



# SENIOR CLUB RUGBY RULES 2023

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**1. General Provisions**

- 1.1. These regulations shall apply to all players, coaches and clubs in all competitions within the PBRFU region, and Wairoa sub-union, or any other region, that participate in PBRFU competitions.
- 1.2. The control and management of all competitions shall be vested in the Council of Clubs (CoC) in accordance with directions of the PBRFU Board. The CoC has discretion to manage the PBRFU and competitions in a manner that is consistent with the objectives of the PBRFU and the NZRU.
- 1.3. The CoC may request, from time to time, that Clubs assist with the running of any facet of rugby in Poverty Bay, such as refereeing JAB.
- 1.4. Non-competitive matches and matches against teams from outside the Union are under the jurisdiction of the PBRFU and its disciplinary rules. The PBRFU must be notified in writing before such matches can take place.
- 1.5. No team, other than a PBRFU representative team, may play in a match or competition outside the PBRFU boundaries without the permission of the PBRFU.
- 1.6. No person currently suspended by PBRFU or NZRU and its affiliated unions may take part in any match or officiate in any capacity under the jurisdiction of the PBRFU.
- 1.7. NZRU Policies, Guidelines and Laws will be followed. See Appendix re GAME ON for 2023.
- 1.8. The CoC in conjunction with PBRFU may amend or alter these rules if required.

**2. Grades**

- 2.1. The CoC shall decide the number of grades each year.
- 2.2. Each Club shall be required to notify the PBRFU in writing regarding team entries in the various grades within the time specified.
- 2.3. The final compositions of grades shall be at the discretion of the CoC.
- 2.4. The CoC shall have the power to accept further entries during the season if, in its opinion, it is expedient to do so.
- 2.5. The CoC will have the power to increase or reduce the number of grades and to form, or discontinue, sections in any grade whenever the occasion arises.
- 2.6. Where grades refer to age limits, eligibility will be determined as at 1 January in each year.



- 2.7. CoC or PBRFU may require proof of age with registration of a player or at any other time during the season.
- 2.8. Any Club desiring dispensation for players over any age limit, wishing to play in a competition, must request dispensation in writing from the CoC. Dispensation will be subject to observation by two appointed personnel.
- 2.9. No Club may have more than one team in the Premier Grade.

### 3. Registrations and Transfers

#### 3.1 Coaches

- a) It is an NZRU directive that all coaches and other personal with a role in Coaching, must attend a Rugby Smart course annually to be registered for the current year. It is the responsibility of each club to ensure every coach in the club has attended the Rugby Smart course before the beginning of each season.
- b) No team whose Coach/s have not attended the Rugby Smart Course, is able to participate in the competition.

#### 3.2 Players

- a) All players playing for an affiliated club or school in the PBRFU must complete a NZRU registration form or register via the online process each season. The players Club is responsible for sending the completed form to PRBFU, or ensuring online registration, prior to players being permitted to play in the competition.
- b) Additional registrations must be received by the PBRFU (either by online registration or paper form) by 5pm on the Friday prior to the next competition game, before the player will be deemed to be registered and eligible to play for the club.
- c) A Player is deemed to be a member of a Club once they have played one 15 aside game for that Club in the main Club competition in the current season.
- d) A player wishing to transfer from one Poverty Bay affiliated Club to another Poverty Bay affiliated Club within a season must:
  - i. Obtain a written clearance from the club they were last registered with.
  - ii. Have completed the transfer and be received by the PBRFU by 5pm on the Friday prior to the next competition game, before the player will be deemed to be transferred and eligible to play for the new club.
- e) A request for a written clearance must be dealt with by a Poverty Bay affiliated Club within 5 days. A written clearance must not be withheld by that club unless a player is in arrears for subscription from the current year. Any further debts cannot be used as justification to deny a written clearance. A Club may be fined \$250 + GST for breaching this rule.
- f) Players will not be allowed to transfer from a Poverty Bay affiliated Club to another Poverty Bay affiliated Club after the first round of the main club competition.
- g) Late season transfers will be considered at the discretion of the Council of Clubs in liaison with the clubs involved.
- h) Any players arriving in Poverty Bay from elsewhere in New Zealand must reside in the province for seven clear days before being eligible to play.
- i) Any player arriving in Poverty Bay from outside New Zealand must comply with IRB as well as PBRFU transfer regulations.
- j) A player is exempt from the transfer regulations where:
  - i. they have not played any rugby for a club for a full year;
  - ii. they are attending a tertiary institute outside the province



- iii. It is the responsibility of the Club to ensure the players have complied with the transfer regulations.

