



1. *Vermont Youth Rugby Association Handbook*

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Section 1 - Mission Statement

1. *The Vermont Youth Rugby Association, a non profit organization, is dedicated to the promotion, development, and support of youth rugby programs in an effort to encourage the integrity and character that makes rugby unique.*

Section 2 - CODE OF CONDUCT

VYRA teams and their members will abide by the following code of conduct:

Rugby players and team officials represent themselves, their Club, the Vermont Youth Rugby Association and the United States Rugby Union. Each Rugby Player, Coach, Referee, and Team Official is expected to be a lady or gentleman, both on and off the pitch Rugby players and team officials shall not exhibit, nor tolerate actions or behavior that would adversely affect the image of your Club, VYRA, the United States Rugby Union, the Game.

Section 3 - THE BENEFITS OF VYRA MEMBERSHIP

Some of the benefits of membership in VYRA include:

- A vote in the Annual General Meeting
- Access to referees through the NERRS (New England Rugby Referees Society)
- Access to Select Side play for qualified team members
- Participation in Vermont State Championship and League play
- Ability to nominate team members for VYRA Officer, Director and Committee positions
- Disciplinary support from NERRS and the NERFU (New England Rugby Football Union) Disciplinary Committee
- VYRA will handle all player, coach, and team registrations to USA Rugby

Section 4 - MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

To be a member in good standing with VYRA, every club must be compliant with the following items.

1. Membership is open to all U19 teams whose players comply with VYRA age requirements:

1. Players are eligible if they have not reached their 19th birthday by the September 1st that occurs at the start of the competitive season. (To be consistent with USARugby, the "competitive season" starts September 1.)
2. Players are not eligible if they have registered with a college team or are enrolled in a college which offers rugby.
3. Any team competing in a match that leads to a national championship must follow USA Rugby's eligibility rules. Note that they are more restrictive:

National U19 Club Championship

6.1. Club Eligibility

- a) Club can be represented by players that meet the requirements of 6.2 including players from multiple high schools, GED-enrolled players, home schooled players, and provided there is not more than a maximum of five (5) non-resident players on their Roster for any particular match that may in any way lead to the applicable USA Rugby Championship Event.
- b) Club may carry an unlimited number of players on its Roster.

6.2. Player Eligibility

- a) Players are eligible if they have not reached their 19th birthday by the September 1st that occurs at the start of the competitive season.
- b) Player must have played for the club in at least two (2) Qualifying Matches or second-side match associated with a Qualifying Match during the competitive season at least a week apart from each other prior to participating in a USA Rugby Championship Event.
- c) The player must not have played in a Qualifying Match for any other club during the fifteens competitive season – including in High School, Collegiate, or Senior competitions.
- d) Players must be enrolled in high school and attending classes full time, as defined by the High School registrar. However, if graduation for a particular player occurs during the Competitive Season, the player retains eligibility for the remainder of the Competitive Season.
- e) See Section 13.6 for additional information about potential Waivers.

1. ASSOCIATION DUES

1. All member clubs must pay all VYRA dues as billed by the VYRA Treasurer. Clubs that have not paid their dues will not be afforded VYRA membership rights until all dues are current, as certified by the VYRA Treasurer.
2. Membership Fees are as follows:
 1. Teams will be invoiced and notified of all fees at the annual meeting.

2. Annual dues and fees will be determined prior to annual meeting and collected in 2 installments:
 1. Club fee are due on Jan. 1st,
 2. Player fees are due at the time of submission of CIPP registration forms.
 3. All clubs must submit CIPP forms to VYRA. VYRA assumes filing responsibility for all coaches, players and member teams.
2. CIPP REGISTRATION
 1. All member clubs, coaches, administrators, and players must be USA Rugby CIPP registered..
 3. CONTACT INFORMATION
 1. Clubs are solely responsible for actively maintaining the contact information for their club with the Association. Clubs will contact the VYRA Executive Director with all team-related changes.
 2. VYRA will maintain a list of member clubs and contact information on the web site.

Section 5 - MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

1. To apply for membership in VYRA, complete the “New Member Application” form found in the Coaches Corner of the VYRA website. Submit an electronic copy to the VYRA secretary.

Section 6 - PLAYER'S DRESS GUIDELINES

The VYRA takes the appearance of its players and Clubs seriously. Uniforms that do not meet the minimum standards outlined here are a potential safety issue for players. Uniforms that do not meet the minimum standards outlined here portray a less than favorable image of the Game. The VYRA abides by the standards set by the International Rugby Board for padding and other equipment. If any equipment or padding does not include an IRB Approval tag, the Referee will mandate its removal. For a complete outline of the International Rugby Board (IRB) Guidelines for regulations regarding equipment and padding visit the following website - <http://www.IRB.com>

Kit Requirements

1. Kits must match and be clean with no tears in shirts, shorts, and socks. Short, or cut, sleeves must be hemmed and must at least cover the player’s biceps. No clothing may show below Rugby shorts (no boxer shorts); except for spandex shorts.

1. Numbers on jerseys will be mandatory beginning in the 2009 season. Both teams must conform to all USA Rugby Kit Requirements.

1. In the event of a lack of contrast of color jerseys, the *home team*, in all league matches, is responsible for providing alternate wear to the satisfaction of the referee. The match is liable to forfeiture, at the referee's discretion, if contrast of jerseys is unacceptable to the referee.
1. Member clubs cannot have any reference to alcohol or tobacco related products or companies displayed on any part of their kit.

