggested checklist for position-specific assessment:

### Forwards:

Props (#'s 1 and 3)	Strong stable scrummagers Support for line-out jumpers Ball control on contact (retention and distribution) ability
Hooker (#2)	Accurate throw in line-outs Win own ball in scrums and use of channels Flanker role at lineout Ball winning, retention, and distribution
Locks (#'s 4 & 5)	Strong scrummagers Ability to win ball in a line-out Ability to win possession on kick-offs Good body position in rucks and mauls, and driving ability
Blind Side Flanker (#6)	Strong defender in close quarters Ability to win ball in a line-out Speed and high work rate Ability to support attacks Ability to regain ball at breakdown

Open Side Flanker (#7)	Speed and high work rate in defense and attack Ability to secure possession at break down Ability to put pressure on opposing midfield Strong tackler Ability to support attacks
Number 8  breakdown	Ability to win line-out ball Control at back of scrum High work rate Strong defender Ability to support attack and regain ball at
Scrum Half (#9)	Swift and accurate passes with both hands Kick with both feet Cool head under pressure Ability to threaten defense Tactician: use of blind side and of forwards
<b>Backs:</b>	
Fly Half (#10)  attack  defender  throw long passes	Tactician Cool head under pressure Kick accurately with both feet in defense and  Ability to threaten defense and to beat the  Fast and accurate in handling, including ability to  Communication with backrow and midfield Pressure defender Positioning and running lines
Centers (#12 and #13) support   ball	Controlling the ball in contact as a carrier and  Quick hands under pressure Strong defender Tactical kicks High work rate-chasing kicks and supporting the  Ability to beat the defender Alignment and angle
Wingers (#11 and #14)   kicks	Finishing ability- (speed and evasion) Positional sense in attack and defense Fielding ball under pressure Clearance kicks Work rate - covering from blind side and chasing  Keeping ball alive Counter attack Tackling

Fullback (#15)

Fielding under pressure  
Ability to kick accurately with both feet  
Positioning in defense  
Recognition of when to counter attack  
Penetration and distribution in attack  
Tackling