

Community Game Anti-Doping booklet

RUGBY LEAGUE. It's a whole different ballgame®

2008



www.rfl.uk.com



FOREWORD

Welcome to the RFL's Community Game Anti-Doping Booklet. This guide aims to support Players, Coaches and Volunteers in finding relevant and up to date information relating to anti-doping.

The RFL is committed to the principles of drug-free sport for the following reasons -

- To uphold and preserve the ethics of the Game.
- To safeguard the physical and mental health of players.
- To ensure that all players have an opportunity to compete equally.

To underpin that commitment the RFL will -

- Educate and inform players about the dangers of drugs and consequences of taking drugs or breaching the Anti Doping Regulations.
- Comply with the WADA Code.
- Test players to confirm and maintain their drug free status.

This booklet will either provide you with, or direct you to, the information you need on the rights and responsibilities of players, coaches and volunteers taking part in rugby league in relation to RFL Anti-Doping Regulations and the law.

At the heart of the RFL Anti-Doping Regulations is the desire to achieve a level playing field on which players can compete with confidence and on the basis of natural sporting ability.

The RFL wants to ensure that all players in this country at all levels have been given all the support they need to perform safely to the very best of their ability. We want to ensure that all our players are able to make well informed and positive decisions so they can say with pride, "That was 100% ME".

Richard Lewis
RFL Executive Chairman
August 2008

WITH THANKS

The RFL would like to thank UK Sport for their assistance in producing this Community Game Anti-Doping booklet.

The RFL has taken every care to ensure that the content of this booklet is current and correct and it has been produced in good faith. However, the RFL cannot guarantee the correctness and completeness of the content and no responsibility is taken for any omissions or errors.

The information included is only a short guide to the issues involved and does not constitute legal, medical or other professional advice.

Anyone using this information is strongly recommended to ensure that they are fully aware of the RFL Anti-Doping Regulations, the WADA Prohibited List and any relevant legislation before embarking on any course of action.





ANTI-DOPING RULES

All sports including Rugby League are governed by a set of anti-doping rules called the World Anti-Doping Code (the Code). These rules govern Rugby League at all levels. The Code aims to harmonise the rules and regulations governing anti-doping for all players, in all sports, throughout the world. A fundamental principle of the Code is to protect the rights of all players committed to competing in sport cleanly and fairly.

Players, coaches and volunteers are expected to abide by the rules by virtue of their involvement in rugby league and are all subject to the RFL Anti-Doping Regulations.

The RFL Anti-Doping Rules which are WADA Code compliant can be downloaded from the RFL website www.rfl.uk.com

The RFL Anti-Doping Rules allow the RFL to test at all levels of the game.

The Values of the Game	
Rugby League is PASSIONATE	Rugby League is UNCOMPROMISING
Rugby League is INCLUSIVE	Rugby League is THE FAMILY GAME

A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Rugby League players play the game to have fun and compete against each other testing their skill, strength, determination, speed and technique. It is essential that all players can take the field knowing that they are competing cleanly against other players who are competing cleanly.

Rugby League is a physical and mentally demanding game and players have to work hard to achieve results at all levels. Any player who is looking to cheat and take shortcuts by using performance enhancing substances, demonstrates a mental weakness that will hinder their progress in the game. Rugby League is a game with high standards and these standards will not be compromised.

RESPONSIBILITIES - PLAYERS

Your role as a player carries with it many responsibilities, and your responsibility to compete cleanly and fairly is fundamental. The key player responsibilities are -

- Do not use 'performance enhancing' or illegal substances.
- Discourage the use of, and challenge the use of, 'performance enhancing' or illegal substances amongst your team mates.
- Know what 'performance enhancing' or illegal substances are.
- Know where to go if you have any concerns about drugs.
- Follow the testing procedures when appropriate.





"I will not tolerate any players using illegal or performance enhancing substances. They are dangerous and show a mental weakness and willingness to cheat that is unacceptable in Rugby League. Both performance enhancing and illegal substances carry massive health risks."

Tony Smith, England Head Coach

TESTING

All players in the game are bound by the RFL Anti-Doping rules. This means that all players at all levels can be tested. Players have an obligation to compete fairly and to protect their health and well-being. UK Sport or the RFL may carry out anti-doping tests so players should ensure that they are always complying with their responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES – COACHES & VOLUNTEERS

In your role as a coach or volunteer, you have a responsibility to ensure that you fully understand and promote the rules of anti-doping – so you can guide your players through a clean and successful rugby league career.

Coaches and volunteers have a highly influential and important role, particularly on young players. Your views and actions could have great impact on decisions taken by your players and it is therefore vital that you set a positive and moral example by consistently enforcing clean anti-doping messages. Remember that it is your job to support and lead your players, and you need to take responsibility for setting and enforcing the rules.

Coaches and Volunteers should -

- Make it clear to all players that doping in Rugby League is simply not acceptable and is not necessary in order to win
- Ensure your players understand the Anti-Doping Regulations of the RFL,
- Discourage, and challenge, the use of 'performance enhancing' or illegal substances amongst all players.
- Do not put undue pressure on players to change their body shape (i.e to bulk up or slim down.)

