

Year 2008 MARFU Sevens Procedures

Committee Members:

Chairman/EPRU Representative: Susan Martinko

VRU Representative: Darin Darden

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1. **Qualifiers/Championship:** The MARFU sevens season will consist of **three (3) Qualifiers for 2008** and an **8-team MARFU Qualifier Premier** and a **6-team Open Championship** and will begin in **early-June**.

In addition to the Qualifier Premier (QP) division, **there will continue to be a "Qualifier Open" division (QO) in 2008**. The goal is to provide teams who would normally be uninterested in the qualifier division, exposure to competitive sevens play, earn points based on merit and reward those teams with a championship at the end of the season, all identical to, and side-by-side, the Qualifier Premier teams.

The QO division is an additional division available at each of the **three qualifiers** and ANY side is eligible to enter. Teams are awarded points exactly as Qualifier Premier teams. At the end of the season the top **eight** QO teams will enter the MARFU Open Championship (free of charge) to determine the #1 QO team in MARFU.

QO teams **continue to be** required to turn in rosters to tournament directors. There are no restrictions between a team moving players up and down to their QP sides week to week (but not during the same day) to enter the QP. Any swapping of players between sides on tournament day will result in forfeit of all points earned that day by BOTH offending teams.

Any team, MARFU or non-MARFU or even a MARFU-based select or social side, are eligible to enter the Qualifier Open but only recognized MARFU sides (For example: NOVA III, Frederick II, Washington Poltroons, the University of Maryland, etc.) may accrue points toward the MARFU Open Championships. Non-MARFU teams such as the Virginia Cardinals or Atlantis are NOT permitted to accrue points.

As with any rugby play, players must be CIPP registered with the club they play under.

Tournaments cannot charge QO teams more than the fixed Qualifier rate of \$200. However, they may charge non-MARFU teams or teams not interested in QO any rate they choose.

Tournament Directors are **required to** turn in QO scores **no later than 9 pm the Sunday following the tournament** just as they do QP scores so records can be preserved in case any concerns arise.

2. **Format :** The **8** MARFU Qualifier Premier and **6** Qualifier Open Championship entrants will be determined by total number of qualifier wins and total number of points accrued at qualifier appearances:

a) **Seeding** : If a team wins a Qualifier Premier or Qualifier Open they will be guaranteed a MARFU 7s Top 3 seed in their respective divisions. A team may enter and win as many qualifiers as possible. Thereby, final seeding will be determined by:

i) total qualifiers won

ii) total points earned

b) Points Awards :

The two teams advancing to the final receive 3 points.

The two teams losing in the semi-finals will receive 2 points.

The four teams losing in the qualifier quarter-finals will receive 1 point (only if the tournament permits quarterfinalists).

Pool ties will stand and will count for 1/2 point for each team (see below for championship round ties after regulation play).

All teams will get 1 point for entering the tournament, and participating to the satisfaction of the tournament director.

A win in any bracket leading to the championship counts as 1 point. Third place wins and consolation wins count for 1/2 point.

Consolation matches will be encouraged and additional points (or 1/2 points) will be given for consolation games after 3rd place.

3. Tournament Guidelines

a) **Tournament Formats:** The Tournament Director will email the MARFU 7s Committee semartinko@hotmail.com soon after the WEDNESDAY 10:00PM DEADLINE the teams that have registered for the upcoming Qualifier so that we can seed and pool the Qualifier bracket. The first 2008 Qualifier will be seeded by 2007 results according to: 1) finish at Nationals 2) finish at MARFU Championship 3) Point Standings at completion of Qualifiers.

b) Tournament Guidelines :

The Qualifier Premier Bracket will kick-off no earlier than 10:00 AM. The Qualifier Open Bracket can kick off earlier or later according to the desires/resources of the Tournament Director."

Require at least four matches to win.

E-mail address below for possible formats to accommodate up to 16 teams while still providing five matches.

Provide matches for all entrants, discouraging forfeits.

Seeding for tournaments is amended as follows: For tournaments that have quarterfinal stages Pool A plays Pool D (1v2, 2v1) and Pool B (ideally #2 seed) plays Pool C. No longer will teams be reseeded based on points.

