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# Introduction

The ARU believe that younger rugby union players should be introduced to the game gradually through its pathway programme. The Rugby Union pathway is based on research conducted into children in sport and development. It was concluded that modified pathways offer great opportunities for children to develop confidence in sporting performances.

Pathway Rugby should be free flowing with the purpose of developing the skills of running, balance, ball handling and contact. The Pathway comprises:

**Walla Rugby** Under 7 and 8

**Mini Rugby** Under 9 and 10

**Midi Rugby** Under 11 and 12

This is implemented through the use of modified laws.

## Role of the Pathway Coordinator

The role of the Pathway Coordinator is an easy one, but very important to the success of the Australian Rugby Pathway. Through the use of Pathway Coordinators the implementation of the Pathway will be successful.

Your role as a Coordinator will ensure that the Pathway is being conducted across the State/Country in accordance with Pathway laws and ethos as set out by the Australian Rugby Union. Most importantly young players will be playing a safe and enjoyable game.

While many of the following are shared responsibilities, the major responsibilities of the Pathway Coordinator are:

- First point of contact with age-group specific information.
- First point of contact with respect to inconsistency such as law interpretation or application.
- First point of contact with respect to coach, referee and player demeanour or behaviour management.
- Conduct regular meetings with age group coaches, referees and parents to inform them of rule interpretations, code of conduct etc.
- Identify prospective coaches and referees to ensure each team has people in place.
- Supply the relevant Development Officer with coaches and referees details for the Coaches Register.
- Ensure the integrity of game day management—refer to Appendix A: Game Day—An Event

# The Field Marshall

Please ensure that your Field Marshall checks the safety of the grounds prior to any play taking place. The importance of the role of the Field Marshall can not be underestimated with the number of syringes being found at sporting fields in the community.

The role of the Field Marshall is outlined in Appendix B.

## Identification of Coordinators/Field Marshall on Match Day

Each home club should ensure that their Coordinators and Field Marshall are clearly identifiable at home games. The importance of the Coordinators and Field Marshalls being clearly identifiable cannot be understated. Easily identified Coordinators/Field Marshalls can effectively function as points of reference to fulfill their roles.

Some states have screens available for use to screen print the respective titles onto club shirts. These screens are available upon request to the respective state union.

## ARU Pathway Quality Assurance Audit

The Pathway Audit scheme is a quality assurance initiative by the Australian Rugby Union to ensure the match day integrity of Pathway rugby. A quality assurance checklist is implemented by Development Officers to measure the efficiency of stated criteria. The criteria each club needs to address are outlined below.

- Playing area of correct size – appropriate to each level of Pathway rugby.
- Field markings clearly identified and visible – appropriate markers need to designate playing areas. ie. collapsible markers.
- All goal posts padded and pads in good condition.
- Playing enclosure roped off 5m from sideline and dead ball line – common sense workability should be exercised.
- Field Marshall clearly identified and visible – should be clearly identified and visible to personnel from visiting clubs.
- Medical assistance available and clearly visible – should be clearly and easily accessed by all playing teams.
- Pathway Coordinator clearly identified and visible – essential so Pathway concerns can be effectively addressed.
- Team numbers on field are equal to specific Pathway level maximums.

- Correct ball size – appropriate to each level of Pathway rugby.
- Correct playing time adhered to – appropriate to each level of Pathway rugby.
- Referee appropriately dressed and qualified – volunteers need to be distinctly recognised.

- Expectations of Behaviour correctly adhered to by Coach—as outlined in the Pathway Law books.

- Expectations of Behaviour correctly adhered to by Players—as outlined in the Pathway Law books.

- Expectations of Behaviour correctly adhered to by Spectators—as outlined in the Pathway Law books.

Development Officers implementing the Pathway audit on game day need to introduce themselves to the Juniors President and then the Pathway Coordinator to establish their presence, purpose of visit, and extension of pleasantries. Such implementation of the Pathway audit will lead to increased levels of integrity and goodwill in the rugby community.

**A copy of the ARU Pathway Quality Assurance Checklist is in Appendix C.**

## The Ground

The following definitions apply to all forms of Pathway Rugby games.

The **playing area** consists of the field-of-play and the in-goal area.

The **field-of-play** is bounded by the touch lines and goal lines, but does not include them.

The touch line is considered to be ‘in touch’ (see Touch and Lineout in the relevant Law Book). The goal line is considered to be part of the in-goal area.

