

Rugby League Basics

Included topics

1. Aim of Rugby League
2. Different Rugby League Positions
3. Passing and Handovers
4. Rugby League Offside Rules
5. Scrums
6. Ball in Touch
7. 40-20 & 20-40
8. Six-Again Rule
9. Goal line Drop Out
10. Advantage

NRLB
NEDERLANDSE RUGBY LEAGUE BOND

1. Aim of Rugby League

The simple aim of league rugby - like most ball sports - is to score more points than your opponents do.

How many players per team?

There are 13 players per team and each team can use up to 4 additional reserves waiting on the interchange bench.

How many substitutions can a team make per game?

The substitutes can get substituted - interchanged - up to 12 times throughout the game.

How long does a game take?

The game gets played over two halves of forty minutes with a break at the half-time interval. Match timekeepers use a loud hooting siren for signaling full time.

How can you score points?

There are three principle methods of scoring. When you ground the ball in their try-line you score four points. Kicking at goal afterwards bumps up to six points if your player converts the kick. Penalty goals score an extra two points and your side gets one for a drop goal.

2. Different Rugby League Positions

| Positions | Role description |
|--------------|---|
| Fullback (1) | A fullback is often the most complete player on the team. His primary role is the last line of defense, standing behind the main line of defenders. Defensively, fullbacks must be able to chase and tackle any player who breaks the first line of defense, and must be able to catch and return kicks made by the attacking side. Their role in attack is usually as a support player, and they are often used to come into the line to create an overlap in attack. |
| Wing (2&5) | Speed is what the winger is all about - and you need plenty of it. But to be a truly dependable winger, you need to pick up those difficult passes in tight spaces. So, as well as the speed of a sprinter, you need hands like glue - the ball needs to stick to you every time you get it. But don't think you're only responsibility is in attack. Often the winger can be the last line of defense, so you need to be able to make those important tackles when they count. |
| Centre (3&4) | The centre is always in the thick of things, whether in attack or defense. In attack their primary role is to provide an attacking threat out wide and as such they often need to be some of the fastest players on the pitch, often providing the pass for their winger to finish off a move. In defense, they are expected to mark their opposite centre. |
| Standoff (6) | The standoff or five eighth is usually a strong passer and runner, while also being agile. Often this player is referred to as "second receiver", |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| | as in attacking situations they are typically the second player to receive the ball (after the halfback) and are then able to initiate an attacking move. |
| Halfback (7) | The halfback or scrumhalf is the link between the forwards and the backs. They can expect to make plenty of passes to teammates. Halfbacks need to have the safest pair of hands on the team - as well as a brilliant rugby league brain. The halfback is the player who feeds the ball into the scrum. A brilliant number 7 has the kicking skills of an international footballer. Whether it be a place kick, a drop kick or just a plain old punt, he needs to make every kick count. |
| Prop Forwards (8&10) | Front row forwards must enjoy bashing their way through tackles and making big tackles when they count. Props are usually the largest and heaviest players on a team. In attack, their size and strength means that they are primarily used for running directly into the defensive line, as a kind of "battering ram" to gain meters/momentum. |
| Hooker (9) | The hooker probably makes more contact with the ball than any other player on the field. They often are the players who act as the dummy half after a play the ball, swinging the passes out or breaking down the opposition's defense by a dummy-half scoot. They are expected to make plenty of tackles when they matter and usually make most tackles of the team. |
| Second Row (11&12) | Second Row loves making tackles and breaking down the opposition's defense. They possess more speed and agility than props and take up a wider position in attack and defense. Each second rower will cover a specific side of the field, working in unison with their respective centre and winger. |
| Loose Forward | The loose forward will always be found in the thick of the action. It is a job that requires plenty of running, so they need to be super fit. Not only that, loose forwards have to have excellent handling skills and a defense as tough as iron. They will generally top the tackle count at the end of the game. And as the last man in the scrum, it is the responsibility of the loose forward to make sure the ball is available for the halfback. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

3. Passing and Handovers

Rugby league regulations allow the players to pass the ball as often as they like. They can do so until they get tackled. But the ball must always get passed backwards.

When is a player tackled? The referee always decides when a tackle is complete, and when defenders laying on top of the tackled player have to release him. So always pay close attention to the ref when in a tackle. The four options below are what a referee looks at when deciding if a tackle is complete or not.

Grounded when the ball carrier is held by one or more opposing players and the ball or the hand or arm holding the ball comes into contact with the ground.

Upright when the ball carrier is held by one or more opposing players in such a manner that he can make no further progress and cannot part with the ball.

