

NSW RUGBY LEAGUE

Community Rugby League — Reference Pack

Cross-References Cited in Section 5.5

Melee Escalation & Associated Crowd Invasion Policy

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1. P&P Section 5.4 Rule 1 — On-Field Striking / Punching

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), pp. 143–144

Any Player who throws a punch or “strikes” another during a match will be automatically sent from the Field of Play. If that Player is subsequently found guilty through a Judicial process, (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 Medium/Grade 2 (at minimum).
- 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.

Key text: Strike → automatic send-off. Minimum 1-week suspension. Aggressor minimum Medium / Grade 2. Second offence in a season = automatic 12-month suspension.

2. P&P Section 5.4 Rule 7 — Players or Team Officials Leaving the Playing Area

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), p. 144

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), Team Official(s) and team(s) concerned:

7. Any participant (being a Player or Team 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 of Play.

7.1 Players or Officials found guilty of any breach of Rule 7 will be suspended for a minimum of six weeks; and

7.2 The offending Player or Team Official'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 7.

Key text: Leaving the Playing Area to join an altercation = automatic send-off, minimum 6-week individual suspension, and the team loses a win's worth of competition points (2 or 3) per offender.

3. P&P Section 5.4 Rule 8 — Abandoned Games

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), p. 144

8. In the event of a match being abandoned due to foul play the match will be deemed as completed. The team that is determined by the Match Officials to have instigated the foul play will be deemed to have forfeited the match. In the event that the Match Officials determine 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.

Key text: Match abandoned due to foul play = deemed completed, no replay. Instigating team forfeits. If both equally responsible, neither team gets any points. Both teams attend a Code of Conduct hearing.

4. P&P Section 5.4 Rule 9 — Finals Series Matches

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), p. 144

9. At the discretion of the relevant League, any breach of rules 6, 8, 11–14, occurring in finals series matches, will result in the offending team or teams being disqualified from the relevant competition. Teams disqualified following misconduct in finals series matches will not be eligible for any premiership honours for that season.

Key text: Misconduct in a finals match can disqualify the offending team from the competition AND make them ineligible for premiership honours that season — at the discretion of the relevant League.

5. P&P Section 5.4 Rule 10 — Suspended Players

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), pp. 144–145

10. Participants are responsible for ensuring they do not take to the Field of Play whilst they are serving any rugby league-related suspension. Should a suspended Player take to the Field of Play whilst they are so suspended, the Player concerned will be issued an automatic and fixed further 12-month suspension which will be added to the end of the original suspension expiry date. The coach, team manager or other team staff will also be issued a 12-month suspension.

Key text: A suspended Player who takes the field gets an additional automatic 12-month suspension added to their existing one. The coach, team manager or other team staff who allowed it also receive a 12-month suspension.

6. P&P Section 5.4 Rules 11–14 — Spectator Field Intrusion

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 5.4 (Tough Love in League Policy), p. 145

- 11.** 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.
- 12.** Should a Spectator contravene any such penalty, the League reserves the right to suspend any children / 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.
- 13.** Failure to Identify – Should a Club refuse, fail or neglect to identify any 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.
- 14.** Teams and Clubs are liable for the behaviour of their Spectators. If any 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.

Key text: Spectator entering field = automatic 12-month ban. Club must identify offenders or team is suspended. Spectator misbehaviour costs the team a win's worth of competition points and a match forfeit.

7. P&P Section 6.2 — Code of Conduct Procedure

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Section 6.2 (Code of Conduct Procedure), pp. 153–155

Rule 6.1 — Administration (Incident Review Coordinator)

The Incident Review Coordinator (to be appointed by the League Board and/or Competition Committee) will be responsible for the administration of the Conduct Review Code of Procedure and the following duties:

- 6.1.1 Review all acts of misconduct and other incidents and breaches of the NRL National Code of Conduct.
- 6.1.2 Investigate, examine and consider any conduct that may constitute an offence.
- 6.1.3 Recommend and/or take action where considered appropriate.
- 6.1.6 Grading of any charges.

Rule 7.7 — Response to Charge and Breach Notice

Following notification of the charge or the issuing of an Adjudicated Breach Notice, the person charged may respond by:

- 7.7.1 Taking an early guilty plea which overcomes the need to appear before the Conduct Review Committee.
- 7.7.2 Pleading guilty to the offence but dispute the grading (or in the case of an Adjudicated Breach Notice the penalty issued).
- 7.7.3 Pleading not guilty and have the matter go before the Conduct Review Committee.

Key text: The Adjudicated Breach Notice mechanism. Three responses available: early guilty plea, guilty plea disputing the grading, or not guilty (matter proceeds to the Conduct Review Committee).

8. NRL Offences Index — Charge 15.1.i

Source: NSWRL Community Rugby League P&P Manual 2026, Judiciary Appendix 2 — Schedule of Offences, p. 178

“Coming from a distance to become involved in a fight”

Penalty schedule (Clean Record / 1st Offence — increased for prior proved offences):

Grading	Base Penalty Points	Suspension
Grade 1	3	6 matches (5 with early guilty plea)
Grade 2	3	7 matches (6 with early guilty plea)
Grade 3	3	8 matches (7 with early guilty plea)
Serious	4 (Min Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel — 6 to 14 matches depending on grading

Key text: Any player who comes from a distance to become involved in a fight is liable to 5–14 matches suspension as an INDIVIDUAL penalty. This is in addition to any team-level breach under Section 5.5.

10. NSWRL Rules and Regulations — Rule 8 (Misconduct)

Source: New South Wales Rugby League Limited Rules and Regulations, Rule 8 (Misconduct), p. 7

8.1 The Code of Conduct applies to each category of person and entity aforementioned at Rule 4.1. Those persons and entities shall be bound by and shall comply in all respects with the Code of Conduct.

8.2 Notwithstanding anything herein or elsewhere contained, the provisions of the Code of Conduct are not intended to affect in any way the provisions of the NSWRL Judiciary Code of Procedure or the operation of the NSWRL Judiciary.

Rule 4.1 — Persons and entities bound by these Rules:

- a) Clubs
- b) Associated Clubs
- c) Players
- d) Club Officials

Key text: Clubs, Associated Clubs, Players and Club Officials are ALL bound by the Code of Conduct under Rule 8.1. Clubs are therefore responsible for the conduct of their players, parents, carers, coaches, officials and supporters.