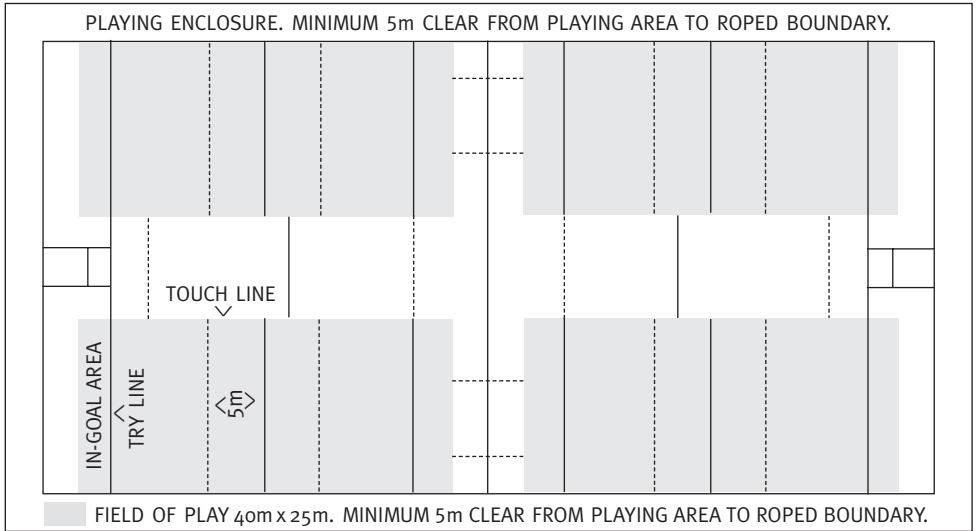
The **playing enclosure** is the playing area, and a **reasonable** area surrounding it, and is under the control of the referee. This area should remain clear. It is recommended that the playing area be ‘roped off’ in such a way as to restrain or confine spectators to an area a minimum of 5 metres from the touch line and dead ball line.

**Persons authorised to enter the playing enclosure:** The referee, coach and players of each team are authorised to enter the field-of-play.

The touch judges and authorised medical staff are permitted between the playing enclosure and the field-of-play.

The Manager and reserve players must remain outside the playing enclosure.

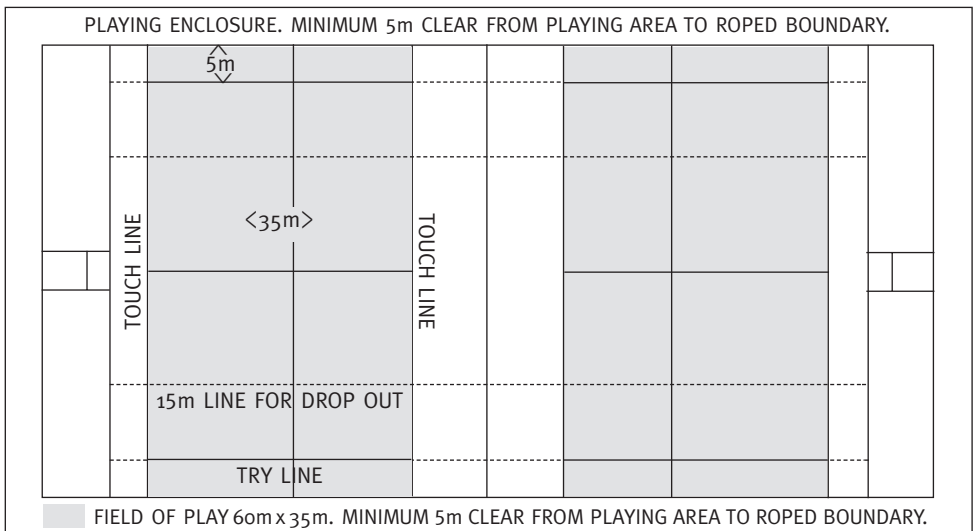
# WALLA FIELD SET-UP ON STANDARD RUGBY GROUND



Playing Area: The maximum playing area for this age group is 50m x 25m

***All goal posts within the playing enclosure must be fitted with goal post pads.***

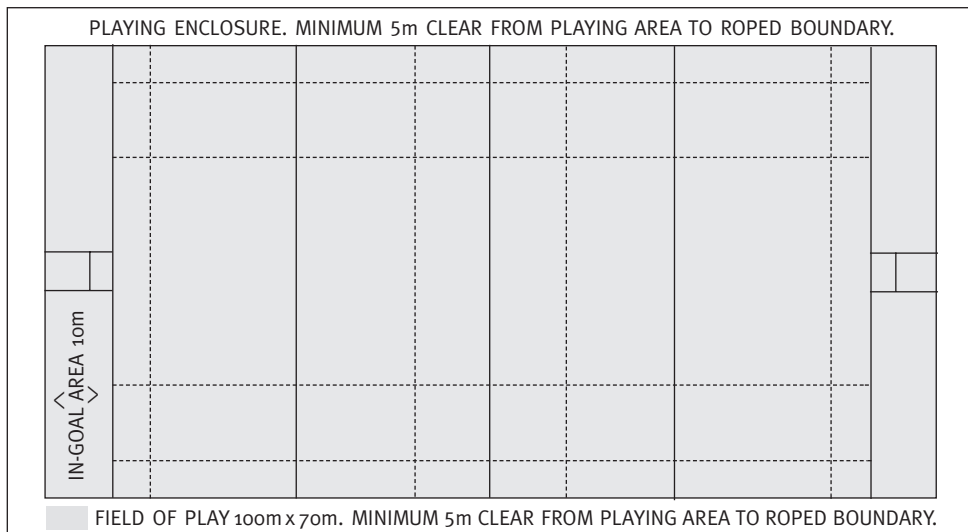
# MINI FIELD SET-UP ON STANDARD RUGBY GROUND



Playing Area: The maximum playing area for this age group is 70m x 35m

***All goal posts within the playing enclosure must be fitted with goal post pads.***

# MIDI FIELD SET-UP ON A STANDARD RUGBY GROUND



Playing Area: The standard playing area for this age group is 120m x 70m

**All goal posts within the playing enclosure must be fitted with goal post pads.**

## Common Understandings

### PATHWAY LAWS

The following two laws are applicable to Walla, Mini and Midi;

**Two year window.** This allows players with an adequate skill and maturation level to participate in a game one year above their chronological age group eg. A 7 year old player who turns 8 during the season, may play in the U9's.

