

2015-16 ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS AND EVENT-SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

2.4. Club Eligibility.

All Clubs must be in good standing with their Approved Governing Body and USA Rugby. The following measures are required for a club to be in good standing with USA Rugby, and therefore, eligible to participation in sanctioned competition:

- a. Club must be registered in the current year's CIPP, with all dues fully paid.
- b. Club must have a registered coach certified by USA Rugby.
- c. Club must have a Roster minimum of nine (9) players for sevens competitions and fifteen (15) players for fifteens competitions.
- d. Club must adhere to the regulations and procedures for the particular USA Rugby Championship:
 - i. The teams selected to represent the GU/LAU/CR Competition in the Competitive Region/'Round of 8' play-offs must be determined on the basis of competition (i.e., rather than on basis of allocation).
 - ii. Each club must fulfill their USA Rugby/CR stated divisional minimum number of contests (or predetermined goal) competed unless a waiver has been granted by USA Rugby.
 - iii. For purposes of this rule a competition is defined as a game considered to be between the strongest squads of two teams on that day to determine the 'best' team.
- e. Clubs entering the United States from other international unions must receive official clearance through home union and USA Rugby in accordance with iRB Regulations.

2.5. Player Eligibility.

All players must be in good standing with their GU/CR/Conference and USA Rugby. To be in good standing the following minimum rules apply:

- a. Player must be registered in the current year's Club and Individual Participation Program (CIPP), with all dues fully paid, prior to participating in any match.
- b. Player must be registered for the club to play in a League/Qualifying Match with that club.
- c. Player must be registered either as an At-Large member or for a club within the GU/Competitive Region for an NASC event.
- d. USA rugby shall follow the International Olympic Committee and US Olympic Committee policies regarding transgendered athletes.
- e. Player entering the US from any other international union must receive official clearance through his/her home union and USA Rugby in accordance with iRB Regulations.
- f. Player must also adhere to the event-specific regulations and procedures for each particular USA Rugby Championship Event.

SECTION 3. SENIOR CLUB.

3.1. Competition Sanctioning.

- a. All matches leading to the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series must be a part of a sanctioned USA Rugby competition or sanctioned playoff pathway.
- b. Non-sanctioned matches and competitions may be recognized by USA Rugby for the purpose of determining eligibility inside of sanctioned competitions.
- c. All sanctioned matches shall be governed by the World Rugby Laws of the Game. Any and all “Union Specific Variations” are applicable to national unions only, with USA Rugby the sole decider in determining whether such variations are open to use for league/qualifying/CR matches.
- d. Clubs participating in sanctioned competitions must adhere to Club-specific regulations as outlined in Section 3 of the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations.

3.2. Senior Club National Championship Series.

The USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series includes the 15s playoffs for Men’s Division I, Men’s Division II, and Men’s Division III, as well as the 15s playoffs for the Women’s Premier League, Women’s Division I, and Women’s Division II.

- a. Clubs must participate in a sanctioned USA Rugby competition in order to qualify for the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series.
- b. The National Championship Series includes the Men’s DI/DII/DIII and Women’s DI/DII playoffs, starting with the National Quarter-Finals and/or any NCC-required Cross-CR Play-In matches. The National Championship Series also includes the Women’s Premier League Semi-Finals and Final.
- c. Matches in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series will adhere to the same Match Roster requirements as outlined in Section 3 of the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations, except that:
 - i. No player participating as an Elite College Player may participate in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series; and
 - ii. No player participating as an Elite Club Guest Player may participate in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series
- d. Clubs participating in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series may carry a maximum Roster of 28 players per Event Weekend. For purposes of this rule:
 - i. Event Weekend is defined as the time period covering a single USA Rugby Championship Event, i.e. from team checkin through the final whistle in any given category, division, or sex.
 - ii. The Full Roster is locked for the duration of the Event Weekend
- e. Clubs participating in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series must carry a minimum Roster of 20 players per Event Weekend.
- f. The Event Weekend Roster may include a maximum of ten (10) Non-Resident Players and a maximum of six (6) Collegiate Guest Players

- i. The Match Roster may not include more than five (5) Non-Resident Players
 - ii. For purposes of this rule, the full Roster is locked for the duration of the Event Weekend
- g. Clubs fielding multiple sides are subject to additional regulations at USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series events. See Section 3.5 of the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations.

