

David Dodge

From: Tam Breckenridge <tambreck1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 10:12 AM
To: David Dodge
Cc: Filip Keuppens
Subject: Re: 7s Player Eligibility Through TOLA Tournaments - Request for Ruling

With Approved Governing Body approval, this will confirm these competitive events, which shall be conducted in the same manner as the formal 'points' TOLA Events, may be applied towards the players' National Championship participation requirement specified in Regulation 5.3-(a).

Each of the outside tournaments must be rostered events, with the rosters provided to the Sevens Competitions Committee by the tournament organizer.

Thank you for seeking clarification. I misread the specific details of your initial question.

Best,
Tam

On Wed, Jun 8, 2022 at 7:48 AM David Dodge <DDodge@gpm-law.com> wrote:

Thank you Fil and Tam.

For clarification, are “free-standing” TOLA events (such as Dallas Rugby’s Lone Star 7s Tournament on Saturday) eligible for this exception. To clarify, in the “hybrid” format, the Qualifier and TOLA teams play as part of the same pools / brackets, it’s just that the teams that indicate prior to the tournament that they are playing for Qualifier points (toward National Tournament eligibility) get Qualifier points, and those that declare they are playing for TOLA points (toward the regional TOLA Championship) get TOLA points. In the “free standing” TOLA tournaments, there is no opportunity to earn Qualifier points, only TOLA points (although, as pointed out below, most of the same teams and players play in the “free standing” TOLA tournaments as play in the pure Qualifiers and “hybrid” formats).

My proposal / request was that the Rule 5.1(i) exception allow players to earn National Tournament eligibility through playing in both “free standing” TOLA tournaments, *and* in “hybrid” Qualifier/TOLA tournaments (even if their team declares its only playing for TOLA points). No eligibility would be earned through playing in a purely social tournament (e.g., 7s by the Sea).

Can you please confirm that this request is approved in full, or that the exception would only apply to the “hybrid” format tournaments.

Thank you, and sorry for any confusion.

David

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From: Tam Breckenridge <tambreck1@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 8, 2022 9:36 AM

To: Filip Keuppens <fkeuppens@picklepower.com>

Cc: David Dodge <DDodge@gpm-law.com>

Subject: Re: 7s Player Eligibility Through TOLA Tournaments - Request for Ruling

Filip and David.

Thank you for notifying the Eligibility Committee.

Given these are competitive events, have approval of the Approved Governing Body, and shall be conducted in the same manner as the formal (points) Qualifying Events in the TOLA Sevens Series, the hybrid events meet the criteria to count towards the players' National Championship participation requirement specified in Regulation 5.3-(a).

Best,

Tam

On Wed, Jun 8, 2022 at 3:00 AM Filip Keuppens <fkeuppens@picklepower.com> wrote:

Good morning Dave,

There is precedent for doing this and I do not believe that using TOLA tournaments as individual qualifying tournaments would interfere with the intent or spirit of any policies provided the tournament meet “qualified tournament guidelines”, which all points qualifying TOLA tournaments do. Tam, for your benefit, TOLA guidelines can be found here: <https://texasrugbyunion.com/tola-7s-tournament-rules-and-regulations/> and we sanction all qualifying tournaments in the same way we do National Qualifying tournaments.

While I’m sure it’s obvious, just for clarity’s sake, this would only apply to fully sanctioned, points generating TOLA tournaments (7s by the sea, mudfish and other purely social tournaments would be excluded).

Thank you,

Filip

From: David Dodge <DDodge@gpm-law.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 11:44 PM
To: Filip Keuppens <fkeuppens@picklepower.com>
Cc: Tam Breckenridge <tambreck1@gmail.com>; David Dodge <DDodge@gpm-law.com>
Subject: 7s Player Eligibility Through TOLA Tournaments - Request for Ruling

Fil,

I’m writing to you in your capacity as both the Red River 7s Subcommittee Chair, and as the SCC 7s Competition Committee Chair.