**Unlimited interchange is allowed.**

In keeping with the philosophy of the pathway for maximising skill development, enjoyment and safety, we recommend the following;

That all players have equal game time.

That both teams should field equal numbers, not in excess of the numbers dictated to by the laws of the game.

That the competition season should be a maximum of 16 matches.

*Appendix H provides a summary of the laws for Walla, Mini and Midi. For a more comprehensive explanation of the Laws of the Game at this age level refer to the relevant law books, reference may also be made to the current ARU 2002 Law Book.*

# FEATURES OF THE AUSTRALIAN RUGBY PATHWAY

➤ Provides children with a safe and enjoyable introduction to the skills and tactical principles of the game of Rugby union.

➤ Allows young players to be introduced to skills at a pace appropriate to their age and physical development.

➤ The essential feature of Rugby within the Pathway is one of enjoyment. Irrespective of size, body shape or ability, players are given the opportunity to reach their potential in a caring, fun and safe environment.

➤ Pathway games provide the basic skills and understanding of set plays through the modified scrum, maul and lineout situations.

➤ The desirable qualities of rugby—sportsmanship and fair play—are positively rewarded, with minimal emphasis on competition.

➤ At all times safety is a paramount consideration. The Laws of each level of the Pathway have been specifically designed to provide a safe environment for both male and female players, while learning relevant skills.

With your support, and that of the local club or school, in a very short period of time you will see your child's coordination, confidence, self-esteem and social skills improve immensely. This will help to provide a good basis of health, fitness and motor skills for future years.

## COACHING

Walla, Midi and Mini Rugby are simple versions of the 15 a-side game designed to provide an introduction to the skills and tactical principles of Rugby for 7 to 12 year old players.

These are done in an enjoyable play or game form that will stimulate interest and maximise participation. The essential feature of Pathway Rugby is one of *enjoyment*. The desirable qualities of Rugby—*sportsmanship and fair play*—are to be positively rewarded. At all times safety must be a paramount consideration.

The concept of *positive reinforcement* of the ideals of the game and skills of players cannot be over-emphasised. Satisfaction should be gained from participation, Improvement and competitive performance - without emphasis on win at all costs.

Players should be left to develop skills and learn the game without the presence of external pressure to win premierships.

Coaches must ensure that the skills of the game are correctly taught and that the success achieved by each player is acknowledged and encouraged. It is vital that each



and every player receives the same opportunity to develop in an environment of friendliness and co-operation.

### **MAYDAY Procedure – Scrum.**

All coaches should be practising this important safety technique. This is covered in all coaching accreditation courses. A copy is attached in Appendix D.

## **REFEREEING**

Unlike the more senior levels of Rugby, where the referee's role is to interpret, judge and decide, Pathway Rugby requires a different philosophy from the referee.

A purely technical refereeing approach to the Laws of Pathway Rugby is contrary to the spirit of the game. It is recommended that at all times referees adopt an *encouraging and educative*, rather than punitive, whistle-happy approach.

The desirable qualities of rugby - sportsmanship and fair play—should be positively rewarded. This may be done by a quiet word or open comment, rather than penalising the player.

Of course, any dangerous action by a player should be quickly and firmly dealt with, but again the emphasis should be on the educative approach.

In summary:

- keep it simple, *free-flowing and enjoyable*
- let the players *develop skills*, with *safety*
- discourage any dangerous action or unsafe practice
- adopt an *educative, positive re-enforcement* approach
- ensure that players receive an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of ability.

Coaches and referees should meet before the game. This will enable the three of you to function as a team to ensure everyone is working from the same set of common understandings.

# **Practical Refereeing Tips-Walla**

## **THE ROLE OF THE WALLA REFEREE**

The Walla Law book (p4) highlights that the Walla referee is a manager and teacher in that they:

- should be encouraging and educative
- positively reward sportsmanship and fair play
- deal quickly and firmly with any dangerous action or unsafe practice

# COACHES ROLE IN GAME MANAGEMENT

The coach assists the referee to manage Walla rugby games by directing players on the field. For example:

- assisting in the efficient formation of lineouts, scrums and ball takes
- setting of off-side lines for scrums, lineouts and ball takes
- calling of ball takes when appropriate.

## KNOCK-ONS

A knock-on will only be called if:

- The ball is played forward rather than dropped
- The attacking team gains an advantage.

