



rugby



Frantz Reichel of the French national team at the 1900 Paris Olympics, the first time rugby was an Olympic event

Rugby is a sport played by 2 teams of 15 players each, in which a ball is moved with the hands and feet. First played at Rugby School in England in 1823, the game flouted the rules of the day governing football by allowing players to take the ball in their hands. Rugby was initially played with a round ball. The oval ball was adopted in 1851. The first club, Guy's Hospital, was formed in 1843, and it was only in 1871 that the first rules were codified, under the name of Rugby Football. In 1877, the number of players went from 20 to 15, and in 1886, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales founded the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB), which established the rules of play. England became a member four years later. In 1895, a split led to the creation of the Northern Rugby Football Union and 13-a-side teams. The game became an Olympic sport in 1900, at the Paris Games, and remained so until 1924. In 1910, The first Tournament of Five Nations brought together the four IRFB member teams and France, which only joined the federation in 1978. The first World Cup was organized jointly by Australia and New Zealand in 1987 and women had their first own World Cup in 1991. In 1995, high level rugby players acquired professional status.

HOW A MATCH IS PLAYED

A team is made up of 15 players on the field and 7 substitutes. The ball may be moved with either the feet or the hands. Each team attempts to score points by placing the ball in the opposition's in-goal area by hand, or by kicking the ball between the uprights of the goal posts above the crossbar. A match consists of 2 40-min halves, with an intermission lasting not longer than 10 min. At the kickoff, the team that gained possession of the ball by winning the toss kicks the ball into the opponent's zone from the center spot. The ball must cross the opposition's 10 m line to be considered in play. When the ball is played with the hand, it must not be passed forward. However, it may be kicked forward. When the attacking team places the ball in the other team's in-goal area, it scores a try, which is worth 5 points, and which can then be converted. A convert is a kick at the goal

made by an attacking player, from the distance of his choice, directly in line with the spot where the try was scored. All the opposition players must remain in their in-goal area. If the ball passes between the uprights and above the crossbar, the convert is good and is worth 2 points. If not, only the 5 points scored for the try are counted. The team that has given up points puts the ball back into play at the halfway line. A goal scored from a penalty kick (a kick made from where a foul was committed, with the penalized team not being allowed to interfere) is worth 3 points. Any player may attempt a drop goal at any time. This is worth 3 points if the ball goes between the uprights and above the crossbar. The team having scored more points at the end of the match is declared the winner.

THE PLAYING AREA

The playing area is grass covered, and includes the two in-goal areas, which are delimited by the goal line and the dead ball line.

Flag posts (14)

Flag posts are located along the touchlines at the 2 ends of the dead ball lines, the goal lines, the 22 m lines, and the halfway line; they indicate the boundaries of the playing field.

