

**ARIZONA RUGBY UNION
DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Updated August 1, 2009

1. THE ARIZONA RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION (ARU) DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

1. Composition of the Committee

Discipline for the Arizona Rugby Football Union (the “ARU”) shall be determined and communicated by a permanent three member Disciplinary Committee (the “Committee”). Members of the Committee shall consist of the elected Vice-President of the ARU, who shall act as the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee (the “Chairman”), and four current ARU members in good standing designated by the Chairman, and shall serve a term of one year to coincide with elections of ARU Board of Directors (the “Board”) elections.

Should a member of the Committee choose to resign at any time during his/her term, the Chairman shall designate another member to complete the remainder of the term. If the Chairman should resign, or be removed from Office, the Board shall designate a replacement until a new Vice-President is elected or replaced.

2. Role and Jurisdiction of the ARU Disciplinary Committee

The Arizona Rugby Football Union has established the Disciplinary Committee to adjudicate disciplinary matters involving ARU clubs and club members which arise in connection with rugby union football on or off the field. Such matter may be referred directly to the Committee by officers of ARU or members of the Rugby Referees Society in Arizona, or any referee that has officiated over an affiliated ARU rugby team or player. In the case of matters arising outside of Arizona/Nevada, referrals by other parties, such as referees of other unions or officers of other unions or USARFU, must be made to the Committee, or the Board who will direct all matters to the Chairman. The policies and procedures of the ARU Disciplinary Committee shall control all disciplinary matters within the ARU.

2. GENERAL

The local union disciplinary committee is only one arm of an effective disciplinary structure which begins at the club level and extends to the national level. The basis of all discipline lies in the club. As such, the clubs must insist on high standards of behavior from their members on and off the field. The spirit and the law of rugby must be inculcated into all participants in the game. Disciplinary rules should be enforced at the club and local union level with the interests of all players and of the game itself.

3. REFERRALS TO THE COMMITTEE

While all matters of misconduct, on or off the field, which may be detrimental to the game of rugby, will be considered by the Committee, most matters requiring disciplinary action will result from sending off of a player from the field by a referee.

3.1. Referee Referrals for Sending Off of a Player

When a player is ordered off the field under Law 10 in a match within ARU, the referee must promptly file a Disciplinary Form as prescribed with the Committee and follow the duties outlined by the USARFU in its disciplinary directives.

3.2. Other Referrals

When a matter arises which, in the view of a referee or ARU Board member, is contrary to the spirit of and/or detrimental to the game of rugby and which might warrant disciplinary action, such person may bring the matter to the attention of the Committee by filing a report with the Committee. This report shall contain appropriate documentation, including but not limited to, a detailed description of the incident or practice in question and the names of all parties involved or present.

4. OFFENSES

The Committee shall consider all matters referred to it in accordance with section 3.

4.1. Major Offenses

Matters pertaining to sending off under section 3.1 shall constitute “major offenses.” Such offenses shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 4.1.1. Foul play, misconduct, or dangerous play (Law 10);
- 4.1.2. Repeated reports for minor offenses (Law 10);
- 4.1.3. Assault on another player during a match;
- 4.1.4. Playing or attempting to play while under suspension;
- 4.1.5. Playing knowingly with a suspended player;
- 4.1.6. Extreme verbal abuse of a referee;
- 4.1.7. Verbal threat of physical harm or injury to a referee;
- 4.1.8. Physical assault against a referee.

4.2. Other Matters

All matters referred to the Committee other than offenses pertaining to a sending off under section 3.2 shall constitute “other matters”.

4.3.Functions of the Referee

Under the provisions of Law 6 of the Laws of the Game, the referee is the sole judge of fact on the field.

5. PENALTIES

5.1. Mandatory Suspension for Player Sent Off

5.1.1. A player who has been sent off by a referee under Section 3.1 shall be suspended for the next two (2) scheduled matches played by his/her club, or two (2) weeks, whichever is the longer period of time.

- a. Exception: The only exception to the mandatory suspension shall be in the case where a referee states in his/her Disciplinary Form to the Committee that he made a genuine mistake and that the player did not commit the offense for which he/she had ordered him/her off.

5.1.2.A player who has been sent off by a referee under section 3.1, and it is the player's second offense within any season year, then that player shall be suspended for the next five (5) scheduled matches played by his/her club, or five (5) weeks, whichever is the longer period of time.

5.1.3.A player who has been sent off by a referee under section 3.1, and it is the player's third offense within any season year, then that player shall be suspended for one (1) full year from the date of the suspension.

5.2.Additional Penalties for Players Sent Off

In the case of a player sent off for a major offense under section 3.1, if the Committee determines that penalties in addition to the mandatory suspension may be in order, it shall hold the discretion to impose any additional penalties as the Committee deems appropriate for the offense. The Committee shall have broad discretion in determining fair and just additional penalties in accordance with the facts and circumstances of each case.

