



THE AIM OF THE GAME

RUGBY is a full contact sport played by two teams. The aim of the game is for each team to score as many points as possible. When time is over the team with the greatest number of points wins the match. In order to do that each team attempts to gain possession of the ball and take it to their opposition's end of the field and touch it down behind the goal line. To advance the ball the team with possession may kick the ball forward or pass the ball from one player's hands to another as long as the ball doesn't travel forward in the pass. The defending team tries to stop their opponents' progress or take control of the ball by turning it over and gaining possession. In defence the players tackle the ball carrier, grabbing hold of the opposing players and bringing them to the ground. A tackled player must either pass or release the ball to allow the defenders to contest possession of the loose ball. This continues until a try or goal is scored, a player commits a foul, or the ball goes out of the field of play. The match lasts 80 minutes – two halves of 40 minutes – plus time added to account for injuries and stoppages.

SCORING

IN RUGBY, points are gained by either scoring a try or a goal.

A try is scored when a player takes the ball across the opposition's goal line and grounds the ball in the in-goal area. The try is worth five points.

A goal is scored by kicking the ball between the uprights and above the crossbar of the goal posts.

► Teams can score a dropped goal – or field goal – worth three points by dropping the ball to the ground and kicking it through the goals during general play.

► When a team is infringed against they can take a penalty kick by placing the ball on the ground or drop kicking it through the goals. This is also worth three points.

► A team can attempt to convert a try by kicking the ball through the goals. This conversion kick is taken from a point in line with where the ball touched the ground for the try. The ball may be placed any distance away from the posts. A conversion is worth two points.

KICK OFF

ON SEPTEMBER 9, the referee's whistle will blow, signalling the kick-off of a six-week tournament – this year's largest sporting event, the Rugby World Cup.

Twenty teams from around the world will play 48 matches over 45 days to decide the champions of the sport. Our

Newspapers in Education program is going to take a grandstand seat for 10 days and find out more about the game of Rugby Union.

Keep your eye on the ball as we tackle the 2011 Rugby World Cup.



A TEAM

A RUGBY Union team consists of 15 players – eight forwards and seven backs. The forwards' (numbered one to eight) main role is to gain and retain possession of the ball and take part in set pieces like the scrum and line-out. The backs (numbered nine to 15) participate more in the running plays, moving the ball around to try to score tries and use tactical moves and placement to try to create holes in the opposition defence. There can be up to seven replacements (subs or reserves) in each team but a player can only be substituted once.

PLAYS

DURING a game several different plays occur.

The scrummage

The scrummage or scrum for short is a way of restarting the game. It consists of eight players from each side interlocking in three rows with the heads of those in the front row binding with those in the front row of the opposing team. The ball is thrown in between the teams as they push against each other to try to win the ball by sending it back with their feet.

The lineout

The lineout is way of restarting the game after the ball has been kicked or knocked into touch. Both teams line up in equal numbers one metre apart and contest the ball thrown between them. The ball is thrown in, usually by the hooker of the team in possession, and the players attempt to catch the ball or pass it down to another member of the team.

The ruck

If a tackled player goes to ground they must release the ball immediately. When the ball is on the ground a ruck is formed and players in each team try to move their opponents out of the area and manoeuvre the ball from under the bodies of the players on the ground to make it available for their team.

The maul

Occurs when at least three players, with two of these coming from the same side, are in contact with each other. In a maul the ball is in the hands of a player and not on the ground.

TOMORROW: Rollin' Rugby Part 2