

SPECIAL RULES SET DOWN FOR 2024

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Failure of any team's management to follow any of the procedures set out in these Special Rules, particularly playing an unauthorised player or failing to have the necessary Squad List available for examination by opposing team's management before matches, may result in that team being deemed to have defaulted any game where such omissions occur.
- 1.2 Regardless of which weight and/or age scale is adopted for Counties Manukau Junior Rugby, all grades are to ensure adherence to the rules. This is to be done from the start of the season and with the full support of the Counties Manukau Junior Management Board (CMJMB) to Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union (CMRFU). This is to include some form of positive identification for all players, ideally a document with a photograph including certified age and weight information.
- 1.3 These Special Rules will be reviewed at the end of each season and updated to reflect any changes expected for the forthcoming season (e.g. Key Dates, Definitions).
- 1.4 The CMJMB will continually assess the Grading Structure and may, depending on feedback received from clubs or changes imposed by Counties Manukau Rugby and New Zealand Rugby Union, undertake a review of some or all aspects of the Grading Structure after the conclusion of the season. Any review of the Grading Structure will be at the discretion of the CMJMB, who will notify clubs that a review of the Grading Structure will be taking place, confirm the scope of the review, and details the review process.
- 1.5 All people involved with junior rugby must follow APPLAUD (positive sideline behaviour) at all times.

2 Key Dates

- 2.1 The Special Rules will be circulated to every club no later than end of January.
- 2.2 The CMJMB Junior Rugby Key Dates will be circulated to every club no later than the end of January.
- 2.3 Team entries for all grades must be confirmed by email to the CMRFU Competition Manager no later than 5 April 2024.
- 2.4 All Dispensation requests must be submitted to the CMJMB no later than 29th March.
- 2.5 All Dispensations shall be confirmed by the CMJMB no later than Wednesday 17th April 2023.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 Ages are to be prior to the first of July and weights as set out the Grading Structure.
- 3.2 The following definitions apply to these Special Rules:
 - '**authorised**' means a player who is eligible to play rugby after being registered, verified, and (where applicable) having received approval of any dispensation.
 - '**CMJMB**' means the Counties Manukau Junior Management Board
 - '**CMRFU**' means the Counties Manukau Rugby Football Union.

'dispensation' means a formal exemption from the CMJMB for a player to play in a grade outside the grading structure.

'Competition Grade' means any grade in which teams are allocation points based on the results of games played during Round Robin and teams are ranked based on points allocated throughout the season for eligibility to take part in semi-finals and finals.

'Dispensation Committee' means the members of the JMB Executive responsible for approving or rejecting requests for dispensations.

'Grading Structure' means the structure for allocating players to an age grade based on date of birth and weight limits.

'JMB Executive' means the executive board of club representatives responsible for managing the CMJMB and administering junior club rugby in in Counties Manukau.

'registered' means a player whose registration is entered into the NZR database.

'Registration Day' means the day (or days) notified by the CMJMB to all clubs that a formal registration and weigh-in will be conducted for pre-registered 8th to 13th grade players.

'Squad List' means a list of all players in a team including name, photo, date of birth, and weight.

'verified' means a player who has had their weight and date of birth. checked by a member of the JMB Executive.

4 Registration

- 4.1 Team Entry Registrations must be received by the Draws Convenor and CMJMB Registrar at least fourteen days before commencement of the playing season.
- 4.2 Clubs will enter team in the following pools in their respective grades – 8th, 9th, 10th 11th.
 - 4.2.1 Courage (red)
 - 4.2.2 Connected (white)
 - 4.2.3 Work Hard (black)
- 4.3 Three weeks grading round for 12th and 13th grades.
- 4.2 4.4 Clubs are required to “pre-register” players on the NZ Rugby Sporty online database prior to Registration Day.
- 4.3 4.5 Clubs are required to record players weight and verify date of birth no later than 31st March.
- 4.4 4.6 A Registration Day (or days) is to be conducted by CMJMB to officially record the age and weight of all pre-registered 8th to 13th grade players. There will only be one weigh-in per player. Once a player has been officially weighed, that is the weight for the season, no re-weighing after games or at a later date. Under 6-7 Clubs to manage the process, weigh-in and photos.
- 4.5 4.7 At Registration Day each player must provide either an original birth certificate, passport or other validated proof of date of birth. The CMJMB will photograph, weigh, and record each player’s details and determine the player’s eligibility for their pre-registered team.
- 4.6 4.8 New players who register after Registration Day must be registered using the registration process detailed above and clubs must notify the CMJMB Registrar of all new registrations as soon as possible.
- 4.7 4.9 New players must be weighed-in by a member of the JMB Executive prior to the next JMB meeting after that player has registered or the next Registration Day, in conjunction with the 2024 key dates calendar, whichever is sooner.
- 4.8 4.10 New Players may not play in matches until such time as they are officially authorised, with any late registered players being graded according to their age and weight at that time (i.e. to

qualify for a grade a player must meet the same requirements as if being weighed at the start of the season).

