

**Handbook
of
Policy, Procedures
and Guidelines**



of the
**Upstate Small College
Rugby Conference
(UpSCRC)**

Upstate Small College Rugby Conference
Policy, Procedure and Guideline Handbook
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NOTE: All NSCRO Policies, Forms, etc. are found on the NSCRO website, under the Documents section (www.nscro.org).

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Conference Administrators, Team Coaches and players with the most up to date information on how the Conference operates. The handbook provides the rules, regulations and performance standards required of all member clubs and players. All members of UpSCRC agree to abide by the regulations and rules set forth in this handbook.

SECTION 2 - CODE OF CONDUCT

The UpSCRC expects all of its teams and their members to abide by the following code of conduct:

Rugby players and team officials are representatives of not only themselves, but also their Club, The Upstate Small College Rugby Conference, USA Rugby and NSCRO. Each Rugby Player, Coach, Referee, and Team Official is expected to conduct themselves, both on and off the pitch in a dignified and respectful manner. Rugby players and team officials shall not exhibit, nor tolerate actions or behavior that would adversely affect the image of themselves, their Club, the UpSCRC, or the game of rugby. Such offenses shall be met with swift discipline by the UpSCRC Disciplinary Committee.

SECTION 3 - MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

A. The membership of the Conference shall be limited to undergraduate rugby teams in good standing with their respective college or university and in compliance with USA Rugby and NSCRO policies, as set forth in the By-Laws of the Conference.

B. In order to be a member in good standing with UpSCRC, every club must be compliant with the following items:

Dues: All member clubs must pay all UpSCRC dues as billed by the UpSCRC Treasurer. Clubs that have not paid their dues will not be afforded UpSCRC membership rights until all dues are current, as certified by the UpSCRC Treasurer. The financial year will run from July 1st to June 30th. The penalty for failing to make payment on time or an arrangement satisfying the UpSCRC Treasurer will result in an additional fee of no less than \$100.

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SECTION 3 - MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS (Continued)

USA Rugby Member Registration : All member clubs, players, and coaches must be USA Rugby member registered prior to participating in any rugby match or competition. Registration is ONLY valid for clubs if **all players** are registered, the **club itself** is registered and **coaches** are fully certified by USAR at a min. of Level 200. All clubs MUST have a certified coach, whether it is a player-coach or otherwise.

Clubs, players and coaches not USAR member compliant will be sanctioned, per a decision made by the Disciplinary Committee.

Contact Information: Clubs are solely responsible for actively maintaining the contact information of their club and officers by submission of an updated Team Contact Form. The Conference will consider the information in hand to be current at all times and cannot be responsible for any issues resulting from incorrect or outdated contact information.

Resignation of Membership: A team may resign from the Conference with or without cause by submitting a written or electronic notice to the Commissioner before March 15th, proceeding the effective date of the resignation. Any notice of Withdrawal from Spring 7's competition only must be submitted before November 1st, proceeding the effective date of withdrawal. Mid-season resignations will not be accepted. The resigning team shall remain liable for any pending financial obligations to the Conference and its members.

SECTION 4 - MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

Any team seeking to join the Conference shall submit a written request to the Conference Commissioner, no later than March 15th proceeding the effective date of the membership. Members shall be admitted based on a two-thirds vote from the Board.

SECTION 5 - MEDICAL GUIDELINES

A. All Teams are required to complete an UpSCRC Emergency Action Plan (EAP), prior to the start of each competitive season.

B. All Coaches must be familiar with and adhere to the USA Rugby Policy regarding Concussions, as well as the World Rugby Concussion Guidelines.

C. Teams hosting games, scrimmages, tournaments, or any rugby activity involving contact and players from another team are required to provide on-site or on-call medical coverage, as specified inn the UpSCRC EAP Responsibilities section.

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SECTION 6 - PLAYER CLOTHING GUIDELINES

UpSCRC abides by the standards set by World Rugby for padding and other equipment. Uniforms that do not meet the minimum standards outlined here are a potential safety issue for players and portray a less than favorable image of the Game. If any equipment or padding does not include a World Rugby Approval tag, it is not allowed and the Referee will mandate its removal. A complete outline of World Rugby Guidelines and regulations regarding equipment and padding is described in World Rugby Law 4 and Regulation 12 (laws.worldrugby.org). Particularly important to note is:

- **World Rugby Law 4.4.(c)** A player must not wear any items containing buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection not otherwise permitted under this Law.
- **World Rugby Law 4.5(b)** The referee has power to decide at any time, before or during the match, that part of a player's clothing is dangerous or illegal. If the referee decides that clothing is dangerous or illegal the referee must order the player to remove it. The player must not take part in the match until the items of clothing are removed.

