



Northern Territory Rugby Union Competition Rules

2025-26

Prepared by: Matt Kaye
Caretaker Chief Executive Officer
Northern Territory Rugby Union

Date: 30 September 2024
Revision: 1.0

Updated by: Matt Kaye
Club Development Manager
Date: 8 September 2025
Revision: 1.2

Contents

1. Definitions	3
2. Preamble	5
3. Laws of the Game	5
4. Governance of the Competition	6
5. Rugby AU Codes and Policies	6
6. NTRU Codes and Policies	7
7. National Standard Competition Rules	8
8. Law and Regulation Clarifications	15
9. Players	16
10. Match Day Rules and Procedures	18
11. Accreditations	19
12. Junior Competition Variations	20
13. Annex A	22

1. Definitions

For the purposes of these Rules, the following definitions shall apply:

“Affiliated Union” means a body so named in, or admitted pursuant to, the Rugby Australia Constitution as being an affiliated union.

“Association” means an organisation that administers a group of clubs for the purposes of governance and regulatory requirements with respect to competitions, events, tournaments and rugby programs.

“Clearance” means the requirement for a currently registered player wishing to register at another Club on the same registration type during the season.

“Codes, Policies and Procedures” means the codes, policies and procedures of Rugby Australia and/or NT Rugby Union

“Insurer” means the insurance provider of the Australian Rugby Insurance Plan.

“International Union” means a Rugby Union, Rugby Club, or other body based in a foreign nation and affiliated with the National Rugby Union of that nation.

“Competition” means any match played as part of either:

- (i) a structured competition or series including a trial match, a friendly match, or representative match involving a Rugby Body; or
- (ii) a Sanctioned Event.

“Competition Manager” is the person deemed responsible by the Union for the day to day operational management of the competition.

“Event Organiser” means an organisation authorised to conduct Rugby Union programs, events, tournaments, and/or matches in Australia, pursuant to the Rugby Australia Event Sanctioning Guidelines,

“Game” means the game of Rugby as recognised by World Rugby, including any variations authorised by World Rugby or Rugby Australia.

“Judiciary” is the Sub Committee as appointed by the Member Union.

“Laws of the Game” mean the laws of Rugby as published by World Rugby, including any variations authorised by World Rugby or Rugby Australia.

“Management Committee” is the committee appointed by the Member Union to oversee the management of the competition.

“Member Union” means an Australian State or Territory union in membership of Rugby Australia.

“NTRU” means Northern Territory Rugby Union Inc

“Participant” means a Player, match official, selector, coach, trainer, manager, team official, or an individual involved in the organisation, administration or promotion of Rugby including a director, officer or employee of a Rugby Body.

“Player” means a player of the game of Rugby.

“Registered” means a Player and/or non-playing Participant who has completed effective registration and paid all applicable fees and levies.

“Regulation(s)” means the World Rugby and Rugby Australia Regulations, as amended from time to time.

“Rugby” means Rugby Union football.

“Rugby Australia” or “Rugby AU” means Rugby Australia Ltd.

“Rugby Body” means Rugby Australia, any Member Union or Affiliated Union of Rugby Australia, or any Rugby Union, Club or other body in membership with or affiliated with Rugby Australia, a Member Union or an Affiliated Union.

“Rugby Club” or “Club” means any club affiliated with a Member Union or an affiliated Rugby Body, that is a participant of the competition.

“Rugby Xplorer” means Rugby Australia’s online registration and competition management system.

“Rules” means the National Model Competition Rules and the Competition Rules of the Specific Union.

“Sanctioned Event” means an event, tournament, and/or matches conducted by an authorised Event Organiser that have received formal approval.

“Specific Union” means the governing body of the competition.

“WR” means World Rugby.

2. Preamble

These Rules set out the minimum standards and procedures that apply to Competitions conducted under the jurisdiction of Rugby AU and its Member Unions.

This Competition, as with all competitions played under the auspices of NTRU, are community competitions. All Participants in the Competition are to be made aware of the [WR Playing Charter](#); which includes the:

[Principles of the Game](#)

[Principles of the Laws](#)

All Participants are to be made aware that by virtue of the acceptance of a team into this competition the match organiser e.g. NTRU and their respective Participants subject themselves and agree to be bound by the Rules of the Competition and applicable Policies & Procedures.

