



**NEW ZEALAND
RUGBY LEAGUE®**

**GUIDE TO THE LAWS
OF MINI-MOD FOOTY**

NZRL Publication January 2010

THIS BOOKLET IDENTIFIES THE MAJOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE LAWS OF MODIFIED GAMES. WHERE NO MODIFICATIONS ARE MENTIONED, INTERNATIONAL LAW APPLIES.

The **Mini-Mod** programme is unashamedly about young players first, their interests and needs as a child – then, and importantly their development and preparation for the International Law game and its demands.

In this way children can develop a ‘love’ of the game.

Mini-Mod has two strands.

Mini is an introductory phase that emphasises a positive experience through fun and enjoyment, participation, a safe playing environment and the development of basic movement skills.

Mod, still emphasising all those aspects mentioned above, now focuses on technical skills.

The League has taken great care to ensure youngsters experience their football in a controlled way that reflects their needs.

Mini-Mod games are designed so that the player’s development can be matched gradually, progressively and sequentially to the complexities and demands of the adult game.

All of this, a child oriented philosophy, is conditioning bright and happy children to be drawn to Rugby League through rewarding and satisfying experiences. In this way **Mini-Mod** is a recruitment and retention tool which must necessarily be supported by good club climate, coaches and parents.

This booklet should be read in conjunction with the

SAFE PLAY CODE

MINI FOOTY

(Under 6 - Under 9 Years)

Classification of Groups by age	Players in the relevant age group to be under that age prior to 1st January
Size of Field U9 Yrs. Only in exceptional circumstance	68 x 30 metres. For physically bigger teams U9 – 68 x 40m. But, both teams must agree otherwise regulation field to be used.
No. of Players on Field	Maximum 8; Minimum 6. Teams must have equal playing numbers on the field (the referee can direct a player be replaced)
Coaches	As a guide coaches may be present on the field to assist their young players in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All year for under 6's • The first half of the season for Under 7's
4 Tackles	The game is of 4 tackles
No Scrums	There are no scrums in Mini Footy
No Finals	No finals are played. Competition points are not applied in these grades
Periods of Play	3 x 10 minute periods
Intervals	3 minutes between periods
Minimum Playing Time per Player	Each player to play a minimum of one unbroken period of 10 minutes
Injury Time	No time off for injury

Replacement	A player may only be replaced as a result of injury or after playing one full 10 minute 'period' of play
Player Misconduct	Sin Bin is not applicable. The referee may direct that a player be replaced
Play the Ball P.t.B Team not in possession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No markers allowed • Team not in position must retire 5 metres from the P.t.B. and, • Cannot advance unless the acting half-back runs or the ball has been passed and is in the hands of the first receiver
Passing from P.t.B	2 or more passes to retain possession
Passing within 20m of own Goal Line	One pass only. The acting half-back must pass the ball for the team to retain possession, or run and score (hard yards)
Zero Tackle Count No count at first tackle if -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A player fields a kick from (1) the start of play; (2) restart of play; (3) a penalty kick • A player (1) picks up the ball dropped by an opponent; (2) intercepts a pass; (3) gains possession after the ball has been deliberately touched by an opponent
Starts of Play Commencement of each period of play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The non-kicking side to retire 5 metres • The ball to travel 5 metres forward before either side touches the ball
Restarts of Play After Points Scored	<p>In all following instances the non-kicking team is to retire 5 metres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-scoring team to restart play with a place-tap kick from the centre of half way

Goal Line Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball made dead by defending team. Ball must travel 5 metres forward
20 Metre Tap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball made dead by opposition. Restart with a tap kick at the centre of the 20 metre line
Ball into Touch – From Starts & Restarts	When the ball is required to travel 5 metres forward and it lands in the field of play and then enters touch, the kicking side will P.t.B 10 metres in field opposite where the ball entered touch, with a zero tackle
Try	All tries scored are worth 4 points
Goal Kicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only after a try has been scored Place or drop kick in front of goal posts Goal kicks to be taken in rotation by all members of the team
Change of Possession Occurs after -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4th tackle Knock-on or forward pass Acting half-back or 1st receiver runs with the ball and is tackled before scoring (refer Passing within 20 metres of own Goal Line – ‘hard yards’) Player in possession runs into or is tackled into touch
Kicking In general play	Is not allowed
Held up in Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play is restarted by the player in possession. P.t.B. 5 metres out from the goal line and opposite where held up

Held up in Goal Cont’d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a player in possession is held up on the 4th tackle, the opposition will P.t.B. 5 metres out and the tackle count is zero
Stripping of the Ball	No stripping or stealing of the ball in a tackle
Safety	For all safety rules including the tackle zone and shoulder charge please refer to the Safeylay Code in the rear of this book.

