



THAMES VALLEY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

JUNIOR RUGBY INFORMATION HANDBOOK

2024



**BRIAN TUNNICLIFFE
MOTOR GROUP**



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WELCOME:

On behalf of the Staff at Thames Valley Rugby Football Union, we would like to welcome you to the 2024 Junior Rugby season.

The aim and purpose of this handbook is to provide you with a point of reference for some of the important policies, rules and procedures often required by those charged with coaching and managing our junior teams. The TVRFU relies heavily on the time and expertise of volunteers, to ensure the best possible rugby experience for our young players.

The Small Blacks philosophy is about playing with mates, having fun and developing skills to foster a lifelong love of the game. The contents of this handbook provide information that supports this philosophy. This is a live document which should change over time depending on your ideas and needs. With this in mind, we are keen to get your thoughts on what else could or should be included. If you have any suggestions on what else you would like to see included in the future, please email these ideas to taine@tvrfu.co.nz.

We appreciate all the hard work and personal time that Junior Convenors and their Committees, Coaches and Managers put in to enable junior rugby players to participate in and enjoy the game that we all love. Again, a big thanks for 'making the game happen' for our kids.

Our staff are always on hand to help so feel free to come and see us anytime. We hope you thoroughly enjoy your time playing Junior Rugby in the Thames Valley Region this year, and we look forward to seeing you in and around the traps throughout.

The TVRFU actively encourages young people to join and the benefits in this regard are to:

- Having fun.
- Meeting new people.
- Retaining a good level of health and fitness.
- Learning the importance of fair play within a competitive team atmosphere.
- Actively participating in a sporting activity.
- Encouraging hardworking ethics and commitment.
- Learning that hard work and practice produces positive results.
- Learning and experiencing the joy and comradeship of being in a team that sets goals and strives to achieve them.

LET'S GROW THE GAME TOGETHER!

Taine Wilson
TVRFU Game Development Officer.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

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• **TAINÉ WILSON (TVRFU STAFF REPRESENTATIVE)**

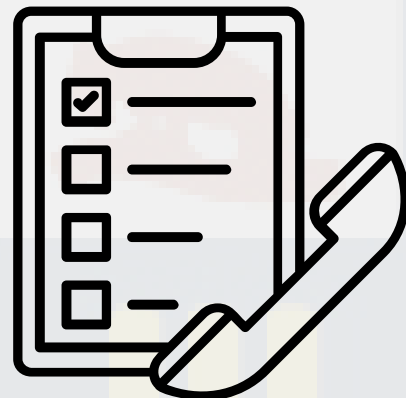
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JUNIOR CLUB DELEGATES 2024

• **COROMANDEL:**

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• **HAURAKI PLAINS:**

• CHRIS SPILSBURY

MOBILE: 027 698 8721

• **MERCURY BAY:**

• SARAH OLD

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• **PAEROA:**

• JASON MAGON

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• **TAIRUA:**

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• **THAMES:**

• RORY MITCHELL

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• **WAIHI:**

• DAVID CAREY

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• **KATIKATI:**

• AMY WILLOUGHBY

MOBILE: 027 537 1486

• **WHANGAMATA:**

• **KAITLIN RUSSELL**

MOBILE: 022 517 2918

Club Contacts

COROMANDEL:

YEAR 8:

COACHES:

JORDAN WILLIAMS - 027 431 2887

TUKU RENATA - 027 777 7060

KERE COLLIER - 027 381 4108

MANAGER:

DANIELLE DUDSON - 027 289 6777

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MANAGER:

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COACHES:

KAMURA TUKERANGI - 021 113 891

MANAGER:

DANIELLE DUDSON - 027 289 6777

PAIGE WILKINSON - 021 091 39331

RIPPA RUGBY:

COACHES:

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MANAGERS:

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Club Contacts

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COACHES:

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COACHES:

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YEAR 3 TITANS:

COACHES:

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COACHES:

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Club Contacts

KATIKATI:

YEAR 8 EAGLES

COACH - MARK RICKARD 0272574119

MANAGER - KIRSTY RACZ 0279674315

YEAR 6 RAVENS

COACH - JAROD STONE 0278382582

MANAGER - JO CORNS 0272920756

YEAR 5 DRAGONS

COACH - MERV ORMSBY 0272664459

COACH - MATT ROYACKERS 0272000788

MANAGER - AMY WILLOUGHBY 0275371486

YEAR 3 ULIULI

COACH - OFA 02040895568

MANAGER- CARA HOWIE 021519233 OR

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YEAR 3 HINEHINA

COACH - MARCUS HOWIE 0273617103

COACH - GARETH ANDERTON 0272037399

MANAGER- CARA HOWIE 021519233

*Katikati
Rugby & Sports*



Club Contacts

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YEAR 8 MANAGER:

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YEAR 4/5 COACH:

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YEAR 4/5 MANAGERS:

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YEAR 3 COACH:

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RIPPA RUGBY MANAGER:

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Club Contacts

PAEROA:

