Flag Rugby
Lesson Plans

By:
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Stephen Fish
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This collection of rugby skills are designed for teachers to be able to teach rugby fundamentals to their students. The language of this document is written to provide a straightforward and uncomplicated approach to teaching rugby to youngsters.

These lessons are appropriate for children from grades one to eight. Primarily rugby is an outdoor activity, but all of these skills can be taught in a school gym.

Acknowledgments
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Caleb Smith
Lina Febbraro
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Chris McLachlin
The Rugby Football Union
Martin Gallagher
Tiffany Elliott
# Movement Skills Recording Chart, Rugby Passing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge/Skill Category:</th>
<th>Learning Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement Skills</td>
<td>Apply the principles of movement while refining movement skills (e.g., running into an open space to elude an opponent in rugby)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement Skills</td>
<td>Perform a variety of throws, and passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rugby Pass</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performs few of the skills as described</td>
<td>Sometimes performs the skills as described</td>
<td>Usually performs the skills as described</td>
<td>Consistently performs the skills as described</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely applies skill in other situations or activities</td>
<td>Sometimes applies skill in other situations or activities</td>
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</table>

### Pop Pass
- Carries ball in two hands
- Turns trunk towards - 4 - side the receiver called
- Releases pass in front of receiver
- Performs few of the skills as described
- Rarely applies skill in other situations or activities
- Sometimes performs the skills as described
- Sometimes applies skill in other situations or activities
- Usually performs the skills as described
- Usually applies skill in other situations or activities
- Consistently performs the skills as described
- Consistently applies skill in other situations or activities

## Student Names

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Unit: Flag Rugby

Lesson format credited to OPHEA Curriculum Support Binders K-10
Duration 5 Sub Tasks

Description
Students actively participate in skills, drills and lead-up games related to flag rugby. This safe, fun, non-contact version of rugby involves a variety of sending, receiving and carrying skills. It is played outside on a school field. However, some drills and games can be adapted for indoor activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Task Title</th>
<th>Expectation Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sending and receiving: Accuracy/Stationary</td>
<td>7p37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sending and receiving: Accuracy/Moving</td>
<td>7p28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sending and receiving: Accuracy/Moving</td>
<td>7p28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sending and Receiving and Game Play</td>
<td>7p37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Further Activities</td>
<td>7p37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment and Evaluation
A variety of assessment methods may be used in this unit. Some assessment strategies and tools included are:

Formative/Ongoing:
- Teacher assessment using a movement skill rubric and anecdotal recording chart.
- Teacher assessment using a participation rubric.
- Student self-assessment using a participation target.
- Peer assessment using a movement skill rubric.

Summative:
- Teacher assessment of movement skills using a movement skill recording chart.

Links to Prior Knowledge
- It is the teachers responsibility to be aware of and to follow the Ontario Elementary Curricular Safety Guidelines or their board’s safety policy.
Unit Flag Rugby

Sub-Task #1 Sending and Receiving: Accuracy/Stationary

Facility
School field or gymnasium

Materials
Rugby balls
Velcro flagbelts and flags
Pylons

Description
Students actively participate in sending and receiving in drills and incorporate these skills in a modified game situation.

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<td>7p37</td>
<td>Participate vigorously in all aspects of the program.</td>
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Assessment Opportunities – Suggestions for Assessing Expectations
Formative/Ongoing:
- Self-assessment of participation using a target.

Teacher/Learning Strategies

A) Warm-Up
- **Flag Tag.** Using pylons designate a specific playing area (not too large). Students try to collect as many flags as possible from other students. No elimination of players occurs, students continue to play by trying to collect other flags even when their flags have been removed. Students begin by speed walking and gradually increase speed as they warm up. Different Locomotor movements (e.g., skipping, galloping, sliding) can also be used.
B) Skill Development

- **Step One: Passing while stationary.**
  - Students line up in groups of 5 shoulder to shoulder.
  - Each line has one ball.
  - Students hold hands up in front of them to provide a target for the ball.
  - The first participant in line takes the ball in their hands.
  - Slightly twists their upper body towards the next player to hand them the ball.
  - This continues down the line until it reaches the end.
  - Once the ball reaches the end the last player will pop the ball up into the air, catch it and then hand the ball to the player beside them.

- **Step Two: Passing while stationary**
  - Remain in same line as step one.
  - This time ask the students to be an arms length away from the person beside them.
  - Each student must hold their hands up to create a target for the ball.
  - The players will pass the ball down the line.
  - The students will take the ball, twist their upper body towards the next player and using their fingertips flicks the ball at the next students’ target.
  - The ball is passed to each student until it reaches the end of the line.
  - The last player throws the ball in the air, catches it and then passes to the person beside them.

- **Captain Ball**
  - Organize groups of four or five students into single file facing the captain of the line.
- The captain is between three and five meters away from his line.
- The captain passes the ball to the first student in line, who returns the pass and sits down.
- The captain passes to each student in turn.
- The passes become more difficult the further the ball must travel down the line.
- The last student in line catches the ball and runs to the position of new captain.
- The previous captain runs to be the first in line with the other students shuffling back.
- Repeat until all students have been captain.
- This could be made into a relay race against other groups.