3.3 If any Club or school is found to be in breach of the Registration and Transfer regulations, the following procedure shall apply:

- i. the offending Club shall forfeit any points gained while in breach and the opposing Club be credited with five competition points; and/or ii. if both Clubs are found to be in breach, the match result shall be cancelled;
- iii. if the offending club did not gain any competition points while in breach, then a penalty point (-1) will be applied;
- iv. Further penalties may apply. See Penalties.

#### 4. Player Eligibility

- a) A player being duly registered and otherwise complying with these and all relevant Regulations shall be at liberty to play in the competitions in any team entered by his Club in any grade at the discretion of their Club.
- b) No player having played three or more games in the Premier grade after the end of the first round in the Premier grade, shall be eligible to play in a lower grade, except where the team that player played for in the Premier grade has been relegated to a lower grade during the current season.
- c) Exception to this rule is if a player plays a senior one game and is then called into a premier game as a fill-in for their club on the same day, this is not counted as 1 of the 3 competition games for eligibility to compete in playoffs at senior one level.
- d) Dispensation can be applied for by a club no closer than 3 weeks prior to a Semifinal or Final requesting that a player who has covered an injury break be allowed to return to Senior 1 competition. Dispensation to be in writing and presented to Council of Clubs committee and decision made at least 3 weeks prior to game in question.
- e) No school age pupil may play for a senior club team unless he has written permission from his school principal and caregiver and completes the PBRFU process if under 18 years old.
- f) NZRU Policy 'Age to Play Senior Rugby' must be adhered to with regard to players age and eligible positions.
- g) To be eligible to participate in play-off matches (semis and finals), players must have played and/or been listed on a team sheet in a minimum of three (3) competition games for that club in the current season. To be clear: this means being present at the game and dressed in playing uniform and available to play in a starting or reserve position as part of the 22.
- h) No person currently suspended by PBRFU or NZRU and its affiliated unions may take part in any match.
- i) If any Club is found to be in breach of any of the Player Eligibility regulations, the following procedure shall apply:
  - i. The offending Club shall forfeit any points gained while in breach and the opposing Club is to be credited with five competition points: and/or ii. if both Clubs are found to be in breach, the match result shall be cancelled;
  - iii. the player in breach may be suspended for up to 22 days;
  - iv. if the offending club did not gain any competition points then a penalty point (-1) will be applied;
  - v. further penalties may apply. See Penalties

#### 5. Representative Players

- a) No player may play for a Club if they have been selected to play in a representative match unless:



- i. Release granted by the Coach of the representative team; or
- ii. Player declared unavailability for the representative team at the time of initial selected. b) If this regulation is breached:
  - i. The responsible Club may be fined.
  - ii. Competition points will be deducted from the responsible Club; and/or
  - iii. The player in breach may be suspended for up to 22 days.

## 6. Fixtures

- a) The PBRFU will publish a draw outlining all fixtures. Fixtures may be changed at the discretion of the CoC.
- b) Any team defaulting a match must notify the opposing team, the Referees' Association and the PBRFU by 7pm on the Thursday before the game is scheduled to take place, or equivalent time if the game is scheduled on a day other than Saturday. A fine of \$250+GST may be charged to any team that defaults plus that team/club may be required to reimburse the hosting club for any expenses incurred upon a late default.
- c) A defaulting team shall forfeit the match and the opposing team will be awarded five competition points. If points For and Against become relevant, as in the case of drawn points at end of round robin (refer to rule 9.a ii), the average For and Against points of all other games played against the defaulting team will be calculated and added to the team that was defaulted against.
- d) Any team defaulting two matches in succession or three matches at intervals will be withdrawn from the competition unless dispensation is given by CoC.
- e) In the event of a team being withdrawn from any competition during any round, results, points and point differential statistics will be adjusted as though the team concerned never existed.
- f) The referee shall have the power to call off a game where he or she decides the ground is unfit to play on or because of bad conduct.
- g) Where a game is called off due to bad conduct the management of both teams and the referee will be to attend the next meeting of the disciplinary committee. Both teams will be suspended from all play until an appropriate penalty has been decided.
- h) Any match abandoned for any reason shall be reported immediately to the PBRFU. This responsibility lies with the Referee, if present, or the Home Team. After considering the facts the PBRFU may decide that:
  - i. The score at the time of the abandonment shall stand; or
  - ii. The match shall be rescheduled to another date.
  - iii. If both teams are in attendance for the game but one team is short of players, players may be shared to continue with a game (by agreement) without incurring eligibility penalties. The team which had the required number of players is awarded the win by default. Grades below the premier division will incorporate the GAME ON principles (see Appendix).