3. Laws of the Game

All games will be played in terms of the [WR Laws of the Game](#), including any of the following variations:

- a. Tackle Height Law Variation (as part of 2024/2025 World Rugby Global Law Trial) Law 9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late, or dangerous. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling, or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the sternum even if the tackle starts below the line of the sternum.
- b. [WR Under 19 Variations](#)
[Rugby AU Under 19 Variations](#)
- c. [WR Sevens \(7-a-side\) Variations](#)
- d. [WR 10s \(10-a-side\) Variations](#)
- e. [WR Game On Variations](#)
see later section in this document Game On Variations applied in a specific Competition
- f. [WR Leisure Modified Formats](#) including Cross-Field (RugbyX), Beach 5s etc.
[Rugby AU Cross-Field 7s](#)
- g. [Rugby AU Kids Pathway U6 to U12](#)
- h. [Rugby AU Veterans Rugby Laws](#)
- i. Tri Tag Rugby Laws

4. Governance of the Competition

All matches in the Competition shall be played in accordance with the [WR Regulations of the Game](#) and Rugby AU Regulations, Codes and Policies.

In addition, Rugby AU publishes '[Game Management Guidelines](#)' annually that have been prepared to assist Member Union's in the administration and playing of the game in domestic competitions within Australia.

The NTRU General Manager or their appointed delegate will be responsible for the overall governance of the Competitions operating in the Northern Territory.

5. Rugby AU Codes and Policies

The effective governance and administration of rugby requires adherence to a wide range of codes and policies around safety and welfare, integrity, inclusion, member protection and child safety and privacy etc. Therefore, all matches shall be played in accordance with all [Rugby AU Codes, Policies and Procedures](#):

5.1. [Safety & Welfare](#)

Rugby must be as safe, inclusive and fair as possible. Rugby AU has several policies and initiatives aimed at ensuring that rugby is safe to play and is enjoyable for all participants.

- Concussion Management;
- Serious Injuries and Injury Reporting;
- Welfare Initiatives;
- Player Dispensation;
- Match Day Safety; and
- First Aid medical.

5.2. [Child Safeguarding](#)

Rugby AU is committed to ensuring that rugby is a safe environment for children and young people.

- Child Safe Framework and Guidelines;
- Reporting;
- Working with Children Checks.

5.3. [Integrity](#)

Rugby Australia's Codes, Policies and Procedures have been developed to provide a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment for all rugby participants in Australia.

This includes the following:

- **Rugby AU Disciplinary Rules** - these have been developed to ensure a consistent approach to foul play, citing and judicial hearings;
- **Anti-Doping Code** - all participants are bound by the Anti-Doping Code and must be aware of the requirements;
- **Sports Supplement Policy**;
- **Illicit Drugs Policy**;
- **Code of Conduct** – provides a set of standards that everyone involved in rugby is required to comply with to ensure that the image and integrity of the sport is protected. The Code also outlines the procedures for reporting, complaint handling and investigations of any alleged breaches;
- **Medical Policy** - provides information on the use of medications, medical procedures and measures to protect the health and welfare for semi-professional and professional players;
- **Member Protection Policy** – ensures that all Participants feel included and safe in rugby; and
- **Anti-Corruption and Betting Policy** – applies to all Participants and they need to be aware of its requirements.

Additionally, the following documents are included as part of these Competition Rules:

- Inclusion Policy;
- Safety and Participation Policy;
- Registration Regulations;
- Registration Terms and Conditions; and
- Smart Rugby Policy.
- Rugby AU Social Media Policy

Any concerns that arise as a result of an alleged breach of any of the above provisions can be reported at [Reporting a Concern](#).

6. NTRU Codes and Policies

Matches played in Northern Territory under the auspices of NTRU shall also comply with these Policies and Procedures.

6.1. [Access](#)

The [NTRU Policies and Procedures](#) (for all NTRU Competition Grades) can be accessed from the NTRU website by clicking the link or following these steps:

- Visit nt.rugby
- Hover over the “Administration” menu option across the top of the screen
- Select “Darwin Club Competition” from the available menu

6.2. Available NTRU Policies

The NTRU Policies and Procedures which are available online are listed below. This may be amended and updated as required from time to time.