C) Skill Application

- Monkey in the middle.
  - In a group of 6, 4 students try to make passes while stationary.
  - The other 2 students are the monkeys and are trying to intercept the passes.
  - When the pass is intercepted the player who threw the intercepted pass becomes a defender and the monkey takes their place.

Notes to Teacher

- Ask students what gives them power when sending the ball (e.g., using full body, swing of the arms, follow through).

Unit Flag Rugby
Sub-Task #2  Sending and Receiving: Accuracy/Moving

Facility
School field or gymnasium

Materials
Rugby balls
Velcro flagbelts and flags
Pylons

Description
Students actively participate in sending and receiving in drills and incorporate these skills in a modified game situation.

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<td>Send an object to a partner, to a target, or over a net, using a serve, an underhand throw or pass, or an overhand throw or pass.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7p28</td>
<td>Intercept objects (e.g., balls, Frisbees) while moving in various directions and at different speeds.</td>
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Assessment Opportunities – Suggestions for Assessing Expectations

Formative/Ongoing:
- Teacher assessment of ball handling skills using a skills recording chart.

Teacher/Learning Strategies

A) Warm-Up
- **Stuck in the mud.** Using pylons designate a specific playing area (not too large). Students are organized into groups of attackers and defenders with approximately two or three attackers for each defender. You can start both teams speed walking and gradually progress to running. Attackers run around the grid and try to avoid having their flag pulled. If their flag is pulled they must remain stationary (stuck) with legs astride. The defender hands back the flag to be reattached to the belt. To release a stuck attacker, a team mate must crawl through their legs. An attacker can not be tagged while releasing a stuck team mate.

B) Skill Development
- **Step One: Passing while moving**
  - Students line up in groups of 5 at arms length away from the person beside them.
  - Each line has one ball.
  - Students hold hands up in front of them to provide a target for the ball.
  - Have the flat line change to one on a 45-degree angle.
  - State that in rugby the pass must always go backwards, but the players run forwards.
  - The first participant in line starts the line moving at a brisk walk with the ball in hand.
  - A pass is made only if the receiver calls for the pass to be made.
  - Slightly twists their upper body towards the next player and uses their fingertips to flick the ball at the next students target.
  - This continues down the line until it reaches the end.
  - Once the ball reaches the end the last player will pop the ball up into the air, and catch it.
  - The line must then reset on a 45-degree angle with the first pass coming from the last player.
• **Step Two: Passing while moving**
  - Repeat the same activity as step one but do it at a jog and then finally at a run.
  - The ball must be carried in two hands in front of the body.
  - The passer must control their pace after their pass so as not to run ahead of the ball.

• **Pass and Support: Follow the Leader**
  - Use a large grid of 20m x 20m.
  - Groups of five with one ball per-group.
  - The leader/ball carrier, can run in any direction.
  - The rest of the group must follow behind in a snake like formation.
  - When the teacher calls “Pass!” the leader must stop and hold the ball out to one side so that the next player can take the ball from them and continue running, becoming the new leader.
  - The dispossessed leader then joins the back of the group.
  - When taking the ball the student should not reduce their pace.
  - **Note:** To make this easier it can be performed at a walk or jog.

C) **Skill Application**

• 2 vs. 1
  - In a group of 3, 2 students will try to make it to the other side of the grid by passing to beat the defender.
  - Set up a 10m x 10m grid
  - Need one ball per group.
  - In rugby an effective passer is one who is able to draw defenders as close as possible before the ball is passed. Drawing in the defense creates space for the receiver to run into free space.
  - The defender must pull the ball carriers flag in order to stop the possession.
  - One of the offensive players will begin with the ball, trying to draw in the defender who is moving towards the ball carrier.
  - The supporting offensive player must communicate with their partner by calling for the pass.
  - Once the defender has been drawn closer, the ball is passed laterally (slightly behind) to the other offensive player.
  - When the ball carrier reaches the other side of the grid they touch the ball down for a try.
  - **Note:** Variations can be made in this game, try 2 on 2, or 3 on 2.
Unit: Flag Rugby

Sub-Task #3  Sending and Receiving: Accuracy/Moving

Facility
School field or gymnasium

Materials
Rugby balls
Velcro flagbelts and flags
Pylons

Description
Students actively participate in sending and receiving in drills and incorporate these skills in a modified game situation.

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Assessment Opportunities – Suggestions for Assessing Expectations

Formative/Ongoing:

- Teacher assessment of ball handling skills using a skills recording chart.

Teacher/Learning Strategies

A) Warm-Up

- Ball take stuck in the mud. Using pylons designate a specific playing area (not too large). Students are organized into groups of 6 attackers and 2 defenders, provide two balls to the attackers. You can start both teams speed walking and gradually progress to running. Attacker run around the grid, passing the ball to one another and try to avoid having their flag pulled. If their flag is pulled they must remain stationary (stuck) with legs astride. The defender hands back the flag to be reattached to the belt. To release a stuck attacker, a team mate must pass them the ball. An attacker can not be tagged while releasing a stuck team mate. Continue for a time or until all attackers are stuck. Then swap roles so all participants have turns attacking and defending. Variation: Increase or decrease the grid size. Increase or decrease the amount of players.

