

**PART  
ONE**

**MINI**



**FOOTY**

**MINI FOOTY  
AND  
MODIFICATIONS OF THE LAWS OF THE  
(ADULT) GAME**



**NOTE**

**THESE LAW OUTLINES  
SUPERSEDE ANY  
PREVIOUS OUTLINES  
ISSUED PRIOR TO  
1 - 1 - 2004**

**IMPORTANT**

- **These laws are the only official Laws of Mini Footy.**
- **Unauthorised alterations are strictly forbidden.**
- **There are to be no unauthorised interpretations.**

## NOTE

The Laws of the (adult) Game of Rugby League shall apply in MINI FOOTY subject to the following modifications (and ONLY THESE MODIFICATIONS) where applicable.

### GENERAL

- (1) Classification of groups is by age. Age applies as on January 1 of each year ... or, as determined by the local J.R.L.
- (2) Mini Footy is to be used for ages up to and including 8 Years, with an option for 9 years if justifiable conditions exist.
- (3) Players, in the same level of competition, must be of the same age group.

### TEAM/PLAYING TIME

- (4) Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is 8. When more than 8 players are in attendance at a match then all players **MUST** play in accordance with Law 7.
- (5) The minimum number of players allowed on the field per team per match is 6. Should less than 6 players be present then, for safety reasons, the match should be forfeited. (See also Law 25, p.14)
- (6) All matches are to be played over three ten (10) minute periods with a three (3) minute interval between periods.
- (7) Each player is to play a **MINIMUM OF ONE UNBROKEN PERIOD** of ten (10) minutes. [This is a MINIMUM and all present should be given the maximum amount of time possible on-field.]

A player, having played an UNBROKEN period of play and been replaced, may be used at a later period as a replacement for a player who has also completed an unbroken period of play and not been replaced, or, for a player who has been injured or suspended....see Law No. 25, p.14.

- (8) A player may be **temporarily** replaced if injured - but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent. The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play (to comply with Law 7).

**NOTE:** (1) Temporary replacement of three (3) minutes is to count as part of the injured player's playing time ... refer to Law 7.

- (2) Should a "blood bin" situation arise, the three minutes of injury time limit does not apply.

- (9) Each team shall consist of three forwards, a half-back and four other backs.

## **FIELD/BALL**

- (10) The field measures 68 metres x 30 metres for ages up to 8 years. If a League wishes to play Mini Footy at 9 years, the field may be increased to measure 68 metres x (maximum of) 40 metres. A full description is given under "Field of Play". MINI FOOTY goalposts - see under "Mini Footy Goalposts".
- (11) The "Mini" game has its own "mini" ball. A full description and details of the ball are under "Mini Footy Ball" later in this outline.

## **TACKLES/TACKLE COUNT**

- (12) Possession is retained for a period of four (4) tackles ... unless a nullification of the count occurs in that time. The referee will both signal and call out the number of tackles with the "3rd and last" being signalled by the raising of an arm vertically with three fingers fully extended. On the fourth (4th) tackle (or at any change of possession) the referee will blow the whistle and signal the change of possession in accordance with International Law. The tackle count will commence after each set play or change of possession. There will be no count at the tackle occurring -
- (i) after a player fields a kick from a start of play, penalty kick or free kick and is tackled before passing the ball;

- (ii) after a player who (1) picks up a ball dropped by an opponent; (2) intercepts a pass; or (3) gains possession immediately after the ball has been deliberately played by an opponent - and, is tackled before passing the ball.

On each of these occasions the tackle count commences at the NEXT tackle.

## **TACKLES/SAFE PLAY**

To ensure safe play in Mini Footy, the following must be observed.

- A** When a tackle is being effected, NO CONTACT is permitted above the armpits.
- B** At any tackle, the ball-carrier MAY NOT BE tripped; slung or thrown; or lifted from the ground to be then driven to the ground to effect the tackle.
- C** The shoulder charge is NOT PERMITTED under any circumstances.

## **NOTE**

- (1) Such occurrences are to be considered as dangerous and a penalty awarded.
- (2) Early “intervention” in these situations on the part of a referee will protect smaller players or those newer to the game.
- (3) In Mini Footy, “surrendering” (voluntary tackles) is permissible and, when it occurs, the tackler must not complete the tackle. Any player involved in the tackle may not drop, or fall, on the prone player.
- (4) The ball-carrier, at a tackle, may not thrust out an arm, palm of hand or fist to contact the tackler anywhere above the shoulder.
- (5) There is to be NO “stripping” or stealing the ball in ANY tackle situation.