- Team Forfeit Procedure
- Wet Weather & Lightning Procedure
- Match Day Procedure
- Conduct of Finals Series
- Player Numbers, Replacements & Uncontested Scrums
- Player Sanction Procedure
- Player Eligibility Policy
- Dispensation Request Form
- Player Uniform Policy
- Ground Marshal Policy
- Game On Rules
- Three Strike Policy
- Serious Injury Policy
- Concussion Policy
- Age Grade Dispensation Policy
- Senior Grade Dispensation Policy
- Appointment Of Referees and Assistant Referees
- Darwin Challenge Cup

7. National Standard Competition Rules

7.1. Registration and Match Day – Rugby Xplorer

It is a requirement of Rugby AU that all Players, Non-Playing Members and Match Officials are registered via Rugby Australia's [Rugby Xplorer System](#);

It is a requirement of Rugby AU that the Rugby Xplorer Competition Management System (CMS) is also used for all sub-Union Competition matches, both Senior and Junior.

7.2. Competition Draw

- The Competition will be conducted in accordance with a schedule of matches drawn up by the NTRU prior to the start of the playing season and varied as necessary from time to time.
- Where possible, all matches in all competitions are to be played in an ascending order i.e. lowest to highest. Where this is not possible, **NO** player who has started in a higher grade is permitted to participate i.e. start / reserve for a lower grade.
 - The only exception being in junior age-grade rugby where a player may play within the same age-grade, or in different eligible age-grades.

- In the event of matches in the same round being played on different days e.g. rescheduled matches due to wet weather, the selection of players must be the same as if all matches in the same round were being played on the same day.

7.3. Match Team Lists, Scoring and Stats

It is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that:

- All players and team officials (where required by the Competition) must be selected in their respective team list for the match;
- All details of point scorers are to be recorded;
- All players who have either been temporarily suspended (yellow card), sent from the field of play (red card) or have a suspected concussion (blue card) must have all their details recorded;
- All movements of players following an injury (blood or otherwise) or for tactical reasons shall be recorded (where required by the Competition);
- The match day scoring, and stats can be entered by ONE team manager for BOTH teams, or EACH team manager for their OWN team. It is also permissible to have an independently appointed ground manager that does the scoring for both teams;
- The referee is to confirm the result of the match by confirming this on the Match Day App in the presence of both teams; and
- All clubs must enter the team list, scoring and stats of all matches online via the Match Day App by no later than noon on the first working day following completion of the match.

PLEASE NOTE: Competitions reserve the right to require this information earlier than this timeline if necessary.

Information entered must include:

- All players' details including substitutes;
- Team Officials' details (Coach, Manager and Ground Marshall)
- Result of the match;
- Point scorers;
- Tries;
- Conversions;
- Penalties;
- Drop Goals;
- Penalty tries;
- All players temporarily suspended (yellow card);
- All players sent from the field of play (red card);
- Players who have a suspected concussion (blue card).

Players selected for A Grade Men's or Women's competitions must have their Rugby Xplorer profile set to "Public" allow their name to appear on Team Sheets (i.e. cannot be listed as "Name Withheld").

PLEASE NOTE: Clubs failing to follow the procedures are liable to receive penalties in relation to Competition points, and/or other penalty as determined by the management committee.

7.4. Ladder Positions (for Competitive Competitions)

Positions in the ladder are determined on the ladder sorting options applicable for the Competition. In the event of two or more teams being equal on Competition points (total match points), for any position, the higher placed team will be determined on the ladder sorting options chosen, these include:

- i. Total Competition Points
- ii. Points differential (+/-)
- iii. Points for
- iv. Points against
- v. Result of game
- vi. Where (i) to (v) above are all equal between two (or more) particular teams, then the relative positions of these two teams will be determined by the drawing of lots by RUSA with the first drawn team being allotted the higher position.

NOTE: For teams in the same grade that have played a different number of games in the Minor Rounds (due to an uneven number of BYEs in that Competition), their Competition Points will be adjusted via an averaging formula to ensure that all teams finish the Minor Rounds on the same number of matches.

NOTE: For the avoidance of doubt, where 2 (or more) teams end on the same competition points, the team finishing higher on the table after applying 7.4 (ii) – (vi) will be provided an additional Competition Point in Rugby Xplorer so the finishing positions in the public ladder are accurate.

7.5. Forfeits

Any Club intending to forfeit a Match must do so in accordance with the Team Forfeit Procedure.

