

Montana Youth Rugby Association By-Laws

Montana Youth Rugby Association (MYRA) is organized and is operated exclusively to promote and foster the growth of high school rugby football and to educate the public and players in the game of rugby union as played under the laws of the International Rugby Board. MYRA will have jurisdiction over its members in all matters pertaining to the administration of rugby activities to include but not to be restricted to scheduling, discipline and related matters.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of the organization shall be the Montana Youth Rugby Association hereinafter referred to as (MYRA) or “the union”.

ARTICLE II

Membership and Meeting of Members

2.1. Full Membership in MYRA with voting rights shall be reserved for clubs actively involved in playing rugby and in good standing. Good standing requires all of the following:

2.1.1 CIPP-registered with USA Rugby (club, 15 players and coaching staff minimum). A copy of each Clubs, players and coaches accepted application must be on file with the Union Administrator.

2.1.2 MYRA requires that each team have, at a minimum, a 100 level USA Rugby certified coach. MYRA encourages coaches to participate in continuing education, through USA Rugby, and achieve a level 200 coaching certificate or higher. (Amended 12-01-2012)

2.1.3 Submission of a signed MYRA Code of Conduct statement from every club member to be on file with the MYRA Administrator. A signed Code of Conduct is required for all players, coaches and parents. It is recommended that spectators also sign a Code of Conduct.

2.1.4 Submission of a signed MYRA Emergency – Medial Consent form from every club member to be on file with the MYRA Administrator.

2.1.5 Each club shall be affiliated with and adopt the Bylaws established by the MYRA.

2.1.6 New Teams: Any youth rugby club is eligible to petition MYRA for membership. New teams are required to comply with all requirements for a team in good standing as stated under Article II. In Communities where one team registered with MYRA already exists, new teams seeking to form in that community shall first seek approval from MYRA. These new teams shall submit to the MYRA Executive Committee an outline in writing detailing their coaching staff, expected numbers of players, a facilities plan, evidence of community support and reasons why or how a separate team in that community would advance MYRA goals and benefit the affected players. Entry to MYRA by any new team must be approved by a majority MYRA vote. (Amended 02-25-2012)

2.2 Each club in good standing and with a minimum of fifteen registered players shall have two (2) votes. These votes are represented by a coach, player or other representative delegated by each club to attend the MYRA meetings. Certified proxies shall be allowed.

(Elsewhere in the By-laws we encourage parent participation included is "other representative" in addition to removing the specification that one "must" be a player. This language gives each Club the flexibility to construct the representation of their choosing.) (Amended 12-01-2012)

2.2.1 These delegates will make up the general committee of the MYRA. Adult delegates (non-players) will be eligible to be elected to the Executive Committee of the MYRA.

2.2.2 There will be two General Meetings held each year. The first meeting will be held on the first Monday of December, the second meeting will be held in the spring at a time to be determined at the December meeting. Special meetings may also be called during initial organization and under extreme circumstances. Notice will be provided to each full member club either in writing, by confirmed e-mail, or direct telephone contact. (Amended 12-01-2012)

2.2.3 All member clubs are required to make a reasonable effort to attend MYRA General Meetings.

2.2.4 A majority of the Full Members of the Union shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a Union General or Special Meeting and an action of the Union must be authorized by an affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

2.2.5 A majority of the Executive Committee of the Union shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at an Executive Committee Meeting and an action of the Executive Committee must be authorized by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Executive Committee present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

2.2.6 Any person who is or was a Executive Committee member, Committee Leader or Committee Member of the MYRA (and the heirs estate, executors, administrators and personal representatives of such persons) shall be indemnified to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law in connection with any actual or threatened action or proceeding (including civil, criminal, administrative or investigative proceedings) arising out of their service to MYRA. Committee members, committee leaders or members may be similarly indemnified in respect of such service to the extent authorized at any time by the Executive Committee members.

ARTICLE III

Executive Committee

3.1 Day to day business of MYRA shall be conducted and directed by the MYRA Executive Committee as described in this Article.

3.1.1 The elected Executive Committee shall be comprised of the: President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, MYRA Administrator, East side Representative, West side Representative and a Girls side Representative. These officials will be elected from the delegates representing each club. A MYRA Referee Chairman will be appointed by the Executive Committee and is a non-voting member of the Executive Committee. (Amended 12-01-2012)

3.2 Election of Officers shall be held at the Annual General Meeting. Officers shall be elected for a one year term. No limitations on the number of terms that may be served shall apply to any Officer position.

