



5.4 Tough Love in League Policy – Curbing Violence in our Game

The Tough Love in League (TLIL) Policy applies to all age groups from Under 13s to Open Age (Community Rugby League) competitions. A zero- tolerance approach to abuse and violence will be implemented across all NSWRL Community Rugby League Competitions.

On Field Striking / Punching

1. Any player who throws a punch or “strikes” another during a match will be automatically sent from the field. If that player is subsequently found guilty at a Judiciary hearing, (in the absence of mitigating circumstances), the MINIMUM penalty will be a one- week suspension.
 - 1.1 The Player(s) deemed to be the Aggressor in throwing a punch / punches will have their Judiciary charge graded as (at minimum) Medium (400 points).
 - 1.2 Any player found guilty of breaching rule 1.1 for the second time in a season will incur an automatic MINIMUM 12-month suspension from the game.

On Field Melee's

2. In the event that there are two or more players from the same team that are deemed to be inciting and / or involved in an on-field fight, the referee should abandon the match and the following penalties will be applied.
 - 2.1 If only one team has more than 2 players involved in the on-field fight, the opposition shall be awarded the win on forfeit. For and against will be recorded as per the competition rules and / or by-laws. Should the non-offending team have scored more than the ‘for’ points as per the competition rules / by-laws at the point of the match being abandoned, their points ‘for’ will stand. The offending teams score, regardless of how many points they have scored at the point of the match being abandoned, will be recorded as 0.
 - 2.2 If there are two or more players involved from each team the match will be considered abandoned and neither team will receive any competition points, or any points for or against.
 - 2.3 If there are three or more players involved in the on-field fight, both 2.1 and or 2.2 will be applied and the offending team will also have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted as penalty.
 - 2.4 Any team found guilty of either 2.1 or 2.3 will be placed on a \$1000 bond for the remainder of the competition season.
 - 2.5 Any team found guilty of a second offence of 2.1 or 2.3 will be disqualified from the competition.

Team Replacement Players

Over the past few seasons there has been an alarming increase in the number of team replacement players who illegally take to the field (leaving the team bench etc), when a melee begins, or when a perceived unfair decision or occurrence has taken place. As a deterrent to this type of behaviour, a zero- tolerance approach will be taken. The following penalties will apply for both the player(s) and team(s) concerned:

3. Participants who enter the field of play illegally will automatically be sent from the field.
 - 3.1 Players found guilty of infringing Rule 3 will be suspended for a minimum of six weeks.
 - 3.2 The offending player's team will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) for each player that breaches Rule 3. For example, if three players are found guilty of entering the field of play illegally, their team will be penalised nine competition points where a win is awarded 3 competition points.



Players Leaving the Playing Area

The following penalties will apply for any player or team official that leaves the playing area to become involved in any altercation or melee. Penalties will be imposed on both the player(s), official(s) and team(s) concerned:

4. Any participant (player or official) who leaves either the playing area or the team bench to become involved in any altercation or melee that is occurring outside the playing area (behind the fence or rope where spectators are located) will automatically be sent from the field.
 - 4.1 Players or Officials found guilty of infringing Rule 4 will be suspended for a minimum of six weeks.
 - 4.2 The offending player or officials team will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) for each player that breaches Rule 4. For example, if three players are found guilty of entering the field of play illegally, their team will be penalised nine competition points where a win is awarded 3 competition points.

Spectator Field Intrusion

5. Any spectator who enters the playing area or field of play with intent, or without the permission of the Ground Manager, will automatically be banned from attending Community Rugby League matches for a minimum period of 12 months. Should a spectator contravene any such penalty, the League reserves the right to suspend any siblings of the parent or family involved from playing in NSWRL related competitions. A bond / fine may be attributed to the spectator to allow them to resume attending matches after the expiry of the suspension imposed.
 - 5.1 **Failure to Identify** - Should a Club fail to identify a person(s) who has breached Rule 5, the League reserves the right to suspend the team the spectator was supporting, until such time as the person is identified.
 - 5.2 Teams and Clubs will be liable for the behaviour of their spectators. If a breach of Rule 5 has been identified, the team concerned will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points), and the match concerned will be deemed as a forfeit to the opposition team.