Five (5) Competition Points (with a deemed score of twenty-eight (28) points to zero (0)) will be awarded to a Team whose opponent has forfeited a Match. Where both teams forfeit, no Competition Points will be awarded.

In Senior Rugby, a forfeit in any higher grade will result in an automatic forfeit in the lower grade(s) in the same round.

There will be no refund of player registration fees from NTRU or Rugby AU in the case of forfeited matches

A Club that forfeits three games in the same grade in the same season will be issued a Show Cause Notice to explain the reasons why its team should remain in that grade.

In the case of a club withdrawing a team(s) from the Competition, the opposition of a withdrawn team will retain all For, Against and Competition points for matches already played. All future matches against the withdrawn team will be recorded as a Forfeit, and competition points awarded, unless deemed otherwise by the Union.

NTRU General Manager or their delegate may impose further penalties on Clubs for withdrawing teams from the Competition. This will include a financial liability of \$1,000 per Senior Team and \$500 per Junior Team (U13 to U17), at the discretion of NTRU.

7.6. Postponed / Abandoned Matches

If the venue of a match or matches is unavailable for any reason, it shall be the responsibility of the home club to advise the Competition Manager immediately that the ground is considered unplayable or doubtful of being playable. NTRU General Manager or their delegate, after consultation with the clubs involved, shall direct how the abandoned match will be dealt with.

In the event of a match having to be abandoned for any reason beyond the control of the match officials, the following procedure shall apply:

- i. Where a match has been abandoned during the first half, the result may be declared as a draw and no points for or against will be awarded, or the match may be replayed at a time and venue as determined by the Competition Manager in his/her absolute discretion.
- ii. Where a match has been abandoned during half time or during the second half, the result at the time of the abandonment will be the final result.

In the event of a match having to be abandoned for any reason involving unacceptable behavior on the part of players or any other persons, or any other similar reason, the NTRU shall determine if any penalties will be imposed on the competing teams.

It should be noted that any such action taken under these Rules shall not prevent (and may run in parallel with) other action that is deemed necessary under the Disciplinary Rules, Code of Conduct or other relevant WR or Rugby AU regulations, codes, policies or rules etc.

Refer to **Wet Weather and Lightning Procedure** for the process involved in the abandonment or suspension of fixtures due to weather.

7.7. Playing Field

Refer to **Match Day Procedure** for the process of the hosting fixtures

Clubs hosting matches played under these rules shall comply with the [RA Medical and First Aid Requirements](#)

With respect to medical requirements, both teams are responsible for ensuring that matches are not played if the all the requirements relating to medical care are not in place. Reference should be made to the Rugby AU Medical and Safety Recommendations for further information.

For all Competition matches the host club shall be responsible for ensuring that the field of play is correctly marked in accordance with the WR Laws of the Game. ([Law 1 - The Ground](#))

Goal Posts - All Goal posts within the playing enclosure must be padded.

Playing Enclosure

Entry to the playing enclosure must be restricted by a fence, barricade or rope at a minimum of five meters, where practicable, from the playing area perimeter.

Persons authorised to enter the Playing Enclosure (“Authorised Persons”) are as follows:

- Medically Qualified Persons/Sports Trainer – maximum two per team
- The Teams
- Appointed match officials
- Ground Marshalls
- Water carriers – maximum two per team (three allowed in 7s)
PLEASE NOTE: Head Coaches are **NOT** permitted to be water carriers
- A maximum of 4 ball persons
- All Authorised Persons permitted to enter the playing enclosure must have some distinguishing mark/bib e.g. high visibility vest.

NOTE: All Authorised Persons permitted to enter the playing enclosure must have enclosed footwear.

7.8. Technical Zones

Technical Zones - where Competition matches require technical zones, two will be provided within the playing enclosure on the same side of the pitch, on either side of the halfway line and outside the field of play.

- Personnel permitted in the technical zone differs between the XVs and 7s game format.
 - i. **XVs** - Maximum of four persons are allowed in the technical zone. Each team is allowed two medically qualified persons and two water carriers.
 - ii. **7s** – maximum of ten persons allowed in the technical zone. Each team is allowed a coach, team manager, medical person and five reserve players. One additional person who is either a medical or a coaching member of the team and whose responsibility has previously been notified to the ground marshal.
- Roles of personnel in the technical zones.
 - i. The medical personnel may enter the field of play in accordance with the Laws of the Game at any time a player is injured.

