

# NRU Discipline



**TEAMWORK  
RESPECT  
ENJOYMENT  
DISCIPLINE  
SPORTSMANSHIP**

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## Code of Conduct for Club Coaches and Volunteers

This Code of Conduct is the “World Rugby Code of Conduct”, amended only so far as is necessary to apply to the game of Rugby in Northumberland

### The Code

Code of Conduct for clubs, coaches, players and match officials and persons connected in anyway with the game of Rugby in Northumberland

All persons: -

1. Must ensure that the Game is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour and acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the match officials to maintain those principles;
2. Shall co-operate in ensuring that the spirit of the Laws of the Game is upheld and refrain from selecting players guilty of foul play;
3. Shall not repeatedly breach the Laws of the Game;
4. Shall accept and observe the authority and decisions of referees, assistant referees, match officials and all other rugby disciplinary bodies;
5. Shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which a referee or assistant referee handled a match;
6. Shall not publish or caused to be published criticism of the manner in which Northumberland Rugby handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the World Rugby Bye-Laws, World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game, Cup Rules, other Northumberland Rugby rules or processes or World Rugby Laws of the Game;
7. Shall not engage in any conduct or any activity on or off the field that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches (including, but not limited to, the supply of information in relation to the Game, directly or indirectly, to bookmakers) or in the integrity and good character of any person;
8. Shall not commit a breach of World Rugby Regulation 6 (Anti-Corruption and Betting)
9. Shall promote the reputation of the Game and take all possible steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute;
10. Shall not commit a doping offence as defined in World Rugby Regulation 21 (Anti-Doping);
11. Shall not abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, assistant referee or other match official, whether on or off the field of play;
12. Shall not use foul or abusive language or gestures towards referees, assistant referees or other match officials or spectators;
13. Shall not do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on the ground of their religion, race, sex, sexual orientation, colour or national or ethnic origin;

14. Shall not do anything which adversely affects the Game of Rugby Football, Northumberland Rugby, any member club or other Union of World Rugby or any commercial partner of the Game in Northumberland.
15. Shall abide by all other Codes of Conduct and policies issued by the NRU including inter alia the Northumberland Rugby Code of Conduct for Safeguarding Children in Rugby.

Every person is under an obligation to comply with this Code of Conduct.

The Northumberland Rugby Union is obliged to monitor compliance with and impose sanctions for breaches of the Code of Conduct by persons under its jurisdiction.

For breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Discipline Panel of Northumberland Rugby Union may impose such penalties as it deems appropriate.

## Discipline – On Field Aspect

### Recommendation

Club and representative age grade rugby from **U7 through to and including U18 teams**

NB Discipline in Schools and Colleges shall be dealt with by the head teachers and principals respectively as per the school or colleges internal disciplinary procedures and the sanctions table.

The CB YDS [at present Chris Davy – [cdavy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cdavy@hotmail.co.uk) ] is available to offer advice and assistance.

### Introduction

Rugby union is an invasion game.

The aim is for clubs is to recruit players and maintain their involvement in rugby union in to the adult sections of a club. Due to the contact nature of rugby union there may be disciplinary issues.

Players are registered in clubs as per their chronological date of birth. In addition, administrators [coaches, referees and welfare volunteers] also have to be aware of the individuals physical and skill development.

A young player will join a rugby union club to maintain/develop a social network, to develop new skills, to challenge skills already learnt, to maintain/improve their physical fitness.

As a player moves through the chronological age groups they will become physically bigger, faster and therefore more powerful. Their skill will also improve but some players will have initial problems – physically and persona – in dealing with the increased contact and care is required by the coaches and the referees.

When a club/school is involved in an internal or inter club coaching session they MUST risk assess the situation BUT may decide to appropriately introduce a player or skill.

If this includes 2+ clubs [TRIANGULAR] then the coaches [and if appropriate the referee] agree on the format.

### RFU Regulation 19 Appendix 6

In Clubs, U13 and below shall be dealt with by the Club Age-Grade Player's coach. U14 to U18 in a club shall be dealt with by the Club disciplinary officer or panel (of not more than 3 people) with experience in dealing with young people. Cases concerning serious injury, police investigation, racial abuse shall be referred to the RFU NYDS who shall determine who shall deal with the matter.

## Coaching sessions/games FRIENDLIES and TRIANGULAR - all Age-Grade rugby

The home club/school appoint the referee and the players, coaches and referee work together to achieve the outcome of the session. If a coach/referee decides there has been a serious offence the player and his coach should be informed and appropriate action is taken by the players' coach – e.g. substitute. It is not expected that yellow/red cards will be utilised in these sessions.