NOTES

MOD LEAGUE

(Under 10 - Under 11 Years)

Classification of Groups by age	Players in the relevant age group to be under that age prior to 1st January
Size of Field	80 x 48 metres
No. of Players on Field At any one time	Maximum 11; Minimum 8. Teams must have equal playing numbers on the field (unless a player has been dismissed without replacement)
Coaches	Not permitted on the field at any time during play
Finals	Points are not awarded for fixtures/ matches. No Finals are Played.
6 Tackles	The game is of 6 tackles
Periods of Play	2 x 20 minute halves
Intervals	5 minutes
Minimum Playing Time per Player	Each player to play a minimum of one unbroken half, 20 minutes, of the match
Injury Time	No time off for injury
Replacement	A player may only be replaced as a result of injury or after playing one full 20 minute half of the match
Player Misconduct	Sin Bin is not applicable. The referee may direct that a player be replaced

Play the Ball P.t.B Team not in possession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one marker allowed and must always be present • Team not in possession must retire 5 metres from the P.t.B. and, • Cannot advance unless the acting half-back runs or the ball has been passed and is in the hands of the first receiver
Passing from P.t.B	2 or more passes to retain possession
Passing within 20m of own Goal Line	One pass only. The acting half-back must pass the ball for the team to retain possession or run and score (hard yards)
Zero Tackle Count No count at first tackle if -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A player fields a kick from (1) the start of play; (2) restart of play; (3) a penalty kick • A player (1) picks up the ball dropped by an opponent; (2) intercepts a pass; (3) gains possession after the football has been deliberately touched by an opponent
Starts of Play Commencement of each period of play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The non kicking side to retire 10 metres • The ball to travel 10 metres forward before either side touches the ball
Restarts of Play After Points Scored	In all following instances the non kicking team is to retire 10 metres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non scoring team to restart play with a place kick from the centre of half way
Goal Line Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball made dead by defending team. Ball must travel 10 metres forward

20 Metre Tap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball made dead by opposition. Restart with a tap kick at the centre of the 20 metre line
Ball into Touch – From Starts & Restarts	When the ball is required to travel 10 metres forward and it lands in the field of play and then enters touch, the kicking side will P.t.B 10 metres in field opposite where the ball entered touch, with a zero tackle
Try	All tries scored are worth 4 points
Goal Kicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only after a try has been scored Place or drop kick in front of goal posts Goal kicks to taken in rotation by all members of the team
Change of Possession Occurs after –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 6th tackle Knock on or forward pass Acting half-back or first receiver runs with the ball and is tackled before scoring (refer Passing within 20 metres of own Goal Line – ‘hard yards’) Ball kicked in general play and bounces into touch. P.t.B 10 metres in from where the ball crossed the touch line – zero tackle Ball kicked in general play goes into touch on the full. P.t.B where kicked –zero tackle

Change of Possession Cont’d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball ricochets or rebounds from a player of the non-kicking team and goes into touch. Non-kicking team P.t.B. 10 metres in-field from where the ball crossed the touch line – 1st tackle ‘Bombs’ or attempted field goals, change over where kick took place Scrum half or first player to pick the ball up from the scrum runs and is caught in possession without scoring. Change over where tackle occurs Ball carrier is held up over opponents goal line after 5 tackles
No Change of Possession	Ball kicked in general play and touched by the opposition before going into touch. P.t.B by the kicking team 10 metres in from where the ball crossed the touch line – zero tackle
Kicking In general play	Allowed, but no bombs or field goals. Refer Change of Possession for Kicks into Touch
Scrum Occur if -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player in possession runs into or is tackled into touch Infringements by both sides except on the last tackle From a penalty kick if the opposition touches the ball before it crosses the touch line Following an infringement involving the referee, touch judge or spectator (team last in possession feeds the scrum)
Number in Scrum	5 players

