

Introduction and Summary

The following is an extract featuring Try Tag Rugby relevant sections from the RFL's submission addressing the government's return to recreational team sport framework. The submission was sent in July 17th, 2020, with a request to resume Try Tag Rugby activities by August 1st at the latest.

The risk analysis framework was developed by a working group of all major sports. The sport of Tag Rugby is officially medium risk for droplet transmission, which is due to the very fleeting interactions of face to face time that happen throughout a game when making a tag or being tagged. With one rule change detailed below, all other aspects of the game are low risk.

Our match analysis found an average of 19 instances of face to face interactions per player in a typical game. Further analysis found that the play the ball process averaged 2.1 seconds and hence there was approximately 40.5 seconds in a game when players were within a metre and face to face.

To help mitigate this, we've made a rule change so that going forward markers will have to stand 2m or further away at the play the ball. This will significantly cut face to face time when a player is tagged, meaning that the only face to face time will be the fleeting moment when a Tag takes place. Referees will be instructed to heavily police this new rule.

It's worth noting that the government defines a high-risk interaction as being within 1m of someone for 15 minutes or more. A low risk situation is having no interaction within 1m. Once the marker is removed from the play the ball, we are looking at a few seconds during a game of face to face interaction for each player, so it's fair to say we are very much at the lower end of medium risk!

The other main way the virus can be transmitted is through fomite transmission (via equipment) which we have addressed with a plan to sanitise tags and balls pre-game, half-time and full-time.

The risk analysis and our plans were reviewed by some top advisers working with the RFL, including a leading scientist and doctor. The plans are still subject to change whilst we await government clearance and or feedback.

Extract: Rugby Football League Return To Play Submission

Introduction to Stage 3 (non-contact variants)

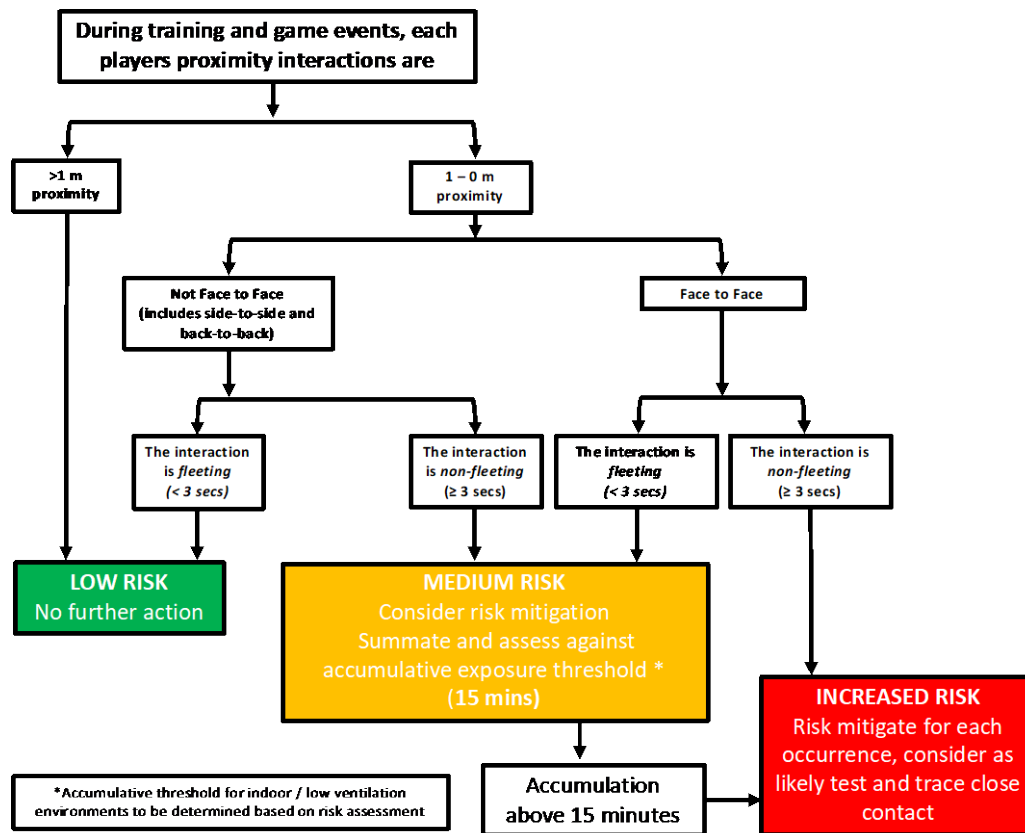
As the Rugby Football League (RFL) move from Stage 2 to stage 3 in their Return To Play (RTP) Roadmap, they are looking to reintroduce Try Tag Rugby as an approved variant of the game.

