

Rugby Montana Policies & Procedures

Rugby Montana is organized and is operated exclusively to promote and foster the growth of high school rugby, middle school rugby, and youth rugby programming and to educate the public and players in the game of rugby union as played under the laws of the International Rugby Board. Rugby Montana is a State Based Rugby Organization (SBRO) under USA Rugby as of December, 2016. Rugby Montana 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 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 action plan [e.g. hospital directions] available to give to visitors. The emergency action plan will also be on file with the administrator and published to the state website.

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. Coaches will need to forward a copy of the medical clearance to the administrator for clearance for rostering.

4.0.6 Player's Clothing - Rugby Montana 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 03-01-2017)

4.0.7 Rugby Montana Referees: The Rugby Montana Executive Committee will appoint a Rugby Montana Referee Chairman with duties as assigned by the Executive Committee. The Referee Chairman will maintain a roster of Rugby Montana approved referees. If a team or tournament director wishes to use a referee outside the Rugby Montana approved roster they must do so under the approval of the Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana Executive Committee. The Rugby Montana Executive Committee may provide partial or full funding for this outside referee recruitment. (Amended 03-01-2017)

4.1 Home Team Responsibilities: Each Club will be expected to provide a field of play and to communicate with the Montana Rugby Referee Society (MRRS)/Rugby Montana Referee Chairman to arrange referees for home games. Referees will be paid a set fee per game by the home club. This fee will be set annually by the MRRS.

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, Rugby Montana will make a determination. (Amended March 2017)

4.1.3 All teams are required to confirm their matches within 72 hours of the scheduled game time with the designated Rugby Montana Referee Chairman. Failure of a team to reschedule a match or if a team “no-shows” a scheduled match will result in a penalty of the set fee for that match payable to Rugby Montana as part of the yearly referee fees.

4.1.4 All teams will be current with any Referee fees prior to the State Championship in order to participate in the State Championship tournament.

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

- A. CIPP registered with Sports Engine and in compliance with Rugby Montana and USA Rugby.
- B. Submit all Rugby Montana forms in compliance with Rugby Montana policies.
- 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 Rugby Montana Rugby Championship Event.

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

Interpretation ambiguities and waiver allowances are solely the responsibilities of the Rugby Montana Executive Committee and any appeal board sanctioned by Rugby Montana, per Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana Executive Committee and any appeal board sanctioned by Rugby Montana.

A player or member club found to be lacking eligibility per the criteria established herein or which is found to have violated Rugby Montana By-laws pertaining to eligibility shall be subject to such disciplinary and corrective actions as provided under Rugby Montana Rugby policies. (Amended 03-01-2017)

4.2.1 Rugby Montana clubs may choose to have 6th, 7th and 8th Grade programs within their respective club. To be eligible for 6th, 7th and 8th Grade rugby a player must be twelve to fourteen years old and enrolled as a Sixth, 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 6th, 7th and 8th Grade rugby may not participate in High

School matches at any time nor may a fourteen year old enrolled as a grade 9 student play in a 6th, 7th and 8th Grade game. 6th, 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. 6th, 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 2017)

4.3 Disciplinary Policy: The Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana to ensure safety during play and will be enforced at all Rugby Montana events and matches.

All Yellow and Red card infractions must be reported to the Rugby Montana administrator and the Rugby Montana Referee Chairman by the match referee within 48 hrs. The Rugby Montana Referee Chairman or an appointed Rugby Montana 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, referee abuse, 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 Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana leadership within fourteen days of the original grievance submission. Further, issues of Rugby Montana 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 Rugby Montana team who wants to switch teams during the season must submit a written petition to the Rugby Montana 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: Rugby Montana 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.

4.9.2 State Re-Seeding and Bracket Changes: In the event that a team would not be able to fulfill their game obligations at the State tournament and that team notifies the Rugby Montana administrator within a reasonable and prudent time limit before the first scheduled match of the tournament, then the tournament seeding and brackets would be re-done to reflect that change and keep the tournament fair to all participants. (Amended 02-27-2015)

4.9.3 High School Girls State Championship Team Eligibility: Qualifying teams must have a minimum of 10 players/team. Teams unable to field at least 10 players, will not be eligible to play in the State Championship. The team with the most players will match the team with the lower number of players. Teams will not be allowed substitutes unless they have more than 15 players or if they have more players than the opposing team. Teams not qualifying for State Championship may opt to play a B-side game. Girls' teams may be allowed to combine if the request is submitted the Thursday before MYRA Fest. Approval is decided with each girls' team having one vote. In the case of a tie the decision will be made by the Executive Committee. (Amended 4-4-2016)