Section 7 - MEDICAL GUIDELINES

1. Team coaches and administrators should familiarize themselves with the USA Rugby Medical and Safety Guide on their website:
<http://www.usarugby.org/collegiate/manage/medical.html>.
2. It is required that each club will develop and maintain an Emergency Medical Plan for each practice/game site which is to be made available to visiting teams at least 24 hours in advance of a match.
 1. Should an injured player require more treatment than can be provided by on-site trainers or professionals, transport to the nearest emergency facility will be necessary. Under these circumstances, it is important for to provide clear written directions to the nearest Emergency Room. Emergency phone numbers for professional medical transport companies should be a part of the Emergency Medical Plan with a copy available in the medical kit .
 2. Coaches and Administrators should ensure that their players are familiar with the Emergency Medical Plan in the event that the coach is in need of Emergency care.
1. VYRA recommends that each home team have a Certified Trainer (ATC), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), or other medically qualified individual to cover the match. Further, schools must adhere to their own institution's athletic team medical coverage policy.

Section 8 - ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE & REGULATED SUBSTANCE POLICIES

VYRA WILL RECOGNIZE AND ADHERE TO USA RUGBY GUIDELINES AND ANY AND ALL APPLICABLE LOCAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THE USE OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AT ANY VYRA APPROVED EVENT OR FUNCTION WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

1. It is the ultimate responsibility of the home team and local officials to ensure that their own regulations and laws are enforced.
1. Disciplinary action will be utilized to censure clubs, event hosts, and others who fail to take the necessary action to enforce these regulations.
2. VYRA will enforce and adhere to all school or club imposed disciplinary actions resulting from an alcohol or drug related offense.
3. Website policy: All VYRA member sites come under the Code of Conduct and Alcohol & Tobacco policy. Youth clubs cannot have any reference in either words or pictures to alcohol or tobacco on their web site.

Section 9 - MATCH PLAY GUIDELINES

1. Matches must be played on adequately sized fields (See "[IRB field specs](#)" in the reference section on the NERFU website and USA Rugby field specification located on their website).

1. Home AND Away teams must request a referee from the New England Rugby Referee Society (NERRS). If a certified referee is not available, the visiting team has the option of rescheduling or providing a certified referee.

1. VYRA teams may play teams recognized as in good standing with any of the following organizations: VYRA, NERFU, USA Rugby, or IRB.

1. VYRA follows all the laws and rules of the game as stipulated by the IRB and by USA Rugby unless otherwise stipulated in this handbook

1. All league matches must play a minimum of two 30 minute halves

Section 10 - LEAGUE PLAY REQUIREMENTS

1. VYRA league play is administered by the VYRA Competitions Committee

1. SEASON
 1. The VYRA's competitive league season runs from April through June.
 2. League schedules are developed and maintained by VYRA.

1. SCHEDULES:
 1. All games will start at their scheduled time unless both teams agree no less than 72 hours in advance.

2. Home teams have the option to change a scheduled league match to a different location subject to notification to the visiting team and match official no later than 72 hours in advance.

1. **PROTEST PROCEDURE**

The Team Captain must advise the Referee ***BEFORE KICKOFF*** that their team wishes to register a protest and give the reason. The Referee must notify the opposing Team Captain that the game is going to be played "under protest" and for what reason. The Referee should give the offending team a reasonable amount of time to correct the circumstances of the protest. If the circumstances are not corrected, the Referee and protesting team **MUST** notify the VYRA Competitions Committee, in writing, within 72 hours of the circumstances of the protest. The VYRA Competitions Committee will review the protest and the teams involved will be notified of the decision

1. **CANCELLATIONS**

Teams may cancel or postpone league fixtures, subject to both teams' approval. Teams may cancel or postpone league fixtures no less than the Wednesday prior to the scheduled fixture and must notify the visiting team and Referee within that time as well. If a league fixture is cancelled, it must be re-scheduled and played in that league season. Should a team cancel, postpone or relocate a league fixture without following the aforementioned process, or due to reasons outside of the Home Teams control, i.e. weather, the Competitions Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the reasons for cancellation not pursuant to the cancellation policy and ensuring the fixture is re-scheduled and played.

2. **STANDINGS**

1. Division points will be awarded as follows:
 - 4 points for a win
 - 2 points for a tie
 - 0 points for a loss
2. There is no sudden death in league play. Ties are entered into the standings and each team is awarded appropriate points.
3. Forfeits will be recorded as a 7-0 score unless the match was played and a more beneficial outcome occurred for the team awarded the win by forfeit.

3. Teams are required to report their scores and the number of tries awarded to each team to scores@vyra.org.

It is also recommended that each home team report scores in their local papers.

4. **TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE:**

1. If, at the end of league play, two teams are tied in the standings with the same number of division points, the match result between the two teams will determine the finishing order.
 2. Should three or more teams be tied in the league standings, net points (points for minus points against) from the matches among the teams tied shall determine the finishing order until only two tied teams remain. The match result between the remaining two teams will determine their finishing order.
 3. If the above criteria is insufficient to determine the order, point differential of ALL matches (total league match points for minus total league match points against) will be used to determine the final standings
 4. The Competitions Committee has the final decision if all three methods above have been exhausted.
5. MATCH REQUIREMENTS
All league matches must play two 30-35 minute halves.
6. REPORTING
Each team shall enter report scores and number of tries scored by each team to scores@vyra.org within 48 hours of completion of the match.

1. CONTINGENCIES

The Competition Committee reserves the right to add new teams and to adjust divisions and these regulations, as it may become necessary.

Section 11 - LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

1. To be determined by the Competition Committee

Section 12 - DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

VYRA will adhere to disciplinary decisions of NERFU which adheres to the *USA Rugby Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures* set by the United States of America Rugby Football Union (USARFU). A full and up to date outline of these policies will be available on line.

Vermont Youth Rugby Association