



USA Rugby League
Match Operations and Guidelines
2019

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Introduction

This document is established to assist clubs with match day operations. The purpose is to provide clubs with minimum standards of match day operation to meet obligations where items are not defined in the USARL Rules and Regulations, latest revision.

In hosting a rugby league match or event it is the responsibility of the host club or organizing committee to provide amongst other things the following.

- Provision of a suitable surface to conduct the match or event
- Provision of change rooms for players and officials
- Provision of toilets/amenities for participants and the general public
- Provision of areas for the various match officials
- Provision of spectator areas

The host club, in conjunction with their officials, is responsible for the implementation of and adherence to Codes of Conduct and the rules and regulations that apply to the match or event.

For areas that are not covered in this document, refer to USARL Rules and Regulations, latest revision.

Any recommended changes to this document should be sent in writing to the USARL LLC Board of Directors.

ARTICLE. I. GROUND CONDITIONS and LAYOUT

Section 1. Referee's Changing Room

A separate change room shall be provided for referees/officials with seating and access to toilets and showers.

Section 2. Team Changing Room x2

Each team shall be provided with separate changing rooms with seating and access to toilets and showers.

Each changing room shall have the ability to be secured to prevent loss or theft of property.

The home club is not responsible for loss or theft of property during anytime on match day.

Section 3. Ground Lighting

In the event a match begins after daylight hours, sufficient lighting shall be provided to allow for proper play to continue to full time. Final discretion to adequacy of lighting lies with the head match referee.

Section 4. Interchange Club Bench x2.

Each team shall be provided with bench seating for first aid personnel and interchange players

The bench shall be no closer than 5 yards from the side touchline.

No bench shall be placed closer than 10 yards from the center line

Section 5. The Playing Area

The "Playing Area" is defined as the area enclosed by the fence, or other such line of demarcation, which prevents the encroachment of spectators. All spectators shall be located behind such fenced/lined areas at all times. Where no boundary exists, fields shall be suitably roped off. All spectators are to be located behind the fences or within the fenced areas. Club officials are responsible for enforcing and managing spectator behaviour. The only personnel permitted inside the ropes or fences are:

Coaches

Managers

Interchange Players

Medical Practitioners/Trainers

Equipment Personnel

Section 6. Goal Post Covers

All posts shall be covered with pads that are 6 feet (minimum) length, 3 inches (minimum) thick, and attached to goal posts via cord or Hook and Loop (Velcro) straps.

Section 7. Public Restrooms

Adequate separate ladies' and men's restrooms shall be available and in clean condition.

Section 8. Field Conditions

The playing field should be clearly lined in accordance with USARL Rules and Regulations.

The playing field should be clear of any debris, holes, and trip hazards.

The length of the grass may vary from venue to venue. However, grass shall be cut prior to match day to allow for unimpeded play.

Where there is doubt regarding the condition of a ground where a competition match is to be played, the matter should be referred to the Referee. Consultation between the referee, both captains and senior officials from each club should take place prior to the beginning of the match.

Section 9. Ball Persons

If used, all Ball Persons must be at least ten years of age and be attired in a uniform which does not clash with their own team or opposition colors.

A maximum of two (2) Ball Persons for each match of the competition shall be allowed.

Section 10. First Aid Official

A qualified First Aid Official for each team, equipped with an appropriate First Aid Kit shall be in attendance at all games.

Section 11. Heat Guidelines

All personnel shall take a responsible approach towards the safety of participants. A common sense attitude shall be applied with consideration to the comfort and well-being of all individuals, including participants and officials. Cancellation, modification of matches may be appropriate even in circumstances falling outside these guidelines.

When considering modifying, cancelling or postponing a match there are many factors that need to be considered. Exercise in the heat creates competitive demands on the cardiovascular system, which is required to increase the blood supply to the exercising muscles. At the same time it must regulate body temperature by increasing skin blood flow in order to produce the

sweat that keeps the body cool. High intensity exercise in a hot environment, with the associated fluid loss and elevation of body temperature, can lead to Dehydration - Heat Exhaustion - Heat Stroke.