In partnership with Sport England a number of team sports (Football, Rugby Union, Netball, Rugby League, Basketball, Hockey) devised a 'Return to Recreational Team Sport' Framework that is predicated on the below 'Exposure Framework': Beneath that Framework will sit a sports specific Action Plan and Guidance which once approved by DCMS will see the relevant sport being able to return in accordance with the plan.

A Team Sport Risk Exposure Framework

to inform risk mitigation strategies and support test and trace

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Applying the Framework

The RFL's analysis has considered the following key elements of the framework: -

Droplet transmission: The risk associated with each action in an activity based on duration and proximity of participants. By using the Team Sport Risk Assessment Framework, we have determined the risk of actions in the playing and training environment and in doing so determined the overall level of risk of taking part in Rugby League activity in its various forms.

Fomite transmission: We have assessed this risk of the handling and transfer of equipment in Rugby League. This is primarily the ball and in the case of Try Tag Rugby and Wheelchair Rugby League the tags.

Population: The number of participants likely to take part in the proposed activity plus known risk factors of participants with underlying health conditions or high-risk groups, who wish to participate.

Environment: This is dependent on the type of venue the different variations of the sport would take place in. This only has an impact for indoor variations of our sport mainly Wheelchair Rugby League offer.

Droplet transmission

Having analysed the Team Sport Risk Exposure Framework and face to face guidance, we can mitigate any high-risk exposure associated with Rugby League activity, other than the tackle and the Play the Ball (including the marker).

This mitigation would be achieved by making the necessary COVID-19 rule amendments removing other high-risk factors.

To determine the level of risk of the tackle and Play the Ball, we have undertaken video analysis of each Rugby League activity, to understand the average proximity of players during a game of Rugby League.

This also involved tracking the maximum amount of time the players would be involved in a high-risk situation. During a tackle, the amount of face to face would vary and be limited on occasions but we've included all the interactions to replicate the highest level of risk.

To help understand this we have created a Frequency Duration Index, which indicates the level of risk exposure of each type of activity. This is outlined in the table below.

[Return to play supporting documents and data.](#)

Each variant and opportunity to play within the sport has been data analysed for the average number of contacts per player and the average contact duration.

* Each offer has had multiple games assessed with total Involvements that result in a clearly defined contact episode counted. This is involvements/player to calculate the average involvements/player.

* Each game has had 10 involvements that result in a clearly defined contact episode selected at random and duration of each involvement times. This includes some F2F contact.

* The Average number of involvements per player per game is multiplied by the average involvement time to give a "Frequency Duration Index" per game.

* The contact episodes are define as first point of contact between an attacker (ball carrier) and defender(s) until the ball has been clear from the dummy half passer and the markers are clearly outside of 1m range.

*Orange box = average time given for contact time – due to lack of video evidence.

