



PLAYERS COMPETING ABOVE THEIR AGE GROUP

Rugby Canada's Policies for Provincial Unions:

Rugby Canada remains adamant that player safety is paramount. Therefore, the following should serve as a guideline on age grade rugby:

- i. any such regional / provincial policy is documented in meeting minutes;
- ii. the minutes justify the reasons for the local policy; and,
- iii. the minutes identify the safety issues that were considered before introducing the policy.
- iv. All minutes must be provided to Rugby Canada.

3.1 ELIGIBILITY:

3.1.1 *For Under 20 (Men & Women) competitions, all players must be under twenty years of age and at least the age of eighteen years, as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.2 *For Under 19 (Men & Women) competitions, all players must be under nineteen years of age and at least the age of seventeen years, as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.4 *For Under 18 (Men & Women) competitions, all players must be under eighteen years of age and at least the age of sixteen years, as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.5 *For Under 17 (Men & Women) competitions, all players must be under seventeen years of age and at least the age of fifteen years, as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.6 *For Under 16 (Me & Women) competitions, all players must be under sixteen years of age and at least the age of fourteen years, as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.7 *For Senior Women Championships, all players must have reached the age of eighteen years of age as of January 1st in the year of the competition.*

3.1.8 *In order to substantiate the above age limitations, all participating teams are to comply with the registration procedures as established from time to time by the Rugby Canada Board; including the provision of Rugby Canada pro forma waivers, duly executed by the athlete's parent or guardian and provision of a copy of the athletes' birth certificates and/or valid passport. Failure to comply with the established registration process will result in that player being ineligible for competition until such time as the registration process has been completed.*

3.2 MINIMUM AGE EXEMPTION PROCEDURES:

Exemptions to allow an athlete who is under the minimum age requirement of a competition, as specified in 3.1.1 to 3.1.8, may be made providing the procedures listed below are followed. The launching of such an application is the responsibility of the Member Unions on behalf of their players. All players playing outside of their age categories must be identified to Rugby Canada directly to the member services department.

- 3.2.1** *Rugby Canada recommends that a three-person committee be established for each case, consisting of a member of the Provincial Union or a designated alternate, a registered medical practitioner who has knowledge of rugby and a member of the player's club that is not directly associated with the team in question. This Committee shall hear the application requiring evidence it deems necessary to render a decision, beyond provisions of 3.2.2 if desired. An appeal can be made in writing to Rugby Canada if it is desired.*

NOTE: ***NO PLAYER IS PERMITTED TO PLAY AGAINST PLAYERS YEARS ABOVE THEIR DESIGNATED AGE BRACKET. FOR EXAMPLE, A PLAYER 14 YEARS OF AGE CAN APPLY TO PLAY UP IN U16 RUGBY BUT, A 13 YEAR OLD CANNOT PLAY UP IN 16 RUGBY.***

- 3.2.2** *Given the potential logistical requirements of forming such a Committee, applications will only be considered if the provincial union office receives applications at least 14 days prior to the event in question. Applications shall include, as a minimum:*

3.2.2.1 *A letter from the player's coach (only letters from coaches certified under NCCP will be accepted) attesting that the player is capable: physically, emotionally and socially, to participate in the competition in question.*

3.2.2.2 *A letter from a qualified Sports Medical practitioner or, if not practical, the player's Family Physician, confirming that an examination (done within one month of the competition) has indicated that the player is physically capable of participating at the level under application and declaring a clear understanding, by the medical practitioner, of the physical and competitive environment that should be expected for that athlete.*

3.2.2.3 *A letter from the player's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) outlining the player's maturity level in social development and declaring a clear understanding, of the physical and competitive environment that should be expected for that player in question playing up an age grade.*

3.2.2.4 *Requests for exemption from any of the above provisions should be made in writing to the Provincial Union not less than 14 days prior to the start of the competition in question.*