## PLAY - THE - BALL

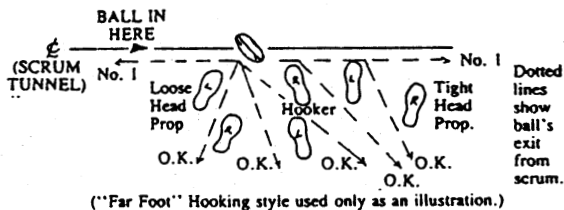
- (13) The play-the-ball shall be as normal in the adult Laws.  
However-
- (a) No markers are allowed. The ball must be played backwards.
  - (b) The acting half-back and the player receiving the ball from the acting halfback may, on receiving the ball, either pass the ball or run themselves. Should they elect to run, not score and be tackled, then their team forfeits possession. A member of the opposite team will then play the ball for play to recommence.  
**Should the defending team play the ball within 10 metres of its own goal line (i.e. the area between the International Laws touch line and 10 metre line) then THIS LAW applies only to the acting halfback - i.e. only the acting halfback MUST pass the ball for the tackle count to continue.** At any change of possession, the referee's signal will be in accordance with adult Law.
  - (c) At the play-the-ball, no member of the team NOT IN POSSESSION is to move forward until the ball is in the hands of the FIRST RECEIVER or the acting halfback elects to run or mishandles the ball. Each member of the team NOT IN POSSESSION must retire 5 metres from the play - the - ball and any player who is within this area shall be deemed to be out of play. Members of the team IN POSSESSION must retire behind the acting halfback.

## SCRUM

- (14) Scrums, should they occur in Mini Footy, will consist of three (3) players from each team who are to be correctly bound in the accepted fashion. A scrum shall be packed only when -
- (a) there is an infringement by BOTH sides, e.g. a double knock-on, except after three (3) play-the-balls.
  - (b) the ball-carrier is held up over his opponent's goal line, except after three (3) play-the-balls.

- (c) from a penalty kick the ball is touched by a member of the non-kicking team before entering touch.
- (d) there is an infringement involving the referee, a touch judge or a spectator.

On other occasions when a scrum would have been set the ball merely "changes hands" and the non-offending side plays the ball. The two lines of forwards **MUST** pack with their backs parallel to the ground **and face their opponents' goal line till the ball has emerged properly from the scrum.** NO PUSHING, PULLING OR ROTATING A SCRUM IS PERMITTED. **ONLY the hooker may STRIKE for the ball** and, then, only after it has touched the ground along the centre-line of the scrum beyond the inner feet of the loose head forwards. The hooker must keep one foot on the ground at all times. **All prop forwards MUST keep both feet on the ground at all times apart from the act of re-gaining balance.** At all scrums, the ball must emerge as shown in the diagram below.



The FEEDING of the scrums is in accordance with adult Laws.

The “non-feeding” halfback must adopt a position behind the scrum and the “feeding” halfback must retire behind the scrum immediately after the put-in. In Mini Footy, all players NOT in the scrum, are to retire behind their row of forwards. When the ball emerges correctly from the scrum and is picked up by an on-side player, that player may either run or pass the ball but must not be caught in possession. If this ball-carrier runs but does not score and is tackled with the ball while running in the field of play, a change of possession occurs and will be signalled in the prescribed adult fashion. If the player gains possession, but is unable to either run or pass the ball and is tackled, then play continues with a play-the-ball ... i.e. 1st tackle.

## TRY

- (15) A try is scored in the normal way. A try scored after **fewer than 2 passes** is worth 3 points. **After 2 or more passes**, the try is worth 5 points.

A pass may be defined as an inside transfer of the ball from one player to another. Should the try be worth 3 points, the referee will signal this in the fashion normal to the adult International Law situation. Should the try be worth 5 points, the referee - after signaling a try, will raise one arm vertically with five (5) fingers outstretched - thereby indicating the higher value. The referee WILL NOT LOWER his arm till notified by the result official that the score has been noted. Should a player be illegally interfered with in the act of scoring a try, an additional kick at goal will be awarded. In any such circumstance of unfair play the value of the try will be five (5) points regardless of the number of passes. A penalty try is worth five (5) points.

