



MALE Under-16 Players in Under-18 Rugby Policy

Policies and Procedures			
Section	Community Rugby	Policy Number	
Title	MALE Under-16 Players in Under-18 Rugby	Version No.	1.8
Launched	May 2009	Review Date	

MALE UNDER-16 PLAYERS IN UNDER-18 RUGBY

Introduction

Scottish Rugby's **Under-16 Players in Under-18 Rugby** policy is a fundamental part of the organisation's ***Are You Ready to Play Rugby?*** campaign, which was launched in February 2009 following extensive consultation with all stakeholders. This policy has been drafted as a result of that campaign and will come into effect from the start of the season 2009/10.

Medical studies support the view that there is increased risk of injury when physically immature males play contact sports against physically mature males. The vast majority of boys (more than 95%) reach physical maturity by the time they turn 16 years of age. As such, boys who have not yet turned 16 should not play with or against players who are aged 16 and over as, in doing so, they will be exposed to an increased risk of injury. Medical studies also support that there is amplified risk for players playing in the front row (prop or hooker).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Eliminate the occasions where physically mature males are playing against physically immature males;
- Protect the safety and welfare of players participating in under-18 rugby at an age younger than sixteen years, by ensuring that players participating in under-18 rugby competition/games have comparable physical maturity, skill levels and playing experience with the participants they are playing with and against; and
- Ensure that all involved in the decision to permit a player to participate in an under-18 rugby game/competition at an age younger than sixteen years understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to the risk of injury and that this risk may be heightened where a player participates in an under-18 rugby game/competition at an age younger than sixteen years of age.

Scope

This policy applies to all male players, coaches/teachers and administrators involved in rugby in Scotland, in member clubs and affiliated schools* of Scottish Rugby, and to all rugby competitions/matches played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in Scotland.

* Under IRB regulations, all clubs and schools who wish to play rugby union are required to be affiliated to their national union. The Scottish Rugby insurance policy covers all member clubs and affiliated schools.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- Under-16 defines a player who has not yet turned 16 years of age
- Under-18 rugby defines all games of under-18 rugby played by clubs and schools in Scotland

Policy

The age at which male players are permitted to participate in under-18 rugby shall be 16 years old.

This policy must be followed unless the exception below is applicable.

Exception: In exceptional cases, a player's physical maturity, skill level and experience may be such that he may be allowed to participate in under-18 rugby at the age of fifteen years old.

Players are only permitted to participate in under-18 rugby at fifteen years of age under the following circumstances:

1. Where the player **will not** play under-18 rugby in the front row (prop or hooker)
2. Where the player and coach have completed the online IRB Rugby Ready course (see www.irbrugbyready.com)
3. Where the coach/teacher have completed the RugbyReady Practical course
4. Where the club or school complies with the procedure detailed below and completes the Under-16 in Under-18 application form
4. Where the player attends a medical assessment on his physical maturity arranged by Scottish Rugby
5. Where the player and his parents agree that he becomes part of an ongoing study on rugby injuries
6. Written approval from Scottish Rugby must be received before any fifteen year old player participates in under-18 rugby

Obligations of Employees

- Scottish Rugby employees must be aware of and comply with this policy
- Scottish Rugby employees are required to communicate this policy to Scottish Rugby member clubs and affiliated schools

Enforcement and Application

The general principle adopted by Scottish Rugby is to ensure the safety of players and to minimise the risks involved in the playing of the sport. It is the responsibility of all staff, member clubs and affiliated schools to enforce this policy. Exceptions to this policy will be given on a case by case basis on completion of the relevant paper work.

Support for Clubs and Schools

Scottish Rugby is committed to providing appropriate help, support and advice to its member clubs and affiliated schools, to ensure that this policy is adhered to. More information can be found in the ***Are You Ready to Play Rugby?*** section of Scottish Rugby's website.

Process

Any club or school which feels they have a player aged 15 who meets the exception criteria needs to follow the steps detailed below:

1. The player completes online IRB Rugby Ready course and takes note of the award date
2. Coach/teacher completes an application form with signatures from the player and player's parent/guardian
3. Application form is sent to the Scottish Rugby ***Are You Ready to Play Rugby?*** administrator at Murrayfield
4. On receipt of the application form, Scottish Rugby will check that the form is complete and complies with the Under-16 Player in Under-18 Rugby policy and acknowledge receipt, via email, with the coach/teacher
5. Incomplete forms or forms that don't comply with policy will be returned to the club/school
6. Approved forms to be counter-signed by ***Are You Ready to Play Rugby?*** project manager
7. Details of players forwarded to relevant Scottish Rugby assessment centre
8. Date and time of assessment communicated to school/club
9. Player attends physical maturity assessment. Only players who have submitted an application form will be assessed
10. Medical practitioner informs Scottish Rugby of results of physical maturity assessment
11. Scottish Rugby will process results, and inform the club/school in writing of the outcome of the physical maturity assessment and whether the player may or may not play under-18 rugby

Provisional Timeline

Please visit the *Are You Ready to Play Rugby?* pages of the Scottish Rugby website to view physical maturity dates and time. Application forms must be received a minimum of 2 weeks before the relevant assessment date.