## 7. Teamsheets

- a) Every competing team shall, at the completion of every match, hand to the Referee an official PBRFU Team sheet, in such form as the Board may from time to time require, listing legibly the players for that team participating in the match.
- b) If team sheet is submitted via MyRugbyAPP the time frame of this APP is set to within 24 hours of the end of the match. If this time frame is not met, a physical team sheet must be submitted to PBRFU within 48 hours of the match.
- c) If any team fails to comply with (1) above, the Referee shall report the facts to the PBRFU who may deem that the match be forfeited. If both teams in a match fail to comply with (1) above the PBRFU may decide that neither team shall be awarded competition points.



- d) All teams’ sheets are to be written or printed legibly and contain the initials (or first name) and surname of each player. Nicknames or first names only are not acceptable and may be counted as non-submission.
- e) If any team is found to be playing a player who is not listed on the team sheet, or plays a player under an assumed or false name, or lists a player on the team sheet who is not present (refer rule 4.f), one or more of the following sanctions will apply:
  - i. The offending Club may forfeit any points gained – the opposing Club may be credited with five competition points.
  - ii. If both clubs are found to be in breach, the match result shall be cancelled. iii. A fine may be imposed on the offending Club/s.
  - iv. The player in question may be suspended for three weeks.

### 8. Referees

- a) Referees for matches will be appointed by the Poverty Bay Referees’ Association.
- b) Referees must notify results as soon as possible to the PBRFU.
- c) A Referee must complete and return the official team sheets (including details of any disciplinary matter or concussion) to the PBRFU within 48 hours of the completion of the match.

### 9. Competition Points

#### FIXTURE SCORING

GRADE	TRY	CONV	PG	DG	PEN TRY
All Grades	5	2	3	3	7 (no conversion)

#### STANDING POINTS / TABLE POINTS

WIN	DRAW	WBD	Loss Margin 7 & under	4 Tries or more Scored
4	2	5	1BP	1BP

- a) A team’s accumulated points shall govern that team’s position on the competition table. In the case of a tie on the competition table, the deciding factors shall be:
  - i. the winner of the most recent match between the teams; or
  - ii. if this match was a draw, the team with the best points differential, calculated by subtracting points conceded from points scored. REFER also to rule 6c.



## 10. Play Off Format for All Grades

- a) The play-off format for quarter and semi finals in all grades will be decided on at the discretion of the CoC in accordance with team entries in each grade and for each competition. The decision will be notified to all relevant Clubs by the PBRFU.
- b) Numbers will not exceed 22.
- c) No rolling subs or other variations will be permitted (regardless of round robin allowances) although application to the CoC may be considered with regard to Game On, for the grades below Premier.

## 11. Ties in Quarter & Semi Finals

- a) Where teams are tied at the end of a semi-final match the winners will be determined as follows;
- b) At full time there shall be a further 10 minutes each way with a five minute break between halves (“extra time”), the team with the highest score at the end of extra time wins;
- c) If after extra time scores are tied, then “Golden Point” will follow. A new toss will be made and the decision to choose ends or kick off will be made by the winner of the toss. The winner is the team that scores first by any means possible.

## 12. Playing Equipment

- a) Each opposing team shall provide a match ball in good playing order. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of the match.
- b) Mouthguards are compulsory for players to wear.

## 13. Club Colours

- a) Each Club shall register their playing colours for approval.
- b) All teams shall play in their registered colours and the referee may order off the field any player not wearing the registered colours.
- c) In the case of a jersey clash, the home team retains preference to wear their jersey and the opposing team must wear an alternative strip. Penalties may be applied to the club if this is breached.

