

Why I want to be a member of the USA Rugby Congress

My name is Kirk Tate and I am currently the Director of Rugby at Huns RFC in Austin, TX. I am seeking election to the USA Rugby Congress to represent the men's and women's senior clubs of the Texas GU.

I have been involved with rugby for my entire adult life. I first walked onto the pitch 30 years ago at the age of 19. I've played and coached in Men's Divisions 1, 2, & 3. I've been a referee, a club administrator, and a union administrator. I'm involved in both 7s and 15s.

I am very concerned by the state of senior rugby and the lack of growth in adult participation in our sport. I say lack of growth, but what I really mean is the *dwindling* of participation. When viewed on a per capita basis, I believe there are fewer adults per 1000 population playing rugby today than there were 30 years ago. For example, there are exactly the same number of senior clubs in Austin today (Huns, Blacks, Valkyries) as there were in the 1980s, but the city has nearly tripled in size. I see this phenomenon all over Texas and all over the country.

This stagnation is a serious problem. While our sport has grown tremendously at the youth and collegiate levels, the vast majority of the people that make the game possible – the coaches, referees, and administrators – come from the senior clubs. Without club rugby, we wouldn't have the resources to support the college and youth programs. As youth and college rugby continue to grow without corresponding growth at the senior level, those resources get stretched thinner and thinner. This cannot continue.

USA Rugby has focused most of its attention on the very top and very bottom of the game, on the national teams and on college and youth rugby, while largely ignoring the middle – the senior clubs. The belief appears to be that the senior clubs can take care of themselves. But I believe this is short-sighted. I believe that investment in the senior clubs is an investment in the college and youth games as well. Ignoring the senior clubs puts our entire sport at risk.

As a member of the USA Rugby Congress, I want to create initiatives to get club rugby growing again. I've had success creating growth at my own club, and I believe that USA Rugby can help all our clubs do the same. We need to create financial incentives to encourage growth, remove obstacles to participation, and provide resources to help current club administrators and train new ones. I want to represent **all** levels of the senior club game, not just Division 1 or just the men or just 15s.

Kirk Wilson Tate

2308 Village Way Drive ~ Austin, Texas 78745

Phone: 512-917-9515 ~ E-mail: hunscoach@yahoo.com

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

- BA, University of Texas at Austin, 1987
- JD, University of Texas School of Law, 1992
- USA Rugby Level I Referee, 1999
- USA Rugby Level I Coach, 1999
- USA Rugby Level II Coach, 2001
- USA Rugby Level III Coach, 2002
- USA Rugby Developing Skills, 2007

RUGBY EXPERIENCE

***Director of Rugby
Head Coach
Director
Forwards Coach
Huns Rugby Football Club***

***Apr 2013 – present
Mar 2002 – Nov 2012
Aug 2009 – Aug 2013
Aug 2001 – Feb 2002***

- Fostered growth of club from eleven regular players into one of the largest men's clubs in the USA with over 100 registered players, competing in three divisions
- Reached USA Division 1 Round of 32 playoffs in 2009-2013
- Reached USA Division 2 Round of 16 playoffs in 2004 and 2006
- Guided team from last place in Texas Rugby Union Division 2 in 2002 to promotion to Division 1 and USA Round of 32 playoffs in 2009.
- Served on planning committee for 2002, 2003, 2004 USA Girls' U-19 Elite Camps
- Assistant Coach at 2003, 2004, 2006 Texas U19 Player Development Camps
- Forwards Coach for 2013 Central Texas Regional Select Side

***Manager & Assistant Coach
El Azul 7s***

Apr 2013 – Sep 2013

- Coordinated travel for West Qualifiers in Houston, Kansas City, Denver
- Bowl championship at 2013 Serevi Invitational 7s in Denver, CO

***USA Rugby Red River (ACR4) Competitions Committee
TRU Men's Club Division 1 Secretary
TRU Men's Club Division 2 Secretary
TRU Men's Collegiate Division 2 Secretary
TRU Men's Collegiate Division 3 Secretary***

***May 2013 – present
Aug 2008 – Jun 2012
Aug 2007 – Jun 2008
Aug 2004 – Jun 2005
Aug 2003 – Jun 2004***

- Wrote the TRU and RRRC promotion & relegation policies
- As divisional secretary, created match schedules for league play in those divisions

Forwards Coach

Aug 1998 – Jul 2001

Treasurer

Aug 1986 – May 1987

University of Texas Rugby Football Club

- Planned and conducted trainings with 6-man coaching staff for over 70 players
- Two consecutive appearances in West Territorial Collegiate Championships

President

Jul 1997 – Jun 1998

Treasurer

Jul 1996 – Jun 1997

Director

Jul 1994 – Jun 1996

Austin Rugby Football Club, Inc.

RUGBY HONORS

- Texas Rugby Union Men's Select Side, 1993 -1995
- West Rugby Union Collegiate Select Side, 1987
- Texas Rugby Union Collegiate Select Side, 1986 -1987