
GOLDEN OLDIES WORLD RUGBY LAWS

The Spirit of Golden Oldies Rugby

The spirit of Golden Oldies sport is epitomised in the motto "Fun, Friendship and Fraternity". This international motto is the central theme of every game of Golden Oldies Rugby.

Laws of Golden Oldies Rugby

The Golden Oldies Laws embody and reflect the spirit of Golden Oldies Rugby. The aim of the Laws and the variations described below is to provide a less competitive version of the game in which player enjoyment is maximised and the possibility of injury is minimised. The cynical disregard of the laws of the game, dangerous or overly vigorous play and unsportsmanlike behaviour are not part of the Golden Oldies ethos.

The IRB Laws of the Game of Rugby also apply to Golden Oldies but are modified by the variations described below. Prior to a match the team captains and the referee will agree on the manner in which the game is to be played and the nature of the Laws to be applied. If the team captains and referee cannot agree on any "local variations", then the game will be played in accordance with the Laws detailed below.

Prior to kick off, the match referee will identify and draw the attention of players to those wearing coloured shorts. Players will be briefly reminded of the requirements that apply to those wearing coloured shorts (i.e. both in connection with tackling and in the distance those wearing certain coloured shorts may run with the ball). When a player wearing coloured shorts substitutes for another player, the referee will again draw attention to the fact that a player wearing coloured shorts is now on the field.

Team captains are responsible for the behaviour of their players. It is the obligation of all team members to ensure that the Spirit of Golden Oldies Rugby is maintained at all times.

The Laws of the Game of Rugby also apply to Golden Oldies Rugby but with the following variations:-

1. The Scrum

All scrums are uncontested. In an uncontested scrum the teams do not compete for the ball and the team putting in the ball must win it. There is to be no pressure scrummaging and neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark or to wheel the scrum.

All 8 forwards must participate in every scrum and all 8 must remain fully bound until the scrum ends.

The scrum ends when the scrum half clears the ball from the scrum.

The scrum half must not follow the ball around the scrum. The offside line for the non-feeding scrum half is either the centre line of the scrum on the side from which the scrum is fed or behind the last man's feet of his team's scrum.

2. Lineouts

There are to be no quick lineouts.

A lineout must consist of 8 players.

The lifting or supporting of players in the lineout is not permitted. Players jumping for the ball must not be assisted by other players in the lineout.

3. Offside

The offside laws must be observed by all players at all times. Failure to fully comply with the offside laws results in player frustration and niggles which can quickly destroy any game of Rugby.

Among other things, being onside means remaining behind the foot of your team's hindmost player at rucks and mauls, remaining 5 metres behind your last man's feet at scrums and remaining 10 metres back from the centre line of a lineout.

Entry to rucks and mauls must be "through the gate" from an onside position and not from the side.

4. Kicking

A player may kick the ball in general play but only when inside his team's 22 metre area.

Kicking in general play outside a team's 22 metre area will result in a scrum being awarded to the non kicking team where the kick took place.

If a free kick is awarded to a team inside their 22 metre area the ball may be kicked directly into touch if they wish and they get the gain in territory (although their opponents will have the throw in to the ensuing lineout). If the ball is kicked directly

into touch from a free kick awarded outside a team's 22 metre area, there is no gain in territory for them and their opponents will have the throw in to the ensuing lineout. A team awarded a penalty kick may kick the ball in whatever way they choose.

There are to be no quick tap kicks when either a penalty kick or free kick has been awarded. Players from the offending side must quickly retire 10 metres from the mark.

5. Start and Restart Kicks

Prior to the start of a match the team captains will toss a coin, the winner may choose either to kick off or to nominate the direction in which his team will run. If the winner of the toss decides his team will kick off, the opposing team captain will choose the direction in which his team will run and vice versa.

All kick offs will be by way of a drop kick and must travel at least 10 metres.

Teams scoring a try will restart the game by kicking off to the non-scoring team.

6. Substitutions

Substitution of players is permitted at any time and a player substituted earlier may return to the game at any time.

A player who has been cautioned and temporarily suspended for infringing the foul play law (i.e. shown a yellow card) may be immediately substituted by another player. The period of temporary suspension will be 10 minutes of actual time.

A player who has been sent off (i.e. shown a red card) may be immediately substituted but will not be permitted to return to the playing field for the duration of the event. If the event involves more than one match day (e.g. an International Festival), the offending player will be required to attend a judicial hearing before being allowed to resume playing.

7. Tackles, Rucks and Mauls

To minimise the chance of injury there will be no "cleaning out" of players at tackles, rucks or mauls. Over vigorous rucking and counter rucking and reckless driving into tackles, rucks and mauls are not permitted.

Tacklers must immediately release a tackled or "claimed and held" player and move away to allow that player to exercise his options.

Deliberately laying on or over the ball in order to make it unplayable is not permitted.

The deliberate collapsing or pulling down of scrums, rucks and mauls is not permitted.

If the ball becomes "genuinely unplayable" at a tackle, ruck or maul, play will restart with a scrum fed by the team last in possession of the ball.

8. Game Time

Matches will be played in three 20 minute periods with a 3 minute rest period between each period of play.