YEAR 8

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COACH- PUX 02102647003
MANAGER- DAMIAN 0212130701
MANAGER- CORRIE 021939387

YEAR 7

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YEAR 5

COACH- CAM 0274765709
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MANAGER- SAM 0274943958
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YEAR 4 WHITE

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YEAR 3 WHITE

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RIPPA

COACH- NATE 0273220557
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Club Contacts

TAIRUA

YEAR 4

COACHES:

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MANAGER:

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Club Contacts

TE AROHA:

YEAR 8

COACHES:

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MANAGER: JENNY FOOTE 0211303839

YEAR 7

COACHES:

ANDREW BELL 027 535 0497

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MANAGER: KATE CORRIGAN 021 259 0526

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YEAR 6

COACHES:

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MANAGER: GORANA MATIJASEVICH 0210 255 6054

YEAR 5

COACHES:

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Club Contacts

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YEAR 8

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MANAGER:

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RIPPA COACH

JAKE COMER 027 212 1994

DAVID DYER 021506527

RIPPA MANAGERS:

AMY PRICE 027 725 1820

BELINDA DYER 021506527

YEAR 7

COACHES:

OLI CLEMENTS - 0279745477

MANAGER:

KYLIE GILBERT 0273276069

BELINDA LIMA 021478010

YEAR 6

COACHES:

JESSE WEBB 0214011683

MANAGER:

JASON MCKEARNEY 02108866654

YEAR 5

COACHES:

RYAN SMITH 0210510757

MANAGER:

RENEE STEWART 0220781567

YEAR 4

COACHES:

CORY DIAMOND 0273455743

MANAGER:

JESSICA MULRENNAN 0221368836

YEAR 3

COACHES:

MIKE WARD 0274878633

MANAGER:

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Whangamata
JUNIOR RUGBY CLUB

Club Contacts

WAIHI:

YEAR 8

COACH – DAVID CAREY - 0274721331

MANAGER – ALISHA PAYNTER - 0212357349

YEAR 7

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COACH: SAM COOPER – 021774068

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YEAR 6 RED

COACH: JOE APPLETON - 021 578007

MANAGER: MICAH APPLETON – 022 396 5649

YEAR 6 BLACK

MANAGER ANGELA HEWLETT - 021 024 19558

COACH: ERNANI DE OCAMPO - 021 127 0635

YEAR 5 RED

MANAGER: MICHELLE BREWERTON - 021 685 667

COACH: CARLOS BREWERTON - 027 722 2030

COACH : MICHAEL ENGELANDER - 027 206 8675

YEAR 5 BLACK

COACH – NIGEL SANDERSON 02108690296

MANAGER – EDEN ROBINS 0273250429

YEAR 4 RED

COACH: SHAUN STEWART - 0274461833

MANAGER: LAUREN BARTRAM - 0210442218

YEAR 4 BLACK

COACH: STEVE WILD - 0272279846

COACH: JASON VAN DER HULST- 0211189111

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YEAR 3 YELLOW

COACH: DEAN COCHRANE – 021848696

YEAR 3 BLACK

COACH: NICK HEWLETT 021 024 19554

MANAGER: LISA WILD 027 859 3362

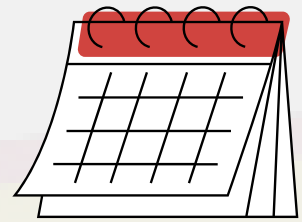
YEAR 3 RED

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IMPORTANT DATES 2024:



Primary School Tackle Rugby: (Years 5-8 Boys & Girls)

Wednesday 15th May - Whangamata Rugby & Sports Club (All Girls)

Wednesday 22nd May Rhodes Park, Thames (All Boys)

Junior Rugby Holiday Program: Ages 10 - 13 (Girls and Boys)

Tuesday 16th April – Thames Rugby & Sports Club

Tuesday 18th April – Whangamata Rugby & Sports Club

Primary School Rippa Rugby Tournaments: (Years 5-8 Boys & Girls)

Wednesday 31st July - Moewai Park, Whitianga.

Wednesday 7th August - Waihi College.

Wednesday 14th August - Hugh Hayward Domain, Ngatea.

Wednesday 21st August - Boyd Park, Te Aroha.

Wednesday 28th August - FINALS DAY Paeroa Domain.

Junior Club Rugby Start & Finish Dates:

Saturday 6th April - Preseason Festival Day

Saturday 13th April - Preseason Festival Day

Saturday 4th May - Season Starts.

Saturday 6th July: Junior Rugby Finals Day, Hugh Hayward Domain, Ngatea.

Shaw Cup & Fleming Shield:

Saturday 27th July – Boyd Park, Te Aroha.

Saturday 3rd August – Whangamata Rugby & Sports

Saturday 10th August – Centennial Park, Paeroa (FINALS DAY)



GRADE RULES & INFORMATION:

Please Note – Please read each competitions rules & information carefully. This is especially the case in our Year 3 Competition where there are changes in field size, numbers per team and NO scrum and lineouts.



