



Rugby Canada's  
Approach to  
**SAFE RUGBY**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

*This document was produced by Rugby Canada in 2007.*

## **Aim**

The primary aim of ***Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby*** program is to provide coaches, referees and club administrators with the required knowledge, skills and leadership abilities to ensure that safety principles and best practice principles are incorporated into all aspects of contact Rugby.

## **The Program**

There are five distinct elements of the program. A number of these have sub-categories with distinct objectives of a specific nature.

1. Duty of Care & Risk Management
2. Balance and Stability
3. Introduction to Contact
  - Tackle
  - Post Tackle Support
  - Rucks and Mauls
4. Building Safe Scrums
  - Safe Scrum Formation
    - i. 1 v 1
    - ii. 3 v 3
    - iii. 5 v 5
    - iv. 8 v 8
  - Pre-engagement
  - Safe, Stable & Square Engagement
  - Contesting for the Ball
  - "May Day" Protocol
5. Injury Protocol
  - Injury Prevention
  - Care of injured Players
  - Implementing IRB Regulation 10 Medical (Concussion)

A typical Safe Rugby session of approximately 2.5 hours would be scheduled in the following manner.

** Introduction	10-15 minutes
1. Duty of Care & Risk Management	10-15 minutes
2. Balance & Stability	25-30 minutes
3. Introduction to Contact	40-45 minutes
4. Building Safe Scrums	30-35 minutes
5. Injury Protocol	15-20 minutes
** Summary and Administration	10 minutes

## **Objectives & Required Outcomes**

### **1. *Duty of Care & Risk Management***

#### **Objective**

***To provide coaches, referees and club administrators with an understanding of their "duty of care" and the "IRB Playing Charter" as well as the implications for them in performing their role in Rugby in accordance with the principles incorporated.***

#### **Required Outcomes**

##### **General:**

- a. All course participants will know the principles of the IRB Playing Charter and understand the implications that are relevant to the manner in which they perform their role in Rugby.
- b. All course participants will have the required understanding of the term "duty of care".
- c. All course participants will be able to identify and apply examples of risk retention, risk reduction, risk transfer and risk elimination to Rugby.

Coaches:

Coaches will be able to identify the principles of risk management and have the ability to apply these principles to their training sessions and competitive programs.

Referees:

- a. Referees will have the skills and knowledge to implement a thorough pre-game safety check.
- b. Referees will have the skills and knowledge to manage a safe environment for games to proceed.

**2. Balance & Stability**

**Objective**

***To provide coaches, referees and club administrators with a portfolio of activities and experiences relevant to introducing and developing attributes necessary for body contact, tackling, scrummaging, the mechanics of pushing & resisting, jumping and supporting players in whilst they are in the air.***

**Required Outcomes**

General:

- a. All course participants will have experienced being involved in developmental activities that are fundamental to body contact, tackling, scrummaging, the mechanics of pushing & resisting, jumping and supporting players in whilst they are in the air.
- b. All course participants will have demonstrated an understanding and appreciation of the contribution that such activities make toward safety as players progress through various developmental stages of body contact, tackling, scrummaging, the mechanics of pushing & resisting, jumping and supporting players in whilst they are in the air.

**3. Introduction to Contact**

**Objective**

***To provide coaches with the required knowledge and skills to introduce body contact activities to players as well as to ensure that coaches, referees and club administrators all have an understanding of their specific “duty of care” associated with body contact in our sport.***

General:

All course participants will have experienced being involved in safe and legal techniques applied to contact in a tackle, ruck, maul and lineout.

Coaches:

- a. Coaches will have the knowledge and understanding to differentiate between safe and legal technical aspects of play compared with all aspects of Law 10 (Foul Play) and other equivalent aspects of the Laws of the Game that apply to foul or dangerous play (e.g.: Law 15.7, etc.)
- b. Coaches will have the knowledge and understanding to limit their coaching to safe techniques applied to all aspects of contact.

