

Schools & Youth Rugby – Managing Mismatches

Rugby is a game for everyone; all ages, levels of experience and body types. Children can prosper through rugby in an environment where having fun, learning and building confidence are prioritised.

It is the responsibility of all adults in the game to create an environment that is player-centred, development-driven and competition-supported. This applies to coaches, parents, teachers, volunteers and supporters.

Playing meaningful games is vitally important for the development of young players and coaches play a key role in managing the playing experience to ensure it creates the right environment. Unfortunately, the number of results returned with high winning margins over recent seasons has been cause for concern. As we look ahead to the new season we'd like to take this opportunity to remind coaches of the rules relating to maximum score and offer some advice about how to manage games that are too one-sided.

Reminder of Schools & Youth Competition Rules regarding Maximum Score:

7.10 If during a U16 or U15 Match a Team attains a 50 point lead the Match will be deemed to have been completed and the referee shall blow for time.

7.11 If during a U14 or U13 Match a Team attains a 30 point lead the Match will be deemed to have been completed and the referee shall blow for time.

7.12 Teams are encouraged to play a friendly match for the remainder of the playing time.

Should a game be stopped in accordance with this rule we encourage coaches to take steps to improve the playing environment and play the remaining game-time as a development match. Options available include but are not limited to;

- Rest stronger players and provide more game-time to less experienced players
- Play players out of position to help develop different skills
- Asking individual players to play for the opposition, or mixing teams completely, can provide a different challenge and help develop communication skills
- Ask the referee to introduce law variations to condition games e.g. minimum number of passes/phases, certain players not allowed to score