Dead ball line

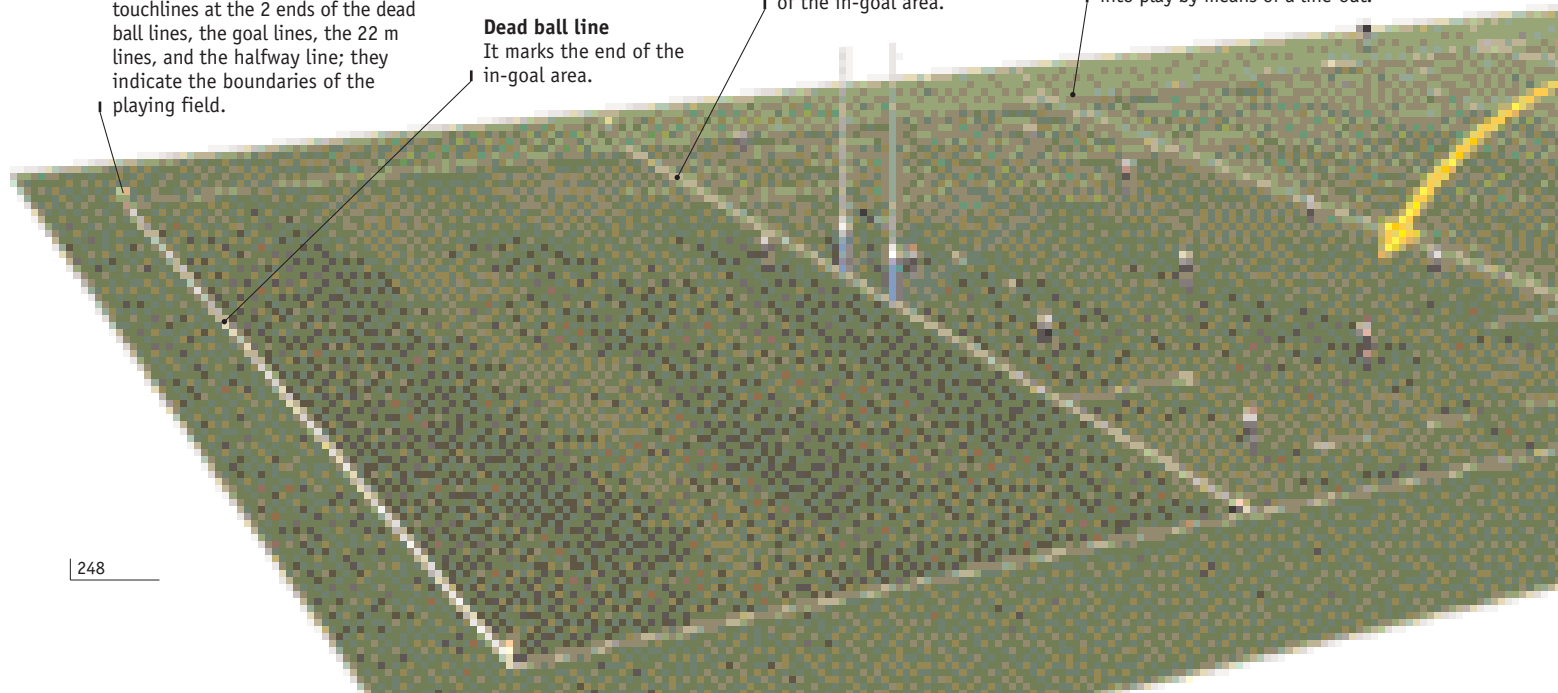
It marks the end of the in-goal area.

Goal line

It marks the edge of the in-goal area.

Touchline

When the ball crosses this line, it is no longer in play, and must be put back into play by means of a line-out.



PLAYER POSITIONS

The number of a player's jersey generally corresponds to a specific position on the field.

Three-quarters (centers and wingers)

On defense, they must be good tacklers in order to prevent the opponents from moving across the field. On offense, they move the ball around quickly by hand to beat the opposing defenders. Centers are excellent passers, and are able to go forward to challenge the opposing centers in order to create imbalances in their defense. The wingers, thanks to their speed, elude defenders to score.

Fullback

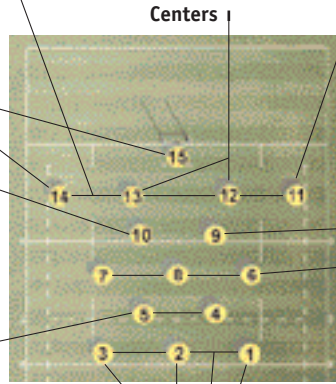
The fullback is the last line of defense when an opponent is attempting to score a try. He must also gather clearing kicks from the opposing team and relaunch his team's attack, either moving the ball by hand or with a clearing kick.

Winger

The fly half acts as a link between the scrum half and the three-quarters. He initiates his team's attacks.

Second row (locks)

Solid players who bind, or support, the front row during a scrum. Their role is to win or recover the ball during throw-ins or scrums.



