



# **MANLY WARRINGAH TOUCH ASSOCIATION**

## **By-Law – U7s and U9s Modified Rules**



## Playing Touch Football – Basic Rules and Terminology

### Introduction

Manly Warringah Touch Association (MWTA / Manly Touch) will conduct their competitions under the current Touch Football Australia (TFA) Rules, 7th Edition & Amendments. However, the MWTA By Laws – Junior and Senior Competition Rules specify supplementary conditions and procedures to be applied by MWTA.

All players, coaches, managers, officials, etc. participating in any MWTA competitions agree to be bound by TFA and MWTA rules and procedures.

MWTA Executive Committee have appointed an Administration Manager to administer our local competitions and a Ground Manager to run the actual game day operations and to ensure all local competitions are conducted in adherence to MWTA's By-Laws.

The Working With Children Check (WWCC) is a legal requirement that applies to persons who work or volunteer with children (U18). It checks the background of persons who work or volunteer with children in sport clubs. All coaches, managers, team contacts and referees, who are aged 18 or older, must have a current WWCC or be exempt from holding one under the law. A parent, who coaches a team that their child plays in, is no longer considered exempt from holding a WWCC for that activity.

The MWTA Executive Committee reserves the right to alter any local rules it deems fit.

### Game Terminology and Rules

Touch Football, like any sport, has a number of unique terminologies and rules; see below for a list of the most common with their explanation.

#### Aim of the Game

- The objective of the game is to score more touchdowns than the other team
- Each touchdown is counted singularly i.e. one point
- The winner of the game is the team with the most touchdowns at the end of the game

#### Attacking Team

- Is the team in possession of the ball

#### Defending Team

- Is the team without the ball

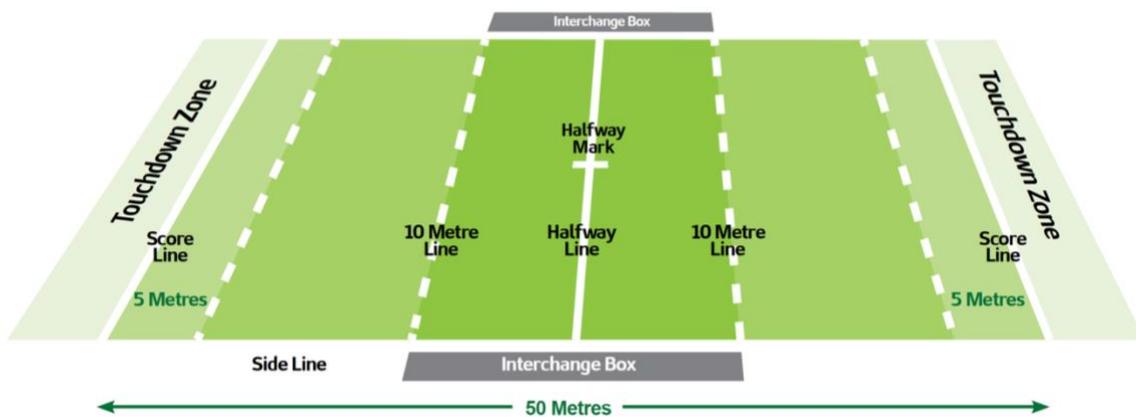
#### Team and Players on the Field

- A touch football team may consist of as many as 14 players
- A maximum of six players are allowed on the field at any one time
- **Modification for Under 7s and 9s** - only 5 players are allowed on the field, with up to 5 substitutes
- Players not participating in the game are to remain behind the sideline in the interchange box until a teammate steps off the field
- The interchange can only be made from one side of the field. The interchange must take place from an 'onside' position, or after a touchdown, when players can substitute at will
- An unlimited number of interchanges between players is allowed

### Field of Play

- A touch football field is half the size of a Rugby, League or Soccer field
- The full size of a touch football playing field is 50 metres wide and 70 metres long (not including the interchange box or the touchdown zone). It is bound by sidelines and scorelines, which extend five (5) metres past the scoreline. (See Figure 1). Players must stay within these confines
- **Modification for Under 7s and 9s** - Manly Touch use a smaller field measuring thirty-five (35) metres wide by fifty (50) metres long