In addition to World Rugby regulations, all teams competing in UpSCRC competition shall adhere to the following:

- A. Kits must match and be clean with no tears in shirts, shorts, and socks.
- B. Short or cut sleeves must be hemmed and must at least cover the player's biceps.
- C. No clothing may show below Rugby shorts (no boxer shorts); except for spandex shorts. If worn, the color of the spandex shorts must completely match the Rugby shorts.
- D. Numbers on jerseys (for the correct positions) are mandatory.
- E. In the event of a lack of contrast of color jerseys, the *home team* is responsible for providing alternate wear to the satisfaction of the referee. The match is liable to cancellation, at the referee's discretion, if contrast of jerseys is unacceptable to the referee.
- F. Clubs cannot have any reference to alcohol or tobacco related products or companies displayed on any part of their kit.

SECTION 7 – ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE & REGULATED SUBSTANCE POLICIES

UpSCRC recognizes that participation in Rugby at the college level involves a majority of "under age" participants. UpSCRC also recognizes the inherent dangers of participating in any physical activity while under the influence of alcohol or other mood altering substances. Furthermore, UpSCRC recognizes the need to adhere to USA Rugby guidelines and any and all applicable local laws and regulations. Therefore the following policies shall be strictly adhered to:

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SECTION 7 – ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE & REGULATED SUBSTANCE POLICIES (Continued)

- A. The serving, selling or consumption of alcoholic beverages, or any other non-prescribed mood altering substance, is forbidden at or during any rugby match or conference event.
- B. Campus policy on alcoholic beverages must be adhered to strictly.
- C. It is the ultimate responsibility of colleges and local officials to ensure that their own regulations and laws are enforced.
- D. Disciplinary action will be utilized to censure clubs, event hosts, and others who fail to take the necessary action to enforce these regulations.
- E. Web site policy: All UpSCRC member sites come under the Code of Conduct and Alcohol & Tobacco policy. Clubs cannot have any reference in either words or pictures to alcohol or tobacco on their web site or other web presence which could be construed as an official team representation (this includes team blogs, Facebook pages, or twitter accounts).

SECTION 8 - MATCH PLAY GUIDELINES

- A. League matches and UpSCRC Regional Playoff matches leading up to the UpSCRC Championship match, must be played on adequately sized and properly lined fields as per the NSCRO [Field Preparation and Sideline Policy](#).
While not recommended, matches prior to the Regional Championships are permitted to be played on a field no smaller than a High School football field (120 x 53.3 yards) and use football goal posts or posts attached to a soccer goal if no other options are available. NSCRO policy for all other field and sideline requirements must be complied with.
- B. UpSCRC Regional Championship matches are to be played on fields which are compliant with the NSCRO [Field Preparation and Sideline Policy](#).
In the event the home team's field is not in compliance with NSCRO requirements, the home team is responsible to secure a field which is NSCRO compliant and is no more than 20 miles further travel for the visiting team.
If the home team cannot secure a field which is NSCRO compliant, the visiting team shall be awarded the opportunity to do so.
If neither team can secure a field which is NSCRO compliant, the Competition Director shall secure a neutral NSCRO compliant sight.
- C. The UpSCRC Conference Championship match will be played at a neutral sight, which is compliant with the NSRCO [Field Preparation and Sideline Policy](#).
The Competition Director is responsible to announce bids for the Championship host sight and shall make the final determination of the match sight. Teams involved in the UpSCRC Championship Match and any NSCRO Playoffs shall be familiar with and comply with the standards and requirements set forth in the [NSCRO Playoffs Match Regulations](#).

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SECTION 8 - MATCH PLAY GUIDELINES (Continued)

D. For all matches prior to the UpSCRC Conference Championship, teams must submit a player check-in notebook, with sectioned dividers, to include:

- a fully completed **UpSCRC Match Roster** form
- a printout of the team's current **USA Rugby Member list**
- NSCRO **Player Eligibility Verification** form (PEV). Once verified by a School Administrator, the signed version of the NSCRO Player Eligibility Verification Form ([Player Eligibility Verification Form](#)) must be included in place of the original unsigned version (see below "NOTE").
- Teams may also include photocopies of each player's student ID, so that the players do not need to personally present them for the check-in.

