

Code of Conduct

This Code applies to all those involved in the sport of Rugby League at every level, including players, match officials, coaches, administrators, club officials, or spectators. All such individuals have a responsibility to act according to the highest standards of integrity, and to ensure that the reputation of Rugby League is beyond reproach. Allegations of a child protection nature relating to the breaking of this Code must follow the reporting procedures as contained in regulation 7.0 (Appendix C).

All other allegations not within the ambit of the Rugby League Child Protection Policy should be addressed by the internal rules of the Constituent Member concerned.

Those involved in Rugby League must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, player and non-player alike, treating everyone equally within the context of the game. In particular, to be aware of the special needs of young people, their wellbeing, including difficulties or possible abuse experienced from within the game or from other sources.

The sport has a duty to ensure that every child and young person involved in the game of Rugby League is able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse.

The sport of Rugby League is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct at all Rugby League games and events.

EQUITY

The sport of Rugby League is opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent discrimination, in whatever form, from being expressed.

All those involved in Rugby League must respect the rights and choices of all human beings, treating everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.

The following codes of conduct must be adhered to at all times so that Rugby League can be enjoyed by all.

COACHES

Introduction

This code is a Rugby League Coach Education Programme (RLCEP) policy within which an accredited Rugby League Coach **MUST WORK**. It should be used in conjunction with **ALL** other Rugby League/Coaching policies, procedures or recognised standards.

Through this code, coaches who are accredited by the RLCEP accept their responsibility to sports performers and their parents and families, to coaching and to Rugby League Associated Governing Bodies, employers and all other colleagues.

Humanity

The coach must respect the rights and choices of all human beings, treating everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.

Relationships

The good Rugby League Coach is concerned with:

- the safety, well being and protection of all individuals in their charge, ensuring that all training and playing demands are not detrimental to the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of the individual;
- encouraging independence through guiding performers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance within training and competition;
- ensuring their behaviour is not misconstrued or open to allegations of favouritism, misconduct or impropriety, particularly where physical contact between coach and performer is necessary within coaching practice;
- ensuring performers and relevant people are aware of their qualifications and experience, respecting the rights of performers to choose to consent or decline to participate within coaching or playing situations;
- refraining from public criticism of other coaches, or match officials- the definition of public in this instance means criticism expressed in any branch of the media or in a lecture or seminar.

Integrity

The good Rugby League Coach:

- abides by the rules of Rugby League;
- follows fair play and ethical guidelines;
- ensures all practices are suitable and relevant dependent upon the age, maturity, experience and ability of performers;
- promotes the prevention and education of the misuse of performance enhancing drugs and illegal substances;
- coaches must accurately present and evidence, upon request, details of their training qualifications and services;
- coaches claiming an affiliation, sponsorship or accreditation with any organisation should do so in a truthful and accurate manner;
- all coaches must declare, to the appropriate body, any criminal convictions

Confidentiality

The coach and performer must reach agreement about what is to be regarded as confidential information.

Confidentiality does not preclude disclosure of information to persons who can be judged to have a right to know. For example:

- evaluation for selection purposes;
- recommendations for employment;
- in matters of disciplinary within the sport;
- in matters of disciplinary action by a sports organisation against one of its members;
- legal and medical requirements;
- recommendations to parents/family where the health and safety of performers might be at risk;
- in pursuit of action to protect children and young persons from abuse.

Personal Standards

Rugby League Coaches within the coaching/playing environment must not attempt to exert undue influences and pressures in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Coaches must display high personal standards that project a favourable image of Rugby League including:

- good personal appearance that projects an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency;
- coaches should never smoke when in the coaching environment.
- coaches should refrain from drinking alcohol to the extent that it is:
 - obvious they have been drinking;
 - affects their coaching competence;
 - compromises performers safety.

Competence

All coaches must be appropriately qualified as per the requirements of the Rugby League Coach Education Programme.

Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their personal and professional development.

Coaches must be receptive to employing systems of evaluation that include self-evaluation and also external evaluation in an effort to assess the effectiveness of their work.

Coaches must be able to recognise and accept when to refer or recommend performers to other coaches or structures. It is the coach's responsibility as far as possible to:

- a) verify the competence of the performer;
- b) verify the competence and integrity of any other persons or structure to whom they refer the performer

Safety

Within the limits of their control coaches have a responsibility to:

establish a safe working environment;

ensure as far as possible the safety of the players with whom they work;

protect children from harm and abuse;

fully prepare their players for the activities and make them aware of their personal responsibility in terms of safety;

ensure all activities undertaken are suitable for the experience and ability of the performers and in keeping with the approved practices as determined by the National Governing Body/Rugby League Coach Education Programme;

Communicate and co-ordinate with registered medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their performers' medical and psychological problems.

Complaints Procedure

Any individual or organisation wishing to make a complaint against a Rugby League Coach, within the context of this code should follow the procedure below:

- report the matter to the employer of the sports coach and to the relevant Rugby League Governing Body responsible for that area of the game.

N.B. (Employer in this instance refers to the organisation that commissioned the coach to do the coaching whether this engagement is paid or unpaid)

- complaints that refer to the protection of children should be dealt with in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Rugby League Child Protection Policy.

