



# NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT



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## Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide all participants in Rugby League with some simple rules concerning the standards of behaviour that are expected.

I commend ARL Development for their efforts in producing this National Code of Conduct. It is another milestone in the continuing development of our great game.

I strongly recommend that everyone connected with Rugby League adopts these rules so that players, coaches, officials, parents and spectators can attend matches secure in the knowledge that it will be a safe and enjoyable sporting experience.

Regards,



Colin Love  
Chairman, Australian Rugby League



## General Principles

Participants in the game of Rugby League include players, parents, spectators, coaches, referees and officials. Every participant should:

- Discourage all instances of unsportsmanlike behaviour, foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the field.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability/disability, sexual orientation, cultural background or religion.
- Condemn the use of recreational and performance-enhancing drugs and doping practices; their use endangers the health of players and is contrary to the concept of fair play.

***Important – every person who attends a Rugby League match does so with the permission and license of the home club and/or league. Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in penalties up to and including a fine, loss of team match points and suspension.***

# CODE OF CONDUCT – PLAYER

- Be a good sport. Respect all good play whether from your team or the opposition and shake hands with and thank the opposition players and officials after the game – win, lose or draw.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit.
- Always respect the referee's decision.
- Never become involved in acts of foul play.
- Honour both the spirit and letter of the competition rules and live up to the highest ideals of ethics and sportsmanship; avoid gamesmanship and respect the traditions of the game.
- Never engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, sledging, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, trash-talking, taunting or other actions that are demeaning to other players, officials or supporters.
- Care for and respect the facilities and equipment made available to you during training and competition.
- Safeguard your health; don't use any illegal or unhealthy substances.
- Recognize that many officials, coaches and referees are volunteers who give up their time to provide their services. Treat them with the utmost respect.
- Do not bet or otherwise financially speculate, directly or indirectly, on the outcome or any other aspect of a Rugby League match or competition in which you are involved.

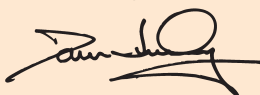
## Endorsement

*Whether you play in the local U7's or for Australia, there are certain standards that you have to live up to.*

*Rugby League is one of the world's great games and if every player remembers, and practises, these few simple rules, the game will continue to prosper.*

*I fully endorse the player's section of this Code of Conduct.*

*Best wishes,*



*Darren Lockyer*

*Player - Brisbane Broncos, Queensland & Australia*



# CODE OF CONDUCT – COACH

- Actively discourage foul play and/or unsportsmanlike behaviour by players.
- Seek to maximise the participation and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability; avoid the tendency to over-use a talented player; treat all players as equals, regardless of their talent.
- Show concern and caution towards all sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a physician and/or sports trainer to the letter when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or playing.
- Teach players that an honest effort and competing to the best of their ability is as important as victory.
- Maintain appropriate, professional relationships with players at all times.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of the rules of the game and keep abreast of current coaching methods; maintain or improve your current accreditation level.
- Always consider the health, safety and welfare of the players.
- Teach young players to realise that there is a big gap between their play and the professional game; do not coach them as if they are professionals.
- Ensure that your coaching reflects the level of the competition being played; do not be a “winner-at-all-costs” coach.
- As coach, conduct yourself at all times in a manner, and in all situations, that shows leadership, respect for the game of Rugby League and respect for all those that are involved in the game – the players, officials, the fans, the parents, the referees and the media.

## Endorsement

*As a coach, you have a special responsibility to ensure that, through your words and actions, you strive to build the character of your players, as well as their skills.*

*You also have to maintain and nurture the traditions and integrity of the game.*

*Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity and remember, constantly promote sportsmanship over gamesmanship.*

*Good luck.*



Wayne Bennett

Coach - Brisbane Broncos, Queensland and Australia



# CODE OF CONDUCT – REFEREE/TOUCH JUDGE/OFFICIAL

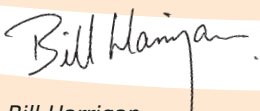
- Be impartial! Also, be consistent, objective and courteous.
- Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else; be alert to minimise dangerous physical play, fair or foul, especially in junior matches.
- Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
- Avoid any form of verbal contact with coaches, team officials, parents and spectators during play.
- Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest, both on and off the field.
- Maintain an appropriate level of fitness for the standard of game at which you are officiating.
- Condemn all and every instance of unsportsmanlike, foul or unfair play.
- Set a good example by the way you dress, speak and act towards players, coaches, officials, parents and spectators.
- Show concern and caution towards sick and injured players.
- Officiate to the age and/or experience of the players.

