

Introduction

[Revision: March 10, 2008] For the Fall 2008-Spring 2009 season, the MARFU College Men D1 League (The League) will include the 8 teams below. The schedule will be produced by March 31, 2008. The teams will play a full round robin schedule beginning about Sept 20, 2008 and concluding on or before Nov 15, 2008. The top four teams as determined by the Super14 scoring system (see below) will advance to the playoffs. The playoffs will be conducted over a single weekend on March 28-29, 2009, subject to MARFU BoD approval. The league will be open to new teams by application at the leagues annual meeting to be held in January 2009. Considerations will include but are not limited to stability of coaching staff, availability of a regulation field, number of players and ability to field two full and distinct teams every weekend, ability to travel as required by the schedule, university support.

1. MARFU Collegiate Men D1 Clubs

For the 2007-2008 season, the league will be comprised of the following clubs:

United States Naval Academy (USNA or Navy)
Penn State University (PSU or Penn State)
University of Maryland (UMD or Maryland)
Kutztown University (KU or Kutztown)
University of Delaware (UDEL or Delaware)
University of Virginia (UVA or Virginia)
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VT or Virginia Tech)
Radford University (RU or Radford University)

Other clubs may be admitted in future years.

League governance.

The League's governing board shall be comprised of one representative from each member club and one representative from each LAU. The chair of this board will be elected by the governing board and must be one of the three LAU Representatives. This League shall be subordinate to the MARFU Collegiate Committee.

The League will be responsible for

- a. producing the schedule for each fall season
- b. making recommendations about any problems that may arise
 - i. forfeits
 - ii. Ineligible players
 - iii. Misconduct (team, player, coach, sidelines, or any other specific person)
- c. making recommendations about revisions to league rules
 - i. scoring system
 - ii. Playoffs
 - iii. Promotion and relegation

- d. making recommendations about revisions to league teams
- e. making recommendations about revisions to the competition standards
- f. maintaining and updating this document

2. Laws of the Game.

All matches shall be played under the Laws of the Game as defined by the IRB, together with any modifications by USA Rugby and MARFU.

3. Scheduling.

The League will make the schedule and distribute to the teams well before the season (approximately June at the latest). The schedule will balance the home and away matches and travel as much as possible. To the extent possible, each year will see a reversal of home and away venues from the previous year.

There may be circumstances that will require that the match be played on a day/time other than Saturday afternoon. For example, Navy rugby cannot play when Navy football has a home game (afternoon or evening kickoff, usually Saturday) due to the requirement that midshipmen must be in attendance at the football game. The League will make every effort to avoid scheduling conflicts where possible so that matches can be played on Saturday afternoon. The League will request schedule conflict information from every team well before the season begins, and will make every effort to avoid scheduling conflicts, where possible.

4. Day of match.

The day of the match shall normally be Saturday. Teams may mutually agree to play the match on another day (Friday night or Sunday) of the same weekend. Teams may mutually agree to move the match to another day (even a weekday) during the season as long as the match is played by the time the playoffs begin. Scheduling problems should be largely worked out in advance.

The home team shall confirm with the referee group that a referee can be available for the rescheduled match. Lack of a confirmed referee shall be reason enough to look for another day/time on which to play the match. The League must be informed by both teams of any changes in the schedule as soon as they occur.

5. Kickoff times.

Kickoff times shall be set by the home team as follows:

Friday matches - the A side match shall not kickoff earlier than 7:00 pm and not later than 8:00 pm.

Saturday matches - the A side match shall not kickoff earlier than 12:00 noon and not later than 2:00 pm.

Sunday matches - the A side match shall not kickoff earlier than 12:00 noon and not later than 2:00 pm.

Teams may mutually agree to kick off at some other time, subject to the availability of the referee. As with day of the match, lack of a confirmed referee shall be reason enough to look for another day/time on which to play the match. The League must be informed by both teams of any changes in the schedule as soon as they occur.

Teams failing to arrive at the venue in time for the scheduled kickoff may be ordered to forfeit the game upon appeal to the League by the aggrieved team. Teams failing to arrive for the game within two hours of kickoff will automatically forfeit the game. The team ready to kickoff on time may, at their option, delay their right to request a forfeit as long as they wish to give the other team time to arrive and kickoff. Teams might forestall adverse action by keeping in contact with the opponent about the nature of their delay. It is incumbent upon both teams to be prepared to kickoff on schedule. MARFU recognizes that there may be times when delays are unavoidable.

A team with sufficient players to kickoff at or after the scheduled time but missing some preferred starters must begin the game with the reserves and substitute the preferred starters during the game according to Law 3. The referee may be forced to begin the game with uncontested scrums, but it would be preferable for the team with a properly trained front row to keep the scrum under control and safe. Teams failing to substitute properly trained front row players at the earliest time they are available will give added reason for the League to order a forfeit.

6. Travel time considerations.

Every courtesy regarding kickoff time should be extended to the visiting team as regards travel time, both to the match venue and then back home. Some of these games will involve more than a few hours of driving, and teams should be afforded enough time to leave at a reasonable hour, make the drive safely, and have time after arriving to stretch their legs.

