

Coaches Code of Conduct

IMPORTANT: Coaches who do not uphold this code of conduct will be subject to sanctions up to removal from their coaching position.

1. Player Safety and Well-being

- Prioritize the safety and well-being of your players above all else.
- Ensure proper warm-up and cool-down routines.
- Teach correct techniques to minimize injury risk.
- Be aware of and strictly follow concussion protocols.
- Maintain a safe training environment.
- Never encourage players to play through injuries.
- Remember: Rugby is just a game and never worth compromising anyone's well-being.
- Beyond physical safety

2. Inclusiveness and Respect

- Actively promote an inclusive team environment.
- Provide equal opportunities for all players to participate and develop.
- Address any discriminatory behavior immediately and effectively.
- Celebrate the diversity within your team and the broader rugby community.
- Respect and champion the right of every individual to participate in sport, regardless of background or ability.
- Remember: "Rugby is not a sport for everyone, but it is a sport for anyone."

3. Community and Sportsmanship

- Foster a sense of community and extended family in rugby.
- Build a positive team culture that extends beyond the field.
- Encourage players to support and respect each other.
- Model good sportsmanship in victory and defeat.
- Engage positively with parents and the wider rugby community.
- Remember that community outranks competition in importance.

4. Professionalism and Ethics

- Conduct yourself with a high level of professionalism in all interactions.
- Maintain integrity and ethical behavior at all times.
- Uphold commitments to your team and the club.
- Use appropriate language at all times:
 - Avoid profanity, offensive terms, or derogatory language.
 - Be mindful of your tone and volume, especially when giving feedback or instructions.
 - Use inclusive language that respects all individuals regardless of their background or identity.
 - Model respectful communication for your players both on and off the field.
- Communicate clearly and respectfully with all stakeholders.
- Continue your coaching education and stay updated on best practices.
- Manage conflicts constructively and fairly.
- Be mindful that behavior outside of coaching may impact your suitability to work with children.

5. Player Development

- Create a positive learning environment that encourages growth and improvement.
- Provide constructive feedback and support to all players.
- Focus on long-term player development rather than short-term wins.
- Recognize and nurture each player's unique potential.
- Encourage a growth mindset and resilience in your players.
- Teach players that winning isn't everything; encourage them to perform to the best of their ability and enjoy the process of participating.
- Motivate through praise, positive feedback, and constructive criticism.
- Never ridicule or undermine players for making mistakes or losing.

6. Fair Play and Respect for the Game

- Uphold and promote the principles of fair play in rugby.
- Teach players to respect the rules and spirit of the game.
- Never encourage or condone cheating or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Treat match officials with respect and accept their decisions.
- Ensure equal playing time for players, especially in youth rugby.
- Emphasize effort and improvement over winning at all costs.
- Refrain from entering the playing field during a match unless invited by the match official.

7. Coaching Practices

- Be organized and create a structure for the season.
- Prepare detailed coaching plans.
- Ensure all equipment is ready and appropriate for practice.
- Use small-sided games that engage all players, are fun, competitive, and skill-developing.
- Keep activity levels high with minimal talking.
- Focus on one or two key elements per session.
- Encourage players to learn by asking questions.
- Rotate players through different positions, especially in youth rugby.
- Plan sessions that are fun, varied, and long-term focused.
- Avoid pigeonholing players into positions early on; rugby is a late specialization sport.

8. Professional Boundaries and Communication

- Build relationships with players based on openness, honesty, mutual trust, and respect.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality, never promising to keep information secret.
- Never use your position to gain advantage or intimidate.
- Wear clothing suitable for the role and avoid anything offensive or inappropriate.
- Avoid situations where you're alone with a child.
- Keep all communication professional, especially when using technology.
- Avoid sharing personal social media information with players.
- Refrain from sarcasm or demeaning language.

9. Physical Contact and Intervention

- Inform players when physical contact is necessary for demonstrations and always seek their consent.
- Physical intervention should only be used to prevent serious harm and must always be proportionate.
- If a child is in distress, use professional judgment to comfort them, but maintain clear boundaries.
- Always act in the child's best interest, preferably with another adult present.
- Ensure any incidents are reported.

10. Organizational Responsibilities

- Communicate effectively with players, parents, and fellow coaches to set clear expectations.
- Monitor and ensure that both players' and parents' behavior aligns with the values and spirit of rugby.
- Adhere to designated practice times; do not consistently go over the designated practice time.
- Incorporate conditioning into skill-based drills rather than using it as punishment.
- If asked to transport children, ensure compliance with safety and insurance regulations.

Reporting Misconduct

1. Follow Safe Sport protocol for reporting incidents.
2. Do not confront the coach on your own unless immediate action is required to protect the victim(s).
3. Report misconduct to the appropriate Youth Directors:
4. The Directors will make an internal decision on next steps and enforce that decision.
5. Use incident report forms when available to report misconduct.
6. Report any behavior by colleagues that raises concern to the relevant authorities.

By adhering to this code of conduct, coaches contribute to a positive rugby environment that benefits players, the club, and the sport as a whole.

I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Coaches Code of Conduct.

Coach Name: _____

Coach Signature: _____ Date: _____