Spectator Unsportsmanlike Comments (to participants / match officials or other spectators)

6. Due to a rise in issues of unsportsmanlike behaviour from spectators at matches, the following process will be followed when a spectator is identified as directed negative or demeaning comments towards any player, match official or other spectator.
 - 6.1 Should any spectator be identified making unsportsmanlike comments during a match, the Referee has the authority to stop the game. The Referee will direct the Ground Manager to ask the coaches of the respective teams to speak to the supporters and ask them to refrain from making any further comments that may be deemed unsportsmanlike. The Referee will then resume the game.
 - 6.2 If there is a second instance of unsportsmanlike behaviour from the same identified spectator, the Referee will then have the authority to abandon the match at their discretion.
 - 6.3 The spectator deemed responsible will be issued a Code of Conduct Breach Notice. Should they be found guilty, the opposing team shall be awarded a win on forfeit the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) will be deducted from the offending team.
 - 6.4 The offending team will be placed on a \$1000 bond for the remainder of the competition season.
 - 6.5 Should there be a second offence related to any team, they will be disqualified from the competition.
 - 6.6 Any spectator who is charged with a High-Grade Code of Conduct Breach and is subsequently found guilty will be disqualified from attending any games for a minimum period of 12 months. Further, the team with which the person concerned is supporting will



have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.

Abandoned Games

7. In the event of a match being abandoned due to foul play the match will be deemed as completed. The team that instigated the foul play will be deemed to have forfeited the match. In the event that both teams are equally responsible for the match being abandoned, neither team will be eligible to be awarded any points for participating in the match. The match will not be replayed. Both teams will be required to attend a Code of Conduct Hearing.

Referee / Match Official Abuse

8. Any player / team official / spectator found guilty of touching a referee or official in an aggressive or inappropriate manner will be disqualified from the game for a minimum period of 12 months.
Further, the team in which the person concerned is playing for, supporting or assisting will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.
9. Any player who is dismissed from the field and is subsequently charged under 15.1F (offensive language directed towards a match official) with a grading of serious (referred directly to the Judiciary) and is found guilty of the charge, will incur a minimum penalty of a 12-match suspension.
Further, the team in which he / she represented will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.
10. Any team official / spectator who is charged with a High-Grade Code of Conduct Breach, and subsequently found guilty of abusing a referee will be disqualified from the game for a minimum period of a 12 months. **Further, the team in which the person concerned is supporting or assisting will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.**
11. Should any player be found guilty of, or accept an early guilty plea for a charge of 15.1.f Offensive Language Directed towards a Match Official, the following competition point penalty will be applied to the players team:
 - 11.1 Low grade charge – team will lose 1 Competition Point**
 - 11.2 Medium grade charge – team will lose 2 Competition Points**
 - 11.3 High and / or Serious grade charge – team will lose 3 Competition Points**

Finals Series Matches

12. Any breach of Rules 2, 3, 5, 6 or 7 that are identified and proven in finals series matches will result in the offenders team being disqualified from the Competition.

Suspended Persons

13. Community Rugby League Clubs are responsible for ensuring any suspended person who is associated with their club, does not act in any capacity which is contrary to the terms of such a suspension. Terms of suspensions are issued with all Judiciary and Conduct Notices of Outcome. Should a suspended person be found to be acting contrary to the terms of their suspension, the Club concerned will be deemed liable. The Club will be fined \$1000.00. Further, if the person concerned is associated in any capacity with a particular team within the Club, that team will be ineligible to play in any Finals Series Matches.
14. The NSWRL reserves the right to de-register any siblings or relatives of a suspended person, should that person to be found to be acting contrary to the terms of such suspension.

Suspended Players

15. Participants are responsible for ensuring they do not take to the field of play whilst they are serving a suspension. Should a suspended player take to the field of play whilst they are suspended, the player concerned will incur a further 12-month suspension which will be added to the end of the original suspension expiry date.



Open Age Competitions

16. Leagues must apply to NSWRL if they do not wish the Tough Love and League Policy and associated penalties to apply in their Open Age Competitions.