Rugby and the Media

# **Possible lesson sequence**

### **Lesson one**

Ākonga are asked to collect and bring media articles (male and female) that portray images of “the good, the bad and the ugly” in sport. Teachers may wish to have a supply of pre-collected articles. A classroom or gymnasium wall can be devoted to these in two sections, entitled “The Wall of Fame” and the “Wall of Shame”.

Ākonga group articles into headings, for example:

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| **“Wall of Fame”** | **“Wall of Shame”.** |
| * **Fair play** * **Losing with dignity** * **Winning graciously** * **Positive comments about umpire, opponent** * **Images of hugs and congratulations** * **Positive role modelling off the field** * **Sport experiences that enhance health** * **Addition of community leisure facilities** | * **Violence/aggression** * **Losing ungraciously** * **Winning and putting down opponents** * **Abuse of referee and officials** * **Images of bad manners** * **Negative role modelling off the field** * **Sport experiences that damage health** * **Addition of community leisure facilities** |

Ākonga in pairs or small groups explore particular themes and trends that might run through these images.

For example:

* What are the proportion of articles about male sports as compared to female sports?
* How are male and female sportspeople represented in the media images? For example uniforms, sports played, poses, and roles.
* Is violence associated with any particular sports? Which ones?
* Which sports seem to receive a lot of funding, for example sponsorship, merchandise, television rights, ticket sales? Which sports receive little funding?
* Which sports seem to be written about most supportively or most negatively?
* Which sports people seem to receive media support or media negativity?

Ākonga establish a Brainstorm Board with messages they have gained from stories and images of sports people.

for example

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Extension activity (This activity may relate to AO 3A4)

Ākonga are asked how the media stories and images affect their feeling of well-being.

For example:

Would you like to be a famous sportsperson? How would it make you feel?

* Do media reports inspire you to participate in sport? Why? / Why not?
* What would you think about sport if a group you relate to (for example people with similar body shape, gender, and/or culture) are underrepresented or portrayed negatively in the sports media?
* If you play a sport how supported do you feel about playing your sport - by the media, friends, and/or family?
* What are some of the messages you receive about sports you play? For example comments may include, “that sport is for sissies”, “it must be cool playing that sport”.
* What effect do these messages have on you? For example comments may include, I feel supported, I feel put down, I don’t care what others say, I enjoy it.

## **Lesson two**

**Task one**

Use media clippings that represent examples of regional support for provincial teams in either the Super 12, or NPC competitions.

Identify the colours, uniforms, cheerleaders, and mascots.

Discuss how these contribute to a sense of identity or belonging to each region.

Ask questions like:

Who does the media focus on?

Where do the colours come from?

What are some of the traditions or folklore behind the provincial teams?

Discuss the level of support for the regional team.

Has it decreased or increased?   
Why is there a change?

How has the media contributed to the change?

## **Task two**

Discuss why people choose to play or choose not to play rugby.

For example, body size, cultural factors, family traditions, parental support, fear of injury, skill differentiation with peers, don’t know the rules, and/or perceived gender bias.

## **Task three**

Discuss the media influence or either restricting people from or attracting people to rugby as a sport.   
For example, focusing on heroes and role models, emphasising portrayals of violence, proportion of male versus female media coverage.

### **Task four**

### Inform ākonga that a rugby tournament will be organised in the syndicate.

* ākonga record their initial responses to participating in the rugby tournament onto cards and place them onto a continuum from “great let’s play” to “I only want to watch”. Encourage honest responses that may reveal a fear of being hurt, fear of being ridiculed, or comments like, “I’ll let my team-mates down”.
* ākonga consider where their ideas come from and how much the media has influenced their ideas.

**Task five**

Having considered people’s opinions and barriers to participation in rugby, ākonga are asked how the game can be modified to break down these barriers and promote inclusiveness.

For example modifying the rules, equipment, and/or scoring. Modification may include aspects of flag football, touch, and new image rugby (See modified rules worksheet).

**Lessons three – six**

ākonga devise a team treaty or code of behaviour that relates to Wall of Fame behaviours. For example







All ākonga sign the team treaty worksheet acknowledging that individual responsibility will be needed. (see worksheets)

ākonga play games of modified rugby (as per ākonga’ rules)

At the end of each lesson an opportunity is provided for ākonga to peer and/or self assess their behaviour against the agreed treaty / code of behaviour.

The following are ideas teachers may use to promote the festivity of the rugby tournament.

* Combine the end-of-season event with a planned excursion for the class away from the school.
* After the final events of the regular season, hold a ‘friendly’ tournament with another class – remembering to include all players and all teams.
* Invite a special guest (eg local rugby role model), or parents, or the local press.
* Plan a class visit to an elite sporting fixture or event.
* Combine the end-of-season event with staff-ākonga or parent-ākonga games.
* Arrange certificates for most improved players, fairest umpire, fair play awards, etc.
* Encourage ākonga to arrange sponsorship from local businesses for team T-shirts.
* Invite the school cultural group or band to perform at the end-of-season event.
* Videotape the festival activities to stimulate next year’s class.
* Teams arrange team chants, dances and/or songs.
* Captains prepare a speech on behalf of their team, thanking umpires team members, sponsors, etc.
* Arrange a special dignitary to make a short speech at a formal ‘opening ceremony’.

Debrief at the end of the tournament.

For example, ākonga report on how their team treaty or code of behaviour affected their enjoyment of the game.

## **Extension activity**

To explore the issue of rugby and the media further, teachers could use the example of [rugby in the media](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/health/sport_studies/approaches/word/social_enquiry_rugby.doc) using the social inquiry model.