SMALL BLACKS DEVELOPMENT MODEL

THE WAY TO PLAY

Rugby is a dynamic and exciting sport that is a whole lot of fun, and helps develop friendships that can last a lifetime. Small Blacks Rugby has been designed to help players develop their rugby skills as their physical ability develops, making the game as simple and safe as possible for all Kiwi kids, regardless of their age, shape or size. The Small Blacks Development Model has been developed to ensure that there is a consistency of play, coaching and player welfare at all levels throughout the country, and is a great way of getting kids involved in a team sport.

DIFFERENT AGES, DIFFERENT STAGES

This poster clearly explains the Small Blacks Development model for coaches, parents and Small Blacks players. It contains easy to follow guidelines on how the game is to be played at each age. The Model has been designed to ensure that all kids who graduate from the Small Blacks programme have the best possible skill set to take them through their rugby career.

Rip Rugby is a non-contact option for U8 - U13.

FIELD SIZE

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	U6: 1/3 field = 40m x 27.5m maximum. Use small post at ends if available.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Goal to 10m (across the field). Portable goalposts recommended. Full size posts on sideline need bolsters.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	15s must be full field.
Rip Rugby	Goal to 10m (across the field).



GAME LENGTH

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	4 x 10 minutes maximum.
U8 YEAR 3	2 x 25 minutes maximum.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	2 x 30 minutes maximum.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	2 x 30 minutes maximum.
Rip Rugby	As above



SUBS

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	All players must play a minimum of half a game (this is to include at least two full quarters). Rolling substitutions are not permitted. Substitutions may be made at half time or approximately half way through each half when the referee will allow and signal a Substitution Break. This applies to representative games.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	
Rip Rugby	As above



BALL SIZE

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	Size 2.5 or 3 balls.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Size 3
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Size 4
Rip Rugby	Appropriate to grade above



NUMBERS PER TEAM

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	7-a-side. Numbers are maximum. If a team doesn't have enough players to start a game, it should then be played with equal numbers.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	10-a-side. Numbers are maximum. If a team doesn't have enough players to start a game, it should then be played with equal numbers.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	15-a-side. Numbers are maximum. If a team doesn't have enough players to start a game, it should then be played with equal numbers.
Rip Rugby	7-a-side or played with equal numbers



TRY

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	If score blow-outs are occurring (ie 35+ at halftime), both coaches MUST meet and come to an agreement as to how they can generate a more even contest. Try = 5 pts.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	
Rip Rugby	As above



CONVERSION

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	No conversions.
U8 YEAR 3	Conversion taken from in front of posts either drop goal or punt. Points don't count.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Conversions not to be taken further out than the 15m line.
Rip Rugby	No conversions



LINEOUT

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	No lineouts.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Always 5 in lineout. Lineouts not to be contested until U11 grade. There is to be no lineout lifting at any level.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Always 8 in lineout. Lineouts can be contested. There is no lineout lifting at any level.
Rip Rugby	Always 3 in lineout. Lineouts follow above contested laws to appropriate age.



REFEREE

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	Beginning coach.
U8 YEAR 3	If no Learning Rugby referee, no tackling.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	If no Playing Rugby referee, no tackling.
Rip Rugby	Nominated Rip Rugby referee



KICK-OFF

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	Free pass.
U8 YEAR 3	Tap and pass. Kick-offs to be rotated through all players.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Punt or drop kick by scoring side. Kick offs to be rotated through all players.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Normal
Rip Rugby	Appropriate to grade above.



SCRUMS

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	No scrums.
U8 YEAR 3	
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Always 5 in scrum. No contest and no pushing.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Always 8 in scrum. Contest and pushing. The push is limited to half a metre maximum. Safety is paramount. A "Scrum Factory" must be carried out by all U12 coaches.
Rip Rugby	Always 3 in scrum. No contest and no pushing.



TACKLE

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	(RIP) When "rip" is made, player passes the ball. Rip flags should be 33cm x 5cm.
U8 YEAR 3	A "Tackle Clinic" must be carried out by all U8 coaches before the season kicks off. "Lummy Tackles". No fending.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	Tackle must be below the sternum. No fending to the head, face or neck regions.
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	
Rip Rugby	(RIP) When a rip is made, player passes the ball.



KICKING

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	No kicking in general play.
U8 YEAR 3	Encourage running and passing.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Yes
Rip Rugby	Yes



PENALTY

U6/U7 YEAR 1 & 2	
U8 YEAR 3	Tap and pass.
U9/U10/U11 YEAR 4, 5 & 6	
U12/U13 YEAR 7 & 8	Normal
Rip Rugby	Tap and pass.



APPLAUD



BY COMMITTING TO APPLAUD; ALL PARENTS, CARE-GIVERS AND SUPPORTERS IN NEW ZEALAND ARE CREATING A GREAT PLACE FOR RUGBY.