Scrum half

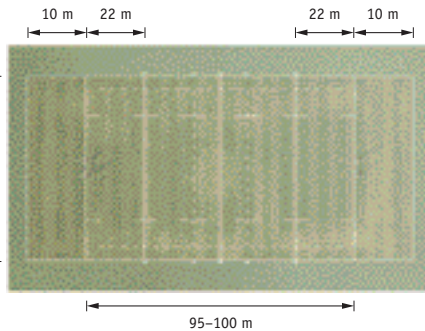
He serves as the link between the forwards and the back lines. During scrums, it is up to him to recover the ball and put his three-quarters into an attacking position.

Third row

They form the last line of players in a scrum. They must keep the ball between their feet until the scrum half can recover it. During play, they must relay the ball from the front row to the halves.

Tight head prop

Hooker



Front row

They are in contact with the opposition during a scrum. The hooker is responsible for winning the ball and heeling it to his teammates behind him. The prop forwards bind the hooker and attempt to move the scrum forward by pushing their opponents in order to gain ground. During play, they attempt to stop the opposing team from advancing and winning the ball during scrums.

Halfway line

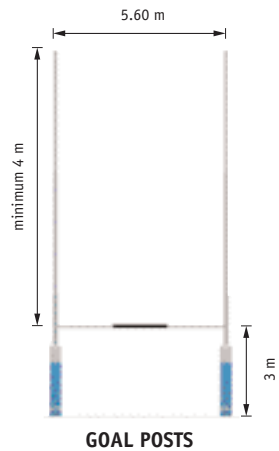
The halfway line marks the division between the two teams' territories.

10 meter line

During a kick-off, the team not in possession of the ball must not cross this line. The team putting the ball into play must send the ball beyond this line.

In-goal

The area within which a try can be scored.



GOAL POSTS

22 meter line

This line marks the spot where the ball is put back into play with a drop-out kick.

Throw-in line

Situated 5 m from the touch-line, it indicates the position to be occupied by the first player in line during a line-out.

Lock line

Situated 15 m from the touchline, it indicates the furthest position that may be occupied by the lock, the last player in line, during a line-out.

TECHNIQUES AND TACTICS

The team in possession of the ball can move it forward using either the hands (passes) or the feet. A player carrying the ball may run toward the opposition's in-goal with no restrictions on his movement. Playing the ball with the foot can be a defensive tactic. When a player gathers

the ball in defense and cannot pass it to a teammate, he propels it away from his in-goal with a clearing kick. It can also be an offensive tactic that serves to get the ball over the opponent's first line of defense or to push the other team back in its own territory.



Passing

Enables a team to maintain possession of the ball by moving it around among several teammates. A pass must always be made backward. A rapid succession of passes creates openings in the other team's defense that are used to move toward the in-goal area. Mastery of passing is fundamental.



Mark (fair catch)

A player makes a direct catch of a forward kick or pass by the opposing team between his own in-goal and 22 m line and shouts "Mark!" A mark can be made even by a player who has both feet off the ground. The player having made the mark is then entitled to a free kick.



Place kick (penalty kick)

The ball is on the ground, standing vertically, and the kicker attempts to kick it between the 2 posts, and over the crossbar. His non-kicking foot remains slightly behind the ball so that his kicking foot strikes as close to the base of the ball as possible, giving it an upward trajectory.



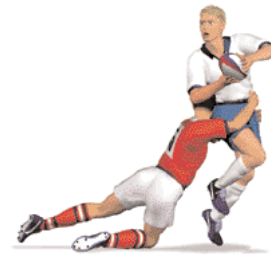
Drop kick

The kicker lets the ball fall and kicks it the moment it hits the ground. The kicking foot must strike it at exactly the moment it bounces to give it an upward trajectory. This type of kick also allows for better ball control.



Hold

A hold takes place when the ball carrier is tackled by one or more opponents and, while he is being held, his feet and another part of his body are touching the ground. When on the ground, the held player must immediately release the ball, without attempting to play it in any way, and get up and move away.