INDEX	VARIANT	ATTACK	DEFENCE	TOTAL	PLAYER AVERAGE	CONTACT TIME
04:40.4	NRL	97.30	192.30	289.60	42.48	00:06.6
04:20.6	Super League	88.10	149.23	237.33	36.20	00:07.2
03:45.0	U7 Contact	15.00	30.00	45.00	45.00	00:05.0
03:13.0	Championship	7.94	19.24	27.18	27.18	00:07.1
02:50.4	NCL	12.82	26.91	39.73	23.34	00:07.3
02:39.5	Women's SL	30.75	48.38	79.13	20.60	00:07.7
02:33.9	U16 Contact	22.33	43.83	66.17	21.68	00:07.1
02:31.5	Adult Regional	54.93	103.24	158.17	20.48	00:07.4
02:12.4	U18 Contact	95.53	152.74	248.26	18.91	00:07.0
02:09.4	U15 Contact	64.85	111.30	176.15	18.48	00:07.0
02:06.6	U14 Contact	98.18	172.59	270.77	18.09	00:07.0
01:35.3	Wheelchair	18.25	17.19	35.44	35.44	00:02.7
01:23.4	U13 Contact	69.06	110.83	179.89	11.92	00:07.0
01:17.2	U9 Contact	7.75	10.00	17.75	17.75	00:04.4
00:58.8	U12 Contact	26.94	110.83	83.35	8.40	00:07.0
00:40.5	Try Tag RL	8.55	10.64	19.18	19.18	00:02.1
00:35.4	Touch RL	24.88	32.56	57.44	23.58	00:01.5
00:03.0	U11 Contact	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	00:01.5
00:03.0	U10 Contact	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	00:01.5
00:03.0	U8 Contact	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	00:01.5
02:30.4	NCL 2009/10	126.37	230.67	357.03	20.60	00:07.3
01:04.7	Training U16	53.08	13.65	66.73	13.35	00:04.9
40:25.8	TOTAL	928.59	1592.13	2466.30	448.67	01:58
01:59.8	Per Player	44.22	75.82	117.44	21.37	00:06

Below is a breakdown of each individual variation on the level of risk.

	Activity	Team Sport Risk Framework	Fomite Risk	Population Risk	Environmental Risk

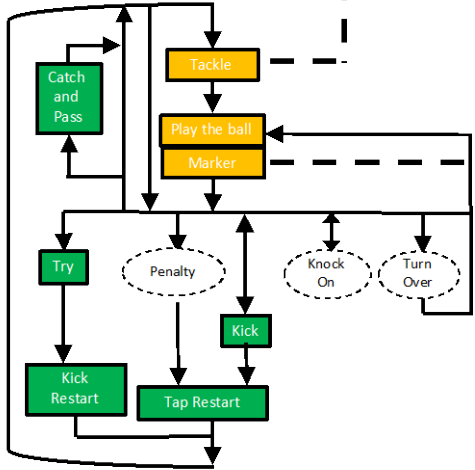
		LOW MED HIGH		Reduced Risk Low High	Outdoor / Indoor
Group 1	Large Group (max 30) Non-contact				
	Touch RL				
	Try Tag Rugby				
	Training session (incorporating Touch and Tag)				
Group 2	Primary RL (4-12 yrs)				
	Junior Youth				
Group 3	X-League Semi-contact				
	Training Full Contact				
	Open Age				
Group 4	Learning Disability Rugby League				
	Physical Disability Rugby League				
	Masters Rugby League				
Group 5	Wheelchair Rugby League				

Individual “team risk exposure framework” assessment

The following sections will explain the risk exposure for group 1 variations.

Try Tag Rugby

1.Tag



Due to 0.5 – face to face fleeting proximity, Tag rugby League non-contact tackle is classified as medium risk. The number of people in a tag rugby league tackle range from 2 to 3 (1 attacker and 2 defenders) The majority tackles 80%+ is 1 on 1 tackle)

Due to 0.5 – face to face fleeting proximity, Tag rugby League, play the ball and marker is classified as medium risk, as they are the are stood face to face for a fleeting moment.

Application of risk mitigation strategies
1. Once a tackle is complete, the maker must retreat 2m away from the play the ball. Which will move the Play the ball and marker to a low risk activity.

2.