- ii. Water may only be taken on the field during stoppages in play for injuries in the playing area and when a try has been scored.
- iii. The water carriers are not permitted in the playing area during penalty kicks at goal.
- iv.
- v. The water carriers must always remain in the technical zone unless they enter the playing area to provide water or when ONE person enters to provide a kicking tee to the kicker for a penalty kick.
- vi. The water carriers must keep the water bottles and carriers with them, and not left in an untidy state within the technical zone.
- vii. Players may come to the touchline adjacent to the technical zone to receive water.
- viii. Water bottles must not be thrown on the field of play.
- Personnel outside the technical zone
 - i. The replacement bench and the location of the coaches should, wherever possible, be outside the playing enclosure (except in the 7s game format).
 - ii. If replacements want to warm up and there is no area available outside the playing enclosure, they may warm up in the opposition in-goal area but must not use balls in their warmup.

7.9. Authorised Persons

It is intended that the Club nominate persons to become “Authorised Persons”.

- No one other than the Authorised Persons shall be permitted in the playing enclosure during a match.
- An Authorised Person (except Ball Persons) must satisfy the minimum accreditation requirements appropriate to their role.
- All Authorised Persons entering the playing enclosure must be registered on Rugby Xplorer – their details may be checked on Rugby Xplorer.
- The home team shall appoint a Ground Marshal who shall ensure that this requirement is complied with and the ground marshal shall report any breach to the Match Committee.
- Authorised Persons must conduct themselves in accordance with the relevant Code of Conduct for and, as part of the accreditation process, they will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they will adhere to the expected standards of conduct.
- All Authorised Persons entering the playing enclosure must be wearing enclosed footwear, e.g. football boots, sneakers.

7.10. Schedule of Penalties

A breach of any of the Competition Rules may include any or all of the following:

- Warning;
- Issue of a Show Cause Notice;
- Loss of Competition points;
- Monetary Fine; and

- Expulsion from the Competition.

7.11. Protests

- All protests must be made in writing and signed by either the Club President or Club Secretary;
- Protests must be received by the NTRU General Manager no later than by the close of business of the 2nd business day/s after the alleged breach of the Competition Rules.
- All protests must specify the particular Competition Rule that has been allegedly breached;
- All witness statements must be tendered on a signed statutory declaration form;
- The decision on the protests shall be determined by the Competition Manager and such decision will be notified to the parties by no later than close of business on the number of business day/s NTRU after the alleged breach of the Competition Rules.
- The General Manager shall determine if a club has breached the competition rules on the civil standard of proof (i.e. more likely than not).
- The Competition Manager will then recommend to the Management Committee the penalties that should be imposed. The Management Committee shall make the final determination in this regard.
- If the club is not satisfied with this decision, it has the right to appeal to the NTRU Judicial Committee. Appeals from the decision of the Management Committee must be received by the Competition Manager by no later than close of business on the number of business days NTRU after the decision of the Management Committee is advised to the relevant club.
- The Judicial Committee shall be entitled to consider whether or not a breach of the Rules has occurred and/or the appropriateness of the penalty and shall have the discretion to vary the decision if they see fit and impose any other penalty as set on in the Rules. The Judicial Committee has the sole discretion as to how it will deal with any appeal.

7.12. Extension of Time

Notwithstanding any of the time limits stated in these Rules, the Competition Manager may in special circumstances exercise their sole discretion to allow reasonable extensions of time if considered to be in the interests of justice to do so.

7.13. Disqualified, unqualified or suspended person/s

It shall be the responsibility of each club to ensure that no disqualified, unqualified or suspended person(s) take part in any match.

8. Law and Regulation Clarifications

8.1. Law 3 – Number of Players – The Team (number of replacement/ substitute players)

- Rolling Replacements - World Rugby Law 3.34 is mandatory across all domestic rugby played in Australia:
- Refer to **NTRU Replacement and Uncontested Scrums Procedure**
- Unlimited rolling replacements applies to all rugby aged U19s and below;
- Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 12 movements applies to all senior rugby, except the B Grade of any division/competition where the maximum number may, at the discretion of the local Union, be unlimited.

Replacements due to blood injury, concussion or injury due to foul play do not count in the designated number of movements.

