



NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

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Introduction

The Rugby League Code of Conduct provides all participants – players, parents, coaches, referees, spectators and officials – with some simple rules that assist in delivering a safe and positive environment to everyone involved in the game.

Within that safe environment, every Rugby League participant has the best chance to enjoy the game. By accepting the standards of behaviour in the Code, we provide opportunities for young boys and girls to grow on the field - we build good players, good citizens and good communities in which Rugby League is a social asset.

I strongly recommend that everyone connected with Rugby League adopts these rules as an essential part of the way they contribute to our great game.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Grant". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John Grant
Chairman Australian Rugby League Commission

General Principles

Participants in the game of Rugby League include:

All registered players; accredited persons - coaches, first aid and Leaguesafe Officers; referees and touch judges; Officials - club, League or Association staff and volunteers, ground managers and duty officials; parents/carers of players, sponsor representatives and club supporters; members of the general public attending as spectators.

Participants are encouraged and expected to:

- **show positive acts of sportsmanship**, discouraging all instances of foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the field;
- **demonstrate the greatest levels of respect**, protecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability / disability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion;
- **lead by positive example**, and condemn the use of recreational and performance enhancing drugs and doping practices; their use endangers the health of players and is contrary to the concept of fair play;
- **celebrate the "good news" stories**, and understand that cyber-bullying, which includes negative or demeaning comments, status posts, personal messages or emails, is deemed as a serious form of harassment;
- **accept that the integrity of the sport is of paramount importance**, therefore, no coach, player, Club official or match official is allowed to participate, or be directly or indirectly involved in any way, in gambling in relation to matches/ competitions in which they are involved or directly linked.

CODE OF CONDUCT – PLAYER

- Be a good sport. Respect all good play whether from your team or the opposition and shake hands with, and thank, the opposition players and officials after the game – win, lose or draw.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
- Always respect the referee's decision.
- Never become involved in acts of foul play.
- Honour both the spirit and letter of the competition rules and live up to the highest ideals of ethics and sportsmanship; avoid gamesmanship, and respect the traditions of the game.
- Never engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, sledging, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, trash-talking, taunting or other actions that are demeaning to other players, officials or supporters.
- Care for and respect the facilities and equipment made available to you during training and competition.
- Safeguard your health; don't use any illegal or unhealthy substances.
- Recognize that many officials, coaches and referees are volunteers who give up their time to provide their services. Treat them with the utmost respect.
- Do not bet or otherwise financially speculate, directly or indirectly, on the outcome or any other aspect of a Rugby League match or competition in which you are involved.

Endorsement

Whether you play in the local U7's or for Australia, there are certain standards that you have to live up to.

Rugby League is one of the world's great games and if every player remembers, and practises, these few simple rules, the game will continue to prosper.

I fully endorse the player's section of this Code of Conduct.

Best wishes,



Darren Lockyer

Former Player - Brisbane Broncos, Queensland & Australia



CODE OF CONDUCT – COACH

- Actively discourage foul play and/or unsportsmanlike behaviour by players.
- Seek to maximise the participation and enjoyment of all players regardless of ability; avoid the tendency to over-use a talented player; treat all players as equals, regardless of their talent.
- Show concern and caution towards all sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a physician and/or sports trainer to the letter when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or playing.
- Teach players that an honest effort and competing to the best of their ability is as important as victory.
- Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with players at all times.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of the Laws of the Game and keep abreast of current coaching methods; maintain or improve your current accreditation level.
- Always consider the health, safety and welfare of the players.
- Teach young players to realise that there is a big gap between their play and the professional game; do not coach them as if they are professionals.
- Ensure that your coaching reflects the level of the competition being played; do not be a “winner-at-all-cost” coach.
- As coach, conduct yourself at all times in a manner, and in all situations, that shows leadership, respect for the game of Rugby League and respect for all those that are involved in the game – the players, officials, the fans, the parents, the referees and the media.

Endorsement

As a coach, you have a particular responsibility to ensure that, through your words and actions, you strive to build the positive character of your players, as well as their skills.

You also have to appreciate and maintain the traditions, image and integrity of the game.

Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity, and remember to always promote sportsmanship over gamesmanship.

Good luck!



Tim Sheens

Coach – Australia & four-time Premiership-winner



Remember that junior players participate for pleasure and mateship. Winning is only part of the fun.

CODE OF CONDUCT – REFEREE/ TOUCH JUDGE/OFFICIAL

- Be impartial! Also, be consistent, objective and courteous.
- Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else; be alert to minimise dangerous physical play, fair or foul, especially in junior matches.
- Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
- Avoid any form of verbal contact with coaches, team officials, parents and spectators during play.
- Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest, both on and off the field.
- Maintain an appropriate level of fitness for the standard of game at which you are officiating.
- Condemn all and every instance of unsportsmanlike, foul or unfair play.
- Set a good example by the way you dress, speak and act towards players, coaches, officials, parents and spectators.
- Show concern and caution towards sick and injured players.
- Officiate to the age and/or experience of the players.

Endorsement

As a referee, you are an integral part of the game and you can help each player enjoy the game by demonstrating a positive attitude, by promoting good sporting behaviour, by being consistent and by communicating in a fair and honest manner.

Try to clearly express your decisions to the players in a way that can be seen and understood.

Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and remember, there is no substitute for a thorough knowledge of the Laws of the Game and your own integrity.



*Bill Harrigan
Former NRL, Origin & Test Referee*



Referees are the key to the successful application of the Safeplay Code in Junior Rugby League.

CODE OF CONDUCT – SPECTATOR/PARENT

- Condemn all violent or illegal acts, whether they are by players, coaches, officials, parents or spectators.
- Respect the referee's decisions – don't complain or argue about decisions during or after a game.
- Behave! Unsportsmanlike language, harassment or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Encourage players to play by the rules and to respect opposition players and officials.
- Never ridicule or scorn a player for making a mistake – respect their efforts.
- Understand that sport is part of a total life experience, and the benefits of involvement go far beyond the final score of a game.
- Participate in positive cheering that encourages the players in the team you are supporting; do not engage in any cheering that taunts or intimidates opponents, their fans or officials.
- Remember that children participate in Rugby League for their own enjoyment, not yours!
- At all times, follow the directions of the Ground Manager and/or other duty officials.
- Never arrive at a Junior League game under the influence of alcohol, never bring alcohol to a Junior League game and only drink alcohol, if it is available, in a responsible manner in the designated licensed area.



Endorsement

I've always loved Rugby League - going to the games and supporting my favourite teams. But I don't love it when fans get unruly or cause trouble on the sidelines.

As a spectator, be sure to do the right thing. Enjoy the game and let the players know that win or lose, you support their efforts.

As a parent, lead by example, promote good sportsmanship and be a positive role model for your children.

I fully support this Code of Conduct.

Layne Beachley

Layne Beachley

Rugby League fan and seven-time ASP World Surfing Champion

CODE OF CONDUCT – SUMMARY OF OFFENCES

Note – Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials and spectators.

No person(s) attending a match, function or event shall:

- (a) Use offensive or obscene language to any participant;
- (b) Enter the Field of Play during the course of a match without the prior approval of the Ground Manager appointed by the home club and/or League;
- (c) Excessively dispute the decision of a referee or touch judge either during or after a match;
- (d) Assault or act with aggression to any person/s;
- (e) Behave in a way contrary to the Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game;
- (f) Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of a match, function or event by any other person/s, or brings discredit to the home club and/or League;
- (g) Act in such a way as to exhibit racial intolerance, by language or other conduct, to any person/s;
- (h) Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Ground Manager, official of the team/club which that person is supporting, or official of the home club and/or League.

Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials and club supporters.

Breaches of the Rugby League Code of Conduct may result in penalties, including but not limited to:

- Suspension of a match and/or
- Termination of a match (including potential forfeiture of competition points) and/or
- Monetary fines and/or
- Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis and/or
- Suspension of a club, League or Association on a temporary or permanent basis.

These penalties are in addition to any penalty which may be imposed by the home League's judiciary.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may cause a match to be stopped!



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Australian Government

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