FIND OUT MORE BY GOING TO SMALLBLACKS.COM



GRADES ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible to play in the Thames Valley Junior Rugby Competition all players must qualify under the following criteria:

- All correct ages, year groups and birth dates & current photo must be entered on the Registration form on the Sporty Website as provided by the TVRFU.
- All players must play in their correct year level/age group as of January 1st, 2024.
- No secondary school students are to play Junior Rugby in 2024 as per NZR guidelines.
- There are NO weight limits to play Junior Rugby in 2024.
- Registered Junior Year 7 & 8 players may play for a Year 9 & 10 team in the Secondary Schools Competition, if required, for up to 2 competition games. Players who play 3 or more competition games in the higher grade will be ineligible to return to the Year 7 & 8 grade and must remain in the Year 9 & 10 team for the remainder of the season (Must play a minimum of 3 games to play in Finals Matches)
- Where clubs/school have more than one team entered in the competition, there can be NO interchange of players between teams once the season has started. Each team remains a separate identity throughout the competition. However, in the event of any team losing several players, or a team is disbanded, a club may apply to transfer players to another team. Such application must be in writing to the TVRFU Junior Management Board.
- All players needing/wanting dispensation to play in the grade below their year group, must talk to their Junior Club Delegate. From here, the request will come to the Junior Management Board where a decision will be made by the dispensation committee.
- Girls playing their first year of Competition Rugby, may be graded down to the competition. This is due to wanting to keep girls in the game

The COMPETITIONS are set out as stated below, or as amended by the Junior Management Board:

Mixed (Boys & Girls Combined) Competitions:

- **Year 8 Grade**
- **Year 7 Grade**
- **Year 6 Grade**
- **Year 5 Grade**
- **Year 4 Grade**
- **Year 3 Grade**



Rippa Rugby Year 2 and Below (Played in-house at clubs) TVRU are working with clubs this year in hosting 5 tournaments on Sundays around the Thames Valley Region. Keep an eye on all Junior Rugby Social media for more information.

SAFE CLUBS, SAFE KIDS

We here at Thames Valley Rugby take our children's safety very seriously. Here is a bit more information on Child Protection and we would appreciate if everyone could upskill on this subject. Each season over 88,000 Small Blacks enjoy playing rugby every weekend. Providing a fun and safe environment for Small Blacks is everybody's responsibility, and it's also up to all of us to make sure they are protected from abuse.

Safe Clubs Safe Kids is New Zealand Rugby's (NZR) Child Protection Program. Through this program NZR supports providing Provincial Unions (PUs) and Clubs with guidance about protecting children and young people involved in rugby.

Since 2013 NZR has police vetted all Small Blacks coaches and Small Blacks referees who have completed an associate referee course. Secondary school rugby coaches and administrators are subject to the protocols of the school they are associated with. Our Child Protection Guidelines reflect current best practice and PUs and Clubs are encouraged to draft their own Child Protection Policy and vet staff and volunteers who will have a duty of care for children and young people.

We've developed these guidelines in consultation with other sporting organizations and NZ Police. The guidelines are available here and have been distributed to all PUs for further distribution to Clubs.

<https://youtu.be/ShQx3CXGen0>

Also available here is a Child Protection Policy template in MS word format for you to adopt and adapt to your organization and the Step guide to report abuse as flyer to put up on your Club noticeboard and website.

For Club Committees there is a checklist to help you implement the policy at Club and Union Level and for Child Protection Advisors there is a Traffic Light Response tool to help you know the correct process to follow.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- [Child Protection Policy Template](#) [Word Doc 107KB]
- [NZR Child Protection Policy Guidelines](#) [PDF 241KB]

RESOURCES FOR CHILD PROTECTION ADVISORS

- [Prevention and Response](#) [PDF 2.6MB]
- [Template for Reporting](#) [Word Doc 67KB]

RESOURCES FOR CLUB ADMINISTRATORS

- [Checklist for committees](#) [PDF 181KB]
- [Travel Guidelines](#) [PDF 155KB]
- [Poster for Clubs](#) [PDF 101KB]

RESOURCES FOR COACHES AND TEAM MANAGERS

- [Travel guidelines](#) [PDF 155KB]
-

For all Child Protection enquiries please contact:

Child Protection Officer

Scott Penney - scott.penney@tvrfu.co.nz

or

Junior Rugby Lead

Taine Wilson - taine@tvrfu.co.nz

Junior Rugby Lead.



SHAW CUP & FLEMING SHIELD:

The aim is to provide an opportunity for as many Junior Club & Primary School players as possible to experience the enjoyment of rugby and to play in a tournament under specific rules & conditions.

Shaw Cup - player eligibility:

- Year 7 or below as of the 1st January 2024.
- There is NO weight limit.
- Must attend a school located within the Thames Valley Rugby Union Boundaries or are registered before Friday 14th June to a club affiliated to the Thames Valley Rugby Union.



