



Hong Kong Mini Rugby Football Union

香港小型欖球總會

## Mini Rugby Refereeing – Festival Player Briefing



**Peter Hudson – HKMRFU Coaching and Refereeing Coordinator**

Dear Coaches,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for the upcoming season of festival rugby. As part of your preparation for festival rugby I would like you to take some time to brief your players on the following issues. It is best practice for a referee to brief each team and their respective coaches on how he intends to manage the game and what areas the match officials will be focusing on. Mini Rugby Festival structure does not allow this process to take place, so this 'Festival Player Briefing' will be the baseline information you will be required to communicate to your players.

**★Discipline Discipline Discipline!** Players mouths! Operation SOGs (Stop Opinion Givers) is in full swing. The only player talking to the referee on the field of play is the team captain. On that basis, can you please make sure you nominate a captain for your on field team and have that individual walk up to the referee, shake his hand and introduce him or her self before kick off. If a player other than the captain is unable to contain him/her self and feels it necessary to give the referee his/her opinion, then he/her will score their team a Free Kick/Penalty Kick. This will also trigger a team warning by the referee that if there is another occurrence from any other member of the team, then on the second offence that player will be subject to mandatory replacement for 4 mins. It is the coaches responsibility for timing the 4 minute sin bin!

**★Discipline Discipline Discipline!** Player skills! The iRB has made the statement that the head is a 'No-Go' area. Therefore if a tackle is made below the shoulder line and the tackler slides up above the shoulder line, then this will be judged to be a head-high tackle and sanctioned accordingly. This also applies to head locks occurring in the ruck and maul area of the game. The head is an absolute 'No-Go' area and players are required to be disciplined with their skills accordingly.

**★Scrum Engagement Sequence!** What the referee will be looking for is compliance with his instructions. The sequence will be Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage. What we want to see is compliance, so 'Crouch' - compliance (both front rows are square and correctly spaced, 'Touch' - compliance (both sets of props touch the opposing players shoulders, then retract their arms, 'Pause' - compliance, 'Engage' - compliance (U19 Law requires the scrum to be steady before the Scrum Half is allowed to feed the ball in). Please ensure your props are trained to bind high on the backs of the opposing prop.

**★Safety Call!** If a player feels they are in trouble in a scrum, ruck or maul, they are to call out 'Mayday!' At this point the referee will immediately stop the game! Can you please instruct your players that if they hear a mayday call, they too should call mayday and immediately take the power out of the situation. Instruct your players to listen carefully to the referee's instructions and slowly peel away from the scrum, ruck or maul. This process will allow the referee to isolate the injured player and position them correctly, particularly if it's a neck injury.

**★Tackle area!** The tackler is to immediately release the ball carrier once they have gone to ground. The referee will need to see space between these players. If the tackler wants to complete for the ball, they must immediately get to their feet and compete. The ball carrier has one chance to place the ball for recycling. Once a ruck or maul has formed, then remind your players that gates are formed and that they are to join the ruck or maul, through the gate behind the feet of the last player in the ruck or maul! Further to this players must remain on their feet to compete for the ball.

**★Offside at the breakdown!** Please remind the players that from the breakdown piece of ruck and maul, the offside line is the last feet of the player in the ruck or maul. Fringe players, who are not full arm bound, must remain behind the offside line. The referee should use his voice command of 'Last Feet' to instruct players to step back behind this offside line.

**★Boots and Mouthguard Check!** Its simple, no mouth guard, no play. Boots should be checked for stud condition and that no boots should support a toe stud.

Should you have any questions regarding the above briefing, please don't hesitate to approach either the on site referee manager or myself for further clarification.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in communicating this message to your players.

In the meantime, have fun!

Kind Regards

Peter Hudson  
HKMRFU - Coaching and Refereeing Co-ordinator