Enjoying U17 Rugby – Good Practice Guide.

INTRODUCTION

This level of rugby is the entry point into the competitive 15 a side adult game and presents its own particular challenges. These guidelines recognise these challenges for all concerned, players, coaches, referees/officials and spectators and suggest the good practices to help anticipate and reduce them.

CLUB

- Have a senior member of the club at each game to support players & coaching staff and clearly involved in encouraging the RFU core values of Enjoyment, Respect, Discipline, Teamwork & Sportsmanship.
- Encourage club members to train as coaches, touch judges and referees to support the U17 game.
- Provide a competent Touch Judge (not a replacement or coach).
- Confirm your referee/officials using the procedure in the WRFU handbook.
- Tell the referees society who the U17 contact person for the club is.

PITCH

- Defined with barriers/ropes with technical areas set out so the RFU pitch side discipline can be observed and spectators able to watch from a position away from the playing area.

PLAYERS

- Respect teammates, coaching staff & opponents at all times.
- Recognise the authority of the referee/officials managing the game & accept the decisions that they make.
- Appreciate the efforts of your club, coaches, referees & parents make in giving you the chance to play & enjoy the game.
- Don't use bad language & don't abuse anyone involved in the game.

COACHES

- Encourage the RFU core values at all stages of training, coaching & playing.
- Brief players on how to captain a side & approach the officials & opposition.
- Talk to the referee when he arrives & introduce your captain on the day.
- Talk through coaching involvement & intervention with the referee including how & when to communicate the need to pass information about player welfare.
- During the game only enter the playing area with the referee's agreement except in exceptional circumstances such as possible serious injury.

- Talk through the game with the referee, but after they have showered/changed.
- Do not use Foul or Abusive language.

REFEREES

- Society to brief referees/officials on the particular needs of the U17 game.
- Appoint officials capable of handling club youth rugby with its recognised management & fitness demands & avoiding club & family associations.
- Referees/officials should arrive an hour before KO & contact the coach/club representatives there on the day & jointly check the pitch meets requirements.
- Discuss & agree with the coach how & when contact during play should be made.
- Establish medical arrangements and agree when appropriate person(s) can come onto the pitch when play is in progress.
- Check referee changing facilities having regard to contact with young players.
- Respect the players during the game & recognise their youth & level of commitment may lead to overreaction requiring calmness, clarity & the support of coaching staff to reset play to standards required.
- Communicate clearly to the players during play (number, colour, action + signals).

SPECTATORS

- Recognise that players, coaches, referees and spectators should be able to be involved in & watch rugby free from any abuse & in safety.
- Respect the barriers/ropes & leave the pitch free for players, coaches & officials.
- Show appreciation of good play from both teams.
- Encourage players to win with dignity & loose with good grace.

SUMMARY

Thanks to all who have contributed to this good practice guide which is intended to increase the effective control & management of this level of youth rugby. Overall we all need to remember the core values of ENJOYMENT, RESPECT, DISCIPLINE, TEAMWORK & SPORTSMANSHIP that enhance the experience of all who are involved in the game, particularly ENJOYMENT!

REVIEW

To be current and useful this guide needs reviewing for the start of the 2011/2012 season.