Championship Ties are resolved as follows: Consult the 'Standard Set of Variations Appropriate for the Seven-a-Side Game' in the current Law Book, Law 5(7).

12-man rosters with 3 subs permitted per game will be permitted; please note that USA championships now allow 12-man (nominated) (new IRB law) rosters. See below about multiple side restrictions.

Player Swapping Legal At Expense of all I,II or III Side Points To Date

Teams are permitted to enter as many qualifier sides as they want so long as they keep separate rosters. 2004 RULE CHANGE: A team may borrow one or more players from their first, second or third team to fill out other sides but if they do so, the side the player(s) came from forfeits all points earned to date. That side is NOT permitted to re-enter qualifiers and those players NOT IMMEDIATELY BORROWED are only eligible to play for the BEST side in the qualifier or in the OPEN DIVISION.

EXAMPLE: Maryland I and II enter NOVA 7s. Both sides earn 3 points at the tournament. For second qualifier MD I is hit by injuries and needs to bring up three players from their II side. This is permitted but MD II forfeits their 3 points from NOVA 7s. MD II's remaining players can only play for the I side or in the OPEN division the rest of the season.

Pool advancement is determined by :

- a. record in pool
- b. head-to-head competition
- c. point differential (rather than points scored)
- d. tries scored
- e. converted tries scored

c) Tournament Administration/Set-up Requirements

Tournament Director

Designate a single individual to be a Tournament Director (TD) whose responsibilities include managing brackets, ensuring timely kick-offs, securing and briefing if necessary referees, and moderating any disputes that arise.

Tournament Directors will Enforce USA and MARFU Eligibility Laws

Enforcement of USA Rugby laws is the tournament director's responsibility. Absent a complaint, checking of passports is at their discretion. However, in the event of a complaint the TD must take the lead on clarifying eligibility. In the event a team is found to have used an ineligible player, at a minimum they will forfeit ALL points earned on that day.

Total Tournament Entry Fees Capped at \$200

Reviewable annually based on tournament feedback but increasing fees and late penalties only serve to punish teams who are hitting every stop on the MARFU circuit.

Provide at least TWO regulation pitches of the best available quality with no noticeable grade for the qualifier bracket. More fields must be available if size of qualifier pool dictates.

Weather Policy: Additional fields, seeding in event of weather cancellations, etc.

All teams MUST have back-up facilities for qualifiers preferably a private one if they have a public pitch.

If one tournament needs to be cancelled, point totals stay as they are at the time of cancellation.

Access to water/fluids either free or available from a vendor at the field, or within 0.25 mile from the tournament facility.

An ambulance (for serious injuries) and trainers (for preventive care as well as injury treatment) are strongly advised and the TD must have access to a cell phone for medical emergencies.

Entry to qualifier division must remain open to all entrants until Wednesday 10 p.m. before the qualifier is held.

Deadline for Registrations/Rosters/Player Transfers for Final Qualifier is Friday, July 11, 2008, 12 noon, NOT Saturday.

NEW USA RUGBY LAW: Teams are permitted to register and transfer players up to the last qualifier in the MARFU. In order to comply with the 22-day USA Rugby deadline, teams may be asked to submit rosters, transfers and CIPP forms for outstanding players by the Friday before the last qualifier (rather than Saturday). We'll make the deadline for rosters the Friday before the last qualifier so we comply with 22-day moratorium.

NEW USA RUGBY ELIGIBILITY LAW:

- a) A club must be a full member of their LAU or TU as defined by the LAU or TU. They cannot be held for partial requirements for the sevens season only.

- b) A club must be in good standing by June 1st. Good standing includes but is not limited to: completed CIPP registration of the club with full payment; in compliance with LAU or TU requirements.
- c) Each participating club may carry a maximum roster of 12 players.
- d) *A maximum of two (2) non-resident players may be on the roster. For the purposes of this event, a non-resident player is defined as a person who is not a U.S. Citizen and does not possess permanent or conditional resident alien status in the United States at the time of the competition.*
- e) A maximum of three (3) players may be on the Match Roster who played 15's for a different senior Club in the same TU in the immediately preceding 15's Competitive Season (there are no restrictions on transfers from collegiate Clubs or Clubs outside the TU).
- f) Clubs may qualify and participate multiple teams in this USA Rugby Championship Event provided the teams have completely separate rosters for the event.

