

Rugby Basics

Rugby has the speed of basketball, the contact of football and the strategy of chess. It is played by two teams of fifteen players with six substitutes controlled by a referee and two touch judges. It is played in two 40 minute halves on a grass pitch (field). Each half starts with a kickoff, where the ball is placed in the middle of the pitch and one team kicks to the other. The clock never stops, but any time taken for injury is added on to the half in which it occurs. The object is to score



more points than the other team by carrying, passing, and kicking the ball. A rugby ball is similar to a football, but is bigger and has rounder edges.

Fun Facts

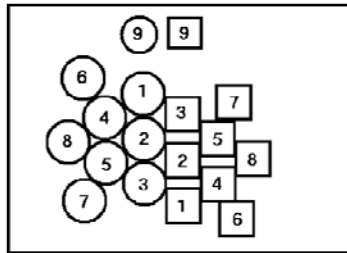
- Basketball was invented by a rugby coach in 1891 - Dr. James Naismith was looking for an indoor activity to provide winter conditioning for his rugby players.
- Rugby was an Olympic sport in 1900, 1908, 1920, and 1924. The US won the Gold Medal in 1920 and 1924.
- Famous rugby players (just to name a few): Sean Connery, John F. Kennedy, J.R.R. Tolkien, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Russell Crowe, Chris Farley, Meat Loaf, Ernesto "Che" Guevara

Positions

The players on each team are divided into two groups, forwards and backs.

(The following diagrams show the players' positions during scrumdown.)

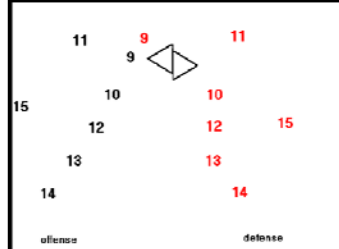
Forwards (The pack)



The pack's responsibility is to gain possession of the ball and then take it forward or present it to the backs.

- 1:** Loose Head Prop (sturdy and fearless)
- 2:** Hooker (small, quick, ready to take control)
- 3:** Tight Head Prop (Sturdy and fearless)
- 4,5:** Second Rows (Locks) - (big and strong)
- 6,7:** Wing Forwards (Flankers) - (quick and aggressive)
- 8:** Number Eight (smart, good foot and hand skills)
- 9:** Scrumhalf (smart, experienced, quick) - The link between forwards and backs - it is the scrumhalf's job, once the forwards gain possession of the ball, to pass the ball to the backs.

Backs



The backs attempt to out-manuever and out-score their opponents by passing, kicking, or running with the ball.

- 10:** Flyhalf (great hands, cool head)
- 12:** Inside Center (good change of speed)
- 13:** Outside Center (same and faster)
- 11,14:** Wing (burner)
- 15:** Fullback (very good feet, able to read game)

The Scrum



A scrum is a formal conglomeration of forwards who bind together in specific positions when a scrumdown is called. It is the basic set formation of rugby and occurs after various infringements of the law or when the ball becomes tied up. A scrumdown begins when the scrumhalf (#9) puts the ball straight into the space between the two front rows (the tunnel). By combining a driving push and a quick foot strike by the hooker, each team attempts to win the ball. After the hooker strikes the ball, it is then channeled back to the #8 who lets it out to the scrumhalf (who has moved to the back) or breaks off and picks it up. By driving forward and winning the ball, it gives momentum to any subsequent offensive move.

Rucks and Mauls



The more spontaneous versions of a scrum are rucks and mauls, which can occur at any time. A ruck is when at least one player from each team binds over the ball on the ground, like in a scrum the ball may not be handled until it leaves the ruck. A maul is when at least one player from each team binds around a player standing with the ball in their possession.

Playing

In rugby anyone can play the ball. You may run with it, pass it, kick it, or tackle an opponent who has it. The ball **cannot** be passed forward, - rather, the ball moves backwards and laterally from player to player, or it may be kicked forward creating a race to be the first to the ball. There is no blocking in rugby. No player can shield or protect the ball carrier, and only the player with the ball can be tackled. Once tackled, the ball carrier must release the ball making it available to any player on either team (this is when rucking occurs).

Scoring

Try: Similar to a touchdown (in football), but with a significant difference. The player must carry the ball over the goal line and then touch the ball down on the ground (5 points).

Conversion: After a try, the scoring team can get 2 additional points by place-kicking or drop-kicking the ball through the opponent's uprights and above the crossbar. The kick is made from any distance back, but in line with where the ball was touched down.

Penalty Kick: After certain penalties, a team is awarded an unopposed kick. If the team is near the opponent's goal, they may attempt to kick the ball through the opponent's uprights and above the crossbar (3 points).

Drop Goal Kick: Similar to a penalty kick, except that this kick can be attempted at any time during normal play, and the ball must be drop-kicked (the ball is dropped and bounces off the ground before the player kicks it) (3 points).

More Info:

MIT Women's Rugby Guide:

<http://web.mit.edu/wrugby/guide/index.html>

Rugby Union Guide:

<http://www.rugbytactics.com/rugby.php>

International Rugby Board:

<http://www.irb.com>

Lineouts



If the ball is kicked, carried, or otherwise escorted into touch (out-of-bounds), the other team then gets to throw the ball into a 'lineout'. The forwards from each team line up parallel to each other, five meters from the touch line. One player stands on the touch line and lofts the ball between the two lines of players (the tunnel), then the forwards from both teams leap up to grab the ball. The ball can be thrown any distance as long as it flies straight between the columns. Teams usually use signals to let their players know where the thrower intends to throw it. Certain players in the line out are designated as jumpers (usually 2nd, 4th, and 6th in line). The rest support and protect them in a variety of ways.

Club info:

For more information about MWR:

<http://www.memphiswomensrugby.com>

<http://www.myspace.com/memphiswomensrugby>

Rugby Hotline: (901) 832-3647

About This Guide:

The basic layout and information contained in this guide are based on Indiana Rugby Football Union's "Rugby Basics" brochure, provided by Rugby Connection. Additional information was taken from scrum.com, "Famous Ruggers" (wesclark.com/rrr/famous.html), and other various sources. Game pictures are from NashBash 2007, Memphis vs. Austin.

Wanna play?

"...like a sorority, but you get to hit people."

We are always accepting new players! Rugby can be played by women of all ages, and no experience is necessary. Regardless of your size or fitness level, we have a position for you. Best of all, the camaraderie you'll find is unrivaled by any other sport. Despite the rough appearance of the game, we play with the utmost level of sportsmanship - teams pummel each other on the pitch, and then share a friendly drink afterwards. You will have opportunities to travel to cities all throughout the Southeast and meet amazing new people, and the friendships you make will last long after the bruises fade.

If you're interested in joining, just come out to practice! Call our Rugby Hotline or visit our website for practice times & locations. *The website also contains directions to the practice locations, as well as a basic guide for what to wear and what to bring.* For more information, contact our PR/Recruiting coordinator:

pr@memphiswomensrugby.com

Sponsorship

If you are interested in sponsoring our team, please contact our Fundraising coordinator:
fundraising@memphiswomensrugby.com

Memphis Women's Rugby in Miami, FL



2007 USA Rugby South Division II Championships