

IRFU Touch Rugby Long Term Development Strategy

Introduction:

2020 has proven that while some things are more important than sport, sport has never been more important. Throughout the pandemic, rugby clubs and schools worked tirelessly to prioritise the wellbeing of their members and continually adapted to meet the needs of their community.

Touch rugby is an adapted format of the game that offers skill development, physical health, wellbeing, and social interaction for its players. It was a vital outlet for many Irish clubs and schools in 2020 amid strict public health measures due to COVID-19.

Working in partnership with the Ireland Touch Association (ITA), the IRFU has prepared a long-term strategy reaffirming our commitment to promoting touch rugby as a way of broadening participation options for players under the IRFU Strategic Plan 2018-2023.

Vision:

Touch rugby inspiring a love of rugby and community by bringing new players to the sport and offering a new outlet for players already active within Irish Rugby.

Mission:

- Provide a better rugby experience by offering touch rugby as a modified format
- Improve standards in rugby by providing more opportunities for skill development
- Be inclusive by offering the game to players of all ages and abilities across all communities

Values:

Touch Rugby embodies and promotes the core values of rugby: Respect, Inclusivity, Integrity, Fun and Excellence.

Strategy:

The IRFU Touch Rugby Long Term Development Strategy is based on the following three key pillars.

1. Education:

- Promoting the benefits of touch rugby to current and prospective rugby players
- Reaching out to new and under-resourced communities to provide playing opportunities
- Providing education and development opportunities to rugby coaches, players and administrators

2. Resources:

- Providing practical resources around training and games to self-starters
- Operational support to clubs, schools and colleges to grow the game in their communities
- Technical support to clubs, schools and colleges to improve the game in their communities

3. Partnerships:

- Continued partnership with Ireland Touch Association
- Community outreach in partnership with four proud provinces
- Working directly with clubs looking to integrate touch rugby into their membership structures