Coaches and Volunteers should not -

- Ignore possible evidence of doping in their team.
- Avoid enforcing rules or enforce the rules selectively.
- Ignore doping because the team needs a particular player.
- Ignore drug misuse by other coaches or volunteers.

"Players who play in the Community Game do so because they enjoy the game. Using drugs is dangerous and is cheating. Players who take drugs are not welcome in Rugby League."

Graeme West, First Team Coach, Wigan St Judes





YOUNG PLAYERS

Young players develop (physically, emotionally, and in terms of technical ability as players) at different speeds and times. Coaches should recognise different levels of maturation in players and not pressure players to develop faster.

The RFL would recommend that players under 16 only use weights under the supervision of a qualified fitness instructor. Body weight exercises can be equally effective and are much safer. The use of supplements is unnecessary for young players; fitness gains can be made by following a nutritionally balanced diet, using appropriate training methods and getting enough rest.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

The Prohibited List (the List) outlines which substances and methods are prohibited in-competition and/or out of competition. A new version of the List comes into effect every January. However, it may be changed from time to time so it is important that you check for changes on a regular basis.

The most current Prohibited List is always available on WADA's website: www.wada-ama.org.

You can also find out the status of a particular substance according to the rules by logging on to the Drug Information Database (DID) at www.didglobal.com

The 2008 Prohibited List includes the following -

Prohibited Substances
Anabolic Agents
Hormones & related substances
Beta-2 agonists
Agents with anti-estrogenic activity
Diuretics and other Masking Agents

NB. This list is subject to change and should be read in conjunction with the current WADA Prohibited List.

Many medications that you may need to take for common illnesses, such as asthma or hay fever, contain prohibited substances.

You can still take medications which contain Prohibited Substances (see the Therapeutic Use Exemptions for further information on how you can obtain permission) and it is important that you do not jeopardise your health by not taking any medication that you need.

THERAPEUTIC USE EXEMPTIONS (TUES)

ATUE is a license to use a Prohibited Substance for a legitimate medical condition, e.g a Salbutamol inhaler to treat asthma. This will not be relevant to the vast majority of players in the Community Game; it only becomes relevant if a player signs for a Professional club - please





see below. However, if you are tested and do not have a TUE in place, you should inform the Doping Control Staff that you need to apply for a retrospective TUE.

WHAT IS STRICT LIABILITY?

Strict Liability means that the absence of a warning or a guarantee as to the safety of a product from a manufacturer does not reduce the seriousness of the doping offence. Players are personally responsible for any substance found in their specimen, despite how it got there.

Ignorance is no excuse!

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

STEROIDS

Steroids stimulate the development of male sexual characteristics and the build up of muscle tissue. Perceived benefits of steroid use are increased muscle tissue leading to increased strength and power.

However, steroids affect the body's natural balance and can have very serious effects including -

- Increased violence, mood swings, depression and personality changes (known as "Roid-Rage")
- Serious liver damage
- Increased risk of heart disease and kidney damage
- Increased risk of muscle injury - the muscles mass gets bigger but the supporting tendons and ligaments may not be able to cope.
- Adolescents may stop growing altogether
- Development of breasts in male users
- Shrinking of the testicles in male users
- Impotence in male users
- Infertility in male and female users
- Development of male features in female users

Steroids can be injected and this poses many risks associated with syringes, including infections, HIV and Hepatitis. Young people should be educated of the risk of syringes.

The Government has announced its intentions to more closely align the rules of sport (The WADA Code) and the rules of society (the Law) by adding more steroids to the Misuse of Drugs Act. The Government has taken this action as they have recognised the risks associated with the use of steroids. Steroids are a Class C drug.

STIMULANTS

Stimulants are substances which act on the central nervous system by speeding up parts of the brain and body's reactions. Stimulants can also suppress hunger and give the impression of increased concentration.





However, stimulants can cause overheating of the body, which can cause the internal organs to stop working, difficulty sleeping, sweating, shaking, anxiety, depression and mood swings. Stimulants can also place undue pressure on the heart which can cause severe problems and cause the heart to be more susceptible to cardiac arrhythmias, which can be fatal.

Common stimulants are ephedrine, cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines - these and all other stimulants are banned in Rugby League.

"I believe it is totally wrong for any Rugby League player to use banned substances to enhance their performance. Players should never forget that they are responsible for what they take and what is inside their bodies."

Paul Sculthorpe, St Helens and Great Britain

SOCIAL DRUGS

All of these social drugs listed below (except for solvents) are illegal and possessing or supplying them (i.e. giving them to other people) can have serious consequences including being sent to prison. In addition, these substances (except for solvents) are all prohibited by WADA.

Marijuana (Cannabis, Weed, Hash) is usually smoked in order to give the user a relaxed feeling. However, it can lead to various mental health problems, including schizophrenia, paranoia and depression. Marijuana can also affect co-ordination and make users very drowsy. There are also more serious health risks including putting extra strain on the heart, making symptoms of asthma worse, lung disease and cancer.