Entrant registration method must include acceptance of an emailed letter of commitment ONLY by the TD no later than Wednesday night, 10:00 p.m. EDT, prior to a tournament. MARFU will hold any team liable to a fine and the full entry fee (for each team entered) for backing out of a tournament if a TD is holding a faxed or emailed commitment received before the deadline. For example: Widget RFC confirms that Widget I and Widget II will attend a qualifier, but backs out after Wednesday at 10:00 p.m. EDT; each side owes the full entrance fee and can be fined by MARFU.

No Show Seedings/Forfeit Points Reduced

If a team is a no-show at a tournament, the event will be reseeded so that the no show team is placed last in the pool and their forfeit should count as a 21-0 loss. Tournament directors are free to develop brackets the Wednesday before a tournament but the brackets should not become official until the Captains meeting that Saturday morning. It's the tournament director's judgment and responsibility about proceeding with a bracketing even if all teams haven't checked in.

NOTE: Tournament organizers must submit win/loss records for all teams entering qualifying division by e-mail by the Monday following the tournament to semartinko@hotmail.com. A running record of the standings will be available via the MARFU web site.

Tournament organizers must collect CIPP rosters of each qualifier entrant club (last year's form is valid) from the CIPP officer.

Excel Roster Form Emailed in advance of tournament are mandatory for both Tier I and Tier II men. By THURSDAY MIDNIGHT prior to each qualifier, teams must turn in their rosters (with no more than 15 players listed) to semartinko@hotmail.com. You do not need to indicate your 12-man roster until Saturday morning (simply check off names at registration), but you must provide name, CIPP number (PENDING NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE). Failure to do so means the points earned that day cannot be finalized until documentation is produced - no later than 6 pm the following Monday. Teams playing ineligible players forfeit all points earned in the tournament and face possible additional sanctions.

A copy of all rosters will be forwarded to the next qualifier's tournament director and CIPP officer. Each qualifier, teams only need to add players to their master form.

Because of the new electronic CIPP registration and so many players are transfers in the summer, the Sevens Committee will resolve any disputes pertaining to registration.

CIPP Officer

Designate one or more individuals, not the TD, to be a CIPP Officer (CO) whose sole responsibility is to:

a) collect rosters from club captains;

b) confirm CIPP against USA Rugby rosters on site for each player participant. Once players register with a sevens club at the beginning of the season and compete in a qualifier are committed to that club the entire season.

c) **PENALTIES:** Fines will not exceed \$100 per infraction and can be assessed to offending club (see club captain responsibilities at the bottom or offending event host for failure to fulfill tournament guidelines a) - c) above. Penalties will not be assessed for infractions due to poor weather. Additional penalties could include forfeiture of future right to host qualifiers. Offending hosts or club will have a chance to plead their case if accused of a rules violation.

d) Clubs are permitted to re-enter qualifying rounds even though they may have already won a qualifier or mathematically qualified for the MARFU Championship.

e) Third place in Championship bracket matches are to be scheduled but actually executed at the discretion of the two teams (e.g. if one team needs the assigned points, the match must be played or conceded to one of the teams).

f) The Sevens Committee will be the first level of arbitration on any issue pertaining to MARFU sevens play or events, outside of the TD on the day of the event. The TD and host club is ultimately responsible for any infraction of the regulations stated above. Regulations laid out in the USA Rugby manual will be enforced with the following additional guidelines:

g) Only USA Rugby and MARFU- recognized clubs may participate in sevens qualifying events. Any dues owed the union must be settled by the date of the second qualifier.