5 Eligibility

- 5.1 Players may not play in matches until such time as they are officially authorised.
- 5.2 Once a player is authorised that player qualifies to play within the specified grade for the entire season and no growth allowance will be necessary.
- 5.3 CMJMB may hold multiple Registration Days or offer late weigh-ins to allow late registered players to be authorised. These dates will be defined in the "Season Overview" released prior to the season start.
- 5.4 Once a player of any age or weight has participated in three games in any one grade, that player is ineligible to play in any lower grade.
- 5.5 Coaches may report any players thought to be ineligible to the convener of the Flying Squad/CMJMB Registrar. **Coaches have no power to stop a player from another team playing.** Suspect players are to be reported to the CMJMB Registrar for follow up checks to be made.
- 5.6 Clubs must pay all team fees prior to the end of June. If team fees are still unpaid on 31 July then no teams will be accepted from that club for the following year until the fees are paid in full and that club will have no voting rights at the end of the season.
- 5.7 To be eligible to play in either competition semi-finals or finals for a particular team, a player must be registered with the CMJMB (for that team) and have played a minimum of four (4) scheduled games prior to the semi-finals. Also, if a player registers after that time that team is not eligible to play in a semi-final or final.
- 5.8 Every registered player is eligible to play in finals of competition grades provided they meet the criteria above.
- 5.9 If a competition grade team forfeits more than two (2) games that team is not eligible to play in semi-final or final.
- 5.10 Any Club team playing unregistered players shall forfeit the match and any points and/or bonus points gained. The non-offending team will be deemed to have won the game 30-0 and will be granted the win points plus a bonus point for the match. (ie: 5 competition points).

6 Dispensations

- 6.1 In extenuating circumstances, dispensations may be granted by the Dispensation Committee.
- 6.2 Any request for dispensation must be in writing to CMJMB Registrar with full explanation and a compelling reason why the dispensation is being requested.
- 6.3 Requests for dispensations will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Dispensation Committee.
- 6.4 All teams with dispensations must identify their dispensated players to the opposition prior to the commencement of games.
- 6.5 All teams with dispensations must field those players as directed by the Dispensation Committee and ensure they field no more than 2 dispensated players at a time.
- 6.6 13th grade teams may have up to 4 players over 80kg available to play in a single game but only 2 of those players may take part in the game.

- 6.7 All teams who have players with specific dispensation rules must adhere to those rules at all times.
- 6.8 If players / teams (outstanding players or teams) who are eligible to play down a grade due to the weight guidelines, are dominating the grade, restrictions can be placed on the player or team at the discretion of the Dispensation Committee in line with restrictions that can be placed on other dispensated players.
- 6.9 **Legacy Grading Exemption (LGE)**
An application for Legacy Grading Exemption (LGE) may be requested to any player who is returning to play in 2024 having been previously registered in 2023 and where that player is moving up two grades within the new grading structure.
- 6.10 13th Grade players who are 12 on 1st January 2024, and meet the grading structure criteria, can play for the 13th grade.
- 6.11 Weight and Age limits for players playing down a grade. That a dispensation may be considered if that player meets the following criteria.
- 6.11.1 Extenuating circumstances
 - 6.11.2 Playing returning from injury.
 - 6.11.3 No team in their age group they are eligible for
 - 6.11.4 Medical reasons
 - 6.11.5 Year/Weight Limits:

Year	Weight Limits
Y3	26kgs
Y4	30kgs
Y5	34kgs
Y6	38kgs
Y7	42kgs

7 Transfers

- 7.1 Players permanently transferring from one team to another and/or from club to club during the season must have the prior permission from the transferring club.

8 Squad Lists

- 8.1 A Squad List for each team will be created in the NZ Rugby Sporty database and must accurately record the following information through the MyRugby App:
- a) Team identity, opposing team, date, and venue as per the draw on the MyRugby App.
 - b) Each player's name and registration number.
 - c) Jersey number for that day (11th, 12th and 13th grades only), noting:
 - a. Jersey numbers must not be duplicated within a playing squad as players are assigned to a position on the MyRugby App and the jersey number signifies that the player played on the day; and
 - b. Jersey numbers may not be swapped between the 22 players on the Squad List during a game.
- 8.2 Team management of any team in 8th grade or above must carry their official Squad List to all games and only those players listed as authorised are eligible to compete.