Figure 1



### Halfway Line

- Is the line that divides the field into halves and the line which attackers must stand behind for the commencement of, or recommencement of, play

### Halfway Mark

- Is the point in the centre of the halfway line from where play is started or recommenced

### Length of Game

- The game is usually 40 minutes duration with two x 20-minute halves and a five-minute halftime break
- **Modification for Under 7s and 9s** - Manly Touch Under 7s and 9s games are 2 x 11.5-minute halves and a two-minute halftime break

### Toss

- The referee will ask for a 'toss' of a coin with both captains, with the winning team having the choice of tapping off or defending and also choosing the direction in which they will run. 'Rock Scissor Paper' is also an accepted method of determining the toss

### Commencement

- The game is commenced, or recommenced after a touchdown is scored, by placing the ball on the centre of the halfway line by the team in possession performing a tap. The tap is taken in the latter case by the team scored against.

### **The Tap**

- A tap is the only form of kick in the game, no other kicking is permitted
- A tap is used to commence or recommence play (at the start of the game and at the restart after halftime, after a penalty, or after a touchdown has been scored)
- A tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground on the location of the mark (given by the referee) and releasing it from the hands, tapping the ball gently with the foot and retrieving the ball cleanly from the ground
- The person who performs the tap is able to score a touchdown without having to pass the ball

### **Pass**

- A pass is the action of throwing or otherwise propelling the ball to a teammate who is beside (but not in front of you) or behind you

### **Six Touches**

- The attacking team maintains possession of the ball until six touches have been effected unless a touchdown is scored or an infringement causes the ball to be handed over to the opposition
- Once six touches have been completed, the attacking team hands the ball over and becomes the defending team
- Play is then recommenced with a rollball or in the instance of a penalty, a tap

### **'Onside' and 'Offside'**

- This refers to a player's position on the field and affects both attackers and defenders

#### Attack Onside/Offside

- Onside (in attack) means being in line with or behind your teammate who is currently in possession of the ball
- For an attacker to be in an onside position, they must be 'behind the ball' relative to the direction in which their team is running i.e. spread out behind the attacking player who is currently in possession of the ball. The ball must be passed backwards
- All players must be in their own half of the field at the start of play
- Offside (in attack) means being in front of your teammate who is in possession of the ball

#### Defence Onside/Offside

- Onside (in defence) means being in line with or behind the referee at the time of the rollball or tap
- The defending team must retreat 5 metres which is normally to the point that is in line with the referee after every touch. Defenders can move forward and make a touch once the attacking team has performed a roll ball and dummy half touches the ball
- Offside (in defence) means being within five metres of the play when the attacking player rolls the ball in defence or within ten metres of a tap (and not making an effort to retire to a point either in line or behind the referee)
- An offside player cannot directly involve themselves in the play until they have moved to an onside position. If they involve themselves in the play while in an offside position, they will be penalized
- The defending team may move forward to effect a touch as soon as the Dummy Half touches the ball
- **Modification for Under 7s and 9s** - the defenders can only move up when the first receiver catches the ball, and/or the dummy half runs with the ball

### **Scoring a Touchdown**

- A team in possession of the ball may score a touchdown by placing the ball on or over the score line (within the boundaries of the extended sidelines), without being touched
- Players must place the ball on the ground in a controlled manner in order to score a touchdown
- Please note players do not have to run around to the middle of the try line and score 'under the posts', score the touchdown where you can
- Each touchdown is worth one point
- After a touchdown is scored, play re-commences with a tap from the halfway mark
- The team that was scored against re-starts with the ball

### **Making / Effecting a Touch**

- A touch is any contact on any part of the body, hair, clothing or ball and can be made by the defending player or even an attacking player
- If a touch is effected on a player in possession, that player must return to the mark and perform a rollball
- The game is based on a great degree of honesty, so if you get touched you need to play the ball and likewise if you are defending you should never call a 'touch' if you did not actually touch the attacking player (this is called a 'phantom touch')