## Competitive – FESTIVALS and WATERFALL

### **U7-U13**

If possible the referee should be appointed by the Referees Society. Where this is not possible the home club/school should appoint a referee, the visiting club/school should agree to this appointment or they may offer to referee the game themselves. There will be no appeal on the result if this procedure is followed.

If the referee decides that a player must cease to participate in a match, they must stop the match, call the individual player aside from the other players and invite the coach of the player on to the field. The referee must explain to the coach and player why the player's behaviour was unacceptable and ask the coach to provide a substitute player. The player is to take no further part in that fixture or Festival. It is the responsibility of the coach to speak to and educate the player why such actions were taken.

### **U14-U15, KNOCK-OUT TOURNAMENTS and LEAGUES for U15**

If possible the referee should be appointed by the Referees Society. Where this is not possible the home club/school should appoint a referee, the visiting club/school should agree to this appointment or they may offer to referee the game themselves. There will be no appeal on the result if this procedure is followed.

The referee may utilise yellow card[s]. If the referee decides that a player must cease to participate in a match [red card], they must stop the match, call the individual player aside from the other players and invite the coach of the player on to the field. The referee must explain to the coach and player why the player's behaviour was unacceptable. The player is to take no further part in that fixture or Festival. It is the responsibility of the coach to speak to and educate the player why such actions were taken. The coach should consult with the Chairs of the club's Disciplinary and Youth committees referring to RFU Regulation 19 Appendix 6 to assist with the decision on the action required.

### **U16-U18 ALL games except coaching sessions, also Area and Representative Teams**

If possible the referee should be appointed by the Referees Society. Where this is not possible the home club/school should appoint a referee, the visiting club/school should agree to this appointment or they may offer to referee the game themselves. There will be no appeal on the result if this procedure is followed.

The referee may utilise yellow cards. If the referee decides that a player must cease to participate in a match [red card], they must stop the match, call the individual player aside from the other players and explain to the player why the player's behaviour was unacceptable. The player is to take no further part in that fixture or Festival. It is the responsibility of the coach to speak to and educate the player why such actions were taken.

The Referee, Club, FE, School and or Representative Team Manager then follow the process outlined in RFU Regulation 19 Appendix 6.

### Process and Sanction[s]

As above re the age group playing

ENSURE the players, officials – referee[s], coaches are working together – a pre match meeting with the referee[s] and coaches is advised. SUPPORT all the people involved, everyone is learning

IF there is an incident ensure it is clear why the referee has had to yellow/red card a player; if a discussion is needed ONLY do this with the referee after the game has ended and a reasonable time has elapsed. A brief written report by the Referee ASAP [within 24 hours], identifying the Law number and description – ENSURE all the reasons for the red card are recorded and within the Referees Report.

There should be a minimum delay in organising a hearing. The Panel may be up to 3 people; it can be one person. Sanctions should relate to the Sanctions Table – RFU Regulation Appendix 6, the entry point relates to the previous history of the player, their attitude following the incident and the severity of the injury.

\*Sanctions imposed apply to all the Age-Grade Player's forthcoming matches, irrespective of whether they are scheduled to play for their school, Club or any other team.

A sanction is a number of matches – not weeks – it may include a non-rugby related sanction.

NB– Law 10.4 [a] striking: 2016-17 any strike to the head shall result in at least a Mid-Range entry point.

### **INFORM**

Club Chair of Discipline

Family

\*CB YDS [Chris Davy at present [cdavy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cdavy@hotmail.co.uk)] who will ensure the school/college and representative/pathway groups are informed and CB Discipline Secretary

Referee and opposition team

**APPEAL**

The Player may appeal to the CB Disciplinary Secretary if they wish to contest the sanction

The CB YDS may appeal to the RFU NYDS IF the sanction is considered too lenient or harsh

The Player cannot play until there has been a hearing, the sanction has been completed or the appeal heard.

**RECORDS**

RFU Safeguarding policies apply

Confidential record should be kept by the Club and by the CB/CSU DS

Names will not be publicised.



## Discipline – Off Field Aspect

This section addresses disciplinary issues in relation to the conduct of coaches, parents and other spectators at youth matches.