## THE WALLA TAG

The purpose of the Walla tag is to halt the progress of the ball carrier.

The key question for the Walla referee is:

**DID THE DEFENDING PLAYER CONTACT THE PLAYER WITH TWO HANDS (SIMULTANEOUSLY) BELOW THE WAIST?**

If so then call **'Tag'** immediately and loudly. This tells all players that the requirements have been met for a successful Walla tag. If the conditions for a Tag have not been met, then call play on loudly.

As the rules of Walla allow a tagged player to pass immediately, there is a need for all players to understand its application.

To reinforce and encourage the immediate passing option follow this by **'Pass, pass, pass'**.

(If the player passes immediately, then only one call of Pass will be necessary.)

The speed or duration of this call can be varied depending on the skill level of the players but should remain consistent within a game.

If a successful pass is made before any further prompts from the referee then play continues under 'general play' and as such there is no off-side.

**WHERE SHOULD THE WALLA REFEREE BE TO MANAGE THIS PART OF THE GAME?**

The Walla referee must be close to the action so they can see tags being made and call 'Tag' quickly.

## THE WALLA BALL TAKE

If a player does not make a pass the referee should follow the three prompts with the call **'Ball Take'**. If a pass is made after this call, play should either be recalled for the

ball take, or the player should be penalised if the referee feels that the act was intentional.

It is only when the referee calls 'ball take' that the full implications of off-side occur. An attacking player can choose to instigate a ball take by not choosing to use their passing option thus forcing the referee to call 'ball take', but cannot simply turn for a ball take and expect off-side to be enforced immediately.

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BALL TAKE?**

To allow play to continue when a player has not taken the immediate passing option following a tag. It also is important tactically, as it creates space through the creation of an off-side line.

### **WHY MAY THE IMMEDIATE PASS NOT OCCUR?**

When the player overruns the tagger, or when there is no player available to receive an immediate pass.

### **WHY IS THE CALL OF 'PASS, PASS, PASS' IMPORTANT?**

The call of 'Pass, Pass, Pass' from the referee determines the time frame for the ball take.

### **WHO CAN CALL A BALL TAKE?**

The referee to manage congestion in the game by creating space through the creation of an off-side line. The coach on the field can if they wish to force the creation of an off-side line and therefore space.

### **WHERE IS THE OFF-SIDE LINE AT A BALL TAKE?**

Defending players must be back 5m.

### **OFF-SIDE IN GENERAL PLAY**

With the exception of restarts and the set plays of scrum and lineout, off-side will only occur at a ball take.

The Walla tag does not set an off-side line, therefore players who remain in close proximity to a player who has been tagged are not off-side. Coaches and referees should explore the use of the ball-take to alleviate this situation.

Upon calling 'ball take' the referee should immediately remind the defence of their responsibility to remain on-side by calling '**On Side**' and retreating to the five metre mark to continue adjudication.

## **THE WALLA SCRUM**

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SCRUM?**

The Walla scrum is used to introduce the scrum as a game element. It is a non-contested method of restarting play. The team feeding the ball into the scrum will win it.

Safety is the most important consideration. Referees should check correct binding and verbally manage the scrum by calling ***crouch, touch and hold, engage slowly*** to ensure that players' heads enter the correct spaces and that the scrum is stable.

### **WHERE IS THE OFFSIDE LINE AT A SCRUM?**

The defending set of backs must be 5 m behind the hindmost feet, and the attacking set of backs behind the hindmost feet.

## **THE WALLA LINEOUT**

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LINEOUT?**

The Walla lineout is used to introduce the lineout as a game element. It is a non-contested method of restarting play. The team throwing the ball into the lineout will win it.

The lineout is complex in that a number of actions are necessary by different players. In essence the ball is thrown into the lineout, caught by a player in the lineout and given to the scrum half for distribution.

Prior to the commencement of the lineout, verbally reinforce the necessary gap, the need to catch the ball and that no player may leave the lineout until the scrum half has cleared the ball.

### **WHERE IS THE OFFSIDE LINE AT A LINEOUT?**

Players not in the lineout must be back 5m from the line of touch.

## **OTHER AREAS OF GAME MANAGEMENT**

Good game management will be achieved by using your voice rather than the whistle. Continuous and consistent voice control is essential in ensuring that the game is free flowing.

As the game must stop for all injuries, a good management technique is simply to ask all players to sit where they are and wait. Move to the player (usually with the coach or manager) and treat as necessary. Return to the players, thank them for waiting and recommence the game.

In the event of a penalty being awarded, (rarely but does occur) ask the non-offending team to place the ball on the mark and wait. Ask the offending team to move back 5m. When all is ready ask the non-offending team to play-on.

There is no fend in Walla Rugby. The fend erodes players confidence to work in close proximity and effectively tag attacking players.

Attacking players should be encouraged to carry the ball in both hands so as to promote the passing option.

The first time a player ‘fends’, the referee should stop play and talk to the offending player explaining that you cannot fend. Have a ball take and if it happens again penalise them.