Fleming Shield – player eligibility:

- Year 8 or below as of the 1st January 2024.
- There is NO weight limit.
- Must attend a school located within the Thames Valley Rugby Union Boundaries or are registered before Friday 14th June to a club affiliated to the Thames Valley Rugby Union.

Player eligibility, teams, regions and all other information can be found in the Shaw Cup & Fleming Shield information booklet, available from the TVRFU GDO Team & will be available on the TVRFU Website.

Shaw Cup & Fleming Shield:

Saturday 27th July – Boyd Park, Te Aroha.

Saturday 3rd August – Whangamata Rugby & Sports Club.

Saturday 10th August – Centennial Park, Paeroa (FINALS DAY)

CANCELLATIONS, POSTPONEMENTS AND GROUNDS CLOSURES:

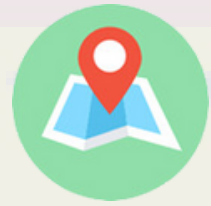
Cancellations/Postponements:

- Cancellations/postponements may occur due to weather or other adverse conditions which could cause the cancellation or postponement of a game. For a game to be cancelled or postponed coaches must communicate to the opposition coach if they feel the game should be cancelled or postponed due to the weather conditions or the grounds and must be agreed on by both coaches - the game should be rescheduled and played later. The day/date will be finalized by the JMB Chairman or TVRFU Staff Member.
- If a game is to be cancelled it is the team managements responsibility to inform the oppositions team manager and the JMB Chairman or TVRFU Staff Member in plenty of time to avoid any unnecessary travel.
- In the event of a change of game dates for any other reason - team management must seek permission from JMB Chairman or TVRFU Staff Member.
- All cancellations from the TVRFU will be put onto the Thames Valley Junior Rugby Facebook page.

CANCELLED

TVRFU JUNIOR CLUB GROUNDS:

- **Coromandel:**
 - 320 Woollams Avenue, Coromandel.
- **Hauraki Plains:**
 - State Highway 25, Waitakaruru
 - Hugh Hayward Domain, Ngatea.
- **Mercury Bay:**
 - Lyon Park, Albert Street, Whitianga.
 - Sports Park Moewai Park Road, Whitianga.
- **Paeroa:**
 - Centennial Park, Towers Street, Paeroa.
- **Tairua:**
 - Cory Park Domain, Cnr Tokoroa and Manaia Roads, Tairua.
- **Katikati:**
 - Moore Park, Fairview Road, Katikati.
- **Te Aroha:**
 - Boyd Park, Stanley Avenue, Te Aroha.
- **Thames:**
 - Rhodes Park, Ngati Maru Highway, Thames.
- **Waihi:**
 - Rugby Park, Kenny Street, Waihi.
- **Whangamata:**
 - Aickin Road, Whangamata.



TVRFU JUNIOR RUGBY CODE OF CONDUCT:

For Coaches & Management:

- Remember that players participate for enjoyment and winning is only part of the fun.
- Never ridicule or yell at players for making a mistake or not winning.
- Be reasonable in demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Operate within the rules and spirit of the game and teach players to do the same.
- Ensure that the time players spend with the coach is a positive experience. All players are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are to the age and ability of all players.
- Display control, & professionalism to all involved including opponents, referees, coaches, administrators, parents & spectators. Encourage players to do the same.
- Show concern and caution toward sick and injured players and follow advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all people involved in the game, of their gender, ability or cultural background.



For Players:

- Do not argue with an official. If you disagree with a decision inform your captain, coach or manager during a break or after the game.
- Understand that verbal abuse of officials and other players, or deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent is not acceptable or permitted behaviour in rugby.
- Work equally hard for yourself and the team.
- Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another player. Treat all players as you would like to be treated.
- Co-operate with your coach, teammates and opponents.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents and coaches.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Thank the opposition and officials at the end of the game.
- Use appropriate language, with players, coaches, officials and other spectators.
- The participating teams and officials should shake hands after the match – no matter the result.

APPLAUD

INTA SPORT:

Thames Valley Rugby is pleased to announce a continued partnership with IntaSport for the 2024 rugby season, offering a coaching app to provide essential ongoing support for the dedicated group of volunteer coaches.

IntaSport has crafted a user-friendly mobile app featuring coaching videos, plans, and valuable information. Additionally, the app offers team messaging, fixture details, club / school information and more. As part of this partnership, the app will be free for all coaches in clubs throughout the province. Thames Valley Rugby has taken the initiative to provide the Premium package for all clubs, becoming the first province in the country to do so. This option empowers club administrators with extra features, including sharing club information, direct communication through the app, fixture uploads, and more.

We also understand that our coaches are volunteers and quite often time poor. We believe this 'one stop shop' app is a proven initiative to support our coaches and clubs in not just surviving, but thriving.

IntaSport founder Kyle McLean comments, "We're excited to continue to collaborate with an innovative, forward-thinking provincial union like Thames Valley Rugby to make the IntaSport App available for junior club coaches throughout the province. There is an ever-increasing demand for time-poor volunteer Youth Coaches to access digital content quickly and easily, where this app has been designed to meet those needs and more. And we're also stoked to that Thames Valley Rugby have made the premium packages available for all clubs which is sure to help streamline club communication and information sharing."