Adults who commit disciplinary offences whilst attending youth games, whether as coaches, parents or spectators, will be dealt in accordance with the RFU's disciplinary processes for adults laid down in RFU Regulation 19. Rather than addressing the matter in terms of a breach of the laws of game, the case will be considered in the context of **conduct prejudicial to the interests of the game** pursuant to **Rule 5.12** of the Rules of the RFU. Such matters will normally be raised by way of a report from the referee – the official RFU Match Official Abuse Report form in match official abuse cases – but may be triggered by a report from any interested 'victim' or third party. Where such matters arise they will be referred to the CB Disciplinary Secretary [at present this is Kingsley Hyland].

The process that is adopted is likely to involve the following:

- The Disciplinary Secretary will consider the report and if satisfied that the allegations contained in it amount to allegations of a disciplinary offence he will commence an investigation in accordance with the powers conferred on him by RFU Regulation 19.6.8.
- The Disciplinary Secretary will usually refer the report to the alleged offender's own Club and invite the Club to conduct their own internal investigation to determine whether any action should be taken against the alleged offender.
- The Disciplinary Secretary will conduct his own investigation into the allegation(s). This may involve gathering further evidence from the person making the initial complaint and any witnesses. He will also enquire as to the existence of video footage of the incident.
- When he has concluded his investigation and gathered all available evidence, the Disciplinary Secretary will determine whether that evidence establishes a case for the alleged offender to answer.
- If satisfied that the evidence establishes a case to answer, the Disciplinary Secretary will prefer a charge [or charges] and require the alleged offender to appear before a CB Disciplinary Panel. Before preferring a charge, the Disciplinary Secretary will consider the outcome of the Club's own investigation and any disciplinary action taken by the Club. If satisfied with the action taken by the Club, he may determine that a formal disciplinary hearing is not required and will simply record the outcome of the Club's investigation.
- Where the case proceeds to a hearing before a CB Disciplinary Panel the procedures laid down in RFU Regulation 19.7 – 19.11 will be followed.
- Although the Panel will have regard to the schedule of recommended sanctions in Appendix 2 to Regulation 19 in the event that the charge is admitted or found to have been proved, the powers open to a Panel in terms of sanction are effectively unlimited.

**It is important that clubs operating youth sections are aware of the following matters:**

- Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their supporters. Disciplinary charges may be brought both in respect of individual offenders and Clubs as a whole. This is made clear by Regulation 19.1.4 which states –

*'All Clubs are required to co-operate with an RFU (or Constituent Body) disciplinary investigation or disciplinary proceedings. All Clubs are further required to appoint an internal Disciplinary Panel responsible for investigating and, subject to Regulations 19.5.2 to 19.5.4, taking appropriate action in relation to disciplinary matters and the conduct of its members, and for generally maintaining discipline within that Club. Nothing in RFU Regulation 19 prevents the RFU from bringing disciplinary proceedings against Clubs (including for the actions of its members **and/or its spectators**) and its members, including in relation to Misconduct or breaches of Rule 5.12.'*

- A Club's refusal to conduct an internal investigation when invited to do so by the CB Disciplinary Secretary may itself be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- In particularly serious cases the CB Disciplinary Secretary can invite the RFU Head of Discipline to take over the case in which event the investigation will be conducted by the RFU and any disciplinary proceedings which follow will be before an RFU Disciplinary Panel.
- Given the increasing prevalence of match official abuse at youth games, nationally as well as locally, sanctions for such offences are likely to be increased to act as a deterrent to others.
- Where a coach, parent or spectator is suspended by a Disciplinary Panel the suspension will usually be from all playing, coaching, officiating, selection, team management, administration or promotion of the game.
- It is a popular misconception amongst Clubs that any disciplinary sanction imposed in relation to a coach, parent or spectator at a youth game is limited to the individual offender or the Club's youth section. **In appropriate cases, especially where the Club concerned has a poor record in relation to off-field discipline at youth games, sanctions can be imposed against the Club itself and could include the deduction of league points.**

## Discipline – Documenting an Incident

In the event of an incident occurring it is imperative that a written record is produced as ACCURATELY and quickly as possible after the event – the referee should submit a Red Card Report within 24 hours. The referee will in most cases be able to discuss their reason/s for asking a player to be substituted or for a player being shown a red card but this should only be after the game. It is advised that the referee is afforded a reasonable amount of time before this discussion takes place.

It is recommended that clubs follow a similar format and document any incident as quickly and accurately as possible. Attempts should be made to identify any potential witnesses and record their contact details along with their relevant position to the incident. Attempts can be made to gather any potential video or photographic evidence [with regard to RFU Safeguarding policy].

The document should set out the factual basis of the incident and should not include conjecture, unnecessary comments or personal opinions e.g. “this was once of the worst cases of stamping I have ever seen”, “the referee got it wrong” etc. It is recommended that all witness statements are checked for accuracy and consistency before being submitted.