Even games between nearby teams, if played on a Friday night, may involve considerable rush hour traffic, so the kickoff time should be such that the visiting team does not have to leave too early or spend a lot of time in rush hour traffic.

7. A and B games.

Each team shall play the A and B-side game against each other, except upon mutual

agreement to do otherwise (e.g., no game, or a B game against a different team). Ideally, each team should have sufficient players to fill out an A and B-side without having players play in both games. The League strongly encourages the B-side game, as it is important for team development. The League shall maintain a separate standings table for the B-side.

The A side match shall normally be played first, with the B side match to follow approximately 90 minutes later. Teams may mutually agree to any other schedule. Teams may mutually agree to play a C side match, or more. The C side match can be played at any time. The League has no requirements regarding C side matches.

B-side matches shall not be required during the playoffs, though teams are certainly free and encouraged to schedule such a game.

8. Uniforms.

Each team shall wear matching kit – jersey, shorts, and socks. The two teams shall wear distinctly different jersey colors/designs in the game. In case of a conflict, the home team shall be responsible for changing into a different jersey that is distinct from that of the visiting team. Both teams should inform the League, the referee group, and the referee of their jersey colors/design. Once at the field, the referee shall make the decision if a prior decision has not been rendered.

9. Referees.

Referees will be supplied by the home teams Referees Society (PSRFR/PRU, EPRRS/EPRU, and RSV/VRU). Costs for referees shall be the responsibility of the home team (no change from the current practice). Referees shall be required for both the A and B games. From time to time, MARR may assign referees to games, but the home club shall pay the cost.

Referees shall be contacted (email, phone) by the home team at least 3 days prior to the scheduled day to confirm availability, give directions, and exchange telephone numbers in case of problems.

Normally, only a referee will be assigned to the game. Each team shall supply a suitable touch judge, as is customary. From time to time, a team-of-three (referee plus two referee touch judges) will be assigned to the match.

10. CIPP and Eligibility.

All players, both starters and reserves in both A and B games, shall be CIPP-registered with USA Rugby. The club and the coaching staff shall also be CIPP-registered. The only

documents that will serve as proof of registration shall be the CIPP list for each club available from the USA Rugby web site no later than the day before the match, or a waiver letter (email copy permissible) from the League Chairman stating the player's eligibility to play. Incoming freshmen and transfer players who are already CIPP-registered should complete the transfer form as soon as possible as it only leads to unnecessary confusion if their name appears on another team's list. Player's who have not been CIPP-registered before must register before their first match.

It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that its players are seen to be eligible by the opposing team before the match. Clubs should not expect that the League would help them sort things out after the match. Teams are encouraged to obtain a CIPP list early in the week and not wait until Friday before the game in case of problems with the USA web site. In case of problems, the League should be notified immediately so that they can help resolve the problem.

All players, both starters and reserves in both A and B games, must meet the same eligibility criteria posted on the USA Rugby web site (<http://www.usarugby.org/membership/eligibility/2006EligibilityRegulations.pdf>) as if they were competing in the national championship. The player certification process shall be as follows: A player's identity can be challenged any time before, during, or after the game by the opposing team, but there will be no independent authority to verify eligibility. Players should be prepared to show original picture identification such as school ID, state driver's license, passport, military ID, or other governmental identification. The team certification process shall be: Teams are presumed to be recognized and in good standing by their school and their LAU. There will be no independent third party to assist in the player and team certification process. Teams are expected to check each other's qualifications prior to the match.

A player whose identity is challenged before the match may choose to play in the game. Should the before-the-match challenge be reported to the League and the player is found to be ineligible, the player's team will forfeit the game, and the player and his team shall be subject to further sanctions through the League, MARFU and/or LAU disciplinary process. A player whose identity is challenged may elect to sit out the game. If the challenged player does not play in the match, then neither he nor the team will be subject to further sanctions.

If a player is found to be ineligible after being challenged during or after the match, then the match is forfeited. The player and his team may be subject to further sanctions through the MARFU and/or LAU disciplinary process.

The team challenging a player's eligibility shall be responsible for presenting the relevant facts to MARFU and their LAU for review and adjudication. Challenges shall be noted on the roster to be sent to MARFU.

11. Roster.

All teams shall present a roster of starters and reserves to the opposing team prior to the match. At the end of the game, teams shall trade roster forms. All teams shall submit roster of starters and reserves that came into the game (and who left and at what time) within 2 days following the match (normally, close of business Monday after a Saturday match). The roster shall include name, CIPP number, jersey number, and position. The roster shall note the captain, who scored, and the manner of scoring. The roster must be signed by one or more of the team's coach, president, and/or captain and include their contact information. MARFU shall make a sample roster form available on its web site. MARFU shall maintain a table of scorers and shall post this weekly during the season.

12. Forfeits.

Any team that forfeits a game due to no-show, late arrival, or an ineligible player shall cause the score of the game to be reported as 35-0 and 5 tries (4 points for the win plus 1 bonus point for more than 4 tries to the winning team; 0 points to the forfeiting team).