B) Skill Development

- Step One: The Pop Ball (follow the leader part 2)
  - Groups of 4 to 5 students with one ball for each group.
  - The students stand in a tight group that will resemble a bunch of grapes.
  - A person at the front of the pack will carry the ball for about 5 meters.
  - The ball carrier needs to pass to a player who is running in tight support.
  - The pass is a pop. The ball carrier will twist at the waist and bend knees into a slight squat position. The flick the ball using their wrists to slightly “pop” the ball into space on the side the receiver indicated.
  - The receiver calls for the ball left or right.
  - Calling for the ball tells the passer to turn and pass to the right or left of the body.
  - The receiver must be sprinting on to the ball.
  - The former passer then joins the back of the pack and the process begins again.
**Step Two: Auckland Squares**
- This drill uses the pop pass.
- Four pylons are placed at the corners of a 5 x 5 meter grid.
- Four to six players will be behind each pylon facing the opposite pylon.
- The first player at the front of two of the lines has a ball.
- The first player starts running with the ball towards the line diagonally across from them.
- The waiting player calls for the ball.
- The pop pass is made to the waiting player and the passer joins the end of the line.
- The sequence continues.
- **Note:** Variations can be made such as using 4 balls. Have the receiver jog out to meet the passer in the middle of the grid.

**Pass and Support: Looping**
- Looping is used to add players to outnumber the opposition and gain a possible 2 on 1 situation.
- Groups of four to five students with one ball per group.
- Line up on a 45 degree angle.
- The line begins to run and the ball carrier passes to the next in line and runs behind the line to until the player reaches the last group member.
- When the ball reaches the end of the line pass it back down the line to the new first player.
- When the new first player passes the ball that player loops to the end of the line and is ready to receive a pass.
- **Note:** A variation can be to have the entire group loop after each on passes.
So if A passes to B. A then loops to the end. B passes to C and B loops to the end. C passes to D and loops to the end.
C) Skill Application

- **Game – decision making – 5 vs. 5**
  - Make a grid 30m x 30m.
  - All players must have on a flag belt with 2 flags.
  - Time for the players to get a taste of a real game!
  - Start the match with a free pass at centre. This means to tap the ball with your foot.
  - The defending team must start back 7m.
  - The attacking players must try and run past the defenders to score a try.
  - A try is when you cross the end line and touch the ball to the ground to score a point.
  - If tagged, the ball carrier must pass the ball backwards to a teammate within three strides or three seconds.
  - After a successful flag pull, the defender must hand back the flag to the player and stay on his/her own side of the ball and must not attempt to intercept or obstruct the pass.
  - Notes: Players should run forward. Dodge the defenders. Only pass if tagged or if a teammate is in a better position. Support players must stay behind the ball.
Unit  Flag Rugby

Sub-Task #4  Sending and Receiving and Game Play

Facility
School field or gymnasium

Materials
Rugby balls
Velcro flagbelts and flags
Pylons

Description
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<td>7p37</td>
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Assessment Opportunities – Suggestions for Assessing Expectations
Formative/Ongoing:
- Self-assessment of participation using a target.

Teacher/Learning Strategies

A) Warm-Up
- Stagger two groups of hula hoops (seven per line) in a tire maze formation. Students move through the hoops in a variety of ways (e.g., run, hop, jump, one foot, other foot, sideways). Select two students to be leaders. The class follows their movements.

B) Skill Development
- Step One: Tunnel Passing.
  - Set up a long grid that is the shape of a rectangle.
  - Two passers stand on either side of the grid with runners through the middle.
  - Two balls for the passers.
  - The central runner runs through the centre of the grid.
  - The runner receives a pass from the one side and passes it straight away to the other side.
  - Then the runner receives another ball and immediately passes it to the other side.
  - Note: remind runners to keep hands up as targets and to look before passing.

- Step Two: Channel Running.
  - 10m x 10m grid divided in half.
  - Groups of four with one ball per group.
  - The aim of this exercise is to run down the left channel, passing along the line and then, at the top of the channel, stop and realign, then turn and proceed down the other channel, again passing down the line.
  - Note: try and have the players run straight. Before receiving a pass, make a target with the hands. To make it harder put a defender in the channel.
• **Game play: Decision Making in a Bunch.**
  - Use a 10m x 10m grid.
  - Groups of six with one ball per group.
  - The four attackers begin with the ball and start bunched close together.
  - The two defenders have a hold of each end of a flag belt to force them to move as a unit.
  - The attackers want to make the defence commit and then pass to a player who is close to an end.
  - If the pass is successful the player should run to attack the open space.
  - Fellow attackers must run in support.
  - If tapped then the ball must be passed within three paces.