h) Three sides per club are permitted to 'qualify' (e.g. I and II and III are acceptable, no IV sides). Teams attempting to qualify three sides must have entirely separate rosters limited to **12** men per tournament. New players may be added week to week to a side but **NEVER** may a player that has appeared for one of the club's sides, appear later for one of the other of the club's sides. **ONLY** if their teams qualify for the MARFU 7s may they then swap players, and then only after the last qualifier prior to the MARFU championships.

i) Only players that have appeared for their respective side in a qualifier may appear in the

MARFU 7s. NICK BELL WAIVER "WASHINGTON AMENDMENT": Only in clear INJURY situations will a player be permitted to miss all the qualifiers and only one player per team will be permitted this waiver (reason: because teams are seeded according to strength displayed at qualifiers, multiple injury waivers skew the seeding.); as always this is decided on a case by case basis. Importing of guest players or ringers for MARFU finals or for the National Club Championships is not permitted and will not be tolerated.

4. Qualifiers

June 7th Lehigh Valley Summer 7s - Contact: [Susan Martinko](mailto:semartinko@hotmail.com), semartinko@hotmail.com

June 14th Maryland Exiles 7s - Contact: [Paul Gabriel](mailto:Paul_Gabriel@hotmail.com), Paul_Gabriel@hotmail.com

July 12th Norfolk 7s – Contact: [Matthew Robinette](mailto:flyhalf826@yahoo.com), flyhalf826@yahoo.com

July 26th MARFU Championships – Richmond, VA – Contact: Carl Schmitt, schmittcf@gmail.com

5. MARFU Championship

a) The Qualifier Premier and Qualifier Open championship will be two pools of teams with all teams seeded according to their point totals from qualifier play. **The championships will require at least 5 matches to win for the QP Bracket.**

NOTE: If a team accrues a win(s) or enough points that place them within the top 6 teams in either the Qualifier Premier division or the Qualifier Open division, it is assumed that the team will fulfill their obligation to attend the MARFU Championships. A team not intending or able to participate in the MARFU Championships must inform the MARFU Sevens Committee Chairperson of this decision by **Friday, July 11, 2008**, at the latest. Any team that cancels after this date or does not show for the Championships will be fined \$500.00.

Point Resolution at end of season

Ties in point totals are determined by

Head-to-head competition over the course of the summer qualifiers.

Then winner of most recent match against one another (current form being the best judge of strength).

If there is no head to head resolution, the Committee will decide with an eye toward admitting the best team possible.

Qualifier Premier Division Pools:

POOL A

1 - 3 - 6 - 8

POOL B

2 - 4 - 5 - 7

Qualifier Open Division Pools:

Pool 1

1

3

6

Pool 2

2

4

5

b) Following pool play, the First Place team in Pool 1 will play the Second place team in Pool 2; the First Place team in Pool 2 will play the Second place team in Pool 1. Winner will play winner for #1; if MARFU has more than 2 teams in the 7s National Championship, the semi-final losers will play for #3.

The seedings for these final four teams will then be determined by

- a. record in pool
- b. head-to-head competition
- c. point differential (rather than points scored)
- d. tries scored
- e. converted tries scored

There are no additional matches for the 3rd and 4th place teams in Pools 1 and 2.

6.. MARFU Championship Venue

The MARFU Championship will take place on July 26th, 2008 in Richmond, VA.

7. What are Tournament Directors are Responsible For?

(see above)

8. What are Tournament CIPP Directors Responsible For?

(see above)

9. What are Club Captains Responsible For?

Ensure that your club is CIPP registered.

Ensure that each player on your roster possesses health insurance.

Ensure the each player on your roster is eligible under USA Rugby.

Ensure entire roster (including students home for the summer) appear under a single club USA Rugby roster.*

10. What are Referees Responsible for?

Know the sevens rugby variations and brief captains before each match.

Be fit to follow the play!

* Rosters can now be obtained on-line from the USA Rugby website (<http://www.usarugby.org/>). Transfer forms for students are available as well.

11. MARFU All-Star 7s Side. No player is eligible for the MARFU All-Star 7s Side unless he has competed in at least one MARFU summer club qualifier and is in good standing with his MARFU 7s Club.