3.3. Club Eligibility.

- a. To qualify for the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series, each team selected to represent the Competitive Region must have:
 - i. Participated in a sanctioned USA Rugby competition;
 - ii. Qualified on the basis of competition (as opposed to on the basis of allocation)
 - iii. Played the required minimum number of matches, as determined by division. This number is determined by the USA Rugby National Competitions Committee (NCC).
 - iv. Used the USA Rugby Competition Management System (CMS), located at usarugbystats.com, for all league/qualifying/ CR matches.
- b. Match Rosters for league/qualifying/CR matches may list a maximum of 23 players.
 - i. No Match Roster may contain more than five (5) Non-Resident Players.
 - ii. No Match Roster may contain more than three (3) Collegiate Guest Players
 - iii. No Match Roster in a match under the Pilot Club Guest Player Program may contain more than a combined total of five (5) total Non-Resident Players and Elite Club Guest Players
- c. Clubs must be registered with USA Rugby prior to the start of either their first league/qualifying/CR match or April 1, which ever date occurs first.
- d. Clubs fielding multiple sides are subject to additional regulations. See Section 3.5 of the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations.
- e. Clubs are required to maintain proper player documentation, as outlined in Section 13.3 and Section 13.5 of the USA Rugby Eligibility.

3.4. Player Eligibility.

The purpose of these regulations is to prevent players from club hopping and to preclude clubs from importing guest players in an effort to strengthen teams advancing to post-season and/or play-off competitions leading to a USA Rugby Championship Event.

Players must meet each of the following criteria in order to participate in any League/Qualifying/CR Match:

- a. Player must be registered for the club and residing in the United States, either upon initial enrollment or written approval from USA Rugby of an official waiver request seeking an in-season transfer (accompanied by the

required release: see 13.5.2-b) from both the previous senior/college club and the previous CR/GU/Conference), by the earlier of:

- i. any participation in a League/Qualifying/CR Match, OR
- ii. no later than 11:59 pm Mountain Standard Time Zone on:
 - April 1 for Men's and Women's Division I, II, and III competitions.
 - April 1 for any sanctioned USA Rugby competition that serves as a Men's Division I/II/III or Women's Division I/II competition on a promotion/relegation basis.
 - October 15 for Women's Premier League (WPL) championship competitions.
- b. Non-Resident (NR) players must have entered and be residing in the United States prior to:
 - April 1 for Men's and Women's Division I, II, and III competitions.
 - April 1 for any sanctioned USA Rugby competition that serves as a Men's Division I/II/III or Women's Division I/II
 - competition on a promotion/relegation basis.
 - October 15 for Women's Premier League (WPL) championship competitions.

*NOTE: Passport or other Proof of Entry into the United States is required to document that this criteria has been met.

- c. National Team players must be CIPP Registered with a senior club prior to any participation in a League/Qualifying/CR Match and prior to the Registration deadline specified in USAR 3.2-(a). The National Team player has eligibility only with the senior club with whom s/he is registered during the competitive cycle unless criteria specified with USAR 13.5.2 for an in-season transfer have been met. National Team players must meet criteria outlined in 3.2-(d) for eligibility in any USA Rugby Championship contest.
- d. Player must have played in at least three (3), or in at least 25%, whichever number is lower, of the club's total League/Qualifying/CR Matches prior to the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series:
 - 6 League/Qualifying Matches Played: Must play in at least two (2) matches.
 - 8 League/Qualifying Matches Played: Must play in at least two (2) matches.
 - 10 League/Qualifying Matches Played: Must play in at least three (3) matches.
 - 12 or more League/Qualifying Matches Played: Must play in at least three (3) matches.

*NOTE: The USA Rugby Competition Management System (CMS), located at usarugbystats.com, is required for all sanctioned competitions and the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series. The CMS is responsible for demonstrating the number of matches each players has played. For the purpose of eligibility, Play is defined as actually stepping onto the field either as a starter, reserve, or blood substitution for any length of time. All records of playing in a match must be submitted into the USA Rugby CMS.