![Game play image](image)

C) **Skill Application**

• **End Ball.**
  - End ball is a rugby/football type of game that emphasizes quick passes of various lengths, communication and rapid tactical decisions.
  - There is no body contact.
  - The class is split into teams. Only two teams can play at a time.
  - Mark out a playing field and end zones.
  - A person on each team goes to the opposite teams end zone.
  - These people are the catchers. They are the only players allowed in the end zone and can move freely around that area.
  - Their team scores when the ball is passed to and caught by the catcher in the end zone.
  - The game begins when the referee throws in the ball.
  - The players may pass the ball in any direction possible.
  - If the ball hits the ground it is deemed a turn over and the ball is awarded to the other team.
  - If a flag is pulled then the player has three seconds to pass the ball.
  - When a player catches the ball that player can not move, but can pass.
  - A player without the ball may move around freely.
Unit  Flag Rugby

Sub-Task #5  Further Activities

Facility
School field or gymnasium

Materials
Rugby balls
Velcro flagbelts and flags
Pylons

Description
Students actively participate in sending and receiving in drills and incorporate these skills in a modified game situation.

- Relay Ball Skills
  - Groups of five with one ball per group.
  - Players race to a line 10m away and back to their group.
  - Then they hand the ball to the next in player in the relay.
  - Note: Variations to make it harder are run to the line and score a try and then run back. Circle the ball around the trunk of the body while running.

- Decision Making 4 vs. 1.
  - Make a 10m x 30m grid.
  - Groups of five one ball per group.
  - The ball carrier tries to score a try by running past the defender.
  - Support players flank the ball carrier on either side.
  - If tagged the ball carrier must pass within three seconds.
  - The defenders must then give the flag back to the player.
• **Decision Making 5 vs. 1 vs. 1 vs. 1 vs. 1 vs. 1.**
  - Make a long grid.
  - Groups of five with one ball per group.
  - All players wearing flag belts.
  - Five nominated defenders in the channel.
  - The defenders stand one behind the other 5m apart.
  - The defenders are only allowed to move sideways.
  - The attacking team of five players must beat each defender in turn.
  - Any attacker who is flagged can no longer play in that part of the move.
M A R C H 1 9 9 9

T A C K L E F O O T B A L L is not an appropriate activity for Elementary physical education classes.

RUGBY/FOOTBALL(FLAG, TOUCH)
JR/INT

Physical Education Safety Guidelines
Elementary - Curricular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Clothing/ Footwear</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Special Rules/ Instructions</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use footballs/rugby balls appropriate to the size and ability of the group, e.g. smaller football/rugby ball or nerf ball. Goal posts must be padded when goal posts are in the field of play.</td>
<td>No cleats to be worn in the gym. Suitable gym clothing and footwear must be worn.</td>
<td>Playing area must be free of debris and obstructions and provide safe footing. Holes and severely uneven surfaces must be reported to the principal and students must be made aware of them.</td>
<td>No blocking or tackling allowed. Modify rules of the game to accommodate differences in ability/age/physical development. Skills must be taught in proper progression. Games and activities must be based on skills that are taught. Boundary lines must be clearly indicated.</td>
<td>On-site supervision is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson format credited to OPHEA Curriculum Support Binders K-10
From UNDER 8 - UNDER 13
MINOR & JUNIOR FLAG (NON-CONTACT RUGBY) MINOR &
JUNIOR FLAG
For ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS in CANADA

This Section contains the rules of play, regulations and recommendations
(including modifications to the IRB Laws of the Game) for Minor FLAG Rugby, to be played by children from Under 8 and Under 13 age grades in Elementary and Middle Schools in Canada. The emphasis at all times (including during any matches) must be on enjoyment and learning, not on winning. (Laws provided by Rugby Canada)

RULES OF PLAY

Players and match officials must endeavor to ensure the IRB Laws of the Game and RUGBY CANADA’s modified by the following playing rules, are observed when playing rugby from Under 8 to Under 13:

1.1 OBJECT:
The object of the game is to score a try (1 point) by placing the ball with a downward pressure on or behind the opponents’ goal line. For the sake of safety, the ball carrier must remain on their feet at all times and they are not allowed to score a try by diving over the goal-line. If a player grounds the ball while on their knees, the try should be allowed but, afterwards, all players should be reminded that they should stay on their feet. For safety reasons, where FLAG RUGBY is played indoors or in restricted areas, a try can be scored by the ball carrier crossing the vertical plane of the goal line without grounding the ball. This allows players to have their head up and be aware of their surroundings at all times. When a try is scored, the game is restarted by a free pass from the centre of the pitch by the non-scoring team.

1.2 TEAMS:

FLAG RUGBY is played between teams of equal numbers of players, each team containing not more than eight players and not less than five players. Each side can have an agreed number of substitutes.
Substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions can only take place when the ball is ‘dead’ or at half time and always with the referee’s knowledge.

1.3 PASSING:

The ball can only be passed sideways or backwards through the air, not handed to another player. If the ball is handed to another player or passed or knocked forwards (towards the opponents’ goal-line) then a free pass is awarded to the non-offending side, unless advantage occurs to the non-offending side. In order to keep the game flowing, referees should play advantage wherever possible.