## Endorsement

*As a referee, you are an integral part of the game and you can help each player enjoy the game by demonstrating a positive attitude, by promoting good sporting behaviour, by being consistent and by communicating in a fair and honest manner.*

*Try to clearly express your decisions to the players in a way that can be seen and understood.*

*Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and remember, there is no substitute for a thorough knowledge of the Laws of the Game and your own integrity.*



*Bill Harrigan  
Former NRL, Origin & Test Referee*



***Referees are the key to the successful application  
of the SafePlay Code in Junior Rugby League.***

# CODE OF CONDUCT – SPECTATOR/PARENT

- Condemn all violent or illegal acts, whether they are by players, coaches, officials, parents or spectators.
- Respect the referee's decisions – don't complain or argue about calls or decisions during or after a game.
- Behave! Unsportsmanlike language, harassment or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Encourage players to play by the rules and to respect opposition players and officials.
- Never ridicule or scorn a player for making a mistake – respect their efforts.
- Understand that sport is part of a total life experience, and the benefits of involvement go far beyond the final score of a game.
- Participate in positive cheering that encourages the players in the team you are supporting; do not engage in any cheering that taunts or intimidates opponents, their fans or officials.
- Remember that children participate in Rugby League for their own enjoyment, not yours!
- At all times, follow the directions of the Ground Manager and/or other match day staff.
- Never arrive at a Junior League game under the influence of alcohol, never bring alcohol to a Junior League game and only drink alcohol, if it is available, in a responsible manner in the designated licensed area.

## Endorsement

*I've always loved Rugby League - going to the games and supporting my favourite teams. But I don't love it when fans get unruly or cause trouble on the sidelines.*

*As a spectator, be sure to do the right thing. Enjoy the game and let the players know that win or lose, you support their efforts.*

*As a parent, lead by example, promote good sportsmanship and be a positive role model for your children.*

*I fully support this Code of Conduct.*

*Layne Beachley*

*Layne Beachley  
Rugby League fan and six-time World Surfing Champion*



# CODE OF CONDUCT – PENALTIES

*Note – Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials and spectators.*

1. No person/s attending a match shall:
  - a. Use offensive or obscene language to any player, coach, referee, touch judge, official or other spectator;
  - b. Enter the Field of Play during the course of a match without the prior approval of the Ground Manager appointed by the home club and/or league;
  - c. Dispute the decision of a referee or touch judge either during or after a match;
  - d. Assault or act with aggression to any person/s;
  - e. Behave in a way contrary to this Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game;
  - f. Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of the match by any other person/s, or brings discredit to the home club and/or league;
  - g. Act in such a way as to exhibit racial intolerance, by language or other conduct, to any other person/s;
  - h. Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Ground Manager, official of the home club and/or league, or official of the team/club which that person/s is supporting.
2. Any person/s contravening **Rule 1** may be reported by the Ground Manager to the Team Manager or other official of the team which that person/s is supporting. Where a team does not have a Team Manager present, a request or direction from the Ground Manager to any official of the team or the team's club shall be regarded as a direction to the Team Manager for the purposes of this Code.
3. The Ground Manager and/or Team Manager must advise the offending person/s of the relevant breach of the Code. The Ground Manager must note the details of their report to the Team Manager on the reverse of the team sheet.
4. In the event that the inappropriate conduct continues, the Ground Manager and/or Team Manager may request the offender/s to immediately leave the ground. This should also be noted on the team sheet.
5. In the event the person/s refuses to obey the direction of the Ground Manager and/or Team Manager, the Ground Manager may direct the referee to terminate the match. In the event that the match is so terminated, the club's and/or league's committee may, at its absolute discretion award the competition points to the non-offending team, or declare that neither side shall be awarded competition points for that match.
6. Clubs which do not exercise control over their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials or spectators may be called upon by the league to accept responsibility for their actions and the following penalties may apply (in addition to penalties which may be imposed by the league's judiciary):
  - **FIRST OFFENCE**  
A fine not exceeding \$500, and/or loss of competition points, and/or suspension of the player from playing, and/or suspension of the offender/s from attending future matches.
  - **SECOND OFFENCE**  
Suspension of the player, and/or team and/or club from the competition on a temporary basis.
  - **THIRD OFFENCE**  
Suspension of the player and/or team and/or club either for the remainder of the season, or permanently.

*Breaches of this Code of Conduct may cause a match to be stopped!*

# NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT



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Club



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**