Tackle

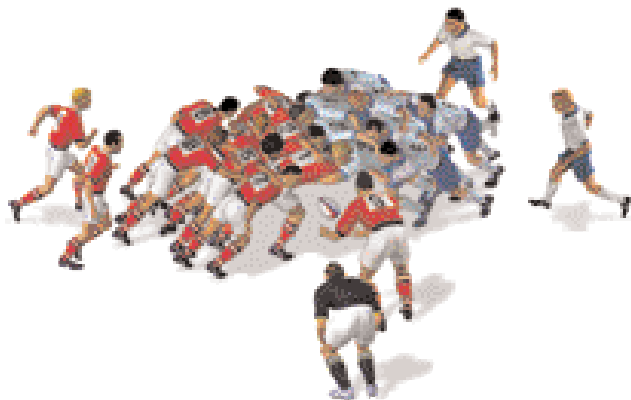
A defensive tactic where an opponent carrying the ball can be blocked and prevented from continuing to move forward. A defender is allowed to grab an opponent in the area between the knees and the torso. Only the player in possession of the ball can be tackled. A tackled player who falls to the ground must release the ball.



Ruck

When a player is tackled to the ground, he must immediately release the ball, which is then free. A player close by can recover it and continue the play sequence. Otherwise, the 2 teams form a ruck to attempt to gain possession of the ball. When the ruck is formed, it is forbidden to propel the ball forward on the ground by pushing it with the hand. A player

cannot move it in his territory except by heeling it, i.e. pushing it with his foot behind him to the scrum half. Players joining a ruck must bind with at least one arm around a teammate, having come up from behind (not from a sideways position, since this constitutes an offside).



Set scrum

Takes place after a foul (knock forward, forward pass, improper line-out, or improper throw-in). The scrum is formed by 8 players from each team (3 front row players, 2 second row players, and 3 back row players) grouped in such a way as to allow the ball to be thrown on the ground between them. The non-offending team puts the ball back into play. The hooker (front row center) is responsible for "heeling" the ball, i.e. pushing it with the foot towards the back of the scrum. Players must not leave the scrum before the ball comes out. Those not in the scrum must remain behind the hindmost player of his scrum.



Maul

Occurs when the ball carrier has been stopped by a defender without being taken to the ground, and several players come and struggle for possession of the ball. The maul is formed by a number of players from the 2 teams who are on their feet when they contact the ball carrier and encircle him. A maul ends when the ball is on the ground, when the ball becomes loose, when the player carrying it frees himself, or when a scrum has been called.

Line-out

When the ball or the player in possession of it touches or crosses the touchline, the ball is in touch. The ball is put back into play by the team that did not have possession prior to the ball or player going into touch. The line-out is formed by at least 2 players from each team, standing in two straight lines at right angles to the touch line. The team putting the ball into play decides how many players will line up. A space of 1 m between the 2 rows of players, called the tunnel, must be respected. The line-out extends from the

throw-in line to the lock line. The player putting the ball into play must throw it, using one or both hands, directly between the two lines of players. Players not in the line-out must remain 10 m from the ball. During the throw-in, it is permitted to support a teammate who has jumped to grab the ball. If a team benefiting from a penalty kicks the ball into touch, it takes the throw-in.



Throw-in

The player taking the throw-in positions himself outside the playing field equidistant from the 2 lines of players. He throws the ball into the tunnel, and the 2 sides attempt to recover it.



PENALTY

A penalty is awarded to the non-offending team when the opposing team has broken the rules (offside, knock forward, unsportsmanlike conduct). The team benefiting from the penalty can decide what form it will take. It can choose a goal kick, in which case the referee must be advised so that his assistants position themselves at the foot of the goal

Offside

A player is considered to be offside if he is ahead of the ball when it is being played by one of his teammates, unless he is not interfering with play. During a scrum, a ruck, a maul, or a line-out, a player is offside if he remains ahead of or moves ahead of the hindmost player of his team in the scrum. When a player kicks the ball, any teammates in front of him are automatically offside. They must move back behind him or wait until he passes them to be onside again.



Knock forward and forward pass

A knock forward occurs when the ball goes forward toward the opposition's dead ball line after a player has lost possession of it or propelled it with his arm or hand.