As you know, the TRU / Red River has for about 15 years maintained its own, structured, regional 7s competition known as “TOLA 7s” (TOLA being short for Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas – the states in which the TOLA 7s tournaments have traditionally been played). *See* <https://texasrugbyunion.com/2022/04/17/2022-rrrc-tola-7s/>. Over the years, the TOLA competition has matured, and today, some Red River Qualifier Brackets are combined with the TOLA in a “hybrid” format, with each TOLA and Qualifier teams competing against each other in the tournament, but for points within their respective competitions. *See* “Hybrid Format” at <https://texasrugbyunion.com/tola-7s-tournament-rules-and-regulations/>

Even in TOLA tournaments that do not have qualifier or hybrid divisions, the “Qualifier” sides (those seeking to qualify for the National Tournament) play against each other. For example, in the Dallas RFC Lone Star 7s Tournament this weekend (a purely TOLA tournament), the Austin Huns, Austin Blacks, Dallas Rugby, Grand Prairie and Dallas Harlequins are all competing (with the Reds, Huns, and Grand Prairie putting in 2 sides). The point being that whether labeled as a TOLA tournament, or a Qualifier, generally the same Clubs and for the most part same players, are playing against each other in both TOLA and Qualifier tournaments.

Here is the schedule of TOLA and Red River Qualifier tournaments for this summer:

SUMMER 7s TOURNAMENTS:

- 6/11:** LoneStar 7s Tournament (Dallas Rugby - Dallas, TX) (TOLA)
- 6/18:** Bloodfest 7s (Huns - Austin, TX) (TOLA / Qualifier #1)
- 7/9:** Hell or Highwater 7s (HARC – Houston, TX) (TOLA / Qualifier #2)
- 7/16:** River City 7s (Blacks – Austin, TX) (TOLA)
- 7/23:** Choctaw 7s (Durant, OK) (TOLA / Qualifier #3)
- 7/23:** 7s By the Sea (CCRFC, Corpus Christi, TX) (Social)
- 7/30:** Cherrybone 7s (Woodlands RFC, Woodlands, TX) (TOLA)
- 8/6:** Horseshoe 7s (Shreveport RFC, Shreveport, LA) (TOLA)
- 8/13-8/14:** USA Club Rugby 7s National Tournament (TBD)

As Red River Competitions Committee Chair, I’m requesting that tournaments in which: (a) there is no separate Qualifier division (i.e., only a TOLA division), *and* (b) tournaments played with a hybrid Qualifier / TOLA bracket, be considered “qualifying matches” (for individual players under Rule 5.3(a)), pursuant to Eligibility Rule 5.1(i). That Rule reads:

- i. Teams intending to use non-Regional Qualifier Sevens for the purpose of getting players eligible to compete at the Club Sevens National Championship must do all of the following:
 - i. Notify the Club Sevens Commissioner (seniorclub7s@usa.rugby) about the team's intention to use a non-qualifier sevens tournament for player qualification purposes prior to the Event.

- ii. Get the tournament director to agree to ID check your team prior to play and then complete this at the Event.
- iii. Get the tournament director to sign a copy of the team roster based on the checked-in players.
- iv. Take a team photo at the Event.
- v. Send the team Roster & Photo to the Club Sevens Commissioner (seniorclub7s@usa.rugby) within seven (7) calendar days of the completion of the tournament.

I further propose that the same roster rules applicable to a Qualifier apply in order for a player on that roster to obtain credit from a TOLA or hybrid tournament, e.g., Rule 5.1(c)(i), (d), (e), (g) & (h); Rule 5.2(e). I believe this is the effect of compliance with Rule 5.1(i), but wanted to clarify the Red River's intent in making this request.

Thanks, and please let me know if you have any questions regarding this request. If possible, I would like a decision in time to announce this exception to the teams participating in Lone Star 7s this weekend.

Sincerely,

Dave Dodge

Red River Competitions Committee Chair

DAVID W. DODGE, P.C.

Attorney | Member

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