- e. Player must be capable of meeting the required match minimum prior to the start of the USA Rugby National Championship Series.
- f. Player must not have played in a League/Qualifying/CR/Recognized match for any other Club, regardless of the division of, or the geographical distance between the two clubs, during the Fifteens (15s) Competitive Season. Any

- exception to this must be accompanied by a written Waiver from USA Rugby, or confirmation that the player has met criteria as a Collegiate Guest Player. See section 3.8 for Senior Club Player Waivers and Collegiate Guest Players.
- g. No player under the age of 18 may participate at the Senior Club level without a Waiver from USA Rugby. See Section 5 of the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations for High School Regulations.
 - h. Player entering the United States from any other international union must receive official clearance through his/her home Union and USA Rugby in accordance with World Rugby Regulations.
 - i. No player under the age of 18 may participate at the Senior Club level without a waiver from USA Rugby.
 - j. No player under the age of 19 may participate as a Front Row Player unless the following have been provided:
 - i. Written Agreement from the Under-19 player to play Adult/Senior Club rugby in the row row, and acceptance of any associated risk with playing with Adults who may be stronger and more physically developed than the player; and
 - ii. Written parent/legal guardian's consent; and
 - iii. Copy of player's birth certificate, and
 - iv. Copy of USA Rugby Medical History form, or qualified medical assessment, completed and signed by a medical expert/physician, and
 - v. Written confirmation from the Senior Club coach with an appropriate understanding of the physical attributes required of, and
 - vi. the risk to players in, the front row in Adult Rugby, and to whom the player is known to have the requisite skills and expertise to
 - vii. play Adult Rugby.
 - k. No Competitive Region and/or Union is permitted to create additional and/or tighter eligibility restrictions than the national guidelines unless specifically approved by the National Competitions Committee and Club Eligibility Committee. CR/Union-specific regulations approved by USA Rugby must be published on the USA Rugby website as an addendum to the USA Rugby Eligibility Regulations to be considered in effect.
 - l. Players on clubs fielding multiple sides are subject to additional regulations outlined within Section 3.5.

3.5. Senior Clubs Fielding Multiple Sides.

The intent of these regulations is to control the movement of players on upper sides to lower sides. For purposes of this rule, the definitions and intent of these sides are: **Lower Division:** intended division for less competitive clubs or the developmental squad(s) of larger clubs providing opportunities to less experienced and emerging players, as well as team members returning from injury. This division provides an avenue for clubs fielding teams in more than one division to develop their own players. A lower division side is literally in a lower division of play than an Upper Division side.

Upper Division: Intended division for experienced and continuing senior club players seeking and able to compete at the highest level possible with the largest

and most competitive clubs. The top rugby players on a club fielding teams in more than one division.

- a. Teams competing for a USA Rugby championship from the same club must compete in contiguous divisions. For purposes of this rule, a club that participates in the WPL and/or which chooses to participate in a recognized, non-USA Rugby Championship competitions shall have its top side considered to be at the level of Division I for the purposes of determining where a second team fielded by that club may compete.
**Movement of players from lower divisions to upper divisions is allowed except where specifically prohibited below:
- b. The movement of Lower Division players to Upper Division sides in League/Qualifying/CR Matches played on the same day and or weekend during the regular League/Qualifying/CR season, is allowed only when the Lower Division match is played before the Upper Division match (this allowance does not apply to USA Rugby Championship Events):
 - i. Up to three (3) players may be listed as a RESERVE PLAYER for the Upper-Division League/ Qualifying/CR Match.
 - ii. Up to four (4) players may be listed as a RESERVE PLAYER if at least one of those players is a front row specialist.
 - iii. The movement of players included on the 28-person Roster of a Lower or Upper-Division side to the 28-player Roster of a different division side fielded by the same club is not allowed during an USA Rugby Event Weekend. For purposes of this rule, each full Roster is locked for duration of the Event Weekend.
- c. Any player that has played in at least 50% of the total number of League/Qualifying/ CR/Recognized matches to be played in the current competitive season by a club's Upper Division side is not eligible to play for that club's Lower Division side. Example: If the Upper Division side has 12 matches scheduled, participation in 6 Upper Division matches would preclude a return to that club's Lower Division side's League/Qualifying/CR matches.
- d. Any player who has played in at least four (4) WPL matches and/or has started in at least three (3) WPL matches is not eligible to play for that club's Lower Division side. Any player who has played in the WPL Semifinals or Final during the current competitive season, is not eligible to play in any other division of a USA Rugby Championship.
- e. Using the total number of League/Qualifying/CR/Recognized matches played by a player, if 50% or more were with the Upper Division side, that player is not eligible to participate with the Lower Division side in the USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series. Example: If a player plays in 5 Upper Division side matches and 4 Lower Division side matches, that player is not eligible for the Lower Division side's National Championship Series matches.
- f. To be eligible to compete in a USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series event in the Lower Division, a player must have played in a minimum of three (3) League/Qualifying/CR matches at the divisional (or lower) level entered into the USA Rugby National Championship Series. **Example:** To