A forward pass occurs when the ball carrier passes the ball by hand or otherwise throws it, and the ball moves towards the opponent's dead ball line. A knock forward or forward pass results in the calling of a scrum that benefits the non-offending team.

Advantage

In the case where a foul leads to a scrum or a penalty, the advantage rule allows the non-offending team to continue playing if the foul gives it an advantage such as a ground gain or ball possession. The referee decides whether the advantage rule is to be applied or whether a penalty or scrum should be called.

VARIATIONS OF RUGBY

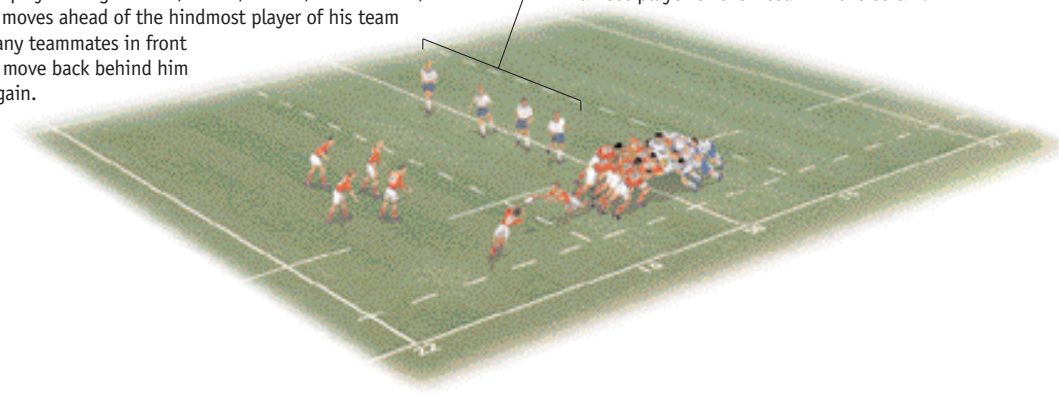
13-a-side rugby (Rugby League): This variation grew out of a split in the English Rugby Football Union. A dissident league, the Northern Rugby Union, was created, and organized 13 man professional rugby. Along with the number of players, certain rules were modified to make the game more spectacular. The ruck was done away with, the hold was introduced, and the charge became all the more important since ball movement increased. The two third-row flanks, who impede ball movement, were eliminated. The throw-in was replaced by the scrum. Rugby League conferred professional status upon its elite players well before Rugby Union did. It is the most popular form of rugby in the Southern Hemisphere.

7-a-side rugby: Created in 1880 in the small town of Melrose in southern Scotland for economic reasons (the need to reduce the costs of lodging and organizing tournaments), it quickly spread across the world. The first tournament was held in 1883. The awarding of points differs from classic rugby. A try is worth 2 points, a convert is worth 3, and a drop goal is worth 4. 7-a-side rugby is played in 2 halves of 7 or 10 minutes on the same size field as 15-a-side rugby, and is governed by the same rules. A 7 man rugby team is

made up of 3 forwards and 4 backs (or three-quarters). The RWC Sevens World Cup is an international tournament played every 4 years since 1993. Since 1996, an annual international circuit has comprised 12 tournaments grouping 12 to 16 national teams.

Offside position

The players are positioned in front of the hindmost player of their team in the scrum.