NOTES

Scrum Formation Refer Safe Play Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scrums are completely de-powered and form up to the instruction: Form – Engage – Hold• All players, except the hooker, to keep both feet on the ground• No pushing, pulling or rotating• Ball to go into the tunnel, i.e. in front of the foremost feet of the loose head front row forwards• Only the hookers may strike for the ball
Scrums Set Down	Scrums are set where the infringement occurs but no less than 10 metres from touch or the goal line
Ball from Scrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possession is forfeited if the first player picking up the ball from the scrum runs and is tackled without scoring (see Change of Possession previous page)• If the player picking up the ball from the scrum is immediately tackled, or falls on the ball, play continues with P.t.B. – 1st tackle
Held-up In-Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Play is restarted by the player in possession. P.t.B 10 metres out from the goal line and opposite where held up• If a player in possession is held-up on the 6th tackle, the opposition will P.t.B. 10 metres out and the tackle count is zero
Stripping of the Ball	No stripping of the ball in a tackle
Safety	For all safety rules including the tackle zone and shoulder charge please refer to the Safeplay code in the rear of this book.

MOD LEAGUE

(Under 12 Years)

Classification of Groups by age	Players in the relevant age group to be under that age prior to 1st January
Size of Field	100 x 68 metres
No. of Players on Field At any one time	Maximum 13; Minimum 11. Teams must have equal playing numbers on the field. (Unless a player has been dismissed without replacement)
Coaches	Not permitted on the field at any time during play
Finals	Points are not awarded for fixtures/ matches. No Finals are Played.
6 Tackles	The game is of 6 tackles
Periods of Play	2 x 20 minute halves
Intervals	5 minutes
Minimum Playing Time per Player	Each player to play a minimum of one unbroken half, 20 minutes, of the match
Injury Time	No time off for injury
Replacement	A player may only be replaced as a result of injury or after playing one full 20 minute half of the match
Player Misconduct	Sin Bin is not applicable. The referee may direct that a player be replaced

Play the Ball P.t.B Team not in possession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one marker is allowed and must always be present • Team not in possession must retire 5 metres from the P.t.B. and, • Cannot advance unless the acting halfback runs or the ball has been passed and is in the hands of the first receiver
Passing from P.t.B	Two or more passes to retain possession
Passing within 20m of own Goal Line	One pass only. The acting half-back must pass the ball for the team to retain possession or , run and score
Zero Tackle Count No count at first tackle if -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A player fields a kick from (1) the start of play; (2) restart of play; (3) a penalty kick • A player (1) picks up the ball dropped by an opponent; (2) intercepts a pass; (3) gains possession after the ball has been deliberately touched by an opponent
Starts of Play Commencement of each period of play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non kicking side to retire 10 metres • The ball to travel 10 metres forward before either side touches the ball
Restarts of Play After Points Scored	In all following instances the non kicking team is to retire 10 metres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non scoring team to restart play with a place kick from the centre of half way
Goal Line Drop-out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball made dead by defending team Ball must travel 10 metres forward

20 Metre Tap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball dead by opposition. Restart with a tap kick at the centre of the 20 metre line
Ball into Touch Starts & Restarts	When the ball is required to travel 10 metres forward and it lands in the field of play and then enters touch, the kicking side will P.t.B 10 metres in field opposite where the ball entered touch, with a zero tackle
Try	All tries scored are worth 4 points
Goal Kicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only after a try has been scored Place kick only Conversion attempts for tries are to be taken in line with where the try was scored but not closer than 10 metres to the touch line Goal kicks to taken in rotation by all members of the team
Change of Possession Occurs after –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 6th tackle Knock on or forward pass Acting half-back or first receiver runs with the ball and is tackled before scoring (refer Passing within 20 metres of own Goal Line – ‘hard yards’) Ball kicked in general play and bounces into touch. P.t.B. 10 metres in from where the ball crossed the touch line –zero tackle Ball kicked in general play goes into touch on the full. P.t.B. where kicked – zero tackle