Details to include in the report:

- Players name, position & number, club and team
- Date and type of match
- Weather conditions and state of the pitch
- Details of any injuries – was a hospital visit required?
- Proximity to the incident – make a drawing
- Witness contact details, details of person completing the record
- Factual description of the incident

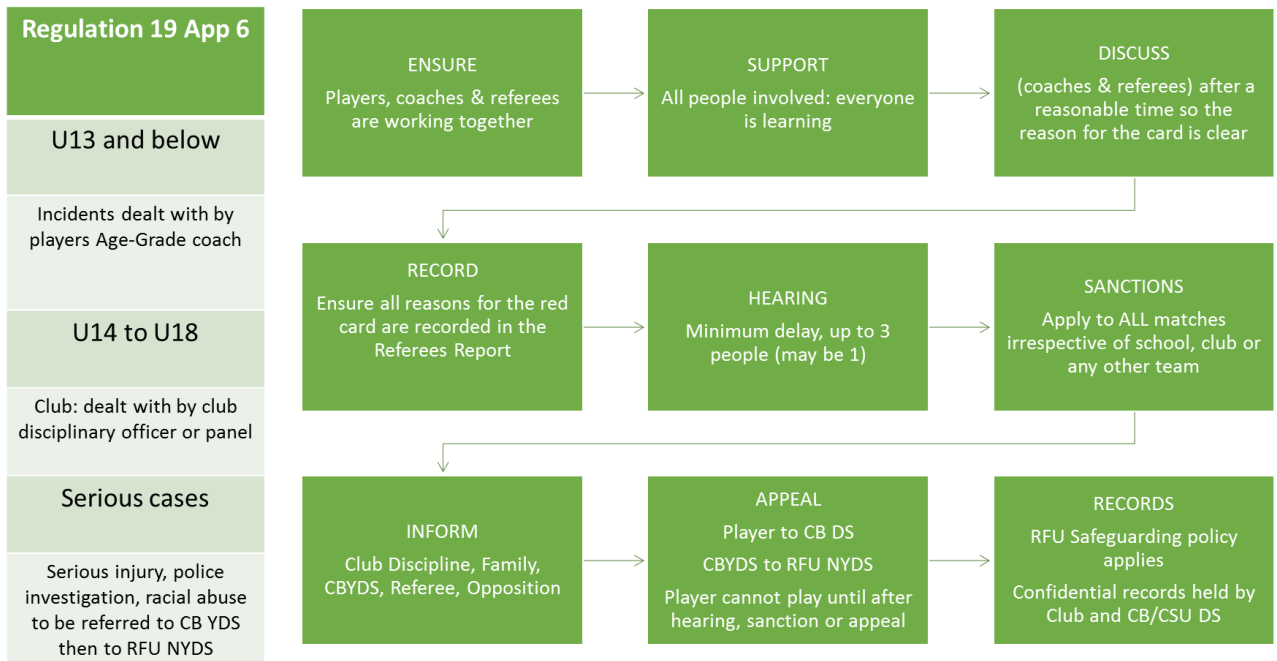
## Discipline – Overview

### Age -Grade by event type

Coaching/Friendlies & Triangular	Competitive: Festivals/Waterfall	Knock-Out Tournaments & U15 Leagues	All Games, Representative, Area
All Age-Grade	U7-U13	U14-U15	U16-U18
Home club appoints referee	Society Referee if possible, if not home club/school appoints	Society Referee if possible, if not home club/school appoints	Society Referee if possible, if not home club/school appoints
Cards? Substitution preferred	Cards? Substitution preferred	Cards? Yellow/Red permitted	Cards? Yellow/Red permitted
Player can take part later	Player takes no further part	Player takes no further part if Red card issued	Player takes no further part if Red card issued
Coach to speak to and educate player	Coach to speak to and educate player	Coach to speak to and educate player. Coach consults with the Chairs of the club's Disciplinary and Youth committees Referee & Club follow Reg. 19 Appendix 6	Coach to speak to and educate player. Coach consults with the Chairs of the club's Disciplinary and Youth committees Referee & Club follow Reg. 19 Appendix 6

### Regulation 19

### Process Overview



## Discipline Contacts

### **CB Discipline Secretary**

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### **CB Youth Discipline Secretary**

Chris Davy

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## General Advice

### **CB Chair of Youth**

Lee Weatherley

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### **County Administrator**

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### **Rugby Development Officer**

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