Law 3.27 i.e. Temporary Replacement – Head Injury Assessment (HIA), **DOES NOT APPLY AT ANY LEVEL.**

8.2. Uncontested Scrums

- Every endeavour should be made to ensure matches start with contested scrums.
- Refer to **NTRU Player Numbers, Replacement and Uncontested Scrums Policy** for clarity in regard to replacements and uncontested scrums
- For A Grade, B Grade & Women there must be sufficient front row players to play at: Hooker, tight-head prop and loose head prop (for squads of 23 players)
- Should a team not be able to meet the obligation for any reason during a game, or should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, then the team concerned must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.
- If subsequently a qualified front rower becomes available so that scrums can be contested, then that player will be allowed onto the field and the team may return to the appropriate complement of players.
- If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

8.3. Regulation 4 – Player Status, Player Contracts and Player Movement

International Clearance

The international Player Clearances Policy within Rugby is set out in WR Regulation 4.6.1 and provides:

- A Player leaving their current Union to play in another Union shall not be registered or eligible to participate in competitions organised, recognised or sanctioned by that new Union until they have an endorsed International Clearance.
- Therefore, Players wishing to play within another International Union are required to complete the [Rugby AU International Clearance Form](#).
- For or Incoming International Clearances (i.e. Players arriving in Australia), please contact the Union you are currently registered with to understand their International Clearance process and obtain, complete and return their current application form.

Domestic Clearance

This relates to club to club player movements for currently registered players. It is a requirement for a currently registered Player registering in the same season to another club for the same or different registration type. Restricted at XVs, 10s, 7s and Veterans registration types in competition rugby only. The player cannot register unless clearance approval is granted by their 'from' Club and Association.

8.4. Two Teams in the Same Age Grade / Division

Clubs with two teams in the same age grade may nominate: 12 players (U13-U17) for both teams;

- Nominated players may not switch between teams.
- Outside of the nominated 12 players (U13-U17), all other players can switch between either team.

A player that is not nominated as per above is permitted to qualify for more than one team subject to finals eligibility.

- Once selected in a final match e.g.: Semi Final, they must remain in that team for the duration of the final's series. They cannot change teams if one team drops out of the finals.
- Nominated squad lists must be submitted to NTRU prior to Round 3.
- Any exceptions are only eligible after gaining approval from NTRU.
- Failure to obtain prior approval from NTRU may result in NTRU determining the team to have played an illegible/unregistered player.

9. Players

9.1. Registration and Eligibility of Players

- Only persons registered in accordance with the Rugby AU Registration Regulations will be eligible to take part in any Match in any Competition including any Finals Series conducted by the Union.
- Refer **NTRU Player Eligibility Guidelines** for clarity on dispensations, eligibility for Finals fixtures and exemptions of eligibility.

- Teams must ensure their players are correctly registered and if required, granted dispensation. If breached, sanctions WILL be enforced as outlined below:
- If a team plays an unregistered or ineligible player, then the team will be deducted 4 competition points per player for each game that player has participated in
- If a team plays an unregistered or ineligible player for their age-group without dispensation, then that team will be deducted 4 competition points per player for each game that ineligible player has participated in.

9.2. Player Transfers

- Any Player wishing to transfer to another Club must do so in accordance with the Rugby AU Player Clearance and Transfer Procedures.
- Players are unable to transfer within Clubs competing in the NTRU Competition in each season after the third Competition round. NTRU may allow transfers outside this period at its sole discretion in extenuating circumstances.
- A Club may withhold a player clearance on account of any outstanding fees owing to the Club by the player. If a Club has other criteria, they wish to withhold a player clearance for, evidence of this should be in the form of a written agreement between the player and the Club, and provided to NTRU for consideration.

9.3. Representative Teams

- All Clubs must make their Players available for selection in any Northern Territory Representative team selected by the Union.
- Any Player who is selected in an Northern Territory Representative Team Squad will be deemed to be an ambassador of the Union and of its values and beliefs, and must comply with such further Rules and conditions governing their conduct as may be set down from time to time by the Union including in the form of a player participation agreement and the Union may at any time inform a Player that they are no longer eligible to participate in the Northern Territory Representative Team Squad or that they are no longer a selected Player on the Northern Territory Representative Team Squad.
- A Player who is selected in an Northern Territory Representative Team Squad may receive material benefits by way of clothing, playing equipment, meals, travel subsidies and the like from the Union but the selection of the Player and their participation in an Northern Territory Representative Team Squad is on a voluntary basis and there will be no employment, partnership or agency relationship created between such a Player and the Union and such a Player is not entitled to receive any employee benefits or entitlements through the Union.
- Players that are financially indebted to the Union are ineligible for selection in any Northern Territory Representative Team Squad.