1.4 FREE PASSES:

(a) A free pass is used to start the match at the beginning of each half from the centre of the pitch, from the side of the pitch when the ball goes into touch at the point where the ball went out of play and from where the referee makes a mark when an infringement has taken place.

(b) At a free pass, the opposition must be 7 meters back from the mark. They cannot start moving forward until the ball leaves the hands of the passer. At a free pass, the player must start with the ball in both hands and, when instructed by the referee who will call “PLAY”, pass the ball backwards through the air to a member of their team. For safety reasons, the receiver of the pass must not start more than 2 meters from the free pass mark. The player taking the free pass must pass the ball and cannot just run with the ball when the referee calls “PLAY”.

(c) If an infringement takes place or the ball goes into touch over the goal line or within 7 meters of the goal line, then the free pass must be awarded to the non-offending side 7 meters from the goal line. This gives more space for both attacking and defending teams to play in.
1.5 THE FLAG:

(a) All players wear a FLAG belt around their waist with two tags attached to it by Velcro positioned over each hip. FLAG belts are to be securely fastened and any excess belt is to be tucked away so that this cannot be pulled by mistake. FLAG belts are to be worn outside of shirts and not obscured in any way. Referees are to be watchful for tags being wrapped around the belt preventing them from being pulled off.

(b) The standard dimensions for a FLAG are 38cms in length by 5cms in width although slight variations of a few millimeters should not be cause for concern. They should be made of a flexible plastic or plastic/canvas material. FLAGS are generally provided in red, blue, green and yellow. Colors should be chosen so that they stand out against the players’ strip, e.g. teams with yellow shirts or shorts should not use yellow FLAGS. Coaches are reminded that the FLAGS are to be positioned on the hips, not at the front or back, which may require the belt to be adjusted slightly for players with particularly small waists. Placing a knot in between the two Velcro pieces on the belt often brings the FLAGS into the correct position. Note: These dimensions and colors are only guidelines to try and achieve uniformity. FLAG RUGBY games can continue to be played with FLAGS that do not comply with these guidelines but, for fairness,
in such case both teams should be wearing the same design of flag belt and flags.

(c) A ‘FLAG’ is the removal of one of the two tags from the ball carrier’s belt. Only the ball carrier can be flagged. The ball carrier can run and dodge potential flaggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their flags in any way. The ball cannot be pulled out of the ball carrier’s hands at any time.

(d) If a player does not have two flags on their belt, one on each hip, they will be penalized if they become a ball carrier or if they flag an opponent and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

(e) Actions by the ball carrier:

(1) When the ball carrier is tagged the ball must be passed to a teammate within 3 seconds, this includes stopping time (this time can be modified with the approval of referee/coaches based on the skill
level and ability of the children). The ball carrier must attempt to stop as soon as possible; within 3 strides is a reasonable guide for referees, but the ball can be passed in the act of stopping.

(2) After the ball has been passed, the player must go to the flagger, retrieve their flag and place it back on their belt before re-joining play. If the player continues to play and influences the game without collecting their flag, they must be penalized and a free pass awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.
(3) Players are however only allowed one step to score a try after being tagged.

(4) If the ball carrier is tagged whilst standing inside the goal area they must ground the ball immediately in order to score. Referees should help this part of the game along by advising the ball carrier "Touch the ball down and I'll award the try", or similar.
(5) If the ball carrier dives to ground to score a try it will be disallowed and free pass will be awarded to the defending side 7 meters out from the goal-line.
(f) Actions by the flagger:
(1) When a FLAG is made, the flagger must stop running, hold the FLAG above their head and shout, "FLAG". At this stage the referee must shout, "FLAG - PASS".
(2) If the ball carrier stops running within 1 meter of the tagger, the tagger must move back towards their own goal-line, at least 1 meter, to allow room for the ball to be passed.
(3) Once the ball has been passed, the tagger must hand back the FLAG to the player and cannot re-join the match until this has been done. If a flagger continues to play and influences the match with an opponent’s flag in their hand, or throws it to the floor, they must be penalized and a free pass awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

(g) FLAG RUGBY VARIATION for (UNDER 10 - 11 - 12 & 13 ONLY). To reward good defense and to promote the attacking side keeping the ball alive by passing the ball before being tagged, the side in possession of the ball will only be allowed to be tagged a maximum of 6 times before scoring a try. At the 7th FLAG, the referee will stop the game and give the ball to the other side by awarding a free pass at the point that the FLAG took place. If the 7th FLAG takes place one step from the try line and the ball is grounded, the try will be disallowed and the opposition will be given the ball for a free pass 7 meters out from the goal line, in line with the point the goal line was crossed.

FLAG RUGBY VARIATION
Note: Coaches/referees of the teams may agree to reduce the maximum number of allowable tags to provide more of a challenge to their players, both in attack and defense. If coaches cannot agree then the 7th FLAG ruling must be enforced.

1.6 OFFSIDE:

Offside only occurs at the time of the flag where the offside line is through the centre of the ball. When a flag is made, all players from the flagger’s team must attempt to retire towards their own goal line until they are behind the ball. If a player, in an offside position, intercepts, prevents or slows down a pass from the tagged player to a teammate, a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side.
A player can, however, run from an onside position to intercept a floated pass before it reaches the intended receiver.

