

# Introduction

Any sections or subsections of this document are subject to any current or future directives of USA Rugby and the Texas Rugby Union (TRU). The TRU is a geographical union (GU) based upon a combination of club density in an area and natural geographical boundaries. The TRU organizes and administers member clubs within our GU.

The Red River Rugby Conference (RRRC) organizes, administers, controls and regulates the game of Rugby Union Football for the clubs that are its members within the geographic area (see Appendix A for more information on RRRC roles).

All questions or disputes relating to these operating procedures should be referred to the TRU Board for review and resolution.

## Eligibility

### Club Eligibility

Member Clubs must comply with the following criteria to be a member in good standing and remain eligible to play in a RRRC League match, RRRC Championship, (see Appendix B for RRRC definitions) or a USA Rugby Playoff or Championship.

1. TRU approval: a Club must be formally approved as a member club by the TRU Board.
2. RRRC approval - a Club must be formally approved as a competitive club
  - a. The RRRC will determine a Club's competitive division based on the current promotion and relegation policy (see Appendix C for RRRC Promotion and Relegation).
2. Club Registration: a Club must be enrolled in the current year's CIPP with USA Rugby.
3. Coach Registration: a Club must have an active Level 200 Coach associated with their roster.
4. Touch Judge: a Club must have two TRU certified touch judges available for all home matches.
5. Good Standing: a Club must be in good standing with the TRU, and USA Rugby. Good standing implies that the club has no outstanding disciplinary actions, dues, fines, assessments, and/or other debts to the TRU, and USA Rugby.
6. Other Standards: a Club must meet all other standards currently required or that may be imposed by the TRU, and USA Rugby.

7. In addition to being ineligible for RRRC League and Championship matches, an ineligible club may not participate in any official TRU Meeting.
8. It is a violation of the TRU Disciplinary Code for a club to knowingly violate any of the above listed eligibility criteria. Such violation may result in fines and /or sanctions for the offending club.

## Player Eligibility

The RRRC handles all matters of player eligibility (see Appendix D for player eligibility) and follows the USA Rugby Eligibility Guidelines (<http://usarugby.org/eligibility>).

## Competitions

The RRRC will create the various divisional league schedules (see Appendix E for match scheduling). These schedules will then be posted to the TRU website for review. The TRU will also compile all schedules into a master calendar (<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/calendar/>).

## Forfeiture of Matches

The RRRC handles forfeitures of matches (see Appendix F for forfeitures of matches). Failure to comply with any of the above requirements or refusal to provide the required information is grounds for sanctions for the offending club. Recommended fines shall be as follows:

First offence is written warning

Second offence is \$50 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.

Third offence is \$100 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.

Further infractions shall be sent to TRU Disciplinary Committee or RRRC Competitions Committee as appropriate

## Match Reports

All matches that lead to a RRRC Championship or USA Rugby National Championship will be implemented on the USA Rugby Competition Management System (CMS). Clubs must complete the following procedures:

1. The night before the match, clubs must enter their preliminary match roster in the CMS website. Before kickoff of the match, both teams must provide a copy of

that roster to an opposition representative. Any changes to the actual game-day roster, including potential reserves, must be indicated on the preliminary roster submitted to the opposition. The preliminary roster will indicate name, CIPP#, position, jersey number, front-row eligibility, and citizenship/eligibility.

2. Prior to the match, each club shall provide to the opposition club an eligibility file or notebook which will include for each player listed on the CMS preliminary roster:
  - a. Photo-copy or original of valid photo ID (i.e., driver's license, passport page, military ID, college ID)
  - b. For non-US citizens, photocopy or original of proof of citizenship/eligibility.
3. An authorized representative of each club shall verify, by signature on both preliminary rosters, that he has read the information contained in the opposition club's roster and that he has examined the opposition club's eligibility file. This process of verification neither constitutes nor implies a waiver of the right to future challenge of the eligibility of players or the validity of the match roster. It simply verifies that the representative has examined the opposition's portion of the Match roster and the opposition's eligibility file.
4. Within 72 hours after the match both clubs shall edit (if needed) the preliminary match roster on the CMS website and shall enter all appropriate match information for their club in the post-match report including:
  - a. Final match roster
  - b. Scores: type, time, and player
  - c. Substitutions: type, time, and player
  - d. Disciplinary action
- 5.