At least 30 minutes before the scheduled kick off time, Team Captains or other Team Representatives shall submit the up-to-date notebook to each other. At that time, they shall verify the identity of every player listed on the roster by inspecting a photo ID included in the notebook or shown by each player on the opponent's team. Once the information and ID's are verified, the opposing Team's reviewer shall sign off on the appropriate signature portion of the form. In the event of a discrepancy, the Referee is to act as final decision maker only. Each Team is responsible to send a scanned copy of the verified forms to the the Competition Director or designee, within 24 hours of the completion of the match. Teams are further required to maintain all previous match roster forms in the notebook, throughout the entire season.

For the UpSCRC **Conference Championship** and beyond, submission of an [Player Eligibility Verification Form](#) will be required, in place of the UpSCRC Roster Form. Teams shall be familiar with the NSCRO [Eligibility Verification Procedure](#).

NOTE: It is imperative that Teams submit an NSCRO "Player Eligibility Verification Form" ([Player Eligibility Verification Form](#)) to their respective School Administrator, as early in the school year as possible. This will ensure that the School Administrator has time to complete his/her verification of the form.

- A copy of the verified PEV shall be scanned and e-mailed to the Competition Director, no later than October 1st.
- If any player(s) joins a team after the submission of the PEV, the required information shall be added to the form, indicating "NO" in the last column ("PEV Verification"). Once the player(s)'s information is verified by the original School Administrator (last column changed to "YES" and initialed by the Administrator), the updated PEV shall be scanned and e-mailed to the Competition Director.
- It is the responsibility of the Competition Director to review the original and updated PEVs, for matches played prior to their submission, in order to ensure that all players who participated were eligible to do so.
- Coaches are required to maintain the all original copies of the PEV and weekly match rosters.

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- Use of ineligible players may result in sanctions, including but not limited to forfeiture of any affected match, as ruled on by the Disciplinary Committee.

E. UpSCRC teams may not play any team that is not in compliance with or otherwise not recognized by USA Rugby.

F. All players, coaches, and referees who participate in any match must be CIPP registered with USA Rugby (see Section 3).

G. UpSCRC enforces all the laws and rules of the game as stipulated by the World Rugby and by USA Rugby, unless otherwise stipulated in this handbook.

SECTION 9 - REFEREE NOTIFICATION AND COVERAGE PROCEDURES

A. The Competition Commissioner shall forward the Conference schedule to the NYS Rugby Referees Society, immediately upon it's release to member clubs, as per the Conference By-Laws.

B. The Referees Society is responsible for the assignment of referees and match start times, depending on referee availability.

C. In the event that the Referees Society is unable to assign a referee, it is the home team's responsibility to look for an referee, in their area that can act as the referee. The home team shall promptly notify the visiting team. If the home team cannot locate a referee, then the visiting team shall be provided the opportunity to provide a referee. In the event that no referee can be located, the match shall be rescheduled or cancelled, in consultation with the Director of Competition. The Director shall have the final decision on the match status.

D. It is the Home team's responsibility to contact the referee and the visiting team's primary contact person, via e-mail and/or phone, at least four days prior to the match to confirm match details. The following information is to be provided:

- Confirm home and visiting team;
- Match Day & Date;
- Start time;
- Directions to venue;
- Location of referee changing room, if available and
- Emergency contact information – cell phone.

E. Assume the referee is assigned to do one match only. If you would like to ask the referee to do a second match, please do so in advance. If the referee agrees, please notify the assigner so it can be made an official assignment.

F. Prior to the start of any match, the home team is responsible to ensure the pitch is properly prepared. The pitch must be correctly lined, the goalposts padded and sideline ropes are in place on both sides from goal line to goal line.

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The home team shall ensure these requirements are in place, with ample time for identified issues to be corrected prior to the scheduled match time.

SECTION 10 - LEAGUE PLAY REQUIREMENTS

A. MATCH LENGTH: All 15's Conference matches will be played with 40 minute halves. Teams are not permitted to play more than one league match in a day or more than two league matches in a weekend. Requirements for 7's competition shall be developed by the Director of 7's Competition, or any Committee appointed by the Board, upon establishment of that competitive league.

B. Team Game Day Requirements: Teams must provide a team CIPP Roster, complete Match Rosters and Player Verification Forms, as specified in Section 8.

C. Player Game Day Requirements: Each Player must provide a valid Student Picture Identification Card. If a school does not provide picture ID's, a valid Student ID and another valid form of picture ID (such as a Driver's License), must be presented.

D. Any club which fields players that are not CIPP registered (at any time during the season) will be rendered ineligible for playoff competition.