### **'The Mark'**

- The mark is the position on the field where the attacking player, in possession of the ball, is at the time the touch is effected
- When a player is touched with the ball they have to return to the mark to perform a 'rollball' or 'play the ball' (you will be penalised for not playing the ball on the mark)
- The mark is also the place on the field, indicated by the referee, where the attacking team will recommence play following an infringement

### **Rollball / Play the Ball**

- Is the action of restarting play after a touch or after a changeover
- The 'rollball' must be taken on the mark, (where the touch was made), without delay
- It is performed by placing the ball on the ground and stepping over it or rolling the ball gently through the legs (not more than one metre) to a player designated as the 'dummy half'
- The player performing the rollball must stand parallel to the sidelines
- Unlike rugby league, the player does not need to touch the ball with their foot, the player just needs to step over the ball. This is also called the 'rollball'

### **Markers**

- There are no 'marker' defenders in touch football like in Rugby League
- All players must retreat 5m after a touch has been made

### **Half / Acting Half / Dummy Half**

- Is the first player to touch the ball following the rollball
- The dummy half cannot score, and if they are caught with the ball it is an immediate changeover and the other team receives the ball

### **Intercepts**

- This occurs when the ball is caught by a defender while it is still in the air
- The defender is now the attacker and is entitled to continue running providing they are neither touched or they drop the ball
- After taking an intercept and being touched, the touch count is deemed to be at 'zero'

### **Knockdowns**

- The touch count is re-started if the ball is touched in flight deliberately by a defender and possession is regained by the attacking team

### **'Change of Possession' or 'Turn Over'**

This is the situation in which the attacking team becomes the defending team and vice versa. There are a number of instances throughout the game that this will occur, these include:

- Six (6) touches have been made without the attacking team scoring a touchdown
- The attacking team makes a mistake, for instance, a ball carrier running out of the field of play
- The attacking team drops the ball in any direction i.e. there is no knock-back as in Rugby or League
- Acting half is caught with the ball

### **Penalties**

These are awarded for infringements of the rules and can be taken as a tap. A penalty is awarded to the non-offending team when:

- Passing the ball after being touched by a defender (late pass)
- A defender not retreating five metres from a rollball (offside)
- Not playing the ball on the mark (off the mark)
- Attacking player standing and receiving the ball in front of the player with the ball (forward pass)
- Obstruction – when the player with the ball uses a teammate as a shield to avoid a touch
- Performing a rollball before being touched
- Running on after being touched or throwing the ball away (delaying play)
- Disputing a referee's decision
- Incorrect substituting i.e. not waiting for a team member to come off the field before going on

### **Coach**

- Coaches are not permitted on the field
- **Modification for Under 7s and 9s** - Coaches are allowed on the field but must remain at least 5 metres behind their team
- Coaches are not permitted to talk to the referees. We have a Zero Tolerance to abuse of referees!

### **Summary of Modified Under 7s Rules where different to U9s Rules**

- The attacking team maintains possession of the ball for six touches. All forward passes, dropped balls, late passes, dummy half being caught with the ball are to be counted as a touch or 'chance'
- The dummy half cannot run with the ball and they must pass it to another player before they can join in further play (i.e. stand and pass from dummy half position)
- Manly Touch will provide pink 'Dummy Half' bibs for teams if you would like to nominate a dummy half for a period of play to train your players on the importance of getting to the dummy half position quickly after a touch has been made. It is not compulsory and is just a training aid during games
- The defending team cannot move up until the first receiver has caught the ball and/or the dummy half runs with the ball
- For minor infringements (50/50 calls) the referee may call 'play on' for example if the ball is passed slightly forward or the ball is played just over the mark
- No penalties are to be awarded. Instances including kicking the ball, hard touches, etc. will result in a restart of the set of six (attacking team) or a change of possession (defending team)

If you have any further questions on the rules or terminology used in touch football, feel free to contact Manly Touch on [admin@manlytouch.com](mailto:admin@manlytouch.com)