

## How to use the Substitutes Box!

As Touch is a fast paced, high intensity sport the correct policy and use of substitutes is essential to allow a team to perform effectively for a 40-minute game. This month we outline a variety of ways in which a team can maximise the effect of substituting through a game:

### The rules of substituting:

Players may interchange at any time through the game, without notifying the onfield referee. The main rule is that a player must exit the field and reach the substitutes box (positioned between the 10m lines of the pitch) before a substitute player can enter the field of play. This means that players should be encouraged by coaches to run as hard as they can towards the box whilst substituting, to avoid any delay in substituting, and that the player taking the field waits until the onfield player reaches the box, to avoid a penalty for having 7 players on the field.

### Subbing partners:

Usually players in a squad are paired with a subbing partner, who is the same position, allowing a team to maintain it's strength on the field. A subbing partner, when in the box should encourage the onfield player and the rest of the team, this can include helping to call the Touch count. If your team doesn't have enough players for subbing partners, you can number subs 1,2,3 etc and as a player comes off, they join the back of the subbing 'queue' and take the highest number.

### Subbing Techniques:

- **Only sub on attack-** Subbing on defence momentarily leaves your team short of a player on the field and liable to a score.
- **Don't stay on too long-** Too often players stay on the field too long often in an attempt to change the game, and only sub when tired, leading to a need to recover for longer in the box, and the subbing partner having to cover longer on the field. Subbing often and regularly (1 attacking set and 1 defending set of 6) allows both players to stay fresher for longer.
- **Get the game moving-** Often after a period of intense defence, possibly a few sets, tired onfield players simply want to take a break and run to the box. It is important on any turnover that onfield players help get their team moving upfield before substituting. Don't just run off the field leaving your team short of options.
- **Driving to the box-** Some teams have a policy of driving play towards the box, to allow easy the easy substitution of players. Often the incoming players take up the role of Half, or wrap wide away from the box to provide width. This policy may not suit all teams in all situations as it can compromise field position for attacking play. To counter act this as a defence, you may try and deny a team the ability to move play towards the box. Additionally, on the 5th Touch, the team in possession may elect to lose the ball as far away as possible from the opponents sub box, denying them an easy route to sub when they gain the ball.

# Subbing Effectively



- **Select your sub box at the toss**-The team winning the toss can choose their box, so look out for a box which might have shade etc. to benefit your team.
- **Sub when you can**- Use opportunities such as Touchdowns (for and against), penalties and stoppages in play to substitute,
- **Drop-Off**- Don't forget that you can still use replacements during any drop offs, this is vital as players can tire quickly during drop-offs.

These are just a few ways in which you can maximise the effect and impact of Touch's rolling replacements rules. A coach has a unique opportunity to talk to their team in the box, and influence the game directly as players interchange, getting messages to players and addressing specific playing issues while the game is being played. Poor or ineffective substituting can lead to a team tiring and losing a game.