Failure to comply with any or all of the above requirements or refusal to provide the required information is sufficient grounds for sanctions for the offending club including match forfeiture, disqualification, and/or monetary fines. Recommended Fines shall be as follows:

- First offence is written warning
- Second offence is \$50 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.
- Third offence is \$100 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.

Further infractions shall be sent to TRU Disciplinary Committee or RRRC Competitions Committee as appropriate

## **Safety Guidelines**

The below safety guidelines are for teams and tournaments and are supplied to ensure player and participant welfare in and around sanctioned events.

## Field Policies

1. Sideline barriers are required from goal line to goal line and maintained at least 5 meters from the touchline. A maximum of 1 team staff may stand inside the barriers and in close proximity of the sideline barrier. Replacement players are NOT permitted inside the barrier until requesting entry into the match.
  - a. The appointed team representative must remain between their 50m and 22m or behind the dead ball line. Additional team staff may be behind the dead ball line.
  - b. Coaches or team representatives are NOT permitted to enter the playing area during play. Water carriers and medical personnel may enter the playing area by prior arrangement, or at the specific invitation of the referee.
2. The home club must provide a properly marked field for all matches in accordance with the Laws of the Game and published guidelines of the TRU. Recommended playing surface should be grass or IRB Regulation 22 Certified turf. Fields should be free of debris such as glass, protrusions, divots, etc.
3. View examples of [rugby field or stadium diagrams](#)
4. Teams, staff and players of both teams will be on the opposite side of spectators, separated at the 50m and will remain on their respective sides. No one is permitted inside the 22m from either team.
  - a. If a team has extenuating circumstances that don't allow for this setup, they may request a waiver from the TRU Board. If a waiver is granted, teams, staff and players of both teams will be on opposite sides. Teams, staff and players will still need to stay within their 50m and 22m with no one permitted inside the 22 meters.
5. All goal posts in the field of play must be padded. All field flags must be break-away.

The home club shall provide a sufficient number of properly inflated rugby balls, in good playing condition, so as to carry on the match without substantial delay.

Failure to meet the minimum required policies will be tracked on a rolling twelve (12) month basis with the following sanctions:

- First Offense: \$50 fine
- Second Offense \$100 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.
- Third Offense: \$150 fine and issue will be referred to RRRC for further sanction.

Further infractions shall be sent to TRU Disciplinary Committee or RRRC Competitions Committee as appropriate

The following procedures should be followed on game day and/or in the case of a citing:

- Both coaches should review the assigned team areas at least 30 minutes prior to kickoff.
- If both coaches cannot agree to a suitable resolution, the respective coaches, must notify the referee before kickoff.
- Coaches can NOT agree to waive the stated policy requirements by mutual consent.
- Primary reporting of the Field Barrier Policy shall continue to be made via Referee Match Reports.
- The TRU Administrator and Divisional Reps will review all match reports and notify the respective clubs within 48 hours or as is reasonable.
- Appeals shall be submitted to the TRU
- line Director within 48 hours of notification or as is reasonable.
- Fines shall be due and payable within 10 business days of notification by the TRU.

## **Referee Abandonment of Match**

1. The referee will commence the match only if all safety guidelines are met, and may abandon the match if any of these guidelines are breached.
2. The referee will abandon the match if any match official (referee, touch judge or other assigned official) is threatened verbally or physically.
3. Before abandoning a match, the referee will meet with the team captains to explain why this action is being taken.
4. A team is responsible for the abandonment and will be liable for all match fees.

## **Uniform & Equipment Guidelines**

The TRU, following USA Rugby guidelines, shall conform to World Rugby regulations on Uniforms and Equipment and to any further restrictions implemented by the TRU or USA Rugby may apply.

## **Advertising & Logo Guidelines**

The TRU, following USA Rugby guidelines, shall conform to World Rugby regulations on advertisers and manufacturer's logos, and further restrictions implemented by the TRU or USA Rugby may apply.

## All Star Guidelines

The All Star Managers, appointed by the Board shall coordinate the provision of coaching, managing, training, selection, and match scheduling for representative sides for the Union.

Each participating player must be a member of a TRU sanctioned club and be in good standing with their Club, the TRU, and USA Rugby.