3.3 President

3.3.1 The President assumes primary responsibility for the execution of all MYRA activities. The President presides over all Union meetings and shall ensure execution of any and all decisions enacted by the MYRA membership or Executive Committee. The President will also be responsible for forming a disciplinary committee if need should arise. (see section 4.3)

3.3.2 In his absence, the Vice-President shall assume the responsibilities of the President. In the absence of the President and Vice-President the Secretary/Treasurer shall assume the responsibilities of the President.

3.4 Vice-President

3.4.1 The primary responsibility of the Vice-President is to ensure the appropriate handling of all issues related to the playing of rugby among MYRA clubs. He shall also assist the President with all duties requested, to include assuming the roles of the President in his absence.

3.5 Secretary/Treasurer

3.5.1 The Secretary assumes responsibility for all communication and record keeping within the organization. This includes, but may not necessarily be limited to, maintenance of all records of the MYRA, maintenance of minutes of all meetings, service as official correspondent of MYRA, maintenance and distribution of the membership directory and, if necessary, shall also assist the President with all duties requested, to include, assuming the roles of the President in his/her absence.

The Treasurer assumes responsibility for all financial issues within the MYRA. This responsibility includes, but may not necessarily be limited to, maintenance of financial records, collection of the organization's annual dues, disbursement of funds as directed by the Executive Committee, presentation at each MYRA General Meeting a report of the organization's current financial position, preparation of the Annual Budget for organization approval and shall also assist the President with all duties requested, to include assuming the roles of the President in his/her absence.

3.5.2 The MYRA shall establish a funds account to cover expenses generated by Union activities. Approval of the fees to be charged and use of funds will require a majority vote of the General Committee as a whole.

3.6 Administrator

3.6.1 The Administrator shall represent MYRA and its interests in all interactions with USA Rugby and any and all potential vendors or sponsors. The Administrator will be responsible for collecting from coaches the consent and medical release forms as well as CIPP rosters to verify that all players are eligible and in compliance with USA Rugby.

3.7 Other Voting Committee Members

3.7.1 The East side, West side and Girls side members are elected positions and should be individuals that have knowledge of the game of rugby and have a desire to further the cause of Youth Rugby in Montana. (Amended 12-01-2012)

Article IV

Policies and Procedures

4.0 Player Safety and Development: This must be the number one goal of all involved.

4.0.1. The home team coach will be responsible to have a qualified athletic trainer, or EMT certified adult or better at every game. A coach may fulfill this requirement as long as he is able to immediately pass his coaching responsibilities to another coach and assume the EMT priority.

4.0.2. The home team coach will have an emergency plan [e.g. hospital directions] available to give to visitors.

4.0.3. Coaches will have the player's emergency contact, insurance information and waiver release available at all times.

4.0.4. Failure of the home team to meet the requirement of Section 4.0.1 will result in a forfeit.

4.0.5 Any player who has suffered a concussion either at practice or in a game will be automatically held out of all rugby activities until cleared by a physician.

4.0.6 Player's Clothing - MYRA will adhere to the laws pertaining to a Players' clothing as defined within IRB Law #4 and detailed in IRB Specifications (Regulation 12). These provisions relating to players' dress are set forth to safeguard the welfare of Players. (Amended 02-25-2012)

4.0.7 MYRA Referees: The MYRA Executive Committee will appoint a MYRA Referee Chairman with duties as assigned by the Executive Committee. The Referee Chairman will maintain a roster of MYRA approved referees. If a team or tournament director wishes to use a referee outside the MYRA approved roster they must do so under the approval of the MYRA Executive Board. Any costs associated with this outside referee recruitment are the responsibility of the host team or tournament host unless there is prior approval by the MYRA Executive Committee. The MYRA Executive Committee may provide partial or full funding for this outside referee recruitment. (Amended 02-25-2012)

4.1 Home Team Responsibilities: Each Club will be expected to provide a field of play and to communicate with the MRU Referee Chairman to arrange referees for home games. Referees will be paid \$25 per game by the home club.

4.1.1 Each Club will be encouraged to play a B-side game to make sure that all participants get a chance to play and experience the game of Rugby.

4.1.2 A team is allowed to substitute a maximum of three (3) players, at a play stoppage other than a penalty, as long as the game is allowed to flow and the referee is notified of the substitution. The intent is to provide for safety and participation, not to allow a specific team a competitive advantage. This section will apply during all matches including State Championship matches. If a team objects to the application of this section at the State Championship, MYRA will make a determination. (Amended March 2011)

4.2 Player Eligibility - MYRA clubs will adhere to all policies and procedures in regards to player eligibility.

- A. CIPP registered with USA Rugby and in compliance with MYRA bylaw 2.1.1
- B. Submit all MYRA forms in compliance with bylaw s 2.1.3 and 2.1.4
- C. Players must be enrolled in high school (grades 9-12) or in a high school equivalency program, such as Home school or GED program.
- D. Players must be within four (4) years of the moment the player first enrolled in ninth grade, regardless of when that player started playing rugby or had the ability to start playing rugby.
- E. Players are eligible if they have not reached their 19th birthday by the September 1st that occurs before the competitive season.
- F. Player must have played for the club in at least two (2) Qualifying Matches or second-side match associated with a Qualifying Match during the competitive season at least a week apart from each other prior to participating in a MYRA Rugby Championship Event.