Change of Possession Cont’d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball ricochets or rebounds from a player of the non-kicking team and goes into touch. Non-kicking team P.t.B. 10 metres in-field from where the ball crossed the touch line – 1st tackle ‘Bombs’ or attempted field goals, change over where kick took place Scrum half or first player to pick up the ball from the scrum runs and is caught in possession without scoring. Change-over where tackle occurs Ball carrier is held up over opponents goal line after 5 tackles
No Change of Possession	Ball kicked in general play and touched by the opposition before going into touch. P.t.B. by the kicking team 10 metres in from where the ball crossed the touch line – zero tackle
Kicking In general play	Allowed, but no bombs or field goals. Refer ‘Change of Possession for Kicks into Touch’
Scrum Occur if -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player in possession runs into or is tackled into touch Infringements by both sides except on the last tackle From a penalty kick if the opposition touches the ball before it crosses the touch line Following an infringement involving the referee, touch judge or spectator (team last in possession feeds the scrum)
Number in Scrum	6 players



More than just a game

<p>Scrum Formation refer: Safe Play Code</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrums are completely de-powered and form up to the instruction: Form – Engage – Hold • No pushing, pulling or rotating • Ball to go into the tunnel, i.e. in front of the foremost feet of the loose head front row forwards • Only the hookers may strike for the ball
<p>Scrums Set Down</p>	<p>Scrums are set where the infringement occurs but no less than 10 metres from touch or the goal line</p>
<p>Ball from Scrum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession is forfeited if the first player picking up the ball from the scrum runs and is tackled without scoring (see Change of Possession previous page) • If the player picking up the ball from the scrum is immediately tackled, or falls on the ball, play continues with P.t.B. – 1st tackle
<p>Held-up In-Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play is restarted by the player in possession. P.t.B 10 metres out from the goal line and opposite where held up • If a player in possession is held-up on the 6th tackle, the opposition will P.t.B. 10 metres out and the tackle count is zero
<p>Stripping the Ball</p>	<p>No stripping of the ball in a tackle</p>
<p>Safety</p>	<p>For all safety rules including the tackle zone and shoulder charge please refer to the Safeplay code in the rear of this book.</p>

NATIONAL SAFEPLAY CODE FOR PLAYERS IN TEAMS AGED 15 YEARS AND UNDER

The Safeplay Code was developed to emphasise safety and good conduct within the game of Rugby League by creating the best possible on-field environment and actively controlling undesirable actions. The code applies to all players up to and including the under 15 years age group.

The NZRL trusts that players, coaches, parents and supporters will wholeheartedly embrace the code for the benefit of the players and the game.

Coaches and referees are the key to the successful application of the Safeplay code.

1. TACKLE ZONE

The Code: Tackles above the armpits are not permitted.

Application:

- (a) When the ball-carrier is running with an upright posture, any tackle in which the defender’s arm(s) make contact above the armpit constitutes an infringement.
- (b) It is an infringement for a defender/tackler to set upon the head or neck region of the ball-carrier.
- (c) A defender, in front of a ball-carrier who is diving or running with a “stooped” or “burrowing” posture, is permitted to come in contact with the ball-carriers shoulder provided the defender’s arm(s) extends down the **shoulder** and **trunk** i.e. underneath the ball-carrier.

2. DANGEROUS TACKLES

The Code: 2.1 The tacklers legs cannot be used to trip or to throw.

Application: The use of the legs in a tackle is not permissible. Using the legs (even if the defender has a handhold on the ball-carrier) to trip or throw constitutes an infringement.

The Code: 2.2 Adopting a crotch hold is misconduct.

Application: Adopting a crotch hold i.e. by placing either a hand or arm in the crotch region is an infringement.

The Code: 2.3 No vertical lift in a tackle is permitted.

Application: Vertical lifting in a tackle is an infringement. No defender(s) during the course of a tackle are permitted to vertically lift the ball-carrier. If the possibility of a **vertical** lift occurs i.e. **one** or both feet of the ball-carrier have been lifted off the ground, the referee must immediately blow the whistle to prevent the tackle from continuing. (This is not to be confused with a tackle that, in the same motion, knocks a player off his feet).

The Code: 2.4 Ball-Carrier cannot be lifted and driven.