## GOALS/CONVERTING A TRY

- (16) A goal may be attempted **ONLY** after a try has been scored. The attempt may be taken by either drop kick or place kick. Once a player has attempted a kick at goal (whether successful or not), that player may not attempt another till all others of the same team (on the field at the time) have been given an attempt at a goal ... this also applies at the awarding of an additional kick at goal following the awarding of a try when the try-scorer has been fouled in the act of scoring the try. All attempts at goal are taken from immediately in front of the goalposts. The goalkicker will go back a minimum of 5 metres from the goal line. The kicker must, by either place or drop kick, kick the ball between the uprights and over the crossbar of the goalposts. The goal is worth two points. Only approved kicking tees may be used when a goal is attempted using a place kick.

## **STARTS/RESTARTS OF PLAY**

- (17) Following a try, the non-scoring team will restart play with a place kick from the centre of the halfway line. The ball need not travel any prescribed distance. The place kick restarts are to be taken, in rotation, by all members of the team ... as in Law 16 re attempts at conversion after a try has been scored. For other kicks to start or restart play, the non-kicking team is to retire five (5) metres and, except for a quarterway optional kick, allow the ball to travel five (5) metres. At penalties and free kicks, the non-kicking team is to retire five (5) metres.
- (18) Although the field is reduced in size, scrums are still to be set 10 metres from the touch line and goal line. Penalties normally taken 10 metres from the goal line are still to be taken from that line.

## **REFEREES/TOUCH JUDGES**

- (19) Neutral referees are to be used at every game.
- (20) Touch judges are to be appointed by each team - one per team. They are to supervise the touch lines according to the adult Laws (and the Modifications here). They are also to ensure that all spectators are well clear of the touch lines and that no one stands behind the goal lines. Should spectators encroach so as to disturb the game's progress then the touch judge must signal the referee to halt the game till the spectators move. The Touch Judges will also judge the goal kicks as outlined in Law 16.
- (21) Referees may, during the game, explain the rules and the reasons for their rulings. Such explanations must be kept brief!
- (22) The "home" team is to see that the field is prepared, ensure that a Mini Footy ball (or balls) is (are) available and see that the neutral referee is present.

## COACHES

- (23) **COACHES ARE NOT NORMALLY TO BE ON THE FIELD.** They may, to assist the very young, be present on the field:-
- in any competitions structured entirely for players below the age of 7 years;
  - during **Round ONE (ONLY)** of any **official 6 (or 7) Years Age Group** competitions (irrespective of the individual ages of the participants).
- However - **AT ANY TIME**, should a coach direct a comment at the referee or comment on the referee's performance, the coach will be instructed to leave the field - **IMMEDIATELY**.

## KICKING

- (24) Kicking is NOT ALLOWED in Mini Footy except at -
- starts of play - i.e. halfway, goal line and quarterway line;
  - penalty kicks (where a kick - but NOT a "bomb", may be taken to gain a better field position);
- NOTE:** A "bomb" can be regarded as any kick aimed at gaining **time** (e.g. for the "chasers") rather than **distance**.
- free kicks (these kicks must be place kicks);
  - goal kicks.
- Should a kick (other than the above) be attempted during a match there will be a change of possession at the spot at which the kick was taken ... **unless ADVANTAGE LAW applies**.

## SIN BIN

- (25) The SIN BIN does NOT apply in the MINI FOOTY game. **Should a player be guilty of such conduct that it "merits" a suspension from the field, then the referee is to advise the player's team captain of the problem and direct that the player be replaced.** In this case the offending player would take no further part in the remainder of that period or the match (or any other match in any older age group on that day) depending on the referee's instruction re period or match. A player-replaced for a period, who resumes playing in a later period AND is guilty of further misconduct **MUST** be dismissed **WITHOUT REPLACEMENT**. (International Laws apply here.) (Any further action would be taken at the discretion of the match's controlling body).

## VERBAL ABUSE/FOUL LANGUAGE

The use of expletives and/or threatening or denigrating language is not to be tolerated.

Abusive/foul words, sledging and the use of direct or indirect comments which are threatening or belittling a teammate, an opponent, the referee, an official, or a spectator **HAVE NO PLACE** in any match environment.

Any occurrences of the above are to be regarded as serious **MISCONDUCT** and dealt with accordingly by the referee.

## CLARIFICATION - LAW 5, p.7

A game must not commence if there are fewer players available for either team than the minimum number stipulated.

