

Age Grade Competitions Review

New Rules of Play and Player Progression Pathway to 15-a-side

For the 2015-2016 season, the implementation of the New Rules of Play (NRoP) includes the Under 11 age group. Under 12 NRoP are discretionary in clubs and schools with the majority of counties following this route for club rugby.

In the pilot counties, trials and development of the Under 13 and 14 NRoP will be finalised ready for the 2016-17 season. Feedback will also continue to be sought more widely to help shape the transition from NRoP to 15-a side rugby. The pilot counties of Hampshire, Warwickshire and Durham continue to do an excellent job in supporting the RFU to shape the player progression pathway.

The introduction and development of the scrum and lineout building blocks will also be worked on further in 2015-16.

All of the rules of play and regulations for the 2015-16 season will be on the Regulations section under Governance at EnglandRugby.com by the end of May.

From September 2016, 15-a-side rugby will start at Under 14 and the new rules will be implemented at Under 12 and 13.

In early 2015, the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS), of which the vast majority of rugby-playing prep schools are members, adopted the New Rules of Play up to U11 for 2015-16 and for U12 and U13 for 2016-17. IAPS have therefore aligned to the club game under the AGCR.

The following table shows the current position of the Progression Pathway from Under 7 to Under 14 and includes for information some of the trial elements being piloted at Under 13 and 14. This is an ideal summary for teachers and coaches in preparing for the coming season without having to trawl through the rules themselves.

It is stressed that the rules give the extent and level to which the players can be taken. They should not play beyond what is regulation for their age group (except in special “playing-up/down” circumstances under Regulation 15). However, they can play at a reduced level if it is appropriate. It is expected that coaches will always work together to ensure that all the players, their safety, development and enjoyment comes first.

New Rules of Play & Player Progression Pathway 2015-16

| Structure | | Get started | | | Tackle | Scrum | | Lineout | | Contest for the ball | | Kicking | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| Age Group | School Year | Max numbers | Max Pitch size | Ball Size | | Max Numbers | Contest | Max Numbers | Contest | Ruck | Maul | From hand | At goal |
| U7 | 2 | 4 | 20 x 12 | 3 | No - Tag only | N/A | N/A | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | N/A | N/A | No | No |
| U8 | 3 | 6 | 45 x 22 | 3 | No - Tag only | N/A | N/A | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | N/A | N/A | No | No |
| U9 | 4 | 7 | 60 x 30 | 3 | Yes - inc 'hold' | N/A | N/A | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | No | No | No | No |
| U10 | 5 | 8 | 60 x 35 | 4 | Yes | Nearest 3 | Uncontested | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | Yes - limit of 1 supporting player | Yes - limit of 1 supporting player | No | No |
| U11 | 6 | 9 | 60 x 43 | 4 | Yes | Nearest 3 | Strike only, no push | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | Yes - limit of 2 supporting players | Yes - limit of 2 supporting players | Yes - 'fly hack' not permitted | No |
| U12 | 7 | 12 | 60 x 43 | 4 | Yes | Nearest 5 | Strike only, no push | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | Yes | Yes | Yes - 'fly hack' not permitted | No |
| U13 | 8 | 13 | 90 x 60 | 4 | Yes | 6 - trained and willing | Strike and push | N/A - free pass | N/A - free pass | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| U14 | 9 | 15 | 100 x 70 | 4 | Yes | 8 - trained and willing | Strike and push | 13 | Uncontested | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

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