TROPHIES:

The Junior Management Board offers the following Trophies for the Competition by Teams under its control.



Year 8	Award	2023 Winner	Club
Bernie Passau Cup	Champions	Paeroa	
Runners Up		Waihi	
1st Round Winners	TCDC Shield	Waihi	
Most Promising Player	Keith Robinson Trophy	Mateo Coll	Waihi

Year 7	Award	2023 Winner	Club
Andrew Gemmell Cup	Champions	Katikati Eagles	
Runners Up		Hauraki Plains	
Most Promising Player	Stephen Trebico	Shane Robinson	Thames

Year 6 Premership	Award	2023 Winner	Club
Dennis Lees Trophie	Champions	Thames	
Runners Up		Tairua	
Year 6 Championship			
Roly Chaney Cup	Champions	Whangamata	
Runners Up		Te Aroha Black	
Most Promising Player	Steven Hill Trophy	Jack Strange	Tairua

Year 5 Premiership	Award	2023 Winner	Club
Rex Holden Cup	Champions	Whangamata	
Runners Up		Thames Blue	
Year 5 Championship			
Bill Cooksley Cup	Champions	Te Aroha Red	
Runners Up		Te Aroha Black	
Most Promising Player	Chris Costello Trophy	Jack Bebbington & Joesph Holder	Te Aroha

Year 4	Award	2023 Winner	Club
Barry Priest Cup	Champions	Paeroa	
Runners Up		Waihi Black	
Most Promising Player	David Harrison Trophy	Nixon McKenzie	Waihi

Year 3 Coastal	Award	2023 Winner	Club
TVYMB Medals	Champions	Waihi Black	
Runners Up		Tairua	

Year 3 Plains	Award	2023 Winner	Club
TVYMB Medals	Champions	Paeroa	
Runners Up		Hauraki Plains	
Most Promising Player	Brett Ranga Trophy	Jessie Thompson	Paeroa

PRESIDENTS TROPHY:

○ JUNIOR MANAGEMENT BOARD PRESIDENT AWARD 2023 – MARIUS LLOYD



SPIRIT OF THE GAME:



Excessive Scores:

• If any grade reaches a score of 35-0, the game must be stopped, and the coaches must get together to discuss how a more even contest can be generated. A winner should be declared 35-0 at this time. The reason for this recommendation is to stop the continual thrashing of weaker teams, as it does nothing for the game and can dishearten even the most dedicated player and coach. It is hoped that all coaches will enter the spirit of this recommendation. Humiliation is felt strongly by children and serves only to make it more difficult for a coach to motivate their players. As a positive coach you should consider the advantages (and enjoyment) that come when children are involved in a fair and even contest. The following are suggested steps that the coaches may agree to take:

• **Swap players:**

o The notion that children will not swap teams is an adult one. There may be a few selected players (test your own team to see how they cope with playing against some of their own OR Swap forward packs or backlines with the other team.

• **Change positions:**

o Move some selected players to see how well they cope with playing in another position.

• **Subbing:**

o Sub-off some key players. Wind advantage: Be willing to give away any wind-advantage that may exist.

• **Kick-offs:**

o The weaker team restarts play with a tap and pass rather than the usual kick. OR the scoring team kicks-off to the weaker team.

• **Depower:**

o Depower scrums, non-contested lineouts and scrums. No conversions or change your kicker to an untried player.



Half Game Rule:

Following two pieces of significant research it has been identified that lack of game time is a significant cause of players leaving the game and low retention rates. Having sought the players' views and looking to honor the 'player first' sentiments of the Community Rugby Strategy, a minimum half game for every player policy has been implemented. NZR Policy At all rugby below First XV and including all representative rugby below Under 18 grades, it is compulsory for all players to play a minimum half game. As part of this policy it is re-stated that rolling subs are not allowed, although substitutions at half time will be permitted.

Responsibilities:

• All teams must actively implement the Half Game Rule in ALL Junior Rugby Grades.

• All clubs & teams must proactively educate adults on the rationale for the rule.

SMALL SQUAD SIZES:

The Thames Valley Rugby Football Union is enforcing small squad sizes at Junior Rugby level. We believe it will have a positive influence on players' rugby experiences, such as giving players plenty of game time, as well as making it easier for coaches to manage teams. Please see some positives of the change below:

- Fewer players being sidelined, more players playing.
- Less conflict between coaches & parents over player selections.
- Regular substitutions but fewer tactical disruptions.
- More 1 on 1 coaching so the kids become more skilled and better players.
- Provides more opportunity for coaching & management roles if clubs have higher numbers.

How should this look? This is aimed at clubs that have an awkward number of players, or a high number of players in a particular year group. The following guidelines will be put in place.

