



## Barrie Jaguars Mini Rugby Program

### WHY SHOULD A CHILD PLAY RUGBY?



#### 1. EMPOWERMENT

The major team sports in North America are coach dominated with constant breaks in play or shift changes where coaches can provide guidance and immediate feedback to players. Rugby is very much a players sport. Coaching is done during the week but once a game starts the players take ownership. The game has no time outs or 'shifts' so once the whistle blows the players are for the most part on their own. Players are therefore coached to make their own decisions and back themselves. This is very empowering for young minds and helps

them build confidence and gain valuable experience making their own choices. They learn what a good choice is and just as importantly what is a bad choice. This is a critical life skill that transfers into their personal lives.

## *“RUGBY BUILDS CHARACTER”*



### **2. SELFLESSNESS**

There is minimal tracking of who actually scores or provides an ‘assist’ in rugby. The concept of assists does not actually exist in rugby and meaningful stats are difficult to collate as relatively little importance is placed on who scores. It is the ultimate team sport. Kids who have played other statistically heavy sports eventually work this out and soon realise every person on the field is responsible for making the right decision for the advancement of the team first. This encourages selfless behaviour and true teamwork with the needs of the team always ranking ahead of the individual.

## *“RUGBY IS THE ULTIMATE TEAMSPORT”*

### **3. PHYSICAL FITNESS**

Rugby is extremely demanding physically and builds high levels of cardiovascular fitness in the players. Players have to sprint constantly. Depending on the age group games last up to 30-minutes each way and there are no ‘shifts’ or breaks in play. Players transition from attack to defense depending on who has possession of the ball and the offside line moves

with the ball. There is little time to adjust, players need to think and move quickly often while under extreme fatigue. This builds high levels of resilience, determination and aerobic fitness in the players.

## *“RUGBY REQUIRES TRUE GRIT”*

### **4. MENTAL STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION**

The contact versions of rugby are demanding physically but also mentally. There is no hiding place so players build mental strength to cope with the challenges they face on the field. Decisions need to be made under physical fatigue and teamwork and defensive/offensive systems and structures need to adjust in real time to what is in front of them.



### **5. RESPECT**

You will find respect exists at the very core of the game starting with the opposition and the officials. Players shake hands with the opposition AFTER the game. The reason for this is the physical nature of the sport breeds respect between those who participate such that you want to shake the hand of the opposing players you have been battling with all game. Referees are called Sir and there is zero tolerance for any form of abuse or disrespect to the officials. This is so enshrined in the game the laws allow for a referee to send a player off permanently or temporarily should he be spoken to or treated in a way that is not in the spirit of the game. It has to be that way as there is only one referee and 30 players. This creates an incredible dynamic where there are 30 players scrapping for the ball and one person in the middle with a whistle enforcing the laws.

## *“RUGBY BREEDS RESPECT”*

## 6. WORLD WIDE CLUB

Rugby is famous for being a very social sport. The post-match get together is as important as the game itself. Given the high physical demand of the sports at senior levels, players respect each other and recognise the effort involved in playing a game. The social aspect of the game is how players show their respect for each other. This mutual recognition creates a connection among all rugby players around the globe. Our children will grow up and head out into the big wide world. Wherever they end up there will be a rugby club to join and an instant set of new friends to help them settle and build a new network. Other sports offer camaraderie, but not at the same level of rugby. The strongest friendships are forged when difficult challenges are faced together. This is the environment in which rugby exists and thrives.