Any deviation from these eligibility requirements must be petitioned in writing and approved by the MYRA Executive Committee.

Interpretation ambiguities and waiver allowances are solely the responsibilities of the MYRA Executive Committee and any appeal board sanctioned by MYRA, per MYRA bylaws under ARTICLE IV Practices and Procedures.

No member club or player is permitted to advance its/their own interpretation neither to, its /their advantage nor to the detriment of an opponent: it is the responsibility of a member club or player to seek MYRA Player Eligibility requirements.

Resolution of an ambiguity, where ambiguity arises and which would be reasonably recognized as such by another reviewing the situation. That which is reasonably recognized is within the sole purview of the MYRA Executive Committee and any appeal board sanctioned by MYRA.

A player or member club found to be lacking eligibility per the criteria established herein or which is found to have violated MYRA By-laws pertaining to eligibility shall be subject to such disciplinary and corrective actions as provided under MYRA Rugby bylaw 4.3. (Amended 12-01-2012)

4.2.1 MYRA clubs may choose to have 7th and 8th Grade programs within their respective club. To be eligible for 7th and 8th Grade rugby a player must be twelve to fourteen years old and enrolled as a Seventh or Eighth Grade student at their school. Fourteen year olds are eligible if they turn 14 prior to September 1st that occurs at the start of the competitive season. Fourteen year olds eligible for 7th and 8th Grade rugby may participate in High School matches with their coach's permission/consent however a fourteen year old enrolled as a grade 9 student may not play in a 7th and 8th Grade game. 7th and 8th Grade matches will be 10 a side to allow for smaller schools to field a team. However they may play 15 a side if numbers allow and coaches from both teams agree. Matches will be 60 minutes in total consisting of 30 minute halves. 7th and 8th Grade rugby is a contact sport however will use unopposed scrums and no-lift line-outs. These guidelines are intended to develop rugby in these young athletes and prepare them for the full game. (Amended March 2011)

4.3 Disciplinary Policy: The MYRA Administrator will be responsible for forming a committee of Union delegates (minimum of 3 members) to oversee disciplinary action. This Committee may set disciplinary action against clubs, individual players and coaches for failing to meet policy and procedures of the Union, or for misconduct. All disciplinary items must be submitted to the Disciplinary Committee not fewer than 5 days prior to the disciplinary meeting, with notice given to all parties surrounding the incident/dispute. At the meeting, the Administrator shall read the charges into the minutes with a recommended action (if any), all parties directly involved will have an opportunity to speak, and then the Discipline Committee will determine the validity of the charges and confirm any remedy. All action must be approved by a majority affirmative vote of the Discipline Committee. Under no circumstances can any type of financial punitive damages be considered. Discipline Committee decisions are final except when a team makes an appeal to the Discipline Committee. Appeals and complaints must be presented to the Administrator and the Committee in written form or brought before MYRA at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. All incident/disputes brought before the Disciplinary committee in a timely manner will be resolved within 14 days of submission

4.3.1 Safe Play Policy - The following regulations and procedures are adopted by MYRA to ensure safety during play and will be enforced at all MYRA events and matches.

All Yellow and Red card infractions must be reported to the MYRA administrator and the MYRA Referee Chairman by the match referee with 48 hrs. The MYRA Referee Chairman or an appointed MYRA Officer along with the recommendation of the match referee and following the guidelines below will make a decision on each Red card infraction reported.

Yellow card and "Sin Bin" infractions: A player guilty of foul play (i.e. obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, misconduct or dangerous play) may be sent off the playing area for a temporary suspension in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

If a player is subject to a temporary suspension then the player:

- [a] shall remain behind the opponents dead-ball line (the Sin Bin) or an area designated by the Match Referee or Match Officials
- [b] shall take no part in play
- [c] shall not communicate with team-mates or opponents (including reserves, coaches, and supporters), and
- [d] shall not enter the playing area to resume playing until permitted to do so by the referee

The maximum period of temporary suspension shall not exceed ten (10) minutes playing time, and the time is to be counted by the Match Referee or Touch judge.

