



## Fundamental Disability Tag Laws

Below is an overview of the laws for playing tag rugby as part of the IRFU Tag Rugby Disability Project.

**TAG Rugby:** a non-contact form of rugby where a 'tackle' involves removing a 'tag' which is attached to the shorts of the ball carrier. Each side has six 'tags' to score a try, or the ball goes over to the other team.

### The Basics

- The rugby ball always gets passed backwards. You must try to stay behind the ball at all times.
- Play within the marked pitch area. (Good coaching practice suggests that the scoring try lines are marked with red and yellow cones/flags and the sides are marked with white cones).
- If you hear the referee's whistle stop, look and listen
- To tackle, you remove a tag from the person who has the ball.
- When tackled, stop, put the ball on the ground between your feet and roll the ball backwards gently. This is called a ruck ball.
- To score you must place the ball down over the try line (diving is not allowed).
- No contact with any other player is allowed.

### Players

- There are 2 age groups Under 15 and Over 15 (with 2 groups per age group)
  - Stage 1 = One on field assistant allowed to support players/No on field support required
  - Stage 2 = Two on field assistants allowed to support players
- A team must have no more than 7 players on the field at any time. Rolling substitutions with max of 15 players per team.
- A player must not wear any item that is sharp or abrasive. Players can wear sports goggles that have been approved by a qualified optician.

### Coaching Support:

- Coaches/on field assistants are there to ensure the continuity of the game they must not influence the outcome of the game.
- Coaches/on field assistants cannot score, tackle or obstruct a ball carrier. In circumstances where a game has become so one sided referees can instruct coaches when they can tackle however they will still not be allowed to score.
  - Coaches may wear clothing that will make them easily identified e.g. bright coloured top

### Wheelchairs:

- The person pushing the wheelchair will wear the tags and a tackle will be made in the normal fashion.
- If the ball is passed to the wheelchair player and the ball touches any part of the wheel chair the pass will be judged to be complete. Play will stop until the wheelchair player secures the ball. When the ball is secured by the wheelchair player play will resume with a free pass if appropriate.
- With a free pass the opposition must withdraw 5 metres (defensive line) to facilitate the restart.

N.B. Where a wheelchair player is involved in a game coaches/volunteers and referees must take steps to create a safe and inclusive environment for everybody involved e.g. suitability of the playing surface; all players should be made aware of the application of the laws relating to wheelchair players; spatial awareness on the field of play.

### Scoring:

- In all games, a try scored shall be worth 1 point.
- Each side has six 'tags' to score a try. If no try is scored after the sixth 'tag', the opposition gain possession of the ball and restart with a tap kick.
- When a try is scored **the team that has conceded the score will restart play** with a tap-kick from the halfway line.

### Try definitions:

- Stage 1 – the ball should be touched down (the on field assistant must encourage the touch down over the try line).
- Stage 2 – getting the player and ball over the try line

**Duration of Game:**

A match shall last 10 minutes with no half-time turn round.

**Playing area:**

Depends on the age group and the number of participants. Can vary from 10m X 20m to 30m X 40m to 50m X 70m

**Defending team:**

- The defending team attempts to halt the running progress of the attacking team by tagging the ball carrier
- When a tag is removed, the defender should shout 'tag' loudly and hold it in the air where the tag was made. The tag is then returned to the player or placed on the ground where the tag was made and assume a marker position (i.e. a position 1 metre directly in front of the player who has been tagged), or return to the defensive line.
- A player may defend with 1 or no tags, however if he/she receives the ball he/she must play the ball immediately i.e. pass
- A defender must not deliberately obstruct a ball carrier or a member of the other team who does not have the ball.
- At ruck ball situations the defensive line (except the marker) must be at least 5 metres back from the ruck ball.
- All defensive lines must be at least 5 metres back from the player with the ball.
- An attacker with one or no tags shall be deemed to have been tagged if a defender comes within tagging distance.
- If it is a simultaneous tag and off load, the referee will take no action, he will call 'Ball away'
- The marker cannot run around and retrieve the ball from the scrum half position. The scrum half must be allowed to pass the ball and cannot be tagged.
- The defending team can gain possession of the ball by:
  - An opposition pass can be intercepted
  - Gathering a dropped ball

**Attacking team:**

- The attacking team carries the ball downfield, running/passing to score a try by placing the ball over or behind the opposition try line. No forward passing is allowed. In the event of a forward pass the non-offending team will be given possession and restart the game with a tap-kick.
- A Try will not be awarded if the attacker in possession of the ball falls or dives over the try line and in doing so prevents a tagging.

- If an attacker in possession of the ball is tagged in the in-goal area before he/she scores a try, he/she shall be asked to conduct a ruck ball 5-metres out from the try line.
- If a player in possession is tagged behind their own try line, his/her team will restart play with a tap-kick from the point of being tagged at the 5-metres centre of their try line.
- A player in possession must not attempt to bump or fend off a defender in their attempts to remove a tag nor whilst chasing the ball.

### **Kicking:**

- Kicking the Ball is not allowed except in the following situations:
  - Games will be started/restarted (following a try/penalty) be by way of tap-kick.

### **Knock-Ons:**

- A changeover will be awarded to the non-offending team in the case of a knock-on. A deliberate knock-on will be penalised.

### **Penalties:**

- Penalties are taken by way of a tap-kick. A ruck ball action can be used instead of taking the tap-kick.
- The offending team must retire 5 metres from where the penalty is to be taken.
- Further misconduct by the offending team shall allow the referee to advance the mark of the penalty once only, by five 5 metres.

### **Ball in touch:**

- If a ball or attacking player carrying the ball crosses the touchline, play is restarted by a tap-kick taken by the non-offending team.

### **Foul Play:**

- In the event of misconduct, the referee shall:
  - A: Work with the coach/on-field assistant to manage the situation.
  - B: Where a player is guilty of Repeated Infringements, the Referee shall request the player is replaced through the on field assistant / coaching team.

A penalty should only be awarded to a team for serious foul-play by a member of the opposition team. Coaches and referees should 'coach' players during the game to minimise foul-play. The referee will always try to keep the game flowing by playing 'the advantage'.