Year 6 and below: (10 Aside)

- This rule doesn't apply for the year 3 competition.
- NO more than 13 players per squad (where possible).
- If clubs have more than 14 players, they are to enter TWO teams into the competition and compete with 7 players in each squad.

Year 7 & 8: (15 Aside)

- NO more than 18 players per squad (where possible)
- If clubs have more than 24 players, they are to enter two teams into the competition and compete with 13 players in each squad.

All clubs & coaches are requested to buy into this philosophy, with the purpose of wanting to give players more game time and less standing on the side-line. Clubs must play down to the number of players their opposition have, which in theory will promote good sportsmanship and spirit of the game. By going with a smaller number of players per squad, children and parents will recruit other children to play rugby who would not normally play and this will help increase the numbers. This will come from children and parents reaching out to schools and other sports that don't conflict with rugby.



SIDELINE BEHAVIOR & WHERE TO STAND:

Be supportive:

• It's all about the game, but the game would be nothing without the players. That's why it's our job to back them up and send nothing but positive energy no matter what. Always remember to show your support on and off the field – even if they're from the other team.

Lead by example:

• It's all about the game, but the game would be nothing without the other team. That's why we must remember they're there for the love of the sport, just like us – and we like that. So, when they perform well and set a good example on the field, give them a cheer.

Be respectful:

• It's all about the game, but the game would be nothing without the volunteers. Parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents rise early to coach the teams and ref the games. So, even when they miss a penalty or make a mistake, remember, they're the ones making it all possible for the kids – that's something to appreciate.

Roped Off Grounds:

- Please note that all grounds should be roped off (3-5 meters) from the side-line. An event manager must be appointed for each game. Referees can stop the game proceeding if this is not done.

Sub Benches:

- Year 6 and below have the Sub Benches located on the sideline of Junior Rugby Matches.
- Year 7 & 8 competition the Sub Benches are to be located behind each end of the goal post.
- Please let players play, coaches' coach and managers manage. There is plenty of room to stand at matches, so please make a conscious effort to stay clear of the sub benches

Behavior Punishment:

2023 saw Junior Rugby have a year of sideline abuse and verbal comments towards our referees. This saw reports handed in to the Thames Valley Rugby Union weekly, making the Junior game become unenjoyable for players and parents on the sideline. The Junior Management board have come up with a solution to help protect our volunteer refs during the game. If at any time the referee is having verbal comments of abuse towards them, they have the power to stop the game and tell that person to quieten down with the help of the event manager, if the same person continues during the game and the ref has to stop again, that person is then asked to leave and the game won't start until that person has left the grounds/venue.

We want to have a positive and encouraging year from the sidelines in 2024 and a awesome Junior Rugby Season!!!

CONCUSSION CHECKLIST:



Questioning:

It is important to remember that a person can be concussed without losing consciousness. If a player appears stunned, dazed or confused ask some of the following questions to check if the player is aware of their surroundings and that their memory is working correctly.

- What ground are we at?
- Which team are we playing today?
- What position are you playing?
- Which half is it?
- What is the score of the game?



If they answer any of the questions incorrectly, or are very slow to respond, it indicates that they have probably sustained a concussion and should not continue to play.

Symptoms:

If any of these symptoms are present a player should not return to play

- Unsteadiness or poor balance and co-ordination.
- Blurred or double vision.
- Ringing in their ears.
- Sensitivity to light and noise.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- A headache or feel extremely tired or become irritable.

Important:

Even if there are no immediate symptoms of concussion these can show up later. Ensure the player is regularly checked and not left alone during the first four hours after injury. Concussed Players must get urgent medical treatment if they show signs of:

- Worsening headache.
- Increased drowsiness or can't be woken up.
- Vomiting.
- Increased confusion or agitation.
- Weakness in any limbs.
- Slurred speech.
- Loss of consciousness or seizure.

Players should not return to sport until symptom free AND medically cleared. The IRB's mandatory stand down period is for a minimum of 3 weeks (21 days for all grades). If they return too soon, they are at risk of further concussions. If you sustain a second concussion before the previous one has fully resolved the impact will be more severe and can in some instances be fatal.

INJURY CHECKLIST:

In the event of a suspected spinal or other serious injury

- DON'T MOVE THE PLAYER!
- GET HELP FIRST and GET IT FAST.
- Call 111 for an Ambulance.
- Don't move the player until qualified medical personnel arrives!

A player may have suffered a severe neck injury, and yet still be able to move. If the spine is unstable, and they are moved, they run the risk of permanent paralysis. Referees and coaches should err on the side of caution and seek medical assistance in the event of any potentially serious injury. For all other injuries If the injury disrupts play, get the player assessed on the field so you can decide whether to keep the player on or take them off.

Assessing the Injury:

For effective assessment of an injury use T.O.T.A.P.S.

1. TALK:

- Ask the player what happened.
- Where does it hurt?
- What kind of pain is it (Scale of 1-10)?

2. OBSERVE:

- Look at the affected area for redness or swelling.
- Is the injured side different from the other side?