CLUB OFFICIALS

- Must treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
- Accept the special role that you have to play in the establishment of standards by setting a good example of behaviour and conduct at all times.
- Do not manipulate the rules in order to benefit yourself personally or your club.
- Encourage all players and coaches to abide by the rules and spirit of the game.
- Do not use foul, sexist or racist language.
- Use your official position to take action against spectators who harass, abuse or use foul, sexist or racist language towards players, match officials or coaches.
- Ensure that proper supervision is provided by suitably qualified coaches and officials who are capable of promoting good sporting behaviour and good technical skills.
- Ensure all equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
- Respect the rights of other clubs.
- Show respect to match officials, coaches, players and others involved in the game.
- Not endeavour to influence the result of a game by any actions that are not strictly within the rules of the game.
- Remember sport is enjoyed for its own sake - play down the importance of awards.
- Always have regard to the best interests of Rugby League, including where publicly expressing an opinion of the game and any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game.
- Resist all illegal or unsporting influences, including banned substances and techniques.
- Promote ethical principles.
- Accept the decisions of the Match Official without protest.
- Avoid words or actions, which may mislead a Match Official.

MATCH OFFICIALS

- Must treat everyone equally and sensitively, regardless of their disability, gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, age or political affiliation.
- Be consistent, objective, impartial and courteous when applying the rules of the game. The Rugby Football League does not advise that match officials travel alone with young people (under the age of 18) to games. We advise you always have another adult with you at all times.
- Compliment both teams on good play when the opportunity arises.
- Use common sense to ensure that the spirit of the game is not lost.
- Encourage both teams to play within the rules and the spirit of the game.
- Show patience and understanding towards players who may be learning the game.
- Make every effort to prepare fully for a match, both physically and mentally. On a physical level, a referee must be able to keep up with the speed of the modern game, and be alert and close enough to take correct decisions from credible locations on the field of play.
- Not be afraid to take decisions. A referee should be fair and firm and must resist any possible influence from protests on the part of players, team officials or spectators.
- Show respect towards players and team officials.
- Be honest and completely impartial at all times, irrespective of the teams, players or team officials involved in the match.
- Decline to be appointed to a match if not completely physically or mentally fit to referee that match (because of illness, injury, or for family or other reasons).
- Inform the person or body directly responsible if unable to referee a team or teams for any reason.
- Refrain from requesting hospitality of any kind, or accept any hospitality offered and considered to be excessive.
- Always have regard to the best interests of the game, including where publicly expressing an opinion on the game or any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game.
- Not tolerate foul, sexist or racist language from players and/or officials.
- The powers of a referee must be used with wise judgement and care. Authority and a firm approach must be combined with respect.
- A referee should have regard to protecting the players by enforcing the laws of the game.
- A referee should show due respect when speaking with the players, even in the event of infringements.
- In reports, a referee should set out the true facts and not attempt to justify any decisions.
- It is necessary for the referee's authority to be protected, not only for the sake of the game, but also in the interest of fellow referees, touch judges, reserve referees and in-goal judges. This protection should, however, not influence the over-riding regard for protection of the players.
- A referee should refrain from publicly expressing any criticism of fellow referees, touch judges, reserve referees or in-goal judges.
- A referee should assist with the development of less experienced referees and touch judges.
- A touch judge should give his total support to the referee, but without undue interference or insistence.

PARENTS

- Teach your child to treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin or cultural background.
- Do not force an unwilling child to take part in Rugby League.
- Encourage your child always to play by rules and to respect the match officials.
- Young people are involved in organised sport for their enjoyment - not yours.
- Never ridicule or shout at your child for making a mistake or losing a game.
- Teach your child that effort and teamwork are as important as victory, so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal, physical and racist abuse from Rugby League.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping young people towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship.
- Remember that young people learn best by example.
- Do not question publicly the judgement of match officials and never their honesty.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches and administrators - they give their time, energy and resources to provide recreational activities for your child.
- Insist on fair and disciplined play - do not tolerate foul play, cheating, foul, sexist or racist language.
- As a spectator you must never enter the field of play.

PLAYERS

- Treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
- All non-combatants of the playing teams, e.g. substitutes, players who have been dismissed or temporarily dismissed from the field of play, should never re-enter the field of play unless otherwise authorised.
- Know and abide by the Laws, rules and spirit of the game.
- Avoid all forms of gamesmanship and time wasting.
- Safeguard the physical fitness of opponents, avoid violence and rough play and help injured opponents.
- Accept the decisions of the match officials without question or complaint (let your captain or coach ask the necessary questions) and avoid words or actions which may mislead a Match Official.
- Respect the match officials at all times.
- Exercise self-control at all times and do not use illegal or dangerous tactics.
- Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during a game, even if the team is in a position where the desired result has been achieved.
- Learn to accept success and failure, victory and defeat with humility and dignity respectively and without excessive emotional displays.
- Abide by the instructions of the coach and club officials provided they do not contradict the spirit of this code.
- Treat your team-mates and opponents, coaches, club officials and match officials with respect and consideration at all times - treat them, as you yourself would like to be treated.
- Do not attempt to improve individual performance by the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
- Do not use foul, sexist or racist language at any time.
- No sledging of opposition or team-mates allowed.
- Work equally hard for yourself and your team - your team's performance will benefit and so will your own.
- Be a good sport, applaud all good performance, whether by your team or by the opponent.
- Remember that the aim of sport is to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.
- At the end of play applaud and thank your opponents and the match officials.

SPECTATORS

- Remember the players are taking part for their enjoyment not yours. They are not professional or international gladiators.
- All spectators, on no account, must enter the field of play unless authorised otherwise.
- Be on your best behaviour. Do not use foul, sexist or racist language or harass players, coaches or match officials.
- Verbal abuse of players or match officials is not acceptable in any shape or form.
- Show respect for opponents and match officials. Without them there would be no game.
- Acknowledge good performance and fair play by opponents as well as by your own team.
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms.
- Do not ridicule players who make mistakes.
- Do not overemphasise the importance of winning.