## **PRE-GAME MANAGEMENT**

1. Meet coaches together to ensure common understandings of game management
2. Check that the playing area is clearly and safely marked (Walla Law book p6)
3. Ensure teams have even numbers to a maximum of 7 (Walla Law book p6)
4. Correct ball size (Walla) being used (Walla Law book p8)
5. Each team has a touch judge (Walla Law book p9)

# Appendix A. Game Day – An Event

## RESOURCES

- Field Markers
- Post Pads
- Crowd Control Barriers
- Medical Gear
- People

## THE PEOPLE

The day can be an enjoyable experience for all if the work is shared around.

The following ‘positions’ can be allocated to people via a roster system established at club level.

- **Game Day Coordinator.** Oversees all aspects of the day excluding the catering.
- **Catering Supervisor.** Oversees all running of the canteen or whatever facilities are available.

- **Field Marshall.** See Appendix B: Role of the Field Marshall.

- **First Aid Officer.** Provides first aid to an injured player.

Must have a minimum of a current First Aid Certificate. This is a specialised position, encourage people to do the course.

People are often reluctant to become involved due to the possibility of litigation. Advise people to complete an ARU Registration Form thereby covering them under the insurance scheme.

## MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PLAYER CARE

- Complete medical kit–contact a senior club or doctor for advice.
- Ice / Esky.
- Emergency contact details–ambulance, Union or Club doctor, nearest hospital, etc.
- Designated medical area.
- At least one stretcher, preferably a Jordan Frame or ‘Scoop’, and a set of cervical collars of varying sizes, should be available.

## ON THE DAY

The following list is a suggestion as to what needs to take place in chronological order.

**Before the Games:** (a minimum of 1 hour prior to the first game is advised).

- Open all facilities—clubhouse, toilets, etc.
- Check the playing areas and surrounds.
- Dress the Grounds (crowd control barriers, post pads, etc)
- Check medical gear.

**During the Game:**

- Ensure Field Marshals are in position before the whistle.
- Maintain adequate ice, etc. to medical area.
- Educate spectators in regard to the Expectations of Behaviour.

**After the Games:**

- Undress the Grounds.
- Remove crowd control barriers.
- Collect teams sheets and record results.

Obviously, one of the most difficult things to do is find enough people to do everything. You cannot do everything, it will lead to mistakes and that is what you don't want.

A suggestion is to draw up a roster and encourage parents, particularly new ones, to choose an activity that they may be interested in on home games. Try to ensure the times are relatively short, eg. 2 hours in the canteen, and the activity is split between a number of people during the season.

On average, most clubs have a 8 -10 home games a year (home and away) or less (central venue). If your club has U8's through to U12's this equates to each team being on the roster at home games twice throughout the year.

Occasionally someone will volunteer for a particular activity for the whole season. Let them, but make sure they get assistance along the way.

Burnout is one of the major killers of volunteering.

Remember, it is not a baby sitting service. They have joined the Rugby community, a community in which involvement is part of the package.

# Appendix B. Role of the Field Marshall

1. On arrival at ground, check field surroundings and playing area for dangerous objects and/or potholes to ensure a safe playing area.
2. Check if post pads are in good condition and are in position on posts.
3. Ensure adequate crowd control precautions are in place.
4. Check that a medically trained person is in attendance and where that person will be stationed.
5. Check that an appropriately stocked Medical Kit is available and you know where it is located.
6. If no medically trained person is in attendance and / or no appropriately stocked medical kit is available you should:
  - a. Check that a phone in working order is available, and identify where it is.
    - if it is a pay phone, organise appropriate change
    - if it is a lock phone, identify who has the key or where the key is kept
    - if it is a mobile phone, check that the battery has sufficient battery life
  - b. Establish emergency phone numbers for:
    - Ambulance
    - Local Hospital Accident and Emergency Ward
    - Local Medical Clinic
    - Local Police
  - c. Advise officials and guardians that there is no medically trained person in attendance, and that the above alternative procedures will be followed.



# Appendix C. ARU Pathway Quality Assurance Checklist

Venue	Date		
CRITERIA	WALLA	MINI	MIDI
Playing area is of correct size	50x25m	70mx35m	120mx70m
Field markings clearly identified and visible			
All goal posts padded and pads in good condition			
Playing enclosure 'roped-off' 5m from sideline and dead ball line			
Field Marshall clearly identified and visible			
Medical assistance available and clearly identified			
Pathway coordinator clearly identified and visible			
Team numbers on the field are equal to a maximum of:	7	10	12
Correct ball size	Walla	Mini	Midi
Correct playing time adhered to (per half)	15 mins	20 mins	20 mins
Referee appropriately dressed and qualified			
Expectations of behaviour correctly adhered to by coach			
Expectations of behaviour correctly adhered to by players			
Expectations of behaviour correctly adhered to by spectators			
General comments			
Signed		Position	
Print Name			

# Appendix D. ARU Mayday Procedure

The "MAYDAY" call is a safety technique put into operation when a scrum is considered by a player to be collapsing, or has collapsed, or when a player believes that he/she is in a potentially dangerous position.