3. TOUCH:

- Feel for lumps, depression, swelling, heat, points of tenderness
- Skin
- Soft tissues
- Bones

4. ACTIVE MOVEMENT:

- Ask the injured player to move the injured part without any help.

5. PASSIVE MOVEMENT:

- If the player can move the injured part, carefully try to move it yourself through its full range of motion.

6. SKILL TEST:

- Did the active and passive movement produce pain? If no, can the player stand and demonstrate some of the skills from the game? If an injury is identified, remove the player from the activity immediately.



TIPS FOR REFEREES:



Referees must be organized/provided by the HOME team. Referees in the Year 7/8 Competition should have attended a Associate Referees Course, due to refereeing the scrums contesting ½ meter pushing. Referees are the sole judge of the game. Their decisions should be supported by all players, coaches, managers, and supporters. Here are some tips below:

Tip 1 - Never Assume Anything:

o Never assume anything, only rule on what you can see. Do not assume players are aware of their requirements according to law and to the required technique for the game.

Tip 2- Play Advantage:

o For Junior Rugby its more about players getting their hands on the ball and running with it. So, who really cares if you play a long advantage, and it does not work? A long advantage gives the kids a chance to play the game, spectators have cheered on their team, and maybe a try has been scored.

Tip 3 – Safety:

o Never allow the game to be started or to continue when anyone on the paddock is in an unsafe position. As a referee, it is partly our responsibility to make sure that the game is played safely.

Tip 4- Scrum Time:

o Ensure the scrum platform is secure and safe before allowing the ball to be put into the scrum. Make sure that the front rows are bound together properly, the hooker is bound tightly onto the props, and the locks are binding correctly so the scrum is 'strong' and 'safe'. Do not let them bind up in a 'league' way.

Tip 5 – Lineout:

o Make a good effort to have a clear 1 Metre gap at all lineouts.

Tip 6 - Tackle, Ruck, and Maul:

o This is a great opportunity to do some good coaching, get there early and talk to the arriving players reminding them of their requirements. Use voice commands like; "Release" / "Stay on your feet" / "Join at the back" / "Through the gate"

Tip 7 – Offside in General Play:

o Make sure players are clearly 'ON-SIDE' before blowing your whistle. If they are not, play a Penalty Advantage. Children are likely to fly out of the line, so have a quiet chat to players infringing frequently and nip it in the bud. The more players onside, the better the match will be.

Tip 8 - Enjoy Yourself!

RESOURCES:

- **Rugby Smart App:**

- o Available on Apple & Google Play

- **The Coaching Gig:**

- o <https://www.thecoachinggig.com/>

- **IntaSport App:**

- o Available on Apple & Google Play

- **Coaching Toolbox:**

- o <http://www.coachingtoolbox.co.nz>

- **The Rugby Site:**

- o <https://www.therugbysite.com/>

- **Small Blacks:**

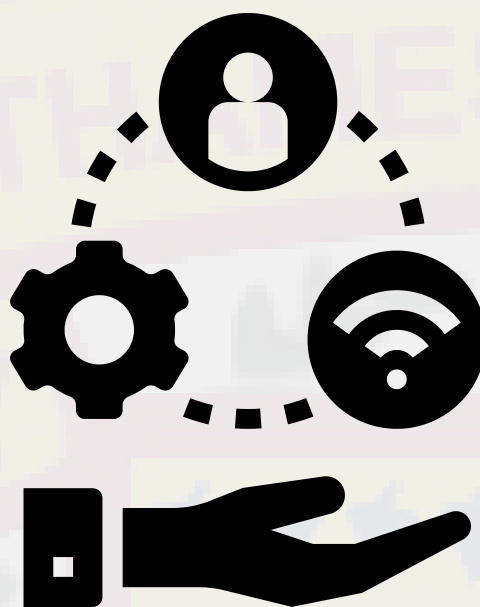
- o <http://smallblacks.co.nz>

- **New Zealand Rugby:**

- o www.nzru.co.nz

- **Thames Valley Rugby Football Union:**

- o <https://thamesvalleyswampfoxes.co.nz/tvrfu/>



NZRFU COACHING COURSES:

- Small Blacks (compulsory attendance for Junior Coaches/Managers)
- Rugby Smart (compulsory attendance for Secondary School, Club Rugby and Referees)
- Associate Referees Course
- Level 1 Foundation Coaching Course
- Level 2 Developing Rugby Coaches (DRC) Coaching Course
- Level 3 Performance Coaching Course
- World Rugby Coach Educator

If you want more information on any of these courses, please click on this link: <https://thamesvalleyswampfoxes.co.nz/tvrfu/coaches-corner/>

If you are interested in attending any of these courses above and want to gain certificates to enhance your coaching, please get in touch with **Scott Day** scott@tvrfu.co.nz



SPONSORS:

**A HUGE THANK YOU GOES OUT TO SUPERIOR PET FOODS (CHUNKY)
FOR THEIR MAJOR SUPPORT & SPONSORSHIP TOWARDS JUNIOR
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