9.4. Player Uniforms

Refer to **NTRU Player Uniform Guidelines**.

9.5. Recognition of Sanctions and Decisions

In accordance with the Rugby a Disciplinary Rules, NTRU respects and has the power to recognise any registration decisions, stand-downs, provisional suspensions, suspensions, and sanctions imposed by other sports in the Northern Territory, Australia or overseas.

A Participant found guilty of an offence by a sport (or the National Sports Tribunal) will not be permitted to participate in any Rugby Union competition, tournament or Match under the auspices of the NTRU for the duration of the suspension.

If a sanction, other than a suspension, or other measures are imposed on a Participant by another sporting body then the sanction or other measures may be recognised and enforced by NTRU to the extent practicable.

NTRU have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NRL Northern Territory regarding cross-code suspensions and NTRU may recognise players suspensions incurred in that sport, and vice versa.

10. Match Day Rules and Procedures

10.1. Rules and Procedures

- All Clubs, Teams, Players and participants must abide by the **NTRU Match Day Procedure Policy**.
- Players uniforms will be as set out in the **NTRU Player Uniform Policy**.

10.2. Club Official

- Each facility is responsible for providing an appointed Club Official for all matches played at the venue.
- The Club Official is the point of contact for all Ground Marshalls, Match Officials and appointed staff.
- The Club Official is responsible for all facility issues, safety of patrons, any escalated behaviour issues.
- The Club Official should have keys with full access to the facility in particular but not limited to ambulance access.
- NTRU shall ensure an appointed Club Official is present for all NTRU hosted fixtures.
- The Club Official must be clearly identifiable and be known to key Club Delegates.

10.3. Ground Marshals

- Each Club is responsible for providing at least one (1) Ground Marshal for each and every match from Under 11 to Seniors.
- Each Ground Marshal will be responsible for completing the Ground Marshal course at the Rugby Learning Centre BEFORE being appointed as a Ground Marshall.
- A Ground Marshal for a Home Team at a “Home Game” shall be considered the Match Day Manager for all intents and purposes on the day of the “Home Game”.

- NTRU shall ensure a Club Official appointed by NTRU General Manager or their appointed delegate is present for all NTRU hosted fixtures.
- A referee shall not commence a match until a Ground Marshal for both teams playing has identified themselves to the referee wearing an identifiable bib.
- Should a referee seek assistance to deal with undesirable behaviour outside of the playing enclosure, they will refer to the Match Day Manager to assist in the matter.

10.4. First Aid / Sports Trainer Personnel

- Each Club must provide a minimum of one (1) x trainer per fixture – for all age grades from Under 11's to A Grade. A trainer is a person from each team who is responsible for immediately attending to a player who appears to be injured, and who provides water to the players.
- Each Club must provide a minimum of one (1) x medical qualified person to assist a team with assessing and managing injuries during a match – for all age grades from Under 13's to A Grade.

11. Accreditations

11.1. SMART Rugby Accreditation

All persons who actively coach, manage, administer or officiate Rugby shall hold a current Smart Rugby accreditation. This may be in the form of one of the following;

- Smart Rugby (Junior Coach)
- Smart Rugby (Community Coach)
- Smart Rugby (Refresher)

11.2. Coach Accreditation

Coaches must have completed (or be actively completing) the below mentioned minimum accreditation;

Minimum Accreditations

- SMART Rugby & Season Ready

Coaching Levels

- Coaching Kids Skills u8-u9 for NEW u8-u9 coaches
- Junior Coach Course u10-u15 (replaces old Foundation Course)
- Essential Rugby Skills Course U13 & above – 1 day course (old Level 1 Course)
- Community Coach Course u16 & above – 2 day course (old Level 2 Course)

11.3. Team Manager Accreditation

Team Managers must have completed (or be actively completing) the below mentioned accreditations or education modules to manage for a Club.