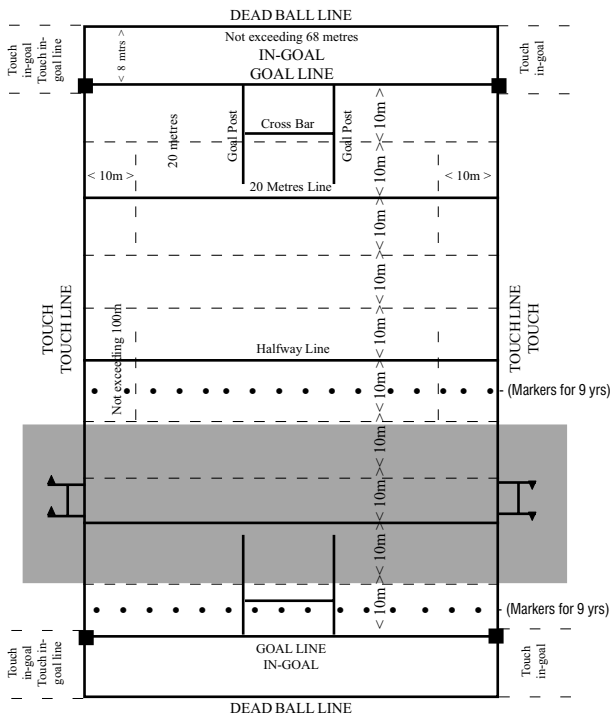
During a game, should the number of players on the field for a team fall below the stipulated minimum number, and the team has no further replacements that can be used, the game must be forfeited, with the following exceptions.

If the number falls below the stipulated minimum because of –

- (a) AN INJURY, the game can continue for the 3 minute injury period but must be forfeited if the player does not return
- (b) THE BLOOD BIN, the game can continue until the player returns or until the end of that period. If the player cannot commence the next period, the game must be forfeited
- (c) A PLAYER BEING 'REPLACED' FOR MISCONDUCT, for the remainder of that period only. The game can continue at least until the end of that period. (This does not apply if the player is 'replaced' for the remainder of the match.)

# APPENDICES

## SIZE OF FIELD



## FIELD OF PLAY

- **OVERALL DIMENSIONS:** For 6, 7 and 8 years, to measure approx. 68 metres (width of regulation-size field) by 30 metres (from 10 metre line to 40 metre line) of regulation field.

**At nine years, the field may be enlarged to measure 68 metres x (maximum of) 40 metres - see diagram on p.17. (Caution is required in the positioning of the field and the markers - see IMPORTANT below).**

- **HALFWAY:** That part of the line stretching between the centres of the goal lines of the regulation field and across the “mini” field as outlined above and in the diagram.
- **QUARTERWAY (1/4 WAY):** The “line” stretching from side to side of the “mini” field 20 metres from the touch line of the adult field, ie. the 20m “scrum line”.
- 10 metres and 5 metres lines are to be “judged” by the referee.
- **IN-GOAL:** Touch in-goal line is 8 metres (max.) from the goal line (i.e. touch line of adult field).

- NOTES:**
- (1) This in-goal depth measurement is to be regarded as a maximum. No minimum applies although a reasonable depth should be used depending on the available space.
  - (2) When using witches’ hats, stakes or the like, care must be taken in their placement to ensure the safety of the players.

## **IMPORTANT - SAFETY CONSIDERATION**

### **Where Mini Footy is played at 9 years.**

- The MINI FOOTY field on p.17 shows the positioning of one (larger) 9 years field. SHOULD TWO such 9 years matches be played simultaneously on the same adult field - the other 9 years field would be similarly positioned on the other half of the adult field.
- Should either a 6, 7 or 8 years field be marked on one half of an adult field and a 9 years (larger) field on the other, the 9 years match MAY BE PLAYED between the 10m line and halfway on the adult field.....ie. the need for markers is eliminated.

### **◆ BEWARE**

Under no circumstances, if two 9 years matches are being played and the larger field used, should the halfway or either goal line of the adult field be used as MINI FOOTY touch lines.... for player safety - ie. the two fields must not butt against one another at the halfway line nor the adult field goalposts be part of a touch line.

## PLAYER IDENTIFICATION

8 9 10	PROP FORWARD HOOKER PROP FORWARD	FORWARDS
7 6 3 2 5	HALFBACK FIVE-EIGHTH CENTRE WINGER WINGER	BACKS
1 4 11 12 13 ( & More)	The number of <b>Reserves</b> is to be determined - <b>and</b> <b>regulated</b> , by the local JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE - with Law 7 kept in mind	RESERVES

## FORMATION AT A SCRUM