## Disciplinary Regulations & Procedures

The Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures found on the TRU website at <http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/disciplinary-procedures/> incorporate those mandated by World Rugby and USA Rugby, will be enforced at all TRU and RRRC events and matches.

The TRU Disciplinary Committee (DC) will consist of the Director of Discipline as Chair. Current Chair and additional members (<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/administration/contact-us/>). The DC shall be responsible for all disciplinary matters that fall within the jurisdiction of the TRU.

The function of the Director of Disciplines is to oversee the behavior of all member clubs in matters relating to the game itself and to the public image of rugby in the TRU. Therefore, actions, both on and off the field, may come under the scrutiny of this officer.

Clubs are encouraged to take action against their own players, members and supporters for actions detrimental to the game of Rugby. All clubs should insist upon a high standard of behavior from all their members and supporters. The Director of Discipline will, at their discretion, consult with members of the TRU Board and the Divisional Reps on disciplinary issues.

### Jurisdiction

The USA RUGBY Disciplinary Committee is responsible for the following:

Incidents involving a touring team from another union playing a United States team, or at an event within the United States. Any club hosting a touring side should have received permission from USA Rugby to host said club (<http://usarugby.org/tours>). USA Rugby has touring policies for both in/out bound touring sides that should be adhered to prior to scheduling of the match and requesting a referee.

- Incidents at a USA Rugby championship series event or any other USA Rugby sponsored competition.
- Unresolved differences between two or more GUs.
- Appeals of decisions reached by GU disciplinary processes or procedures.

The TRU Disciplinary Committee is responsible for the following:

- Incidents at all GU events including all matches played within the GU (League, Friendly, Championships, Tournaments, etc).
- Off field incidents (including those that reflect negatively on the image of rugby) involving member clubs and/or their members, and supporters that occur within the geographic jurisdiction.

The World Rugby REGULATIONS 17, 18, and 20 for foul play are the MINIMUM that will be imposed. Consequently the TRU Director of Discipline can impose more severe sanctions/penalties than those outlined in these regulations and procedures.

The TRU Director of Discipline, in consultation with the TRU Disciplinary Committee, is empowered to impose appropriate sanctions including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, and expulsion as deemed appropriate against individual members and/or clubs. The Director of Discipline does not operate in the realm of the judicial system and cannot award compensation, or direct individuals, or clubs to pay financial damages or restitution for specific incidents of misconduct.

## **Fielding Non-CIPP'd Players**

The TRU Board has approved the following disciplinary actions in relation to clubs fielding non-CIPP registered players:

### *FIRST OFFENCE*

The club will receive a warning letter, the game will be forfeited, and the club will be fined \$100 for each ineligible player. The fine has to be paid within 30 days or the club will be suspended until the fine is paid. If the non-CIPP'd player is involved in a disciplinary issue [yellow or red card], the player will be banned from all rugby until his name appears on the club's CIPP listing on the USA Rugby Website. Once the player's name appears on the USA Rugby CIPP listing, the TRU Disciplinary Director will then impose disciplinary sanctions against the player for his disciplinary infraction.

### *SUBSEQUENT OFFENCES*

The TRU Disciplinary Committee will decide on additional actions which

will range from but not be limited to:

- o Fine of up to \$500 for each ineligible player & the fine to be paid within 30 days or club will be suspended until the fine is paid;
- o The club to be suspended from the TRU for 12 months.
- o Issue will be referred to RRRC Competitions Committee for further sanction.

## **Tracking Offenders**

It is the responsibility of the Director of Discipline to provide a written report to the TRU and the National Office of USA Rugby of any action taken. USA Rugby will cause information on all but the automatic suspensions of a week, or one match, to be periodically circulated throughout the United States by, but not limited to: posting to their website and other electronic or printed media.

Any club that allows a suspended player to participate in matches while suspended will be subject to additional penalties by the TRU Disciplinary Committee.

## **Undetected Foul Play/Off Field Conduct**

When foul play occurs but is undetected by the Referee, Assistant Referees or Touch Judges it is the responsibility of the witness(es) to report it to the referee as soon as practical after the match. If it is not practical to report the incident to the referee, the incident should be reported using the Disciplinary Report (<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/referee-corner/disciplinary-action/disciplinary-reports/>). Likewise, off field behavior that is detrimental to the image of the game of rugby should be reported using the same form in a timely manner.