A single forfeit shall cause the team to automatically drop to the #8 ranking in the playoffs if they otherwise qualified, with all other teams moving up. If more than one team sits in the #8 ranking due to forfeits, then the tiebreaker system above will apply.

Multiple forfeits in the same season, or single forfeits in two consecutive seasons, shall cause the team to be dropped out of the playoffs, be relegated to their LAU D2 the next year, and be ineligible for promotion to the MARFU D1 league for the number of years equal to their number of forfeits.

Extraordinary circumstances which led to the forfeit will be considered upon appeal. Travel problems should be reported to the League and the opposing team when they occur, giving as much detail as possible about the problem and the estimated arrival time. The traveling team should make every effort to complete the trip, and both teams should make every effort to play the game. If the League orders a forfeit due to a no-show or late arrival, it may also declare the playoff penalty to be in effect or waived.

13. Scoring System for Standings and Playoffs

MARFU shall use the same scoring system as for its D1 and D2 men's league. Specifically:

4 table points for a win

2 table points for a tie (a tie at the end of regulation time shall remain a tie)

1 table point for a loss by 7 points or less

0 table points for a loss by more than 7 points

And independently from the above points,

1 table point for scoring 4 or more tries (winning or losing team)

At the end of the league season, all teams shall be ranked according to the number of table points they have accumulated over all games. This ranking shall be used to seed the teams in the playoffs. In case of a tie on table points, the tie breaker system will be head-to-head result, point differential (points for minus points against in all league games), points for (in all league games), tries for (in all league games), and finally a coin toss.

14. Promotion and Relegation

The MARFU College Men D1 League is in a promotion-only mode at present. When the number of teams reaches 10 (approximately), the league will revisit the issue of promotion and relegation. Aspiring D2 teams may submit their case for inclusion in the league to the MARFU D1 League board and the MARFU Collegiate Committee at least 15 days prior to the league's AGM for consideration (usually in January of each year).

15. Group Restructuring

To the extent possible, the initially proposed group divisions would be maintained. Over time, it is possible that circumstances would require a restructuring of the groups to maintain competitive and geographic balance. The League would be tasked with the restructuring, subject to approval by the MARFU Collegiate Committee. However, we don't see this as being required for at least the first two years of the league. Upon promotion and relegation after the second year, group restructuring will be addressed.

16. Playoffs.

The playoff format has the top four teams playing 1v4 and 2v3 in the semifinals with the winners meeting in the final. The two finalists advance to the USA D1 championship. The 3rd place game shall be played. There will not be a playoff series for B-side teams. As the league and the national championship seedings and format changes, this playoff format may be changed.

17. Disciplinary issues.

All disciplinary matters shall be handled by MARFU and the LAUs in accordance with prevailing MARFU & LAU procedures. Referees shall be responsible for filing timely reports of red and yellow card actions, as well as any other disciplinary matter (e.g., off the field behavior). Either team or MARFU or LAU officers may also report disciplinary matters to MARFU and the home LAU (off-field disciplinary matters, foul play unseen by the referee).

Any player ejected from a match (red card or double yellow) may not play in any match for the rest of the day and is automatically suspended for at least one additional match or eight days, whichever is longer. MARFU and the LAUs have standard procedures for promptly adjudicating these matters.

18. Field standards.

MARFU field standards shall be as specified on the IRB and MARFU web site for senior men's league and playoff matches. MARFU standards address minimum field dimensions and obstructions and otherwise conform to Law 1.

(<http://www.marfu.org/marfufieldsize.php>) Goal posts shall conform to Law 1. Artificial turf fields shall generally be acceptable (for the present, ignore IRB Regulation 22), but a letter stating so shall be obtained from MARFU. Any variance shall be approved by MARFU prior to the match being played. Any questions about the suitability of a team's field should be presented to MARFU for review. Teams are expected to provide a safe venue (in terms of field conditions) for playing rugby matches.

19. Lighting for night matches.

If the game is to be played at night, the lighting shall be at least TBD candlepower at ground level anywhere on the playing field from the start of the first game until the end of the last game. Any variance shall be approved by MARFU prior to the match being played.

20. Medical.

The D1 clubs have agreed that all teams shall have medical service at all league games. The home team is responsible for providing the medical service. The medical service shall be equally available to both teams. The medical service may be provided by a licensed doctor (MD, OD, DC), a certified athletic trainer (ATC), a licensed emergency medical technician (EMT), a registered nurse (RN), or other medically qualified person. While an ATC can provide pre-game and in-game services that might help an athlete compete, the goal is to have someone who can professionally assess athletic injuries and the advisability of the player continuing in the match. In particular, this person must be able to assess severe injuries that require ambulance transport to a hospital.

21. Gate receipts.

Teams are free to establish a paid gate for their home matches, and sell refreshments and merchandise at the match, and retain all proceeds. At this time, there are no guidelines or requirements on distribution of gate receipts. Teams are free to negotiate among themselves as to distribution, but in no case shall these competition standards be pre-

empted on account of any dissatisfaction by one or both team about the negotiations.
MARFU retains all rights to the playoffs.