5.3.Penalties for Specific Actions

5.3.1. A Player who commits assault, before start of play, or after play is completed (ie outside the two 40 min halves of playing time); shall be assessed a life ban from the Arizona Rugby Union.

5.3.2. A Player who commits assault by kicking, punching or head butt or similar and connects during the course of play before whistle; can be assessed a 1 year ban

to the end of the next scheduled league season (July 1st) from the Arizona Rugby Union.

- 5.3.3. A Player who attempts to commit dangerous play as in point 2 above, deemed as such by the referee; shall be suspended for the next two (2) scheduled matches played by his/her club, or two (2) weeks, whichever is the longer period of time.
- 5.3.4. A player who receives two yellow cards by a referee within a given season year for violent offenses, deemed as such by the referee, shall be suspended for the next two (2) scheduled matches played by his/her club, or two (2) weeks, whichever is the longer period of time.
- 5.3.5. A Player who receives 2 yellow cards within 3 matches for any reason; shall be suspended for the next one (1) scheduled match played by his/her club, or one (1) week, whichever is the longer period of time.

5.4. Players under Suspension

Should a player, during his suspension:

- Play in a match with his team;
- Play in a match with any other team, regardless of union or location;
- Commit any further misconduct;
- Fail to comply with the guidelines set by the Committee;

The player shall automatically be subject to further disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

5.5. Non-ARU Players

Should a player, who is not affiliated with an Arizona Rugby Union club, be sent off by a referee under Section 3.1, that player shall be considered ineligible for play in the Arizona Rugby Union for a period of one (1) year from the date of the suspension.

5.6. Club Responsibilities

- 5.6.1. Should any ARU club allow an ineligible player to play in a match for their team, the club will forfeit the game in which the offense has occurred. Forfeits shall be handled according to Section 16.2 of the ARU Constitution.
- 5.6.2. Should any ARU club allow an ineligible player to play in a second match for their team during any season year, regardless if it was the same ineligible player or not, the club will be suspended from Union membership for a period of one (1) year from the date of suspension.

- 5.6.3. When a player is issued a red card and that red card has been confirmed by the Disciplinary Committee, the Club is required to email a photo of the player that includes the face to the ARU Vice President and the ARU Secretary before their next scheduled game, suitable for posting to the ARU website.

Penalty: Failure to provide the photo via email before the following game shall result in the Club forfeiting that game and the game shall not be played.

5.7. *Offenses against Referees*

Major offenses against Referees will be treated with severity. Because of the seriousness of these offenses these sanctions will be strictly adhered to. For any action toward a Referee or a game related action reported by a referee, the following penalties shall apply:

- 5.7.1. Persistent criticism/disputing of calls:
 - a. First Offense – 1 to 3 game suspension.
 - b. Second Offense (within 1 year) – Minimum 5 game suspension up to 1 year suspension.
- 5.7.2. Verbal abuse and/or Threatening a Referee:
 - a. First Offense – 3 to 5 game suspension.
 - b. Second Offense (within 1 year) – 4 to 10 game suspension.
 - c. Third Offense (within 1 year) – 1 to 3 year suspension.
- 5.7.3. Continuation of acts listed in Section 5.7.1 or 5.7.2 above and/or non violent contact with a referee after a send off *or* at the end of the match *or* elsewhere:
 - a. First Offense – 6 month suspension.
 - b. Second Offense (within 1 year) – 1 year to indefinite suspension.
- 5.7.4. Physical Assault or Attempted Physical Assault of a Referee on or off the field:
 - a. Immediate Suspension.
 - b. 21 day fact finding period to commence from the day of the incident, in which a representative of the accused party's team may present a written statement containing any mitigating circumstances.
 - c. Unless overwhelming evidence is presented, as determined by the Disciplinary Committee, that would mitigate the situation, a minimum suspension of 5 years shall be assessed, with a maximum suspension of indefinite.
 - d. If the Disciplinary Committee determines that overwhelming evidence is presented as to not warrant a 5 year suspension, then no less than a 1 year suspension shall be assessed to the guilty party.

5.8. *Additional Penalties*

The Committee may at any time determine that penalties in addition to any mandatory suspension/penalty may be in order and it shall hold the discretion to impose any additional penalties as the Committee deems appropriate for the offense. The Committee shall have broad discretion in determining fair and just additional penalties in accordance with the facts and circumstances of each case.

5.9. Precedent

In determining appropriate penalties for major or other offenses, the Committee may look to previous dispositions of similar offenses in determining appropriate sanctions.

5.10. Prior Records

The Committee shall consider an individual's record or previous misconduct relating to rugby football when determining appropriate disciplinary penalties in a given case.