It is considered necessary to have a recognised call Australia wide which would allow people to have an understanding of what actions they should take when one of the above mentioned situations occurs in a scrum.

The following is a description of the process to be followed by players, when the "Mayday" call is heard. Referees should be acutely aware of the process, as they may well be the person who can talk the players through the correct disengagement sequence.

## **The injured player should not be moved after the "Mayday" call.**

All other players should follow the sequence below.

- The player makes a loud call, "MAYDAY". The referee should immediately blow the whistle.
- The back 5 (locks, flankers and No. 8) should immediately stop pushing to release pressure on the front row.
- All players should then lower to their knees in a controlled manner. This takes the majority of the weight off.
- There is then a pause.
- The second movement is to lower the top half of their body.
- The front row then softly land on their face, which is termed a "face plant".
- Having collapsed into this position and taken the weight off, none of the parties should look sideways. Rotation and flexion is the cause of many injuries.
- For example if the hooker is injured, neither front rower should look sideways to see how the hooker is, because that will also expose them to the same or similar injuries.
- Don't look sideways, just collapse straight to the ground.
- The call is then made by the referee, "DOES ANYONE HAVE A PROBLEM?"
- **Certainly do not try and move the player. Leave them exactly where they are.**
- If there is no reply the referee asks the players to number off; 1, 2, 3, 4, etc
- The props should release their bind on the opposition

- **On the referees instruction:-**
  1. The number 8 then moves back and away.
  2. The flankers then release their binds and move outwards and away.
  3. The locks then release their binds and move outwards and away.
  4. The prop forwards then release their bind on the hooker and move outwards and away.
- As the hooker is in the centre of the scrum, this will leave the two hookers on the ground.
- This leaves everyone released and free.
- If everybody moves free of another player, then there will be no further injury to any player in trouble.
- The player left on the ground is then left in that stable and still position, until medical assistance arrives.
- **Certainly do not try and move the player. Leave them exactly where they are.**

# Appendix E. Summary of Pathway Laws

## SUMMARY OF THE FEATURES OF WALLA RUGBY

*For under 7/8 year olds of the Australian Rugby Pathway*

**Playing Area** Max. 50m x 25m (includes in-goal area).

**Team Size** Seven (7) players as max per team.

**Ball Size** Size Walla.

**Playing Time** Two x 15 minute halves.

**Scoring** A try is worth 5 points.

No conversion attempt after a try at this age level.

No penalty goals or drop goals at this level

**Kick-off** Taken in the form of a 'punt kick'. Non-scoring team to kick off.  
5m 'free zone' for receiver.

**Restart** 'Tap restart' by non-scoring team after a try.

**Kicking in General Play** No kicking is allowed in general play.

**Penalty Kick** The 'tap restart' is the only option.

**Walla Tag** To halt the progress of the ball carrier, a defending player must contact the ball carrier with two hands (simultaneously) below waist height.

Once tagged the ball carrier has two options:

1. Pass the ball to a team mate immediately; or
2. Set up a ball take.

**Ball Take** A Ball Take occurs if passing option not taken following a 'Tag'.  
Call after tag should be pass, pass, pass, then ball take.  
Offside line for defending team is 5m.

**Scrum** Scrums are non-contested. Only the hooker of the team feeding the ball into the scrum may strike for the ball.

Gentle, non-pushing scrum with three players in each front row

Offside line is 5m from last feet for defending team and from last feet for attacking team

Scrum Half not feeding the ball cannot go past the mid line of scrum

**Line-out** Line-outs are non-contested.

Two players line-out (plus hooker.)

The lineout is formed 3 metres from the touch line.

The thrower stands in line with their own team.

Biased, targeted throw

Offside line for the backline is 5m from the middle of the lineout

**Advantage** Played generously to ensure a free-flowing game.

**Off-side** In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.

Off-side lines exist for scrum, line-out and ball take situations (see relevant sections).

**Finals series** No finals, no competition ladder and no premiership awarded at this age level.

# SUMMARY OF THE FEATURES OF MINI RUGBY

*For 9/10 year olds StepTwo of the Australian Rugby Pathway*

**Playing Area** Max. 70m x 35m (includes in-goal area).

**Team Size** Ten (10) players per standard team.

**Ball Size** Size Mini.

**Playing Time** Two x 20 minute halves.

**Scoring** A try is worth 5 points.

A kick at goal following a try is worth 2 points. (Taken in front of the posts – if goal posts available.)

There are no penalty goals or drop goals in Mini Rugby.

**Kick-off** Taken in the form of a ‘drop kick’ or ‘punt -kick’. Non-scoring team to kick off.

5 metre ‘free zone’ for receiver.

**Restart** ‘Drop kick’ or ‘punt kick’ by non-scoring team after a try. 5 metre ‘free zone’ for receiver.

**Kicking in General Play** No kicking is allowed in general play.

**Penalty Kick** The ‘tap restart’ or kick for touch are the only options for the team receiving a penalty.  
(Penalty kicks for goal are not permitted at this age level.)