- compete in the Division II National Championship Series, a player must have participated in at least three (3) Division II matches.
- g. To be eligible to compete in a USA Rugby Senior Club National Championship Series event in the Upper Division, a player must have played in a minimum of three (3) League/Qualifying/CR matches at any division level with his/her club. **Example:** To compete in the Division I National Championship Series, a player may be eligible having only competed in three (3) Division II matches.
 - h. A continuing and/or returning player registering for a senior club fielding multiple sides prior to the registration deadline (Section 3.4(a)) but after the conclusion of the League/CR/ Qualifying/Recognized schedule, or a player unable to meet the minimum match criteria, may be declared eligible only for the Upper Division side on that club for the remainder of the competitive season.
 - i. No club may have more than one side in each divisional level.

Section 13. GENERAL PROCEDURES.

13.1 Medical.

- a. Concussion: Players suspected of having concussion or diagnosed with concussion must go through a graduated return to play protocol (GRTP: available on http://www.irbplayerwelfare.com/pdfs/IRB_Concussion_Guidelines_EN.pdf)
- b. Heat: USA Rugby recommends that the Heat Illness Prevention Interventions established by the IRB (www.irbplayerwelfare.com) be applied if, during the match, conditions reach a temperature higher than/equal to 86° F with humidity greater than/equal to 60%.

13.2 National Championship Event Rosters.

- a. Upon qualifying for a National Championship Event, each Club or Team shall submit to USA Rugby within the time frames requested a roster of the players and a list of the support staff that will be in attendance at the USA Rugby Championship Event. The roster shall designate information specific to player and club eligibility for each Event and must be signed and certified by a responsible club official and Territorial Representative. Appropriate Roster forms can be found at www.usarugby.org.
- b. All Clubs must also check with their Approved Governing Body officials for any other requirements of documentation that must be retained and/or presented during matches that lead in any way to a USA Rugby National Championship.
- c. All updated information on current year deadlines and requirements will be maintained at www.usarugby.org.

13.3 Club Documentation.

The following section is a guide to documentation that should be maintained at all times from the start of the competitive season by a responsible club official. This documentation should be made available upon demand and/ or prior to registration for GU/LAU/CR championships and USA Rugby Championship Events or any League/Qualifying/CR Match.

13.4 Player Documentation.

The following section is a guide to documentation that should be maintained at all times from the start of the Competitive Season by a responsible club official. This documentation should be made available upon demand and/ or prior to registration for Conference/GU/LAU/CR championships and USA Rugby Championship Events or any League/Qualifying Match.

A player may be required to submit documentation to prove as needed (a) identity; (b) citizenship status and /or qualification as a resident (as opposed to a non-resident); (c) CIPP enrollment; (d) waiver granted by USA Rugby; and (e) high school or college enrollment. Players unable to provide appropriate documentation will be assigned non-resident status for purposes of eligibility. Acceptable documentation includes:

a. Proof of Identification.

- i. Current government issued photo identification.
- ii. Official school ID for students.

b. Proof of Citizenship can be verified with:

- i. Original or copy of U.S. birth certificate OR
- ii. Original or copy of photo page of U.S. passport OR
- iii. Original or certified copy of Permanent (Green Card) or Conditional Permanent Resident.
- iv. Alien documentation (Conditional Green Card, INS "A" Number issued and stamped in passport) AND Copy of Permanent or Conditional Permanent Resident Alien documentation for retention at registration. Note: Documentation (i.e. letters of application) in reference to the pursuit of permanent or conditional resident status in order to facilitate a player's participation in the competition is NOT sufficient.

c. Proof of current member registration can be verified with a printout from USA Rugby Website showing valid registration dates.

- d. Proof of official waiver from USA Rugby can be verified with waiver letter signed by USA Rugby National Office staff or Eligibility Committee Chair, delivered by fax or electronic mail, displaying player name, club, official dates of eligibility, and regulation waived.