E. Game scores must be submitted by the winning team, within 24 hours of the completion of the match and in compliance with instructions set forth by the Competition Director. Match rosters will also be submitted as instructed. Failure to properly submit scores and or match rosters may result in a Forfeiture.

SECTION 11 - MATCH SCHEDULE / FORFEITURE / CANCELLATIONS

A. Conference match schedules are developed and maintained by the Competition Director. Schedules are to be finalized and distributed by June 30th.

B. Match start times are generally scheduled for 1:00 p.m., but teams should be available for kick off times between 11:00 a.m. and 3 p.m, dependent on referee assignments.

C. The home team has the option to change a scheduled match to a different location that is no more than 20 miles further travel for the visiting team, subject to Competition Director approval and notification to the visiting team and the assigned referee.

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SECTION 11 - MATCH SCHEDULE / FORFEITURE / CANCELLATIONS (Continued)

D. Teams are responsible to be available to participate in all scheduled Conference Matches. However, if in the event a mutually agreeable date and/or time change is made, the team that initiates the change must immediately report the agreed change to the Referees Society for a referee assignment. If no Referee assignment can be facilitated by the Referees Society, both teams may mutually agree to a suitable replacement as specified in Section 8B of this handbook. If both teams mutually agree to the change and after a referee assignment is made, the team originally requesting the change shall immediately notify the Competition Director. Advise regarding a proposed change may be sought from the Competition Director. However, it is not the responsibility of the of the Competition Director to force a non-agreed change proposal, unless it is deemed by the Director to be an emergency situation.

E. Due to the inherent difficulties in rescheduling matches, cancellations or postponements will be limited to emergency situations only. Teams that find it necessary to cancel or postpone league matches must immediately notify the Competition Director, via e-mail and phone contact. The Competition Director will review the matter. If a league match is cancelled, it must be rescheduled and played in that league season in order to count for league competition. Should a team cancel or postpone a league match and the match cannot be made up, the Competition Director shall be responsible for reviewing the reasons for cancellation and determining the outcome, which may result in one team forfeiting the match.

F. If the match is cancelled it is the home team's responsibility to contact the referee and the referee assigner immediately. Do not simply send an e-mail or leave a voice mail, please confirm that the cancellation message has been received. The visiting team will be similarly notified.

G. If in the event a team Forfeits a scheduled Conference match, they will be barred from the current season playoffs. A team that Forfeits two matches in the competitive season, will be designated as a Developmental team for the following competitive year. As such, they will not be scheduled for regular season Conference matches. Instead, the Conference will assist them in arranging matches with Bye teams and/or "B" side matches. In the event of a second Forfeiture, the Executive Board shall also be required to conference with the offending team, in order to assess any means of assistance that can be provided to the team, by the Conference. In the event of an emergency/extreme situation that causes a team to Forfeit, the Executive Board shall consider any appeal to these sanctions.

H. Failure by the Home Team to notify the referee of a cancellation or forfeiture may result in an additional fine, equivalent to the Referee Society's match fee in effect at that time.

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SECTION 12 - MATCH PROTEST PROCEDURE

The Team Captain must advise the Referee BEFORE KICKOFF that their team wishes to register a protest and give the reason. The Team Captain must also 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 protesting team MUST notify the Competition Director via email within 72 hours with the circumstances of the protest. The Competition Director will review the protest and the teams involved will be notified of the decision.

SECTION 13 - SCORING / CONFERENCE STANDINGS

A. There is no overtime in league play. Ties are entered into the standings and each team is awarded appropriate points.

B. In the spirit of the game, the following will be effect for all league matches: In order to avoid the situation where a team is forced to attempt to score as many points as possible in a match in an attempt to secure a higher finish, we are capping the point differential in a match at 40.

Once a team reaches a 40 point lead, the score is frozen. The game continues and the teams will play the game out. For example, if a team gets a 45-5 lead the game continues and the score in the standings will be listed as 45-5 regardless of the actual final score (even if the final point differential is less than 40).

C. Conference standings will be based on cumulative scoring points, as follows:

- 4 points for a win
- 2 points for a tie
- 1 Bonus point for scoring four or more tries in a match
- 1 Bonus point for losing By seven points or fewer
- 0 points for a loss by eight points or more (notwithstanding 1 Bonus point for scoring 4 tries or more)
- A forfeited game will earn the winning side 4 points for a win plus 1 bonus point Based on a score of 28-0

E. Tie breakers for a two-way tie are:

1. Wins
2. Head-to Head
3. Fewest Points against
4. Coin Toss

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SECTION 13 - SCORING / CONFERENCE STANDINGS (Continued)

F. Tie breakers for a three-way tie are:

1. If a team is eliminated when applying these tie-breaker rules, start back at the beginning using the appropriate tie-breaker rule for the remaining tied teams (2-way or 3-way or more).
2. Wins
3. Fewest Points against
4. Coin Toss

G. The Competition Director will inform all Teams of the method of reporting Match Results, at least 10 days before the start of the competitive season.