Application: A tackle that results in the ball-carrier being lifted and remaining off the ground while the tackler takes two (2) or more steps to drive the player (in any direction and while the ball-carriers feet are off the ground) is an infringement.

The Code: 2.5 The additional following action(s) by a tackler will also incur an immediate penalty.

Application: When a player in possession is running, it is an infringement for a defender chasing from behind to lift and attempt to lift (hitch up) the trailing foot of the ball-carrier.

3. SHOULDER CHARGE

The Code: A defender cannot "shoulder charge" a ball-carrier to affect a tackle.

Application: A defender who runs at a ball-carrier and **without attempting to tackle, grab or hold the ball-carrier**, charges to make contact with the shoulder or with the upper arm (tucked into the side) is guilty of an infringement.

4. VICIOUS PALM

The Code: An attacking player cannot thrust out an arm to contact the defender above the shoulder.

Application: Any **attacking** player who violently **punches or thrusts** out an arm or uses an outstretched stiff arm so that the hand or fist contacts the neck, face or head of a defender commits an infringement. (This section does not state that a player cannot legitimately 'palm' the head, neck or face).

5. SLINGING

The Code: The use of the ball-carriers arm, or jersey to sling or swing a player is prohibited.

Application: A defender who uses the arm or jersey of the ball-carrier to **sling or swing** the player in a tackle commits an infringement.

6. FLOPPING

The Code: A defender cannot drop or fall on a prone player.

Application: It is an infringement for a defender to drop, dive or fall on a player in possession of the ball who is prone or stationary on the ground and not attempting to play-on. (A simple hand-on completes the tackle).

7. SURRENDER (IN THE TACKLE)

The Code: Ball-carriers may surrender in the tackle. When small and/or inexperienced players are involved in a "surrender", defenders must not complete the tackle.

Application: This rule is designed to protect beginners and small players by minimising risk and eliminating excessively robust play.

The referee, not the player, calls "held". Players who are at an obvious disadvantage because of low levels of experience, are of small stature or show a lack of skill are to be protected when in possession of the ball and being tackled. A halt to play is called (by the referee) when these players submit to the tackle or are held, subdued or their progress is halted by bigger or more experienced players. Failure by a tackler(s) to respond to the referees call is an infringement.

8. VERBAL ABUSE / FOUL LANGUAGE

The Code: The use of obscene expletives, threatening or denigrating words is not permitted.

Application: Verbal abuse, obscene language and sledging, including comments or words that threaten or denigrate an opponent, referee or supporter is an infringement. (If the individual cannot be identified, the team should be cautioned through the captain).

9. SCRUMS

The Code: Pushing or pulling in, or rotating a scrum is not permitted.

Application: All scrums are to be de-powered.

Scrum will form as per the following instructions: Form, Engage & Hold. A team that deliberately **pushes or pulls** in, or **rotates** a scrum is guilty of an infringement. Once the ball has been fed into the scrum, hookers **only** may strike for the ball. Second row players can **lift** a foot to rake the ball out of the scrum, but cannot step forward over the ball to cause the ball to come out of the scrum.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

It is mandatory that any act that transgresses the Safeplay code be followed by a penalty, plus a caution & instruction to the offender. The 'sin-bin' does not apply to mini-mod football. Any additional action to a penalty is "temporary suspension" with a replacement of the offender for the remainder of that period of play. A player returning to the field after suspension and who is guilty of further misconduct is to be dismissed without replacement.

For players aged 13-15 years, international law will apply for misconduct.

ADVANTAGE PLAY & THE SAFEPLAY CODE

A penalty kick must follow any infringement.

1. If no advantage occurs, the penalty is to be awarded immediately.
2. If an advantage occurs, the penalty is to be awarded either at the breakdown in play immediately after the misconduct occurred (unless a try is imminent) or where the act of misconduct occurred, whichever is to the greater advantage to the non-offending team.
3. When a try has been scored in the same play in which the act of misconduct occurred or in the immediate play thereafter (the imminent factor) the penalty kick, additional to the conversion, will be awarded in front of the goal posts. A kick at goal must be taken from the penalty kick (place or drop) and play restarted from the centre on the half-way line irrespective of the outcome of the kick.

More than just a game

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