Upon receipt of these reports, the Director of Discipline must contact the accused within five (5) days. Upon receipt of the comments of the accused the Director of Discipline will follow the procedures established above.

Foul play incidents, if found to be true, should be dealt with as prescribed above.

Off field incidents will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Proven allegations of misconduct that tends to place the game in disrepute are expected to be dealt with in the strongest manner. As a reminder, clubs are responsible for the activities of their members and supporters as they relate to the image of the game.

## **Tournaments**



Any club, which is a member of the TRU that holds a tournament, of any kind, is obligated to ensure that the following disciplinary procedures will be followed:

- All red and yellow card incidents are to be reported by the Tournament Director and the Referee Manager. These individuals are responsible for reporting these incidents no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the Tournament.
- A player who receives a red card in a game, is automatically suspended and can no longer participate in the remainder of the tournament under any circumstances. A full report of the red card incident needs to be obtained by the Tournament Director and the Referee Manager and submitted within forty-eight (48) hours.
- The TRU Discipline Director will determine the length of the suspension upon receipt of the incident report.
  - In the event that a red carded player is allowed to play in the remainder of the Tournament, the club holding the Tournament and the club whose player was red-carded will be liable to sanctions, financial or otherwise, by the TRU DC.

It is recommended that clubs holding tournaments include these procedures in their Tournament program and/or handout the procedures to all participating teams at the tournament team meeting.

## **General Information & Requirements**

Reciprocity is mandated. Players and/or clubs sanctioned in one GU are sanctioned in all GUs.

All members of USA Rugby must keep their GU, and USA Rugby apprised of address changes.

It appears that a small minority of players have a disregard for fair play and the overall good of the game. This fact and the increasing mobility of American society make the following procedures necessary:

- Each GU, TU and the USA Rugby Disciplinary Committee shall maintain written records of all decisions reached and actions taken. The information may be brief but must include name, CIPP number, venue, date and type of incident, action taken, etc. These files must be kept in a professional manner and passed to the new Director of the Disciplinary Committee. The information is required in order to determine whether an individual is a repeat offender. This information is only to be used during the sentencing portion of any hearing, or action and only if there has been prior disciplinary action taken. It may not be used to determine the guilt or innocence of the individual.
- If an individual has been found guilty of an offense and the party moves to a new location, the file(s) of any incidents must be copied and the copy

sent to the Disciplinary Director or Chair of the GU in the new location. This will ensure continued awareness of past problems, which will need to be addressed, if the individual is again accused of misconduct.

## **Out-of-State Offenses**

In any out-of state game [including tournaments] involves a TRU club it will be the full responsibility of the club to:

- Report any yellow or red card offenses to the TRU within three (3) days of the offence[s] occurring.
- Request that the referee submit a report to the Disciplinary Officers of the TRU.
- Furnish the Disciplinary Director of the Texas GU with the name and phone number of the referee: RED CARD OFFENCE ONLY

Any player who is red-carded in out-of-state game will be required to serve the mandatory minimum eight day/one game suspension pending review by the Disciplinary Officers of the TRU. If such a red-card offence occurs in a tournament, the player ejected is ineligible to play for the remainder of the tournament and the automatic suspension begins after the final game of the tournament. Any club that does not report yellow and/or red card offenses in out-of-state games to the Disciplinary Officers of the TRU will face severe sanctions, as will the player who committed the offenses.

## **Cleaning up the Game**

In view of the growing number of complaints from the public nationwide and the need to create an atmosphere in which parent of young players, families and sponsors will feel comfortable participating in the Game, the TRU in conjunction with the Local Referee Organization (LRO), the Texas Rugby Referee Association (TRRA) intend to take a very serious view of conduct that is contrary to the Object of the Game that demands fair play in a sporting spirit. All member clubs are required to ensure the Game at all levels is run as a disciplined and sporting athletic endeavor, and the TRU and the LRO are determined to play their part in fulfilling this obligation.

Consequently, effective immediately, a very serious view will be taken of unsportsmanlike conduct, especially the gratuitous use of foul language and obscenities in a loud and provocative manner, both on and off the playing area, during play and stoppages, before and after the match, no matter who they are directed toward. Referees will enlist the aid of both captains if the problem arises from the touchlines. Club officials will be held responsible for eliminating such behavior beyond the playing area. This offensive kind of behavior is a major stain on the fabric of the Game in the USA and the TRU and the LRO as local guardians of the laws and ethics of the Game are determined to stamp it out.

Similarly individuals who persistently criticize and dispute the decisions of referees and touch judges, verbally abuse or threaten physical assault of a match official will be severely dealt with by the TRU Disciplinary Committee. The TRU and the LRO expect all affiliated clubs to get this message to their coaches, players and supporters and so obviate the need for more draconian action down the road.

# Appendix

## Appendix A - RRRC Duties

The RRRC organizes, administers, controls and regulates the game of Rugby Union for the clubs that are its members within the geographic area its members agree. The RRRC shall organize, control and administer rugby games between regional bodies and visiting clubs as necessary. The RRRC is a conference of USA Rugby that answers to the Competitions sub-committee of the USA Rugby Club Strategic Committee (CSC).

For more information on the RRRC:

<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/information/red-river-rugby-conference/>

## Appendix B - RRRC Definitions

RRRC Division: Organizes member clubs into competitive leagues for the purpose of determining a RRRC champion and/or representatives for championships, which lead to USA Rugby National Championships.

RRRC League Match: any match which leads to a RRRC Division Championship for the purpose of advancing in toward a USA Rugby National Championship.

RRRC competitive season: Is generally defined as September 1 until the final game of the RRRC Championship / League season.

## Appendix C - RRRC Promotion and Relegation

The RRRC handles Promotion & Relegation, for more information:

<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/information/red-river-rugby-conference/>

## Appendix D - Player Eligibility

As the National Governing Body, USA Rugby has the sole right to establish minimum rules under which the game is played in the United States. The rules for the players and club eligibility, use of logos, uniforms and equipment as contained in the "USA Rugby Eligibility Rules" (published on the USA Rugby website:

<http://usarugby.org/club-eligibility>) apply to any match in which in any way leads to any USA Rugby Championship. These are the minimum guidelines, which must be applied by all Geographic Unions.

All Players must be in good standing with applicable governing bodies including their Club, the TRU, and USA Rugby in order to participate in National Championships and all events leading up to the Championships, including RRRC Championships

## **Challenges to Eligibility**

The RRRC handles eligibility and any challenges, for more information:  
<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/information/red-river-rugby-conference/>

## **Appendix E: Match Schedules**

The RRRC will create each divisional league schedule, for more information:  
<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/information/red-river-rugby-conference/>

## **Appendix F - Forfeiture of Matches**

Forfeiture of a match will result in being barred from the playoffs and advancement within the current competitive season. A second occurrence in the competitive season will warrant relegation to the next lower division for the following competitive cycle.

For more information:  
<http://www.texasrugbyunion.com/information/red-river-rugby-conference/>

## **Appendix G: Appeals**

An individual or club may appeal a decision they feel is unjust. This does not apply to suspensions related to players sent off if the initial report was not addressed by the individuals or the clubs. It is recommended that where possible all appeals be accompanied by video evidence of the incident.

A written notice of appeal must be made within seventy-two hours (72) hours of receipt of the notice of suspension. The appeal notice must be sent to the TRU President and the Disciplinary Committee. The TRU President will convene the Board of Directors for review of the appeal. The Board has the power to uphold, overturn, decrease or increase the original sanction as published by the TRU Discipline Committee.

The TRU Director of Discipline shall copy and forward all information regarding the case to the TRU President upon request. If a hearing has been requested, then the hearing date, time and place shall be determined by the TRU President and sent to each member of the TRU Board of Directors and to the appellant. Such details of the hearing

shall be agreeable to all parties, subject to them not withholding such approval unreasonably. When and where possible, all correspondence may be by email.

### **Subsequent Appeal**

If applicable and warranted, the appellant shall have the ability to make subsequent appeal of prior rulings to the USA Rugby Discipline Committee. A copy of the appeal must also be sent to the President of the TRU. The TRU President shall initiate the appeal by contacting the USA Rugby Disciplinary Committee who shall be the Appeals Committee.