Further assessments will be possible throughout the season on an *ad hoc* basis but may require further travel.



APPLICATION FORM – MALE Under-16 Player in Under-18 Rugby

**COMPLETED FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE 'ARE YOU READY TO PLAY RUGBY?' ADMINISTRATOR,
SCOTTISH RUGBY, MURRAYFIELD STADIUM, EDINBURGH, EH12 5PJ.**

<i>PLAYER (please complete all fields and print clearly)</i>	
Name:	Club/School:
Email:	Competition:
Telephone:	Playing Position:
Date of Birth:	Online IRB Rugby Ready award date:
Current Age:	
<p>I have read and understood the Under-16 Player in Under-18 Rugby policy, and completed the online IRB Rugby Ready test.</p> <p>I believe that my physical development, skill level and experience are sufficiently high that I am capable of competing safely with players in the proposed game/competition.</p> <p>I understand that I will be competing against older players and this may involve an increased level of injury risk.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Print Name: _____</p>	

<i>COACH/ TEACHER (please complete all fields and print clearly)</i>	
Name:	Online IRB Rugby Ready award date:
Email:	Practical Rugby Ready award date:
Telephone:	UKCC Qualification (please circle) [1] [2] [3]

<i>Coach to assess the player against the following considerations. If the answer is NO to any of these considerations, then the player shall NOT be considered capable of competing safely with players in the proposed game/competition.</i> PLEASE NOTE: This exception policy is NOT applicable to players playing in the front row (prop & hookers).			
		Please Circle	
Physical Development:	In your opinion does the player's level of physical development allow the player to safely compete with players in the proposed game/competition?	YES	NO
Skill Level:	In your opinion is the player's skill level comparable with other players in the proposed game/competition (including skills specific to their playing position and in relation to the game's fundamentals e.g. tackle, pass, ruck, maul, scrum etc)?	YES	NO
Level of Experience:	In your opinion does the player have the experience to compete with other players in under-18 age group competition? (Please consider the following factors - has the player been involved in representative/pathway rugby; has the player been an outstanding player in his age group; has the player trained with under-18 players and how did he cope?)	YES	NO
Standard of	In your opinion is the standard of competition in the proposed game/competition	YES	NO



Competition:	suitable to allow the player to compete safely?		
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COACH/ TEACHER DECLARATION

I have read and understood the Under-16 Player in Under-18 Rugby policy, and completed the online IRB Rugby Ready test.

In my opinion, the player's physical maturity, skill level and experience are sufficiently high that the player is capable of competing safely with players in under-18 school/club rugby in positions out with the front row.

I have explained to the player and his parent or guardian that the player will be competing against older players and this may involve an increased level of injury risk.

I have explained the rationale behind this application for exception to (insert name: _____), the teacher in charge of rugby or club president or relevant other club office bearer.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN DECLARATION

I confirm that:

- I am a parent or legal guardian of the abovementioned player;
- I have been provided with a copy of Scottish Rugby's Under-16 Players in Under-18 Rugby policy;
- The coach has explained to me that, in his/her opinion, the player's physical development, skill level and experience are sufficiently high that he is capable of competing safely with players in the proposed age grade in a position out with the front row (prop or hooker);
- It has been explained to me that the risk of injury may be increased by the player playing in under-18 rugby;
- I understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to a risk of injury. I also understand that the level of risk may be heightened where an under-16 player participates in under-18 rugby where the player's physical development/maturity, skill level and experience are inferior to that of the players he will play against;
- I agree to my son's level of physical maturity being assessed by a member of the medical profession at a centre identified by Scottish Rugby;
- I agree to my son being part of an ongoing study on rugby injuries;
- I consent to Scottish Rugby holding this information in the Under-16 in Under-18 Rugby policy database.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

SCOTTISH RUGBY DECLARATION

I confirm that:

- a) The information submitted above complies with Scottish Rugby's Under-16 Player in Under-18 Rugby policy.
- b) That the player has attended a Scottish Rugby assessment centre and has passed the physical maturity assessment.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Date Received: