

Dear All

Since there have now been 3 confirmed & disciplined cases of 16 year old playing in adult games this season (and two more currently under investigation) here is a timely reminder on the RFU Regulations. Ignorance is no defence, clubs caught breaching these regulations will be sanctioned. We need to protect young players from being put into dangerous situations.

Grateful if you could share with U14/U15/16/17/Colts coaches, Club Coaching Co-Ordinators and the co-ordinator for all the senior teams; and the main club committees (senior & Mini-Youth) so that no-one is left in any doubt. The reminder will be circulated through as many channels as possible.

We MUST stop this happening. In one of these cases the player ended up in hospital through injury.

Regards,

Nic - RFU

WHO CAN PLAY ADULT RUGBY? A TIMELY REMINDER ON WHAT THE RFU REGULATIONS SAY

There have been three confirmed cases so far this season (08/09) of underage players playing in games of adult rugby. In one case the young player concerned was, unfortunately, injured and taken to hospital. The RFU regulations around this issue are very clear and are there to ensure the medical and emotional safety of all concerned as well as to protect club management committees.

- **No player at 16 years or younger may train with adults or play in adult games** (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd XV etc)
- At 17 years, a player who is deemed both physically and mentally capable by the person(s) best suited to make this decision (parents/coach) is permitted to 'play up' in adult games, **however they are not permitted to play in any of the front row positions**
- Any player assuming any front row position (ie. prop or hooker), during adult training or competition, including replacements, must have reached their 18th birthday.

However, a 16-year-old (ie U17) can play up two age grades and in order to play in Colts (U19) matches, governed by U19 Law Variations and Youth Disciplinary procedures.

It is recommended that clubs and CB's record in writing the decision to play a 17 year old player in adult rugby in the minutes of an official club meeting

From a 'child protection' perspective, once a 17 year old enters the adult game they are viewed by the RFU as an adult, and thus they are no longer governed under the regulations around the need for CRB checks for coaches/managers/etc and appropriate changing and showering arrangements. Furthermore, it is recommended that a suitable adult is appointed to the player as an informal 'chaperone' – someone who they know they can go to with any concerns or issues.

Failure to abide by these regulations WILL result in disciplinary action taken against the club management.

The exact wording of the RFU Regulations can be found in the RFU Handbook 2008/09 (page 407) and online at www.rfu.com/regulations

DAILY MAIL SCHOOLS COMPETITION – ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

There have been a number of cases so far this season of schools playing overage players in the Under 15 and Under 18 Daily Mail Cup & Vase competitions. The Regulations around this issue are very clear but in order to remind schools the following should act as an aide memoir:

- In Under 18 Competitions this season (2008/09) players can only play if they were born after 31st August 1990.
- In Under 15 Competitions this season (2008/09) players can only play if they were born after 31st August 1993.

There are other regulations relating to eligibility that must also be followed but the above is a quick reminder of one key area.

NATIONAL UNDER 17 COMPETITION

Clubs are reminded to ensure that all players are eligible to participate they must have been effectively registered with the club he is representing on the Rugby Football Union RugbyFirst database on or before 31st December 2008.