SECTION 14 - DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

A. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE (DC): The DC will be comprised of three (3) members; two (2) representatives from member clubs and one (1) representative from the Referee's Society. DC members are appointed by the Commissioner, who will also name one of the members to act as the Committee Chair.

It is the responsibility of the DC to weigh all facts/opinions presented during the review process and to determine the intent and/or severity of the infraction. The DC will then rule on the appropriate sanction as set forth in the [USA Rugby Disciplinary Procedures](#). Consensus by the DC will be used to determine the result of the review process.

Teams are responsible for all members who participate in a match, not excluding coaches, sideline players, trainers, and any other members on the sideline. All members of the team are subject to disciplinary action if any incident is reported.

B. YELLOW CARDS: The Incident Report must be filed by the Referee, in compliance with the NYS Referee's Society guidelines. Yellow cards are not reviewed unless a review is requested of the conference by one of the competing teams. This request must come within 48 hours of completion of the match. If a review is requested every effort should be made to hold the review within 48 hours of receiving the request.

C. RED CARDS: The Incident Report must be filed by the Referee, in compliance with the NYS Referee's Society guidelines. A Red card offense carries a minimum mandatory 1 game suspension. All Red Cards are reviewed by the DC, for potential additional sanctions. This review should be conducted within 48 hours of receiving the report. The carded player can request a review to have the card rescinded and the opposing team can also request a review for additional punishment. These requests must come within 48 hours of completion of the match. If a review is requested every effort should be made to hold the review with 48 hours of receiving the request.

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SECTION 14 - DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES (Continued)

D. FIELDING A SUSPENDED PLAYER: Any club which fields a player(s) who is on suspension, will be rendered ineligible for playoff competition. If the playoffs have not begun, the next eligible team will be awarded a playoff berth. Any player joining the conference from another Conference / GU, is required to complete any suspension, which has been decided on by the prior Conference or GU.

E: REGULAR SEASON NON-CONFERENCE MATCH PROCEDURE:

For incidents that occur in matches involving teams from different conferences, the conference of the host team will be responsible for reviewing the conduct of the players from their conference using the procedure outlined above. If a team requests additional punishment for a carded player in a non-conference match, that review would be conducted by the home conference of the carded player. In this situation the team should make the request to its conference's Discipline Director who will immediately share it with the Discipline Director of the home conference of the carded player.

F. APPEAL PROCESS: If a team or player chooses to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, an appeal must be filed electronically with 48 hours, with the DC Chair. The appeal will be heard by an Appeals Committee, which consists of the Commissioner and one other rugby affiliated person from within or outside of the Conference. Appeals Committee members can not also be on the Disciplinary Committee of UpSCRC. If a team or player chooses to further appeal the ruling of Appeals Committee, that appeal will be heard by the USA Rugby Discipline Committee, which will issue a final ruling on the case. USAR discipline procedures will follow standing USAR procedures.

G. POSTSEASON DISCIPLINE: Discipline issues during an NSCRO Playoff match will be handled by USA Rugby and NSCRO, as appropriate. All USA Playoff discipline issues will be handled by USA Rugby, per standing procedures.

SECTION 15 - WEBSITE GUIDELINES

A. In an effort to provide members with the most up-to-date information, a website is to be created and maintained by the Conference. The website will contain, but is not limited to:

- Current Conference News and announcements
- Policies / Procedures / Guidelines
- Conference / Geographic Regional Match Schedules, Results and Standings
- Member Club Contact Information
- Links to other important websites, such as USA Rugby and NSCRO

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SECTION 15 - WEBSITE GUIDELINES (Continued)

B. Conference Commissioner: Is responsible to ensure the website is created and maintained.

C. Treasurer: Has the authority to approve the purchase of any services necessary to create and maintain the website. He/She will ensure sufficient funding is budgeted, in order to maintain the cost of operating the website and maintaining necessary domains.

D. Member Clubs: As stated in Section 3 of the Handbook, individual clubs are solely responsible for actively maintaining the contact information of their club and officers by submission of an updated Team Contact Form.