



## **Rules For Rippa Rugby**

### **Introduction**

Rippa Rugby is a game for young rugby players. It is a very safe, noncontact, easy-to-play game for both boys and girls alike. Best of all it's fun and exciting for all involved. While the rules are simple and the game easy to learn, Rippa Rugby will promote excellent ball-handling and running skills, and give all kids a chance to participate in our national game. The New Zealand Rugby Union is proud to recommend Rippa Rugby and we are sure it will give the kids in your team a fun, safe and enjoyable sporting experience.

### **Objective Of The Game**

The object of the game is to score a try by grounding the ball behind or on the opponents' try line. A try is worth five points. To prevent a try being scored the defenders must rip the flag from the belt of the ball carrier. This forces the ball carrier to pass the ball. Six rips against the attacking team in one set of possession results in the ball being turned over to the defending team.

### **How To Play**

#### **Dimensions Of Field**

The field of play is up to 70 metres in length and up to 40 metres wide. Rippa Rugby can be played in pretty much any open space; however we recommend half a rugby field from the halfway line to the goal line (they form the side lines) of a full rugby field. The field size can be adjusted to cater to the number of players or their age (for example goal line to 10 metre line).

Where possible the field should be marked with cones or markers so that the players can easily tell the size of the playing field. The 'try-scoring area' (in-goal area), should be five metres deep from the try line and clearly marked if possible with cones.

#### **Duration Of Play**

A game is made up of two halves. It is recommended that each half lasts for 20 minutes, with a two-minute interval at halftime.

#### **Number Of Players**

Rippa Rugby is played between teams of equal numbers of players. It is ideal to have no more than 7, and not less than five players but this number can be varied to suit the field size, team size or number of players available.

#### **Substitutes**

Each side should agree on the number of substitutes. Substitutes can be used at any time but they can only be made when the ball is 'out of play' or at halftime. The referee must be told of these substitutions.

#### **Coaches/Referees**

During the match, coaches of both teams can referee or direct the game from on the field, behind their respective teams. (Perhaps half a game each for refereeing can be an option).

If there is only one coach/teacher, the game can be easily played with one referee.



## **The Rippa Belt**

The belt is adjusted to fit the waist of the player and the two flags hang from both sides. Velcro attaches 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 the colour of the flags they wear. The belt must be worn outside the clothing, shirts tucked in and flags free so they can be ripped off.

## **Attackers**

On attack, the ball carrier should run forward and the other players should run in support ready to receive a pass. The ball carrier can evade opposition but should pass to teammates in a better position if there is no space to run into. The ball carrier cannot fend defenders off using their hands, or the ball, and cannot guard or shield their flags in any way.

## **Defenders (Rippers)**

Players should run forward so they can reduce the space between them and the attacker, and move into a position where they can rip the flag from the ball carrier. There is no contact in Rippa Rugby; ripping the flag off the belt of the ball carrier makes a tackle. Defenders (Rippers) cannot physically touch the ball carrier.

## **Rules Of The Game**

### **Starting Play**

One team start or restarts the match from the centre of the field with a free pass. When a try is scored, the non-scoring team starts at the centre of the field with a free pass.

### **Free Pass**

To make a free pass, the player taking the pass starts with the ball on the ground, moves the ball slightly forward using the side of their foot, picks up the ball and makes an accurate pass.

The opposition team must remain 5 metres back from the free pass. They cannot start moving forward until the ball leaves the hands of the player taking the free pass. A free pass is also used to restart play on any turnover of possession, or at any other time that play has halted and needs to be restarted.

If the ball is carried out of the field of play, the game is restarted with a free pass to the non-offending side. Free passes cannot take place less than 5 metres from the try line. The free pass is taken from the point where the ball went out.

A free pass is also awarded to the non-offending team when the opposition infringes the rules, such as:

- A Forward pass
- An offside
- Not returning the flag to the ball carrier
- Pushing, tackling, fending or kicking the ball
- Hiding or shielding flags
- Diving on the ball on the ground
- Continuing to run more than 3 strides after the rip and does not pass the ball



### **Ripping (Tackle)**

To complete a 'rip' one of the two flags from the ball carriers belt must be removed. The only person who can be ripped is the ball carrier. The ripper stops, holds the flag above their head and shouts "RIP!" The ball carrier must then pass the ball immediately (within three strides is a good guideline). 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 ripper must hand the flag back to the player who then reattaches it to their belt before they re-join play. If either of these players doesn't adhere to this, they will be penalised and a free pass awarded against them at the place of the infringement.

### **Knock On**

When a player knocks the ball to the ground towards the opponents' try line, a free pass is awarded to the non-offending team unless an advantage can be played.

### **Offside**

Offside only occurs at the rip. When a rip is made, all players from the ripper's team must get back until they are behind where the rip was made. Failure to do so results in possession changing to the opposition team and the game resumes with a free pass. If a player is offside and they intercept, prevent or slow down a pass, a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending team.

### **Passing The Ball**

The game has been designed to encourage passing. The ball can only be passed in a sideways or backwards direction. There are no forward passes and it cannot be handed to another player. A free pass to the opposition will be the result of either occurring. If the ball is passed sideways or backwards landing on the ground and bounces forward, this is not a knock on or forward pass. Either team may re-gather the ball remaining on their feet to continue play.

### **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 they may get the ball. The referee should call 'advantage' followed by 'advantage over' if the referee deems the team has gained a real advantage. If no advantage occurs play restarts with a free pass.

### **Going To Ground**

If the ball carrier 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.

### **Refereeing The Game**

Make sure you have a whistle, know the rules and try to play advantage wherever possible.

1. Shout "RIP and the rip number (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)" and "PASS!" when a rip has been made.
2. Blow the whistle when and only when play is to stop.



3. Signal to the team who starts with a free pass by pointing with a horizontal outstretched arm towards that team.

When referee must blow the whistle to start, re-start and finish both halves of the game.

When a try is scored the referee blows the whistle and extends the other arm straight above the head to signal the try.

#### **Other Points**

If a player accidentally loses a flag when they have the ball, stop the game, replace the ribbon and restart with a free pass to the team that was last in possession where play was stopped.

If a player is 'ripped' before the try line and they don't pass before they get over the line, they restart play five metres out from the try line with a free pass.

If a player goes to ground with the ball, except in a try-scoring movement, play restarts with a free pass awarded to the opposition.

If the ball gets dropped during a pass but is not knocked on, play can continue. However players must pick up the ball from a standing position.

If the referee must stop the game for any reason other than for an infringement of the rules by a team (for example an injured player), play restarts with a free pass to the team last in possession at the place where play was stopped.

#### **Further Information**

For a copy of this document '**Rules For Ripia Rugby**' go to the North Harbour Rugby Union website and click on the tabs GENERAL INFORMATION and then FORMS, RULES & FORMATS.

For detailed information about Junior Club Rugby in North Harbour Rugby Union click on the following link:

<http://www.harbourrugby.co.nz/media/documents/Junior%20Club%20Rugby%20Rules%202013.pdf>