1.7 OBSTRUCTION:

(a) The ball carrier can run and dodge potential taggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their tags in any way.
(b) Similarly, the ball carrier must not deliberately make contact with an opponent.
(c) If such contact is made the game must be stopped, the offender spoken to, reminded of the non-contact rules of flag and a free pass awarded to the non-offending side.
(d) If the ball is pulled from the ball carrier’s grasp, a free pass is awarded to the ball carrier’s side.

1.8 KICKING:

There is no kicking of any kind in FLAG RUGBY.

1.9 BALL ON THE GROUND:

Players play FLAG RUGBY on their feet, with the ball in hand. If the ball goes to ground, players can pick it up but they must not dive to the floor to recover the ball. Penalty: free pass to non-offending side and the following rules will apply:
(a) If the ball was lost forward, a free pass is awarded to the non-offending side unless advantage occurs to the non-offending side.
(b) If the ball carrier falls to the ground with the ball then a free pass will be awarded to the defending side.
c) If the ball is passed other than forward and goes to ground play will continue and either side may pick up the ball. If the passed ball rolls into touch a free pass will commence from the touchline to the non-passing side.

1.10 NO CONTACT:

The only contact allowed between the two teams is the removal of a FLAG from the belt of the ball carrier. Any other type of contact on the ball carrier, such as shirt pulling, running in front of or barging the ball carrier, forcing the ball carrier into touch, etc must be penalized with a free pass and the players concerned reminded of the rules.

1.11 PROHIBITED PLAY:

In Minor FLAG Rugby, there is a total emphasis on running with the ball, evasion, running in support of the ball carrier, passing and running to FLAG the ball carrier.

In FLAG RUGBY there is:
(a) NO tackling;
b) No Scrums;
c) No lineout;
d) No kicking;
e) No hand off/fend off (a hand off being the placing of an open palmed hand by the ball carrier against an opponent’s face or body while a fend off is an outstretched arm by the ball carrier towards an opponent to discourage that person making a FLAG);
f) No going to ground; and
(g) No ripping of the ball.

1.12 COACHING:

(a) RUGBY CANADA recommends that at a Fixture, a coaching session should precede each match.
(b) All matches should be used as an extension of the coaching session with the emphasis being on the quality of performance rather than the result.
(c) During the match, coaches can direct and develop play, in a coaching sense, from on the field of play, ideally from behind their teams. Coaches must help to encourage the carrying of the ball in two hands and prompt players to pass when tagged. Coaches must not have any contact with players of either side while on the pitch.
(d) The emphasis must be on enjoyment and the players must be encouraged to enjoy the physical skills of running, passing and evasion.
(e) During the half-time interval, coaches must take time to talk to, encourage, coach and explain the game to the players.
(f) Mismatches can be avoided by talking to the coach in charge of the opposition before the game.

RUGBY CANADA ♦ REGULATIONS

1.13 FIXTURES & FESTIVALS:
In the Rugby Continuum:
(a) A Fixture is the playing of FLAG RUGBY between teams of different Schools, not more than three Schools being involved together on any one day. Where three Schools are involved, these are sometimes referred to as “Triangular Fixtures”.
(b) A Festival is the playing of FLAG RUGBY Rugby between more than three teams of different Schools, normally to establish a winner, all matches being part of one event.
(c) A Tour is considered to be a Fixture or Festival according to the number of teams involved.
(d) Fixtures and Festivals must all comply with the regulations contained in the Rugby Continuum, however, Festival organizers may impose additional conditions on participation including maximum squad sizes which should not be less than 10 players (although this should not prevent teams from participating with less than this number should they so wish).

1.14 THE SEASON:
(With the exception of British Columbia Province) The FLAG RUGBY season starts on 1st APRIL each year. Fixtures and FLAG RUGBY Festivals may only take place during the period 1st MAY to 30th SEPTEMBER each season unless a special dispensation has been granted by the RUGBY CANADA. Outside this period players may only participate in training and recruitment initiatives. Applications for
special dispensations should be submitted to the RUGBY CANADA Director of Development.

1.15 AGE GRADES:

(a) A player’s RUGBY age grade is determined by their age on 1st APRIL at the beginning of the season. EXAMPLE: An Under 9 player will therefore only turn 9 during the course of the season.
(b) During the course of a season players may only play rugby with other Under 9 players unless they are permitted to play with players from a different age grade under a dispensation referred to in Section 1.16.
(c) When participating in Fixtures or Festivals, the School must inform the coaches and match officials of opposing teams of any dispensation being applied and identify each player concerned.

1.16 AGE GRADE DISPENSATIONS

The following general dispensations apply as exceptions to the age grade rules. Particular attention is drawn to the need to ensure that player safety is not compromised when applying any of these dispensations since players of different age grade and development will be playing together and the duty of care owed to players means it may not always be appropriate to allow a player to take advantage of a dispensation.