Minimum Accreditations

- Season Ready
- Smart Rugby
- Team Manager Program

11.4. Ground Marshal Accreditation

Ground Marshall must have completed (or be actively completing) the below mentioned accreditations or education modules to be a Ground Marshal for a Club.

Minimum Accreditations

- Season Ready
- Smart Rugby
- Ground Marshal Program

12. Junior Competition Variations

12.1. Age Eligibility & Determining Age Group

Determining age group as per [Rugby AU Participation Policy](#). Between the Under 5 and Under 17 age group, a player may play in the age group they are turning in the playing year. For example, a player turning 15 in in the calendar year (1 January to 31 December) is eligible to play in the Under 15 age group.

Minimum Age

A player must be turning 4 in the playing year.

Please refer to Annex A for further information.

12.2. Substitutions and Playing Time

World Rugby Law 3.34 –

- Unlimited rolling replacements applies for all ages U19 and below

Coaches should ensure that throughout a season, each player starts in at least half of their fixtures. Coaches should ensure that in every game a player is on the field for at least half of the game (unless injured).

Participation in Junior Rugby is more important than winning.

12.3. Scrums

When a team elects to have uncontested scrums the minimum numbers for each team are as follows:

- a) 14 + 15 players = 8 in scrum
- b) 12 + 13 players = 7 in scrum
- c) 10 + 11 players = 6 in scrum
- d) 8 + 9 + 10 players = 5 in scrum
- e) 7 players or less = 3 in scrum

If a team elects to have uncontested scrums after round 5, they must notify their Club Junior Coordinator and Competition Manager with details. NTRU will work with the club and team to ensure that the participants are provided with regular training throughout the season to ensure the team can complete contest scrums. Coaches and Clubs should identify teams at risk and notify Northern Territory Rugby Union immediately to develop a training plan.

If a team starts a match uncontested in a finals fixture, the team electing to go uncontested must drop 1 player. Example 14 v 15. This doesn't affect a team's ability to use that player as a substitute. This rule applies only for ages Under 13 and above and applies only to finals fixtures.

Both teams must match numbers in the scrum when they are uncontested. The Referee will nominate player numbers in the scrum for consistency utilising the system outlined above. Players U15 and above may crutch bind as stated in Rugby AU U19 Law variations. Players aged U14 and below are not permitted to Crutch bind.

12.4. Player Numbers and Participation

All matches from U5 to U11 will be played with matched numbers between teams. U13 and above can be played with matched numbers plus 1.

If a team doesn't have the player numbers required for a fixture, the opposing team must share the minimum players to facilitate a fixture. Example Team A 17 players Team B 7. Team A must share 5 players to facilitate a 12 v 12 or 10's (with 2 reserves) fixture. While winning is important, participation at the junior level is crucial to supporting clubs and ensuring juniors have a pathway to lifelong involvement in rugby. Even if the game is a forfeit, a match should occur.

12.5. Scoring

Should a team be trailing by more 35 points the referee will enforce the "**competitive rule**". The following sequence should occur:

- i. If the difference in score reaches more than 35 points then the winning team **MUST** reduce the number of players on the field by one (1) player.
- ii. If the difference in score reaches 50 points or more then the winning Team **MUST** reduce the number of players on the field by another player so that the Team is two (2) players short.
- iii. If the score reaches a difference of 60 points, the referee will stop the game and the score will be entered as the competition result.

13. Annex A

13.1. 2025 Playing Year

The table below indicates the players eligible age group for the 2025 playing year (1 January to 31 December 2025):

Age Group	Year Born
Get into Ruby – Walla under 5	2020 & 2021
Get into Rugby – Tri Time under 7	2018 & 2019
Under 9	2016 & 2017
Under 11	2014 & 2015
Under 13	2012 & 2013
Under 15	2010 & 2011
Under 17	2008 & 2009

Please note: Players who register for Under 9 or Under 11, during the **2025 calendar year** will remain in the same age group for the first half of the 2026 playing year.

13.2. 2026 Playing Year

The table below indicates the players eligible age group for the 2026 playing year (1 January to 31 December 2026):

Age Group	Year Born
Get into Ruby – Walla under 5	2021 & 2022
Get into Rugby – Tri Time under 7	2019 & 2020
Under 9	2017 & 2018
Under 11	2015 & 2016
Under 13	2013 & 2014
Under 15	2011 & 2012
Under 17	2009 & 2010