Cocaine (Coke, Charlie, Crack Cocaine) can be snorted, smoked or injected in order to give users a 'buzz' where they feel really alert, however there can be 'down' periods or episodes of depression when the effects have worn off. Cocaine is very risky for people with a heart condition (especially considering that many people do not realize they may have a heart condition.) Cocaine can also affect user's ability to breathe or make them overheat or have convulsions. There are also the risks associated with smoking (e.g. cancer, lung disease) and injecting (infections such as HIV, Hepatitis) which can also occur depending upon the method of use.

Speed (Amphetamine, Billy, Whizz) has similar affects and risks to Cocaine.

Ecstasy (E) is usually in tablet form (although it can sometimes be in powder form) and it can give a sense of energy which makes users feel very alert and happy. However, Ecstasy can induce panic attacks, create anxiety or paranoia in users. It can also raise the body temperature of the user, put extra pressure on the heart, and has been linked to kidney and liver damage, all of which can be very dangerous. Ecstasy is especially very dangerous for anyone who has epilepsy, asthma or a heart condition.

Heroin (H, Smack) is usually injected or smoked and is highly addictive. It changes the state of mind of the user to make them feel very relaxed and gives a sense of well being. It is very easy to accidentally overdose using heroin and it can also cause breathing problems. Injecting also carries a variety of risks including infections such as HIV and Hepatitis, or tissue or vein damage, which may lead to gangrene.

LSD (Acid) is sometimes known by the pictures on the paper tabs that it is usually sold on. LSD is hallucinogenic and causes 'trips' where the user's mood is heightened and the senses (e.g. vision, hearing etc) can be distorted. There is no way to predict what sort of 'trip' any particular tab will





give, therefore it can be highly dangerous as a bad 'trip' can be very frightening or confusing.

Solvents can make people feel dizzy or dreamy and can cause hallucinations, which can be frightening and make the user do something reckless which could lead to them getting hurt. Solvent abuse can cause the heart to slow down or in extreme cases, stop altogether. Long term abuse can cause brain, liver and kidney damage.

"Drugs in sport don't work, drugs in Rugby League don't work and drugs in life don't work."

Kevin Sinfield, Leeds Rhinos and England

SUPPLEMENTS

Some players take supplements in the belief that it will help maintain their health and their performance. However, it is now generally accepted that any player who is liable to be tested in or out of competition, may be at risk of a positive drug test from the use of supplements that are too contaminated.

Reliable studies of supplements have shown that up to 25% of dietary supplements on sale to players may contain small amounts of prohibited substances, commonly including anabolic androgenic steroids and stimulants, with a few supplements containing large quantities of these substances. These quantities would cause and have been found to cause positive drug tests. As a result, the RFL cannot be sure that supplements, including vitamins and minerals, ergogenic aids, and herbal remedies, are free from prohibited substances and it is for this reason that the RFL strongly advise against the use of supplements by any player.

WHY ARE SUPPLEMENTS UNSAFE FOR PLAYERS?

The manufacture, distribution and promotion of dietary supplements are covered by a variety of regulations that relate mainly to their safety for the general human population. Players are encouraged to seek professional guidance from a qualified medical practitioner, accredited sports dietician and/or a registered nutritionist about diet and supplement use.

"Some supplements may contain banned substances so players need to check them out before using them. If a player provides a sample which contains a banned substance, they are responsible for it, regardless of how it got there."

Joe Mbu, Harlequins RL

WHAT HAPPENS IF A PLAYER SIGNS PROFESSIONAL?

Should a player sign with a Professional club, they will be much more likely to be tested. Therefore, it is essential that they are fully aware of the regulations including TUEs, strict liability and





testing procedures, and have read a copy of the RFL Anti-Doping booklet for professional players (available from the RFL, the RFL website or from the professional club.) If a player is using a Prohibited Substance to treat a legitimate medical condition, they should apply for a TUE at the earliest possible opportunity. The staff at your professional club will be able to assist with this issue; most professional clubs have a 100% ME Tutor. Alternatively, please contact the RFL for advice.

HOW CAN MY CLUB GET MORE INFORMATION?

The RFL have provided training to a number of Community Game 100% ME Tutors who can deliver 100% ME education sessions to Community clubs. These sessions are appropriate for players, coaching staff and volunteers. To request a session, please contact the RFL using the below details.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A QUERY OR CONCERN?

If you are concerned about drugs, there are various places where you can turn for help. Firstly, you could speak to your Coach or Club Welfare Officer. Alternatively, the contacts below can all provide advice and guidance.

USEFUL CONTACTS & LINKS

RFL
Red Hall Red Hall Lane Leeds LS17 8NB
0844 477 7113
0844 477 0013
www.therfl.co.uk
anti.doping@rfl.uk.com

Talk to Frank
www.talktofrank.com
frank@talktofrank.com
0800 77 66 00

UK Sport
www.uk sport.gov.uk
www.100percentme.co.uk
drug-free@uk sport.gov.uk
0800 528 0004 5248

Drug Scope
www.drugscope.org.uk
020 7928 1211

World Anti Doping Agency
www.wada-ama.org
info@wada-ama.org

National Health Service
www.nhs.uk





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