The referee shall confer with both team captains to determine if conditions warrant playing in extreme heat conditions or if additional water breaks or extended breaks are to be implemented.

Section 12. Electrical Storm Guidelines

Electrical storm is a risk that can cause death to participants in rugby league. It is vitally important that appropriate procedures are put in place to minimise exposure to injury due to lightning strike.

The referee has the authority to stop, postpone and restart matches and is responsible for recognizing the danger and activating the lightning protection plan.

In the event an electrical storm should be identified, all personnel are to retreat to their designated locker rooms. Criteria for the suspension and resumption of activities: The 30/30 rule is recommended, where a Flash to Bang count is recorded. This procedure is based on the fact that lightning travels faster than sound, and given that sound travels at a speed of about one (1) km every three (3) seconds, the time that elapses between the flash of lightning and clap of thunder can be divided by three (3) to give a measure of how far away the storm is in kilometres. A safe distance is generally considered to be approximately 10 km. This means that as the “Flash to Bang” count approaches 30 seconds, all people at risk should be seeking or already in a safe haven.

Once the threat has passed the 30/30 rule provides the criteria for the resumption of play. Wait until the electrical storm has passed, with the “Flash to Bang” count again exceeding 30 seconds - suggesting the storm is again at least 10 km away. Allow a 15 minute safety margin before re-commencing activities. It is important to emphasize that “blue skies and lack of rain fall” are not adequate reasons to resume play early.

The referee shall have the final say as to when play is to resume.

Section 13. Match Play

Time off for injuries and referees cautions will be signaled.

The referee may modify match duration based on weather and field conditions.

Section 14. Footballs

The home team shall provide a minimum of three (3) size 5 balls for each competition.

Section 15. Video Recording

The home team shall video the match from an elevated position.

The video shall be posted online.

The rules and regulations provide further guidance for video recording.

Section 16. Kicking Tees

Kicking Tees are permitted and each team shall provide their own tee. Tees may be used for kicks at goal and starts or restarts of play from the 50m line.

If a kicking tee is used, after the kick has been taken a trainer must remove it from the field.

Section 17. Sin Bin Location

The Sin Bin shall be located at either the area behind the goal post or the player's locker room or as designated by the referee.

Under no circumstances, is a suspended Player permitted on the sideline or bench area.

The referee maintains the official Sin Bin clock and will notify the team coach/captain when the penalty has expired.

Players reentering the match after a Sin Bin offense shall enter the field of play only after checking in with a touch judge.

Section 18. Team Player Book

Each team will have their team player book available for review on match day.

The book shall contain evidence of each player's status (domestic, import, exempt) and proof of individual insurance.

Section 19. After Match Activities

The home team shall provide a suitable after match meal for all players, team and match official at a local pub or restaurant.

The visiting team shall make an appearance at after match activities.

APPENDIX A. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Home Club Match Official

The duties of the Match Official for match days are:

Before start of play

- Make themselves known to the visiting club officials, the referee, teams coaches, and managers
- Identify the location of the ambulance access and ensure that it is free and maintained free at all times.
- Check suitability of playing conditions with the referee
- Check the operation of time clock and sirens

During the match

- Be visible at all times
- Communicate with other match officials
- Enforce the Policy concerning “ On Field Personnel”
- Support the match official with the control of sin binned or sent off players
- Confer with Referee on heat conditions
- Evict persons displaying inappropriate behavior when applicable after warnings
- Notify police in the event of criminal behavior
- Monitor Electrical Storm conditions and confer with referee
- Maintain accurate records of scores and scorers

After the match

- Complete incident report forms where necessary and provide to the referee and USARL Judiciary Committee

Section 2. The Referee

The duties of the Referee on Match day are:

Before the Match

- Identify the Home Club Match Official and First Aid personnel and make themselves known to them
- Be aware of the protocols for being the referee in line with USARL requirements for times, sign on, sin bin, send offs etc.
- Make judgment on playing conditions in conjunction with the match official
- Have their dismissal book with them
- Oversee the coin toss and go over expectations with team captains
- If there are no appointed Touch judges by the USARL, be sure that some are in place before kickoff.
- If the touch judges are “unofficial” (i.e. not appointed), make sure they are briefed

- Carry out a gear and player inspection

During the Match

- Monitor playing conditions and use their discretion to temporarily suspend or prematurely terminate a match because of adverse weather, undue interference by spectators, misbehavior by players or any cause which, in their opinion, interferes with their control of the game.
- Be the sole time keeper except where this duty has been delegated to another person.

After the Match

- Sign the official score sheets
- Complete any referee dismissal forms and / or incident report forms and leave with the match official
- Attend judiciary if required
- Respond to any reasonable questions but no confrontations

Section 3. The Touch Judges x2

Before the Match

- Ensure there is a n unimpeded 5m area along the touch line
- Walk the entire playing area to ensure conditions are safe for play

During the match

- Identify when the ball or a player carrying the ball has gone into touch
- Stand behind goal posts to ensure conversions and penalty kick are successful
- Assist the referee with on side calls and reporting infractions to the referee

After the Match

- Discuss any issues arising during the match with the referee for any reports

Section 4. Trainers

Before the Match

- Ensure water and ice containers are filled and located on each bench and locker room
- Ensure all match balls are located on the 50

During the Match

- Carry messages to players
- Enter the field of play to provide water and ice to players and officials
- Assist with player interchanges

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- Assist with retrieving balls that are forced out of play

After the Match

- Ensure bench areas are clean of all debris and containers

Trainers must comply with all rules and regulations regarding game play and shall follow all referee's instructions.

Trainers shall not distract or interfere with any player while the game is in motion or otherwise make an attempt to provide an unfair advantage to their team.

Trainers will be dressed in apparel that clearly delineates them from either competing team.

Trainers shall not at any time while carrying out their duties make argumentative, disparaging, derogatory, or offensive comments to referees or opposing teams.

APPENDIX B. SERIOUS INJURIES and CONCUSSIONS

Section. 1. Serious Injuries

Only players, match officials and registered trainers are permitted on the field of play while a match is in progress. Should an injury necessitate a doctor coming onto the field, the medical practitioner who carries out the initial assessment is to attract the attention of the nearest Touch Judge who can communicate with the Referee to advise him that the injury is serious. The referee must stop play before a doctor or any other medical assistance can enter the field of play. Under no circumstances is a trainer to chase the referee to advise him of an injury whilst play is still underway. Any trainer who attempts to unnecessarily stop play for tactical reasons will not only be liable to penalty under the provisions of the USARL Rules but may also be ordered from the playing area for the remainder of the match.

Section 2. Concussions

The medical practitioner shall evaluate any player with an obvious or suspected concussion injury and have final say on player disposition. Any player found to be suffering from a concussion will not be allowed to reenter the field of play; no exceptions.

APPENDIX C. DRAW MATCHES

Section 1. Drawn Matches

If scores are equal at the conclusion of normal time in any match, then in such matches, including the Grand Final, two (2) 10-minute periods of extra time will pursue. If the match is still a tie after the first period of extra time, then a second period of extra time will pursue; again where the team with the higher points tally at the end of the extra time will be declared the winner.

If scores are still equal at the conclusion of extra time in any Playoff Series match, then in such matches, including the Grand Final, two (2) five (5)-minute periods of “Golden Point” sudden death will pursue, whereby the first scorer of any point or points (e.g. field goal, penalty goal or try) will immediately be declared the winner. If a try is scored in extra time the conversion kick will not be permitted.

The commencement of the period of extra time will be determined by the toss of a coin as described under the Laws of the Game. If no winner is established, neither through extra-time nor sudden death, the referee will cease play and teams will immediately change ends. The team that did not kick-off to commence the initial period of extra time will kick-off to recommence the second period. Play shall then continue on an unlimited basis until the first point or points have been scored to determine the winner of the match.