**Drop-out Restart** Taken in form of a ‘drop kick’ from the mid-point of the line 15m out from the goal line.

**Tackle** A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is brought to the ground and held by an opponent. This includes being on one knee, sitting on the ground or being on another player on the ground. Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately place, push or pass the ball.

The tackler must release the tackled player and roll away.

No defending player may prevent the ball carrier from playing the ball.

After a tackle players must be on their feet when they play the ball.

**Ruck** If the ball in a ruck becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team moving forward immediately prior to the stoppage. Offside line is last feet.

- Maul** If the ball in a maul becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession at the commencement of the maul. Offside line is last feet.
- Scrum** Scrums are non-contested. I.e. only the hooker of the team feeding the ball into the scrum may strike for the ball.  
Five-player scrum, with three players in the front row and two in the second row.  
There is no pushing in a Mini scrum.  
Defending scrum-half can not go past the midline of the scrum  
Offside line is 5m from last feet for the defending team and from last feet for the attacking team.
- Line-out** Line-outs are non-contested.  
Four players line-out (plus hooker).  
The lineout is formed 4 metres from the touch line.  
The thrower stands in line with the Line of Touch.  
The offside line for players not in the lineout is 5m from the line of touch.
- Advantage** Played generously to ensure a free-flowing game.
- Off-side** In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.  
Off-side lines exist for scrum, line-out, ruck and maul situations.  
An off-side zone also exists for the tackle. (see relevant sections)
- Finals series** No finals series but Premierships awarded for 'first past the post' at this age level.

# SUMMARY OF THE FEATURES OF MIDI RUGBY

*For under 11/12 year olds as Step Three of the Australian Rugby Pathway*

**Playing Area** Standard field - 120m x 70m (includes in-goal area).

**Team Size** Twelve (12) players per standard team.

**Ball Size** Midi football.

**Playing Time** Two x 20 minute halves.

**Scoring** A try is worth 5 points.

A kick at goal following a try is worth 2 points.

There are no penalty goals or drop goals in Midi Rugby

**Kick-off** Taken in the form of a 'drop kick'. The ball must travel 10m towards their opponent's goal line.

**Restart** 'Drop kick' by non-scoring team after a try. Non-scoring team to restart.

**Drop-out Restart** Taken in form of a drop kick from anywhere on or behind the 22m line.

**Kicking in General Play** Kicking is allowed in general play. (Because of this, there is a 'mark' provision at this level.)

**Penalty Kick** The 'tap restart', kick for touch or kick for territory are the only options for the team receiving a penalty.  
(Penalty kicks for goal are not permitted at this age level.)

**Tackle** A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is brought to the ground and held by an opponent. This includes being on one knee, sitting on the ground or being on another player on the ground. Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately place, push or pass the ball.

The tackler must release the tackled player and roll away.

No defending player may prevent the ball carrier from playing the ball.

After a tackle players must be on their feet when they play the ball.

**Ruck** If the ball in a ruck becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team moving forward immediately prior to the stoppage. Offside line is last feet.



**Maul** If the ball in a maul becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession at the commencement of the maul. Offside line is last feet.

**Scrum** The scrum is contested.

Six-player scrum, with three in the front row and two in the second row and a No 8 making up the third row.

There is a maximum of 1 metre forward push allowed in a Midi scrum.

Defending scrum-half can not go past the midline of the scrum.

The No 8 can not play the ball.

Offside line is last feet.

**Line-out** The lineout is contested.

Five players line-out (plus hooker).

The lineout is formed 5 metres from the touch line.

The thrower stands in line with the Line of Touch.

There is no lifting or supporting in a Midi lineout.

Offside line for players not in the lineout is 10m from the line of touch

**Advantage** Played to ensure a free-flowing game.

**Off-side** In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.

Off-side lines exist for scrum, line-out, ruck and maul situations.

An off-side zone also exists for the tackle. (see relevant sections)

**Finals series** There can be a finals series, or Premierships can be awarded for 'first past the post' at this age level.

# Appendix F. Summary of the Features of the Australian Junior Rugby Pathway

	Walla (U7 and U8)	Mini (U9 and U10)	Midi (U11 and U12)
<b>Primary Purpose.</b>	Use the Ball.	Maintain and Recapture the Ball.	Winning the Ball.
<b>Tactical Principles.</b>	Go Forward. Pressure (Tracking).	Go Forward. Pressure (Tracking and Patterning).	Go Forward. Pressure Support.
<b>Playing Area.</b>	Maximum 50m x 25m (across a standard full field).	Maximum 70m x 35m.	Standard Full Field 120m x 70m.
<b>Team Size.</b>	Seven (7) players per standard team.	Ten (10) players per standard team.	Twelve (12) players per standard team.
<b>Ball Size.</b>	Walla.	Mini.	Midi.
<b>Playing Time.</b>	Two x 15 minute halves.	Two x 20 minute halves.	Two x 20 minute halves.
<b>Scoring.</b>	A Try is worth 5 points. No Conversion at this age level. There are no penalty goals or drop goals at this age level.	A Try is worth 5 points. A Conversion goal after a try is worth 2 points. (The kick for goal to be taken in front of the posts). There are no penalty goals or drop goals at this age level.	A Try is worth 5 points. A Conversion goal after a try is worth 2 points. (The kick for goal to be taken from in line with where the try). There are no penalty goals or drop goals at this age level.