5.11. Appeals Process

The Sanction is in place immediately and the offending player/club has the right to appeal the sanction. The appeal shall be submitted by a Club Officer to the DC Chair within 7 calendar days of the sanction being levied. The appeal process can be conducted electronically.

5.12. Tracking of Offenders

- 5.12.1. It will be the responsibility of the Disciplinary Chairman or his designee to ensure that a report, of any penalties received by a player, is provided to all clubs and members in the Arizona Rugby Football Union. A posting of penalties on the official ARU web page will constitute notification to all clubs and members.
- 5.12.2. Upon an offending player receiving a suspension of 3 or more games, the offenders club will be responsible for providing a current photograph of the offending player to the Disciplinary Committee. This photograph shall be made available to all clubs and members of the ARU and any Referee Society.
- 5.12.3. For all suspensions of 1 year or more received by an offending player, the Disciplinary Chairman will ensure that a written report and photograph of the offending player will be provided to all other LAU's in the PCR FU.

5.13. Scope

The guidelines set forth under Section 3 are intended for any player of the game of rugby, participating in or wishing to participate in any game under the ARU or representing the ARU in any manner. Send off's from any union matches, non-union matches, tournament matches, 'friendlies', or any other form of the game of rugby, will be enforced within these guidelines.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLUB

ARU clubs have primary responsibility for ensuring that penalties imposed by the Committee which affect club activities, e.g. suspensions, are carried out. Any club which allows a player

to play rugby football and/or participate in club activities while under suspension will be subject to disciplinary action by the Committee under Section 5.5.

Individual ARU clubs are free to impose penalties on their own players in addition to those imposed by the Committee. Also, penalties imposed by clubs on their own players before the Committee has had a chance to act on a pending matter may be considered by the Committee in its decision regarding sanctions, and the Committee may back date a suspension to take account of a disciplinary action imposed by a player's club.

7. PRIOR RULES OVERRIDDEN

These rules shall override all prior disciplinary rules of the Arizona Rugby Football Union, including those appearing in print.

Appendix 1: Table of Recommended Sanctions

Law No.	Description	Entry Point Based on Scale of Seriousness of the Player's conduct, which constitutes the offending – Lower End (LE), Mid Range (MR), Top End (TE).	Maximum Sanction
6.A.5 10.4(k)	Verbal Abuse of Match Officials	LE – 6 weeks MR – 12 weeks TE 18+weeks	52 weeks
6.A.5 10.4(k)	Physical Abuse of Match Officials	LE – 24 weeks MR – 48 weeks TE 96+ weeks	Life
6.A.5 10.4(k)	Threatening Actions or Words at Match Officials	LE – 12 weeks MR – 24 weeks TE 48+ weeks	260 weeks
10.4(a)	Striking another Player with a hand, arm or fist	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 8+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(a)	Striking another Player with the elbow	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 9+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(a)	Striking with knee	LE – 3 weeks MR – 8 weeks TE 12+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(a)	Striking with head	LE – 4 weeks MR – 8 weeks TE 12+ weeks	104 weeks
10.4(b)	Stamping on an Opponent	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 9+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(b)	Trampling on an Opponent	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 9+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(c)	Kicking an Opponent	LE – 4 weeks MR – 8 weeks TE 12+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(d)	Tripping an Opponent with the foot/leg	LE – 2 weeks MR – 4 weeks TE 7+weeks	52 weeks
10.4(e)	Dangerous tackling of an Opponent including early or late and including the action known as the “stiff arm tackle”	LE – 2 weeks MR – 6 weeks TE 10+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(f)	Holding, pushing or obstructing an Opponent not holding the ball except in a scrum, ruck or maul	LE – 2 weeks MR – 4 weeks TE 6+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(f)	Dangerous charging or obstructing or grabbing of Opponent without the ball, including shouldering	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 9+weeks	52 weeks
10.4(g)	Dangerous charging or obstructing or grabbing of Opponent with the ball, including shouldering	LE – 2 weeks MR – 5 weeks TE 9+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(i)	Causing a scrum, ruck or maul to collapse	LE – 2 weeks MR – 4 weeks TE 8+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(k)	Testicle grabbing or twisting or squeezing	LE – 12 weeks MR – 18 weeks TE 24+ weeks	208 weeks
10.4(k)	Biting	LE – 12 weeks MR – 18 weeks TE 24+ weeks	208 weeks

10.4(k)	Contact with Eyes or the Eye Area	LE – 12 weeks MR – 18 weeks TE 24+ weeks	156 weeks
10.4(k)	Spitting at Players	LE – 4 weeks MR – 7 weeks TE 11+ weeks	52 weeks
10.4(k)	Verbal abuse of Players based on Religion, Race, Colour, or National or Ethnic Origin or otherwise	LE – 4 weeks MR – 8 weeks TE 13+ weeks	52 weeks