## 14. Protests

- a) Any Club may bring a dispute or protest to the PBRFU.
- b) Where a cause for protest is known before a match, the opposing team should be notified by an official of the protesting team and if the complaint is remedied, no further action will be taken.
- c) If the opposing team is unwilling or unable to remedy the complaint, then the game should be played “Under Protest”. This should be made known to the Referee.
- d) Where the cause for protest is discovered during or after the game a protest shall be made, within 48 hours of the completion of the match, by forwarding a written statement, on the Club’s letterhead, setting out the breach complained of and the name of the Club, player or persons complained against, to the PBRFU.
- e) The PBRFU will make the necessary enquiries into the matters placed before it and advise its decision to the party or parties concerned.
- f) A fee of \$250 + GST will be charged for protests from all Clubs. This fee will be retained if the protest is considered to be frivolous.

## 15. Disciplinary Procedures

- a) The NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings (“Black Book”) are the basis for the rules and procedures of disciplinary matters.
- b) The NZRU desires to eliminate misconduct as far as practicable from the game and it is considered that this can be most effectively dealt with at Club level. Therefore all Clubs are urged to establish



a Disciplinary Committee or appoint a Disciplinary Co-Ordinator who will encourage the practice of fair play within their Club and ensure they are aware of the disciplinary procedures outlined in the Black Book.

- c) The PBRFU have adopted the judicial process as outlined in New Zealand Rugby Disciplinary Rules (The Black Book).
- d) In case of Ordering Off (red card), PBRFU has adopted the two week (two game) automatic stand down option, unless the Judicial Review Officer requests a hearing. The player and/or club may also request a hearing.

## 16. Appeals

- a) Any player or person who wishes to appeal a decision of the CoC, PBRFU or Judicial Committee to the Independent Appeals Committee must do so in writing to the PBRFU within 7 days of the date of the written notice imposed.
- b) A fee of \$500 + GST will be charged for appeals from any player or Club. Fee to be paid within 48 hours of lodgment of appeal. This fee will be retained if the appeal is considered to be frivolous at the discretion of the Appeals Committee.

## 17. Disputes

Any dispute over the interpretation of the regulations or rulings will be referred to the PBRFU for resolution.

## 18. Sponsorship

With the approval of the PBRFU, Clubs may incorporate the name of one sponsor in their team name. Club sponsorship must be in accordance with IRB regulations.

## 19. Responsibility for Crowd Control

- a) Where a match is being officiated by members of the Poverty Bay Referees Association, the following standards apply:
  - i. Ropes (or barriers) must be erected at least 5 metres from the touch line and a technical zone identified for each team.
  - ii. Technical zones, if in place, must be used by players and management of the two teams.
- b) Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their supporters and team management.
- c) Club ground officials are to make themselves known to the referee before the beginning of the match.
- d) Club ground officials are to make themselves available to the referee should there be any difficulties.
- e) The referee has the right to stop the game if there are crowd difficulties until order is restored.
- f) Officials appointed by the PBRFU, a Club, or a school, have the right to report individuals responsible for crowd difficulties to the PBRFU.
- g) Reserves and coaches must stay within the technical zone.
- h) Management who enter the field of play must be identified by bibs – 4 maximum.

## 20. Miscellaneous

- a) Anything not covered by these Regulations shall be at the sole discretion of the CoC and governing Rules and Regulations of the PBRFU.
- b) CoC and PBRFU shall issue any further instructions from time to time as necessary. These instructions shall then form an integral part of these Regulations. It is accepted that all of the IRB Laws of the Game apply to rugby played in the Poverty Bay area.





## 21. Penalties

Clubs/teams who fail to comply with any of the outlined criteria, rules and regulations and eligibility requirements may be subject to the listed disciplinary actions on a case by case basis:

- a) Team and/or club warning
- b) Forfeit points from game or penalty point
- c) Team suspension
- d) Coach suspension
- e) Monetary fines may be imposed. Generally, a fine of \$250 + gst will be appropriate. However, CoC has the discretion to impose fines of up to \$1,000 + gst for breaches.

## APPENDIX

NZRU "GAME ON" for grades below premier.