(a) Team Dispensation: EXAMPLE: Under 9 players may play down in an Under 8 team if the School does not have enough players to complete an Under 8 team fixture, however, this dispensation is subject to strict observance of the following qualifications:
   (1) The maximum numbers of players allowed to play up or down is two; and
   (2) NO Players above or below may move by MORE THAN one year in under/any circumstances EXAMPLE: a U/9 CANNOT play in the U11s. This dispensation will also apply if a School does have one or more full Under 9 teams, but needs extra players to field a further Under 9 team.
(b) Training Dispensation: During internal School training, players permitted by the RUGBY CANADA Continuum to play in Under 8 and Under 9 Under 10 and Under 11 Under 12 and Under 13
Squads may train together and play internal training matches together.
(c) Special Dispensation: The vast majority of children, with correct coaching, can play in their correct age grades but in exceptional cases where child safety may be compromised due to a developmental disability (physical or behavioral).

1.16 LIMITATIONS ON FIXTURES:

(a) Each player in each age grades is limited to playing in not more than:
   (1) 17 Fixtures and/or Festivals during a season in addition to any Fixtures and/or Festivals played by them for their Schools;
   (2) 17 School Fixtures and/or Festivals during a season in addition to any Fixtures and/or Festivals played by them for their Club;
   (3) One Festival during the same weekend; and
   (4) 8 games at a Festival.
(b) Schools must maintain a record of how many Fixtures and Festivals are played by each age grade (player) during a season to ensure they are not exceeding these limits.
(c) Where Schools have large squads, additional Fixtures/Festivals may be arranged, provided that no player plays in more than the maximum number referred to above.

1.20 MATCH DURATIONS:

A match is made up of two halves with half-time lasting 2 minutes. Matches are limited to the following durations:
   Fixture (when 2 Clubs or Schools are present): 20 minutes each way, 1 game = 40 minutes.
1.21 DURATION OF COACHING OR TRAINING SESSIONS:

Fixtures, coaching and training sessions must last no longer than 60 Minutes, inclusive of time devoted to match play. At a Festival, time spent on training and matches must not total more than 60 minutes.

1.22 EQUIPMENT:

(a) A Size 3 Ball should be used for UNDER 8/9/10  A Size 4 Ball should be used UNDER 11/12/13. Note: A regulation size rugby ball is acceptable.

b) Players may only use studs and other clothing during training sessions and matches that are in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Game. Spectacles may not be worn during training or in matches.

1.23 PITCH SIZES:

The maximum pitch size for is 60 meters x 40 meters, plus 5 meters for each in-goal area. Reduced pitch sizes are acceptable provided this is agreed between the officiating referee and coaches and the smaller pitches will not materially increase the risk of injury to players.

NOTE Adjacent pitches should be no closer than 5 meters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations represent best practice and Schools, their match officials and coaches must endeavor to follow these:

1.24 THE GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL’S CODE:

Match Officials should:
(a) Recognize the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating players.
(b) Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner during games.
(c) Emphasize the spirit of the game.
(d) Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
(e) Understand the physical and behavioral development of players.
(f) Be a positive role model. Set an example, and as such, comments should be positive and supportive.
(g) Look to self-improvement e.g. participation in training courses.
(h) Recognize that the safety of players is paramount.
(i) Explain decisions - all players are still learning and parents will understand the game better.
(j) Always penalize foul play.
(k) Play advantage whenever possible in order to let the game flow.
(l) Show empathy for the age and ability of players.
(m) Be consistent and objective.
(n) Be familiar with the Good Spectators Code and ensure that verbal abuse from players, coaches or spectators is not tolerated and is dealt with by club officials immediately.
(o) Be aware of, and abide by, the RUGBY CANADA Child Protection Guidance policies and procedures.
(p) Officiate to the rules laid down in the Rugby Continuum and keep themselves updated on rule changes.
(q) Check that the host School has provided a qualified first aid provider, ambulance access has not been obstructed and that appropriate equipment is available along with someone trained in its use before starting play.
(r) Before training sessions and matches check that studs and other clothing are in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Game.

1.25 THE GOOD COACHES’ CODE:

Coaches of players should:
(a) Recognize the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching players.
(b) Understand that most learning is achieved through doing.
(c) Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
(d) Be a positive role model - think what this implies.
(e) Keep winning and losing in perspective - encourage players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
(f) Respect all referees and the decisions they make, even if they appear to make a mistake, (remember it could be you refereeing next week) and ensure that the players recognize that they must do the same.
(g) Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner to all players, both during coaching sessions and matches.
(h) Provide rugby experiences, which are matched to the players’ ages and abilities, as well as their physical and behavioral development.
(i) Ensure all players are coached in a safe environment, with adequate first aid readily to hand.
(j) Avoid the overplaying of the best players by using a squad system, which gives everybody a satisfactory amount of playing time.
(k) Never allow a player to train or play when injured.
(l) Ensure good supervision of players, both on and off the field.
(m) Recognize that players should never be exposed to extremes of heat, cold or unacceptable risk of injury.
(n) Develop an awareness of nutrition as part of an overall education in lifestyle management.
(o) Recognize that it is illegal for players under 19 to drink alcohol or for those under 19 to smoke. Coaches should actively discourage both.
(p) Ensure that their knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RUGBY CANADA philosophy.
(q) Be aware of, and abide by, the RUGBY CANADA recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.
**(r)** Be aware of and abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union in CANADA.
(s) Coach to the rules laid down in the Rugby Continuum and keeps them updated on rule changes.

