

Statement to all Kent RFU Mini/Midi Rugby Sections regarding protective clothing for young players:

Kent RFU Mini/Midi Committee is issuing this statement following a number of recent concerns regarding injuries which have been caused by the wearing of non-regulation equipment. This statement is designed to give practical advice to parents, coaches and managers of young players aged 6 to 12 and is not intended to be a substitute for the details of RFU regulation 15.7.4, iRB Law 4 and Regulation 12.

WHAT PLAYERS CAN WEAR:

1) The **basic equipment** for rugby players is **socks, shorts and jersey**, which for matches will typically be in the club colours. These items **should not be padded**. Children should of course wear **underwear** beneath; this may include heat retaining lycra style vests, shorts and / or leggings or tights.

2) Players should wear **boots** with approved metal studs or plastic moulded studs but these **must not be sharp or abrasive**.

Coaches are requested to adopt the practice of encouraging players to change their footwear on leaving the ground as inevitably concrete car parks etc. will cause studs to become abrasive.

3) Protective **headgear** may be worn but it should be iRB approved.

4) Protective **shoulder padding** may be worn but it should be iRB approved

5) Protective **shin guards** may be worn but these must be of **non-rigid material** and not of the plastic moulded type that is often worn for school football.

6) **Mitts** (fingerless gloves) may be worn but these should not cover the finger tips

7) A **mouthguard** or dental protector is highly recommended.

8) Although one would not wish to see much evidence of this in mini rugby, players may wear supports made of elasticated or compressible materials, which must be washable, and bandages and/or dressings to cover or protect any injury.

WHAT PLAYERS MUST NOT WEAR

a) any item that is contaminated by blood.

b) any item that is sharp or abrasive.

c) any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection

d) jewellery such as watches, rings or earrings.

e) gloves.

f) shorts with padding sewn into them.

g) a single stud at the toe of the boot.

The match referee has discretion to request the removal of any items he considers unsafe.

For the purpose of clarification, tracksuits which have zips at the neck/ down the body and/or at the ankles must not be worn. Training tops and bottoms of flexible and/or weather proof material with elasticated neckline, cuffs and ankles may be worn for training and particularly when the weather is cold or inclement. Training suits should not be worn during a match.

To avoid doubt and in the interest of child welfare, if the weather is so inclement as to make it difficult for the majority of children to stay warm, whilst actively engaged in rugby activities, without additional protective clothing the practice or fixture should be called off.