	<b>Walla (U7 and U8)</b>	<b>Mini (U9 and U10)</b>	<b>Midi (U11 and U12)</b>
<b>Kicking in General Play.</b>	No kicking allowed in General Play.	No kicking allowed in General Play.	Kicking in General Play allowed. If a team kicks into touch or through their opponent's in-goal, from outside their 22m, the defending team will be awarded a scrum at the place the ball was kicked.
<b>Fair catch.</b>	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	The 'Mark' is available at this age level.
<b>Kick-Off.</b>	Taken in the form of a 'punt-kick'. Non-scoring team to kick off. 5m circle rule for receiving team.	Taken in the form of a 'punt kick' or 'drop kick'. Non-scoring team to kick off. 5m circle rule for receiving team.	Taken in the form of a 'drop kick'. Non-scoring team to kick off. Must travel 10m towards the opponents goal line.
<b>Restart.</b>	Non-contested tap restart by non-scoring team.	Semi contested. Drop Kick or Punt Kick by non-scoring team. 5m circle rule for receiving team.	Drop kick by non-scoring team after a try. Non-scoring team to restart.
<b>Drop Out Restart.</b>	Not applicable.	Semi-contested. Drop Kick by defending team taken from the mid-point of the 15m line. 5m circle rule for receiving team.	Contested. Drop kick taken from anywhere on or behind the 22m line.

	<b>Walla (U7 and U8)</b>	<b>Mini (U9 and U10)</b>	<b>Midi (U11 and U12)</b>
<b>Tackle.</b>	There are no tackles in Walla rugby. A two handed tag on the shorts halts the ball carrier. When tagged, the ball carrier should pass the ball to a supporting teammate immediately or set up a ball take.	Tackling allowed with correct technique. Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately place, push or pass the ball. Offside zone at tackle.	Tackling allowed with correct technique. Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately place, push or pass the ball. Offside zone at tackle.
<b>Ruck/Maul.</b>	Exists in the form of a Ball Take if the passing option is not taken following a 'Tag'. Offside line for the defending team is 5m.	Offside line is the last feet.	Offside line is the last feet.
<b>Lineout</b>	Non-Contested.	Non-Contested.	Contested.
<b>Restart.</b>	Two players from each team (plus hooker). Biased targeted throw (ie. thrower stands in line with own team). The lineout is formed 3 metres from the touch line. Offside line for backline is 5m from middle of lineout.	Four players from each team (plus hooker). Thrower stands in line with Line of Touch. The lineout is formed 4 metres from the touch line. Offside line for backline is 5m from line of touch.	Five players from each team (plus hooker). Thrower stands in line with Line of Touch. The lineout is formed 5 metres from the touch line. There is no lifting or support in a Midi lineout. Offside line for backline is 10m from line of touch.

	<b>Walla (U7 and U8)</b>	<b>Mini (U9 and U10)</b>	<b>Midi (U11 and U12)</b>
<b>Advantage.</b>	Played generously to ensure a free-flowing game.	Played generously to ensure a free-flowing game.	Played generously to ensure a free-free-flowing game.
<b>Penalty.</b>	The tap restart is the only option for a team receiving a penalty.	The tap restart or kick for touch are the only options for the team receiving penalty. (Penalty kicks for goal are not permitted at this age level.)	The tap restart, kick for touch or kick for territory are the only options for the team receiving a penalty. (Penalty kicks for goal are not permitted at this age level.)
<b>Scrum Restart.</b>	Scrum are non-contested. Only the hooker of the team feeding the ball into the scrum may strike for the ball. Gentle, non-pushing scrum with three players in each front row. Scrum half not feeding the ball cannot go past the mid line of scrum. Offside line is 5m from last feet for defending team and from the last feet for the attacking team.	Scrum are non-contested. Only the hooker of the team feeding the ball into the scrum may strike for the ball. Five-player scrum, with three players in the front row and two in the second row. There is no pushing in a Mini Scrum. Defending scrum half cannot go past the midline of the scrum. Offside line is 5m from last feet for defending team and from the last feet for the attacking team.	The scrum is contested. Six-player scrum, with three in the front row and two in the second row and a No 8 making up the third row. There is a maximum 1 metre forward push allowed in a Midi scrum. Defending scrum half cannot go past the midline of the scrum. The No 8 cannot play the ball. Offside line is last feet.

	<b>Walla (U7 and U8)</b>	<b>Mini (U9 and U10)</b>	<b>Midi (U11 and U12)</b>
<b>Offside in General play.</b>	In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.	In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.	In general play, a player is off-side if they are in front of a team mate who is carrying the ball, or if they are in front of a team mate who last played the ball.
<b>Final Series.</b>	No finals, no competition ladder and no premiership awarded at this age level.	No finals series but Premierships awarded for 'first past the post' at this age level.	There can be a finals series, or Premierships can be awarded for 'first past the post' at this age level.