1.26 THE GOOD PLAYER’S CODE:

Players should be encouraged to:
(a) Recognize and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing the opportunity to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment.
(b) Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to adults and teammates.
(c) Recognize that every player has a right to expect his or her involvement in rugby to be safe and free from all types of abuse.
(d) Understand that if an individual or groups of players feel they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they should tell an adult either at the Club or School or outside of the game.
(e) Play because they want to do so, not to please coaches or parents.
(f) Remember that skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game.
(g) Be attentive at all training and coaching sessions.
(h) Work equally hard for themselves and their team - both will then benefit.
(i) Recognize good play by all players on their team and by their opponents.
(j) Be a sportsman - “Win with dignity, lose with grace”.
(k) Play to the IRB Laws of the Game and accept, without question, all referees’ decisions even if they appear to make a mistake.
(l) Control their emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of teammates, opponents, coaches, match officials or spectators is not acceptable.
(m) Treat all players, as they would like to be treated themselves. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player.

1.27 DANGEROUS PLAY:

(a) Dangerous play can cause injury. Coaches and match officials must be particularly vigilant to prevent it.
(b) There will always be knocks and bumps in rugby, but if dangerous play is eliminated, then many serious injuries will never happen.
(c) After a stoppage for injury, restart play with a free pass to the team that had possession of the ball immediately prior to the stoppage.

1.28 DISCIPLINE:

(a) If the referee decides that a player must cease to participate in a match, they must stop the match, call the individual player aside from the other players and invite the coach of that player on to the field. The referee must explain to the coach and the player(s) why they feel the player’s behavior is unacceptable and instruct the coach to provide a substitute player. That player is to take no further part in that Festival or Fixture. It is the responsibility of the coach to speak to and educate the player as to why such action was taken.
(b) Clubs and Schools complying with Section 2 of the Rugby Continuum will have both a Child Protection Policy (which conforms to Rugby Canada’s recommendations) and a player disciplinary procedure. While player indiscipline (including physical and verbal abuse and actions contravening the Rugby Continuum) will in most cases be dealt with in accordance with the player disciplinary procedure it should be recognized that there would be some instances where the relevant actions also fall within the scope of the Child Protection Policy.

(c) In the case of actions on the part of ADULTS involved in FLAG RUGBY which contravene the Codes of Practice (for parents, spectators, match officials or coaches) contained in the Rugby Canada Continuum, the recommended procedure is as follows:

FLAG RUGBY

(1) The match or training session should be stopped and the match officials and coaches should confer and agree on a course of action appropriate to the circumstances. This may include the match officials and relevant coach warning the adult concerned or requesting the relevant adult to vacate the vicinity of the pitch before recommencing the match or training. In extreme cases or where the adult refuses to cooperate, the match or training should be abandoned.

(2) The match officials and coaches should notify the incident to the Chairmen of the Minor-Midi Sections of their respective Clubs or to the Head of Games in the case of Schools for further consideration. In extreme cases this may include banning the relevant adult from attending matches and/or training sessions for a period and/or submission of a complaint to the relevant Provincial Body.

(3) Where the relevant actions fall within the Child Protection Policy, Clubs and Schools should also institute the procedures contained in such policy.

(d) In all cases where a disciplinary matter has been referred to a Constituent Body, the Provincial Body may require either Club or Schools to provide additional information on the incident including confirmation of the action taken and may in exceptional cases refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer at RUGBY CANADA for further consideration and sanctions.
1.29 SAFETY:

(a) RUGBY CANADA strongly recommends the wearing of mouth guards in case of accidental collision. Ideally mouth guards should be custom made from a dental impression of the teeth. RUGBY CANADA also strongly recommends the wearing of shin guards.

(b) If a player appears injured, the referee must blow the whistle and stop play immediately. Obviously the referee must use judgment - players don’t want to stop for every slight knock - but it is usually possible to tell when a player is hurt. Where possible, invite the player to get up. If it hurts them to move, let them stay where they are (if this will not worsen their injury) and send for expert help. In all cases it is essential that other people/players be stopped from rushing in and hauling the player to their feet. They may mean well, but they could make the damage even worse. In summary, take no chances: act fast but act with caution.

(c) If referees find themselves in an injury situation, they must concentrate on the vital things. If there is difficulty breathing remove the player’s mouth guard and ensure the player hasn’t swallowed their tongue: if they have, hook it out at once. If they seem stunned, they may be concussed: if so, they must leave the field and have a medical examination. If there is any bleeding, the player must leave the field for treatment. For further information on the interpretation of these rules, regulations and recommendations contact the RUGBY CANADA Director of Development 905-780-8998, WWW.RUGBYCANADA.CA, OR, RUGBY ONTARIO, 416-426-7144, WWW.RUGBYONTARIO.COM.