9. Options

20 metre run: Some regions have adopted this as a Golden Oldies Law. However, it has never been included in the official Golden Oldies Rugby Laws and is only included here as an option for teams who really want it and agree to play it. This "optional" rule may be introduced into a game with the agreement of both team captains and the referee prior to the kick off. If one team captain is not happy playing this option, then the game will be played under normal Golden Oldies Laws.

Gimmicks: On occasions some teams employ game elements such as "short lineouts", "long scrums" and the like during a game. However, while these fun elements are permitted, it is suggested that they not be overdone.

Other options may be organised with the prior agreement of both captains and the referee.

10. Coloured Shorts

All players must strictly observe the restrictions on the tackling of players wearing coloured shorts.

The wearing of coloured shorts does not give a player the right to tackle other players wearing shorts of the same colour.

A player wearing red shorts may attempt to tackle players wearing club shorts if they feel confident and comfortable about doing so.

Players wearing gold, purple or special coloured shorts may run with the ball for a total distance of 15 metres in any direction. Irrespective of the path taken, if that player is not in a position to score a try after carrying the ball a total distance of 15 metres, the ball must then be passed to a team mate wearing club shorts or red shorts only.

Club Shorts: The normal "take to ground" tackle law applies.

Red Shorts: Player may be "claimed and held" but not tackled. A player in red shorts who has been "claimed and held" is considered to have been tackled. That being so, this player must then immediately exercise one of the options required of any tackled player and either pass or release the ball. The opponent holding him must not prevent him from doing so.

Gold Shorts: Player must not be touched or tackled nor must he tackle or attempt to tackle others.

Purple Shorts: Player must not be touched or tackled nor must he tackle or attempt to tackle others.

Special Committee Shorts: Player must not be touched or tackled nor must he tackle or attempt to tackle others.

Guide to Age Groups for Coloured Shorted Players:

35 to 59 years Club Shorts or Red Shorts

Players wear red shorts in matches involving this age group to indicate that they do not want to be tackled to the ground or pushed off their feet. A player in red shorts may be "claimed and held" in the spirit of Golden Oldies Rugby but NOT tackled to the ground.

To avoid confusion, teams should avoid using the colours red, gold or purple or colours similar to those for their "normal club shorts".

60 – 64 years Red Shorts

Can be claimed and held. Must not be taken to the ground in a tackle.

65 – 69 years Gold Shorts

Not to be tackled or touched. May run with the ball for up to 15 metres in total before passing to a team mate wearing club shorts or red shorts.

70 – 79 years Purple Shorts

Not to be tackled or touched. May run with the ball for up to 15 metres in total before passing to a team mate wearing club shorts or red shorts.

80 years and older Special Committee Shorts

Not to be tackled or touched. May run with the ball for up to 15 metres in total before passing to a team mate wearing club shorts or red shorts.

Claim and Hold – an explanation:

The “claim and hold” concept is described in the words and diagrams below.

The player carrying the ball is wearing red shorts and cannot be taken to the ground in a conventional tackle. However, an opponent wearing either club shorts or red shorts may claim and hold him by wrapping his arms around the ball carrier’s body (see Diagram 1). Although the ball carrier has not been taken to the ground, in terms of the Golden Oldies Laws he is now considered to have been tackled. That being so, the opponent who has “claimed and held” the ball carrier must now release and move away from that player to allow him to exercise one of the options required of any tackled player to pass or release the ball.

As an alternative to “claiming and holding” a red shorted opponent or to avoid touching an opponent wearing gold, purple or special committee shorts, a defender may decide to stand in front of that player to prevent further forward progress. This allows the ball carrier time and space in which to play the ball (see Diagram 2).

Diagram 1



Diagram 2



GOLDEN OLDIES WORLD RUGBY – GRADING SYSTEM

Grade 1

The International Golden Oldies Rugby Board recognises that some teams in the 35 – 59 years age group want to participate in a more physical or competitive type of game. Grade 1 has been designed for teams keen to play that style of Rugby. Subject to the agreement of both team captains and the referee prior to kick off, these teams may play under the full IRB Laws of the Game of Rugby. Although played in a more physical way, participants are expected to enter into these games in the friendly spirit of the Golden Oldies Rugby Code. Players wearing coloured shorts are not permitted in Grade 1 and Grade 1 players are not permitted to "fill in" for the lower or more social grades at a Festival.

Grades 2, 3, 4, 5

These grades will play traditional Golden Oldies Rugby under the Golden Oldies Laws and the 3 F's ('Fun, Friendship & Fraternity') of the Golden Oldies Code. They are intended for the 35 years and older age group who wish to play a robust game but without the physical confrontation of Grade 1. Teams will be graded on a sliding scale according to team strength and/or ability with **2** being the **higher standard** and 3, 4 and 5 being the **lesser** standard. Grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 are not recommended for players wearing coloured shorts.

Grades 6, 7, 8, 9,

These grades are designed for teams in the 50 – 59 years age bracket who want to play traditional Golden Oldies Rugby but to a lesser physical standard in recognition of player age and physical condition. In these grades, **6** being the **higher** quality of game with 9 on the sliding scale being the **lesser** standard.

Grade 10

This grade is for the purely social team who are there for the fun of participation on a "still can do" basis. Teams in Grade 10 will be comprised mainly of players from the older age groups or teams with multiple coloured shorts participants.