- 8.3 Squad lists must be made available to opposition coaches or managers at all games if requested. It will be the responsibility of the host club coach/manager to meet with the opposing team and exchange Squad Lists.
- 8.4 Checking Squad Lists is to take place on the field of play 15-30 minutes prior to the game starting and is compulsory for 8th to 13th grades but optional for all other grades.
- 8.5 Squad Lists must be produced when requested by a representative of CMJMB or an opposing team official for any reason at any time during the season.
- 8.6 Failing to have the necessary Squad List available for examination by opposing team management before matches may result in the offending team defaulting the game.

9 Game Management

- 9.1 Each club shall appoint suitable referees to each nominated field of play. Suitable referees should have completed, or be in the process of completing, the NZRU Associate Referees course, or have completed the Small Blacks coaching course. Due to the basic philosophy of the Associate Referee structure, it must be accepted that at present some of these referees may not be independent of a team's management or players.
- 9.2 Each team is to provide an Event Manager for their game. Half field teams must have one and full field teams must have two Event Managers. A high vis vest is to be worn to enable them to be easily identified.
- 9.3 12th and 13th grade team management and reserve players must stand behind the dead ball line (with their team playing in the direction away from them) for the duration of the game. Teams must change ends at half time. One person may be stationed on the side-line this can be the coach or medic (cannot be one of the reserves). This side-line person must identify themselves to the referee prior to kick off. If the layout of the fields does not allow room for this at the end of the field, then there must be a designated area available. Players who have been sinbinned must stand with their team behind the dead ball line.
- 9.4 Team managers must meet with the opposition to verify the score at the end of the match and clearly record/submit the result and identify the winning side (if applicable)
- 9.5 Relevant information regarding any Sinbins or sending's off, concussions and serious injuries (i.e. an injury that requires a player to receive professional medical attention) must be emailed to CMRFU Draws Convener within 72 hours from completion of each game with players, club, grade, and name.

10 Competition Grades

Competition Format

- 10.1 Competition Grades shall consist of as many 'full' rounds as determined by the Draws Convener and CMJMB.
- 10.2 Semi-finals are played between the top team and the fourth team, the second team and the third team, eg Semi-Final 1 – 1v4, Semi-Final 2 2v3. Semi-Finals will be played at 1 and 2 ranked clubs. The winners to meet in the final for the championship.
- 10.3 In the event of two teams ending up on the same points in the competition table, the winning team from the competition game/s played between them will decide which team is ranked higher. If the teams drew, or played each other twice and won one game each, then it shall come down to the points for and against difference to decide the ranking. If still equal, then it shall come down to the toss of a coin to decide the ranking.

- 10.4 In the event of enough teams in the grade requiring it to be split into two divisions there will be semi's and finals for each division.
- 10.5 Semi-finals are to be played the weekend following the competition of the competition round. Any catch-up games are to be played during the week before semi-finals weekend.

Referees

- 10.6 For all Competition Grade games referees shall be appointed by the Counties Manukau Rugby Referees Association.

Points Allocation

- 10.7 Points shall be allocated on a per team basis as follows: 4 for a win, 2 for a draw, 1 for being within 7 points, and 1 for scoring four or more tries.
- 10.8 In the event of a team forfeiting or defaulting a match, a score of 30-0 against the forfeiting/defaulting team shall be entered on the score sheet and the non-forfeiting or non-defaulting opponents shall be awarded the 4-win points plus a bonus point making a total of 5 points.

11 Disciplinary Proceedings for Junior Rugby

- 11.1 All disciplinary matters must be passed onto the CMRFU Disciplinary Committee for resolution in accordance with the procedures specified by the NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings, within 48 hours at the completion of the match played
- 11.2 Any player ordered off or sin-binned must be recorded on the Squad List (Note: red and yellow card can only be issued by referees appointed to referee a game by the Counties Manukau Rugby Referees Association.
- 11.3 Referees and/or Assistant Referees must submit a written report on the standard form within 48 hours of the completion of the match.
- 11.4 Any player ordered off shall be automatically suspended from all rugby until their club conducts a disciplinary review and he/she has personally appeared before the Disciplinary Committee and completed the penalty imposed (if any).
- 11.5 A player that has been sin binned on two occasions during a playing season shall be advised in writing by CMRFU that should any further sin binning of that player occur during the season, on each occasion the player shall be automatically suspended from all rugby and is required to appear before the CMRFU Disciplinary Committee.
- 11.6 Each club is to appoint a Judicial Representative and any matters requiring judicial involvement are to be directed to that person.
- 11.7 Each club's Judicial Representative must also ensure any matters requiring judicial involvement are sent to CMJMB President.