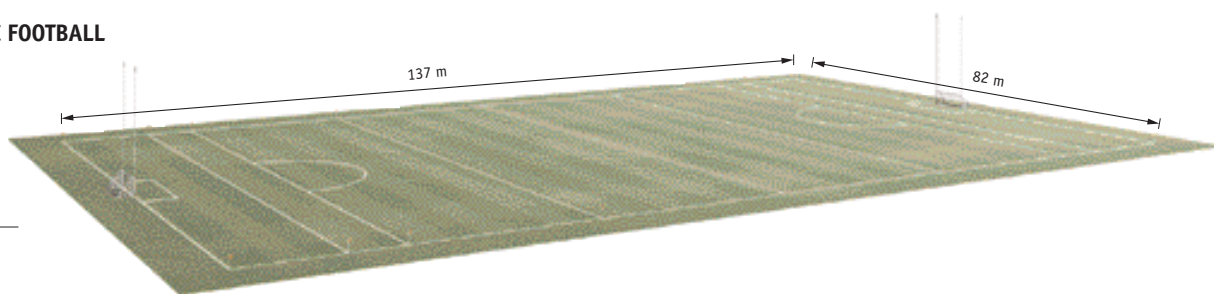
Penalty try

When a defender commits a foul that deprives the attacking team of a certain try, or forces the attacker to score a try in a less favorable position than he otherwise would have had, the referee awards the attacking team a penalty try, which is worth 5 points, between the goal posts. A convert may be attempted after a penalty try.

Free kick

A free kick is awarded to the non-offending team if a technical foul is committed. The kicker has the choice of kicking the ball or playing it with his hand. Attempting a shot on goal is not permitted. Opposing players must remain at least 10 m from the ball.

GAELIC FOOTBALL



EQUIPMENT

Dress

Thick shoulder pads are not permitted. However, the referee may authorize the wearing of soft protective equipment (padding, foam rubber, or a similar soft material) that complies with strict technical specifications.



Jersey

The number worn on the back of the jersey corresponds to the player's position on the field.

Shorts

Socks

Rugby shoes

The cleats may be of leather, plastic, rubber, or aluminum. They must not exceed 18 mm in length.

RUGBY PLAYER PROFILE

The current style of play favors players with a fully developed physique, but skills and body size may vary according to the particular position:

- A back is often tall and slender. He must have the qualities of a sprinter and a kicker.
- The three-quarters are also chosen for their speed and stamina, and must be able to make long runs.
- The halves are generally stocky, have a low center of gravity, and are quick and mobile.
- The forwards are big and sturdy (1.90 m and over 100 kg). The forward is the archetypal rugby player.

Preparation begins with basic training (running, endurance, bodybuilding) and physical exercises (stretching). Players then move on to technical training (passing games) and tactical maneuvers (positioning during throw-ins and scrums). A player reaches the peak of his career around the age of 26 or 27.

Ball

The ball is made of treated leather or polyvinyl chloride (PVC) so that it is water and mud resistant. It must be constructed of four sections, and conform to regulation dimensions. Originally round, it took its oval form when an egg shaped pig's bladder was first used.



circumferences:
760-790 mm/580-620 mm
400-440 g



1851



1923

OFFICIATING AND SANCTIONS

A referee and 2 assistants ensure that the rules of play are respected on the field. They penalize all rough play or dangerous behavior by a series of sanctions: free kicks, penalties, and yellow and red cards. They also penalize any unsportsmanlike conduct that goes against the rules and does not constitute fair play, such as insults or obstruction. All unsportsmanlike conduct results in a penalty.



Yellow card

A yellow card is handed out in the case of rough play or dangerous behavior. It constitutes a warning, and results in a 10 min expulsion. A player who receives a second yellow card is expelled for the rest of the match.



Red card

A red card is handed out in the case of especially rough play or dangerous behavior, or if a player has repeatedly contravened the rules. It results in the player's immediate expulsion.



Rory Underwood (GBR)
A winger who scored 51 tries in 85 matches (an English record), he was a member of the winning team in the Five Nations Tournament in 1991, 1992, and 1995, and a member of a finalist team at the 1991 World Cup and 1997 European Cup, with Leicester.



Jean-Pierre Rives (FRA)
A third row flank, nicknamed "Casque d'or" because of his blond hair, he captained the French national team 34 times in 59 matches. A member of the winning team in the Five Nations Tournament in 1977 and 1981, and the best French player in 1977, 1979, and 1981, he was the symbol of the French national squad during the 1970s and 1980s.



Michael Lynagh (AUS)
A fly half and the World record holder for points scored (914), including 17 tries in 72 matches with the Australian national team between 1984 and 1995, he is considered one of the world's top players. He was a member of the 1991 World Cup winning team.