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Rugby players to hide tattoos in Japan – 24th September, 2018

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Rugby players with tattoos will cover them up at next year's World Cup in Japan. World Rugby wants to avoid upsetting people in Japan. Tattoos are a taboo and are usually associated with yakuza crime gangs in Japan. Many spas and pools ban people with tattoos. However, in 2016, Japan's tourism agency asked these places to relax their rules. It said tourists had tattoos for different reasons. It suggested giving tourists stickers to cover the tattoos.

World Rugby said the teams understood the cultural sensitivity about tattoos. It said none of the competing players had a problem with covering their tattoos. They want to respect Japanese culture. Players will wear a watersports vest as a form of "self-policing". New Zealand's All Blacks team said its players would follow the request and would, "endeavor to be respectful of the local customs and culture" when the team visits Japan.

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Rugby players with tattoos will cover them up during next year's World Cup in Japan. The sport's governing body World Rugby wants to avoid offending people in Japan, where tattoos are a taboo in public. Tattoos are usually associated with yakuza crime gangs in Japan. Many swimming pools, gyms, bath houses and onsen in Japan ban people with tattoos from entering. However, in 2016, Japan's tourism agency asked onsen and gyms to relax their rules because tourists had tattoos for different reasons. The agency suggested giving tourists stickers to cover the tattoos.

The Rugby World Cup director Alan Gilpin said the teams understood the cultural sensitivity about tattoos. He said: "When we raised it with the teams...we were probably expecting a frustrated reaction from them, but there hasn't been." He said the players want to respect Japanese culture. Players will wear a vest used for watersports as a form of "self-policing". The All Blacks team from New Zealand said its players will comply with the request. It said: "We endeavor to be respectful of the local customs and culture, and this will be no different when we visit Japan."

Level 6

Rugby players with tattoos are being asked to cover them up during next year's World Cup in Japan. The request by the sport's governing body World Rugby is to avoid offending people in Japan. It is somewhat of a taboo in Japan to be seen in public with a tattoo. Tattoos are usually associated with the notorious yakuza crime gangs, for whom tattoos are a source of great pride. Many swimming pools, gyms, bath houses and onsen in Japan ban people with tattoos from using their facilities. However, in 2016, Japan's tourism agency asked onsen to relax their rules. It said tourists had tattoos for very different reasons. The agency suggested giving tourists stickers to cover their tattoos.

The Rugby World Cup director Alan Gilpin said all the competing teams understood the cultural sensitivity in Japan regarding tattoos. He said: "When we raised it with the teams a year or so ago, we were probably expecting a frustrated reaction from them, but there hasn't been at all." He added that the players want to respect Japanese culture. He said the wearing of a vest used for watersports would be a form of "self-policing" among the players. The famous All Blacks rugby team from New Zealand has confirmed that its players will comply with the request. It said: "We endeavor to be respectful of the local customs and culture, and this will be no different when we visit Japan."