Succumbing when, being held by an opponent, the tackled player makes it evident that he has succumbed to the tackle and wishes to be released in order to play the ball.

Hand on player when the ball carrier is lying on the ground and an opponent already grounded places a hand on him.

Each team is allowed six tackles (plays) before they have to turn over possession to the opposition.

Instead of using up all six tackles, teams often kick it forward on the fourth or fifth. If you can't score a try during that set the objective is to turn over possession as close to the oppositions try line as possible. If you are in possession on the 4th or 5th and close to the oppositions try line the standoff or halfback often opts for a grubber kick (to either be picked up by attacking players resulting in a try; or to force a goal line drop out). More information on goal line drop outs is to be found in section 9.

4. Rugby League Offside Rules

Offside after a tackle

Once a tackle is completed, the referee will tell the team without the ball to get back 10m from the ball.

Only two players are allowed within the 10m and they are called the "markers".

Every other player must be behind the marker and 10m from the ball.

If they are not, the referee will award a penalty to the team with the ball.

Offside at a kick

If one of your team-mates is about to kick a high up-and-under or a grubber kick to run onto, make sure you are level or just behind them when they kick.

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>If you are not, the referee will award your opponents a penalty because you are offside.</p> <p>The rules say that to be onside at a kick, an active player not in possession of the ball, must be behind the player who kicks the ball.</p> <p>If you are in front of the kicker, make sure you don't get involved with open play.</p> <p>You can do this by raising your arms and running back to an onside position.</p> <p>This shows the referee you have no intention of joining play because you know you're offside.</p> <p>However, if you make no attempt to move back to an onside position as play continues, the referee will award a penalty to the opposition</p> |
|--|---|

5. Scrum

Scrum are awarded for knock-ons and forward passes, unless it is last tackle, in which case it is a handover to the opposition (or unless the opposition gains an advantage, in which case the referee should play advantage).

For each scrum, the captain of the team with head and feed can keep the scrum where it is awarded, or can choose to move to the centre of the pitch or to the 10m or 20m mark from the touchline on the same side of the pitch.

If a defender breaks early from the scrum, a full penalty is awarded against him. The attacking side can choose to reset the scrum instead of kicking the penalty.

6. Ball in Touch

When a ball goes into touch, this is no longer followed by a scrum, but a handover and a play-the-ball for the opposition. The handover takes place 20m in from touch, although the team playing the ball can choose to move it to 10m from touch or to centre of the pitch. This is a play-the ball, so markers are allowed.

7. 40-20 & 20-40 kicks

Where a player kicks the ball from behind their own 40m line and the ball bounces into touch between the opponents' 20m line and goal line, then the kicker's team restarts play with a tap restart. The restart is taken 20m in from the touchline and in line with where the ball first crossed the touchline but no closer than 10m from the goal line. The defense must be 10m back.

The rules are the same for 20-40 kicks, except that this is where the kick is taken from behind the kicker's 20m line and goes into touch between the opposition's 40m line and their goal line.

8. Six-Again Rule

This is one of the biggest changes that has been introduced. For any type of ruck interference - slowing the play-the-ball, hands on the ball, holding down, markers not square, etc. - the referee will not award a penalty but will call "6 again" and the tackle count will reset. The next tackle will therefore be "tackle 1".

The above rule does not apply for defensive offsides, i.e. where the defense encroaches within 10m before the play-the-ball. This is a full penalty where the defense should have been standing (ie 10m forward from the play-the-ball position.)

9. Goalline Drop Out

If the attacking team is under pressure they can force the defending team to drop out from under their own goalposts.

This happens when:

1. A defending player brings the ball back over their own try line and grounds the ball in the goal area.
2. A defending player is tackled in their in-goal area.
3. A defending player kicks the ball in touch on the full from their own in-goal area.

How is it taken?

- Every member of the defending team must be behind the kicker and the try line when the kick is taken.
- The ball must travel at least 10 meters forward.
- The attacking team are pretty much guaranteed the ball every time, so the advantage is entirely with them.
- For example, if the attacking team puts a clever kick behind the opposition's defense, a defender is often left with few safe options. Surrounded by attackers looking to score a try on their goal line, their best bet is to ground the ball and relieve the pressure - but only for a short time.

10. Advantage

This is a way of keeping the game alive after an offence or foul.

Instead of blowing up for a penalty or scrum, the referee gives the side who have not committed the offence the advantage.

But this will only happen if it is in their favor. For example, if a one player knocks the ball on but the opposition obtain the ball in a promising attacking position, the referee can play advantage.