*It is essential to address the following issues given the Canadian social and sporting contexts especially given elements of contact behavior that is acceptable in hockey and Canadian football.*

- i. Head positioning of the tackler at a tackle.*
- ii. Tackles require the use of arms – grasp the ball-carrier.*
- iii. Tackles are to be made below the line of the shoulders.*
- iv. Players whose feet are off the ground are not to be tackled.*
- v. A player without the ball cannot be tackled or blocked.*
- vi. A player in possession should run at the gap and not directly at an opposition player.*

Referees:

Referees will have the knowledge, understanding and observational skills to appreciate safe and legal contact techniques as well as the ability to manage unsafe and illegal procedures.

**4. Building a Safe Scrum**

**Objective**

***To provide coaches with the required knowledge and skills to introduce body contact activities to players as well as to ensure that coaches, referees and club administrators all have an understanding of their specific “duty of care” associated with body contact in our sport.***

General:

All course participants will have experienced being involved in assembling, binding, engaging and competing for the ball in safe scrum formations.

Coaches:

- a. Coaches will have the knowledge and understanding to limit their coaching to safe and legal scrum techniques.
- b. Coaches will have experienced being involved in a “May Day” procedure and will have the skills and knowledge to introduce this procedure to their players.

Referees:

- a. Referees will have the knowledge, understanding and observation skills to appreciate safe and legal scrum techniques as well as the ability to penalize unsafe and illegal procedures.
- b. Referees will have experienced being involved in a “May Day” procedure and will have the skills and knowledge to manage players to proceed through the required process.

**5. Injury Protocol**

**Objective**

***To provide coaches, referees and club administrators with an understanding of injury protocol and the “duty of care” that is expected from them when they are dealing with the health, welfare and safety of all participants.***

**Required Outcomes**

General:

All course participants will have experienced and understand injury protocol associated with on field procedures and sideline management applicable to both match days and training ground situations.

Coaches and Club Administrators:

Coaches and club administrators will have the knowledge and understanding to implement appropriate protocol pertaining to injury treatment, injury rehabilitation and team selection requirements relevant to serious injury including the IRB Concussion management regulation and expectations.

## RESOURCE MATERIAL

### Introduction

- [http://www.rugbycanada.ca/index.php?lang=en&page\\_id=883](http://www.rugbycanada.ca/index.php?lang=en&page_id=883)
- [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/category/story.cfm?c\\_id=80&objectid=10440528](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/category/story.cfm?c_id=80&objectid=10440528)
- Quarrie, K.L. et al. "Effect of Nationwide Injury prevention Programme on Serious Spinal Injuries in New Zealand". BMJ, doi:10.1136/bmj.39185.605914.AE (published 18 May 2007)
- *Rugby Ready*. IRB publication, 2007. Available in booklet and DVD format.
- IRB *Playing Charter* [www.irb.com](http://www.irb.com). Laws of the Game incorporating the Playing Charter.

### Duty of Care & Risk Management

- Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby. *An Introduction to Safety & Risk Management*
- Rugby Canada Risk and Safety Management Resource Manual

### Balance & Stability

- *Rugby Ready*. IRB publication, 2007. Available in booklet and DVD format.
- Australian Rugby Union. *Confidence in Contact*

### Introduction to Contact

- *Rugby Ready*. IRB publication, 2007. Available in booklet and DVD format.
- Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby. *Introduction to Contact*
- Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby. *"Squeeze Ball" Technique*

### Building Safe Scrums

- Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby. *Building Safe Scrums*
- Rugby Canada's Approach to Safe Rugby. *"May Day" Scrum Protocol*
- *Rugby Ready*. IRB publication, 2007. Available in booklet and DVD format.

### Injury Protocol

- IRB Regulation 10 Medical (Concussion)
- Concussion Management
- *Rugby Ready*. IRB publication, 2007. Available in booklet and DVD format.

### Summary and Administration

- Attendance Records (to be filed with the Provincial Union).

Provincial Unions will be supplied with copies of *Rugby Ready* (IRB publication, 2007). All participants (i.e. coaches and referees) who are registered with Rugby Canada will receive a copy of this publication in print or DVD format.

All participants who are not registered with Rugby Canada will have access to the publication at [www.irb.com](http://www.irb.com).