

# **NCRFU Protocol to Enhance Safety at Rugby Matches [October, 2008]**

## **A. Coaches and Referees**

1. All Coaches and Referees confirm their joint objective to maintain a safe environment for all players, coaches, spectators, and match officials

## **B. Coaching Requirements**

1. Each coach shall maintain current CIPP Registration.
2. A team's Head Coach shall have and maintain current USA Rugby Coaching Accreditation (provided, however, foreign accreditation approved and accepted by USA Rugby is an acceptable substitute).

## **C. Field Requirements**

1. Sideline Barriers from goal line to goal line will be maintained a suitable distance beyond the touch lines. As a general rule, the Sideline Barriers must be at least 5 meters from the touchline. Exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis by the NCRFU executive. Only two CIPP registered coaches, and CPR-qualified trainers may stand inside the barriers. Replacement players are NOT permitted inside the barrier until requesting entry into the match.
2. Each team will assign one or two Field Monitors to ensure compliance with the barrier restrictions, and respectful conduct of its spectators, coaches, and participants. The Field Monitor shall wear distinctive apparel, e.g. a florescent vest.
3. Referees will not be permit matches to proceed if the Field Requirements are not met. Any team failing to comply with these requirements is subject to sanctions imposed by the NCRFU Disciplinary Committee (the "D/C"). Opposing teams can report any failure to comply to the D/C.

## **D. Team Requirements**

1. The teams agree to follow USA Rugby's Code of Conduct, attached as Schedule 1. It is the Head Coach's responsibility to ensure that his/her coaches, managers, other staff and players have read and understand their obligations under the code.
2. Using forms provided by the NCRFU, each team will prepare photo ID cards for each coach and player noting the CIPP registration number. Teams will place each participant's card in an organized binder to be held during the match by the opposing team manager. At the conclusion of the match, the referee will meet with the two managers to return the cards; at this time any eligibility protests will be noted and the cards of any dismissed players will be held by the referee to be forwarded to the D/C.

## **E. Sideline Conduct**

1. Any spectator or participant entering the field in a menacing manner will be subject to sanction by the D/C, which may include a complete ban on participation in any aspect of NCRFU rugby. Clubs not taking steps to enforce such a ban are subject to sanction by the NCRFU.
2. If a spectator or participant enters the field in a menacing manner, the associated team may be prohibited from having any spectators at its next match.

## **F. Referees**

1. Referees will maintain CIPP and Referee registration, and follow USA Rugby's Code of Conduct.
2. Coaches will complete, and Referees will submit, Match Cards for all matches except high school matches.
3. Referees will report all red or yellow cards issued, including high school matches, to the Disciplinary Committee. Once given, red or yellow cards may not be revoked. Don't ask.
4. Referees will report any failure to comply with the Field, Team, or Sideline Conduct Requirements to the D/C within 24 hours of the violation.
5. Referees not enforcing all Field, Team, or Sideline Conduct Requirements are subject to sanction by the Board of Directors of the Referees Society, including loss of future game assignments.
6. Teams are encouraged to videotape their games, and are welcome to submit the film to the Referee Society for referee development.

## **G. Match Conduct**

1. Red cards will continue to result in an automatic 2 scheduled match/15 day suspension, whichever is longer. There is no appeal from the automatic suspension. Additional discipline is possible.
2. If the participants of any club side (e.g., "A" side or "B" side) receive a total of three red cards for violence during a season (15s or 7s), the team may be required to appear before the D/C to explain why that side's remaining games should not be forfeited.

H. Referee Abandonment of Match

1. The referee will commence the match only if all Field Requirements are met, and will abandon the match if the Field, Team, or Sideline Conduct Requirements are not maintained.
2. The referee will abandon the match if any match official (referee, touch judge, or other assigned official) is threatened verbally or physically.
3. Before abandoning a match, the referee will meet with the team captains to explain why this action is being taken.

**Agreement by Each Team and Each Referee (must be signed before the First Match):**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Rugby Team agrees to implement the requirements of this Protocol.

**OR**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a NorCal Referee, agree to implement the requirements of this Protocol.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Head Coach/Individual Referee)

**Schedule 1**

**USA RUGBY GUIDELINES ON THE APPLICATION OF LAW--Code of Conduct**

**15.1** USA Rugby expects all teams and team members to abide by the following code of conduct:

**15.1.1** Players, coaches and other team officials who represent their teams are ambassadors of their club, Local Area Union, Territory and USA Rugby, as well as of the game of rugby in general. As such, each player and official is expected to be on good, responsible behavior at all times, both on and off the field.

**15.1.2** Players, coaches and other team officials should not tolerate obnoxious, impolite, or antisocial behavior of any sort that would adversely affect the image of the game as a serious and disciplined athletic endeavor. This includes verbal abuse of opponents by players or their supporters

**15.1.3** A member, player, coach or other official of a club must not before, during or after a match under the jurisdiction of an affiliated Union threaten or address a referee or touch judge in insulting terms, or act in a provocative manner towards a referee or touch judge.

**15.1.4** Referees and touch judges must likewise treat players, coaches and other team officials with equal respect.

**15.1.5** All players, officials and supporters must respect the ground rules that are in effect at any particular match, such as prohibitions against possessing or consuming alcohol on school grounds and in public parks.

**15.2** Member Unions of USA Rugby are encouraged to address violations of this code of conduct using Disciplinary Committees or other appropriate mechanisms according to their own procedures, and to administer and enforce sanctions that shall be binding on all affiliated Unions.