In order to address the issue of multiple temporary suspensions, the following procedure will be implemented:

[a] If a player receives three (3) three yellow cards in a game, that player will be ejected from the game and will receive an automatic minimum suspension of one game.

[b] If a player receives (5) five yellow cards during a calendar year that player will be subject to a Formal hearing. This requirement shall be filled by a Disciplinary Committee as set forth in section 4.3.

When a player receives a Red card and is sent off the field for the following reasons, the sanctions shall be in the range set forth below. These penalties are inclusive of a 1 game automatic suspension.

1. Non Violent Technical Infringements (i.e. repeated off-sides, game misconduct, unsportsmanlike behavior):

First Offense; 1-3 games/weeks

Second Offense (within one year); 2-4 games

Third Offense (within one year); Formal hearing. This requirement shall be filled by a Disciplinary Committee as set forth in section 4.3.

2. Minor Physical Offenses (i.e. pushing, barging, improper tackles):

First Offense; 1-3 games/weeks

Second Offense (within one year); 2-5 games/weeks

Third Offense (within one year); Formal hearing. This requirement shall be filled by a Disciplinary Committee as set forth in section 4.3.

3. Major Physical Offenses (i.e. kicking, punching, dangerous rucking or tackling):

If these offenses were directed to the head or groin or if this type of offense is directed at a player who is in a defenseless position, or situation, and/or in the referee's opinion was delivered with intent to injure.

First Offense; 2-4 games/weeks

Second Offense (within one year); 3-7 games/weeks

Third Offense (within one year); Formal hearing. This requirement shall be filled by a Disciplinary Committee as set forth in section 4.3.

Appeal Process: An individual or club may appeal a decision they feel is unjust following the procedures set forth in section 4.3. All clubs should be aware that the referee is the sole arbiter of fact and time on the pitch and thus any appeals need to take this fact into account. Thus it is recommended that where possible all appeals are accompanied by video evidence of the incident. (Amended 12-01-2012)

4.4 Grievances: All grievances shall be submitted in writing to the relevant Executive Committee member for resolution within 7 days of submission. Unresolved grievances shall be referred to the MYRA Administrator (either by the Committee member or the originator of the grievance) and presented before the Executive Committee for resolution. In all cases, grievances shall receive adjudication from MYRA leadership within fourteen days of the original grievance submission. Further, issues of MYRA Member Club compliance with Union requirements shall be adjudicated by the Executive Committee.

4.5 Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs are strictly prohibited: Clubs that disobey this rule will face strict disciplinary action and repeated or severe abuses shall be considered grounds for revocation of Club membership from the Union. It is a NO TOLERANCE rule. Clubs are not permitted to display any type of alcohol, tobacco or obscene related advertising on its official kit (pubs, saloons, bars, etc.).

4.6 Player Participation: All players, coaches, and other official volunteers must be CIPP compliant and fulfill other USA Rugby Requirements. The Union expects that all players shall have the opportunity to play games on a regular basis.

4.7 Player affiliation: Players must play for the team affiliated with the community they live in. If they live in a community that does not have a team, they may play for a nearby team until there is a team affiliated with their community. When a club forms in their community, they are required to play for that club, become CIPP compliant with that club and fulfill other USA Rugby requirements.

4.7.1 Players Changing Teams: A player CIPPed with a MYRA team who wants to switch teams during the season must submit a written petition to the MYRA Executive Committee. Any participant who disagrees with the Executive Committee decision may file a grievance in accordance with these By-Laws. (Amended 02-25-2012)

4.8 Parent Involvement: It is the desire of the Union that parents become involved at all levels and capacities.

4.9 State Championship: MYRA shall have complete authority to create and manage a competition schedule to determine a State Champion. Teams will be seeded in the Championships according to the following point system. Union match win = 4, Union match tie = 2, Lose by 7 or less = 1, Scoring four or more tries = 1

4.9.1 State Championship Tie-Break: In the case that a championship game should remain a tie after full time the following tiebreaker system will be employed. A coin toss will precede two 10 minute overtime periods. Teams will swap ends after the first period. If neither team has a clear lead after the overtime periods, the winner will be determined by successive field goal tries starting at the 22m line and increasing in distances of five meters for each additional kick required. Each team shall nominate one player to do the placekicking.

Article V

Amendments

5.1 These bylaws may only be amended at a MYRA General Meeting. Notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to the Administrator and distributed to all members at least four (4) weeks before the meeting. A majority vote of full member clubs in attendance shall be required for approval of an amendment to the Bylaws. Further, Bylaw evaluation/amendments shall be an established agenda item at every general membership Meeting.