

**HAVANT RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB
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MINI & JUNIOR SECTION

**8 August 2004
Instructions for completing the Incident/Accident Report Form**

Background

In recent years there has been an increase in what might be described as a blame culture approach to accidents and incidents. In response to this and in parallel with the deregulation of the financial service industry a number of 'No win, No pay' agencies have taken this a step further and actively seek cases to prosecute. Where such cases have come to court, often 4 or 5 years after the original incident, great store has been placed by the judiciary on the availability of written anecdotal evidence recorded at the time of the incident. Where no such record exists, the person who was in charge of the activity where the incident occurred is likely to be at a considerable disadvantage if a defence against a charge of negligence is required.

In this increasingly litigious society in which we live, it is becoming necessary to establish a best practice environment in the provision of sports activities to adults and children alike.

Guiding Principles

Where there is guidance available from the individual sports governing body then the Club needs to demonstrate adherence to the advocated principles. Where there is no guidance then the Club should be seen to have established it's own best practice procedures.

Definitions

The obvious question is going to be 'What level of incident needs to be recorded on an Incident/Accident Reports Form in view of the dozen or so incidents that require first aid in any game of rugby?' Here, there is no direct guidance available or quick answer on the subject.

The ERFU Handbook defines a serious incident as one where as a result of injury the player is unable to return to training or playing for a period of 21 days. A very serious incident is defined as one where, as a result of injury, a player or the player's parents would likely wish to make a claim against RFU Insurance. The RFU further suggest that it is good management practice for clubs to maintain such records and, *as a condition of RFU Insurance coverage, each club must forward a report of serious injury occurrences twice per year.*

Hampshire Referees Society define the need for their version of the report as being whether the injury is sufficiently serious for an ambulance to be summoned.

Another view might be that a report may be useful in a situation where a player through injury is unfit to continue training or continue playing.

Club policy

In light of the guidance or lack of guidance as shown above in making the requirement clear, the following policy is established for use by the Havant Rugby Club Mini & Junior Section.

An Incident/Accident Report Form is to be raised by the person in charge of activities for each player injured in the incident/accident whom, as a result of that injury, becomes unfit to continue with the training session/game. This is to include situations where the player;

1. is taken to the Accident and Emergency (A & E) department of a local hospital as a direct result of the injury whether in care of trained ambulance staff or in the care of parents/responsible adults. The means of travel is not important, the fact that the injury warrants A & E treatment is.
2. is unlikely to return to training or playing for a period of 14 days.
3. may subsequently make a claim against the RFU insurance.
4. may subsequently make a claim against the Club or individual members of the Club.

For any lesser injury that does not prevent the player from continuing with the session but which may have a later and consequent effect, the person in charge of activities during which an injury occurs should decide whether completion of an Accident/Incident Form is warranted.

The purpose of the form is to record facts as determined by the person in charge that relate to the accident or incident in question. In the event of any subsequent proposed litigation against the Club or an individual, the form can

be made available to be used as anecdotal evidence in support of any rebuttal. The form is self-explanatory and suggests a number of subject areas where comment may be appropriate.

Disposal of the Incident/Accident Report Form

When the form is completed, signed and witnessed it should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Mini & Junior Section for indefinite archive. Individuals named may wish to keep a copy for their own purposes.

Deborah J Morgan

Chairman
Havant Rugby Club Mini & Junior Section