12 Complaints

- 12.1 Any team that believes that their opposing team has breached these Special Rules during a game should raise this with the opposing club's President within 48 hours of the alleged breach occurring.
- 12.2 In the event club representatives are unable to resolve an issue raised under clause 12.1 within 96 hours of the issue being raised then the team who raised the alleged breach may raise a

complaint by completing the CMJMB Complaints Form and sending to the CMJMB President within 48 hours of the alleged breach.

13 Rules

- 13.1 A complete set of these rules shall be circulated to every club no later than end of January each year.
- 13.2 Remits to change these rules must be received by the CMJMB Secretary by 5.00pm on the last Wednesday in September. The CMJMB Secretary will then circulate remits to all clubs prior to the October CMJMB meeting for voting.
- 13.3 Votes must be submitted in writing by clubs, authorised by each club's President, and be received by the CMJMB Secretary no later than the last Wednesday in October.
- 13.4 Results of any votes will be tabled to the CMRFU Board to ratify and published at CMJMB AGM in November.
- 13.5 No other changes may be made to these rules unless a Special Remits Meeting is called.

14 Basic Points of Law

- 14.1 CMJMB will operate all under 13-age grades and below subject to the rules in the Small Blacks to All Blacks Development Model put out by the New Zealand Rugby Union.
- 14.2 CMJMB will operate the following substitution rule in all grades:
 - A. **All players must play a minimum of half a game (this is to include at least two full quarters).**
 - B. Rolling substitutions are not permitted.
 - C. Substitutions may be made at half time or approximately halfway through each half when the referee will allow and signal a substitution break. This break should be no longer than one minute and will indicate the end of the current and beginning of a new quarter. This substitution break is solely for the purpose of making substitutions, coaches are not permitted to use this break to provide coaching advice to players/teams. Substituting players at quarter break must be agreed by both teams in advance of the game starting.
 - D. Non-injury substitutions can only take place at half time or these quarter time breaks.
 - E. If, due to a minor injury, a player leaves the field during a quarter, and is cleared to later continue playing, then this player may only return at a designated Substitution break, or at halftime.
- 14.3 Maximum players allowed per playing squad per game are to be:
 - A. 22 for 15 a-side teams as per NZRU Domestic Safety Law Variations;
 - B. 18 for 12 a-side teams;
 - C. 15 for 10-a-side teams
 - D. 13 for 8-a-side teams; and
 - E. 12 for 7-a-side teams.

15 The Season

- 15.1 The playing season will start on a date agreed upon by the designated Draws Convenor and the CMJMB Executive, after considering the dates of the Easter and school holidays. The season will finish at the discretion of the CMJMB Executive and the Draws Convenor.
- 15.2 No rugby games will be played over King's Birthday and Matariki Weekends

16 Cancellations & Defaults

- 16.1 12th and 13th grade games shall not be cancelled, unless for reasons of player safety. If it is mutually agreed that a game cannot be played, it is the responsibility of the team requesting the change to arrange a date for the game to be rescheduled within a reasonable time that suits both teams. It is also that team's responsibility to notify the referees of the change as soon as possible. The Draws Convenor must also be notified of the change of day/time/venue so they can check for any game clashes.
- 16.2 Cancellations will be notified by 4.00pm on Fridays. Any team wishing to cancel a game after 4.00pm on Friday must make contact with the opposition team management to arrange a cancellation or rescheduling of the game.
- 16.3 If a team must default a game it is that team's responsibility to notify the opposition and the referees as soon as possible.
- 16.4 The Draws Convenor must also be advised of a default by the defaulting team, and the team being defaulted must still send through a Squad List noting the default.

17 Coaching

- 17.1 All coaches, including assistant coaches must attend the compulsory NZRU accredited Small Blacks coaching course facilitated by CMRFU annually. Failure to attend the appropriate course will result in that coach's team being withdrawn from the draw. **This is an NZRU requirement.**
- 17.2 A calendar of prospective coaching courses will be circulated to all clubs by the beginning of February each year.

18 Consequences of Breaching the Special Rules

- 18.1 Breaches of these Special Rules may result in penalties for the offending club, including (but not limited to) issue of a formal warning or \$250 fine to be decided at the discretion of the CMJMB Executive.

19 Addendum

As agreed by the CMRFU the SPECIAL RULES SET DOWN shall apply to Counties Manukau Junior rugby with the following proviso and riders.

- 19.1 Where mentioned "club" is interpreted as "club and/or secondary school" as applicable.
- 19.2 13th grade is open to any Under 13 Intermediate or Secondary School pupils.
- 19.3 13th grade is open to any Under 13 players.
- 19.4 The Grading Structure is set by the CMJMB in conjunction with the clubs.
- 19.5 All players attending secondary school and eligible for 14th grade and above must play rugby for their secondary school. All secondary school grades 14th grade and above come under the jurisdiction of CMRFU and rules of the CM Secondary Schools.