



## Medical and Safety

When you accept the role of coach, you accept a major responsibility for the care and safety of your players. Although the athletes share in the responsibility for their protection and safety, their ability to understand what they can do, how they can do it, and whether they are doing it correctly, may be limited. It is your job to help them practice and play as safely as possible.

Your job as a volunteer coach is to recognize an injury when it happens, to stabilize the injury as best you can, and to summon medical assistance if necessary. *You need to understand the limitations of your training and knowledge.* If you are not a trained medical professional then it is your responsibility to call one immediately whenever you have any doubt as to what to do next. Note - A certified coach is required at every match, practice and official rugby function, including after match socials.

It is vitally important that rugby programs provide the tools necessary to create a fun and safe environment for all athletes. This section also serves to provide information to parents so they feel comfortable with rugby. When working to establish safety standards, we must consider:

- Injury Prevention
- Emergency Action Plan Development
- Return to Play Procedures
- Education in the prevention of sexual harassment and bullying
- First Aid Education for Coaches
- Annual Concussion Education for Coaches

A wealth of documentation focusing on safety in youth sports is available to all rugby enthusiasts. This section consolidates information to provide teams with a baseline safety protocol. With preventative measures in place, athletes and parents can find security in knowing the risk of injury is significantly reduced through responsible preparation.

### *Injury Prevention*

Injuries in rugby are no different from those in other sports. The key to prevention is identifying associated risk factors. Rugby programs can work towards decreasing the rate and seriousness of rugby-related injuries by implementing research-based preventive interventions. The first step towards making rugby safer is addressing the following key factors:

- Pre-Participation Examination
- Medical Kit including Medical Documents

- Coaching/Officiating
- Player Education
- Facilities and Playing Conditions
- Physical Conditioning
- Biomechanical or Functional Movement Screening

### *Medical Kit*

Rugby Oregon requires all coaches to maintain an adequate medical kit and updated player medical documents at all practices and games. As of spring 2014, participants and parents will electronically sign all medical documents, and coaches will have access to copies through the back-end of our registration system.

For a sample medical kit supply list, go to the Coach Forms page and look under Medical Forms.

### *Medical Documents (see Coaches Manual Appendix):*

- Preparticipation Physical Evaluation (Appendix E)
- Injury Incident Report (Appendix G)
- Oregon Youth Rugby Parent/Guardian Agreement (Appendix K)
- Authorization to Consent to Medical Treatment for Minor (Appendix H)
- Concussion Information Sheet (Appendix I)
- USA Rugby Medical Insurance Agreement and Rules Acknowledgement (Appendix F)
- Master Player List Report from registration system through Coach Login
- Emergency Plan (Sample – Appendix J)
- Photocopy of Student ID card – Contact Rugby Oregon for alternatively educated students

In addition to these items, physician notes, training attendance records, match rosters and other documents may also be included. All of the information within the binder provides everything needed to properly treat an injured athlete.

### *Certified Athletic Trainers*

Rugby Oregon has contracted to provide certified athletic trainers for our preseason tournaments, league matches, playoffs and state championships.

Certified athletic trainers are medical professionals who specialize in the prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses that occur in athletes and the physically active. Athletic trainers should not be confused with personal trainers from the fitness industry. Primary responsibilities include injury prevention, reduction of further injury by administering immediate care, development and implementation of rehabilitation programs and development of appropriate policies, including return-to-play guidelines.

Athletic trainers are certified by an independent organization that sets the standards for certification. Currently, athletic trainers must possess a bachelor's of science degree from a college or university with an accredited athletic training

program, however more than two-thirds hold master's degrees. Athletic trainers must also pass a certification exam. To maintain the ATC (athletic trainer, certified) credential, an athletic trainer must complete 80 hours of continuing education every three years. In Oregon, all athletic trainers must also register with the Oregon Health Division.

### *Lightning Concerns*

The referee has the power to end the match at any time if he/she believes that play should not continue because it would be dangerous. To reschedule a game canceled due to lightning please see the Make-up Games section on page 28.

For Rugby Oregon's Lightning Policy see Appendix M in the Coaches Manual.

### *Emergency Plan*

Coaches are required to have a written emergency plan at all practices and matches including what to do in the event of an emergency, address of venue, directions to venue, address of nearest hospital/ER, quickest route to the nearest hospital/ER, and contact information. Each program needs an established emergency plan unique to each place of assembly. Emergency Plans are posted to the Rugby Oregon website at the FIELDS link.

See Appendix J for a sample Emergency Plan and Directions

### *Cell Phone*

Coaches are required to have a working cell phone at all practices and matches.

### *Head Injuries – Max's Law*

Rugby Oregon adheres to Max's Law (OAR 581-022-0421), which requires that "All coaches and, as of August 2013, referees must receive annual training in recognizing the symptoms of concussion. The goal of effective concussion management is to protect athletes and return them safely to academics and athletics. A successful concussion management policy includes the following components: Recognize, Remove, Refer, Return.

See Appendix X to review *Max's Law: Concussion Management Implementation Guide*.

### *Graduated Return to Play Procedures (GRTP)*

The Graduated Return To Play (GRTP) program incorporates a progressive exercise program that introduces a player back to sport in a step-wise fashion. This should only be started once the player has completed the requisite physical rest period and is symptom free and off treatments and/or medication that may modify or mask concussion symptoms, for example drugs for headaches or sleeping tablets.

If a player already had symptoms prior to the head injury incident which resulted in the player's concussion or suspected concussion, the player's symptoms must have returned to the pre-concussion level prior to commencing a GRTP. However, in

these circumstances, extra caution must be exercised and it is recommended that a player specifically seeks medical advice in respect of those pre-existing symptoms.

For the full World Rugby Concussion and Return to Play Protocol go to <http://usarugby.org/concussions>.

### *Safety*

While we continue to see significant growth, safety remains our number one priority. Below you will find the policies enforced by Rugby Oregon to promote safety and provide a positive environment in which our athletes can safely participate.

#### **For the Coach:**

- In order to head coach high school rugby, coaches must complete the following online educational requirements offered through the OSAA at <http://www.osaa.org/coaches.asp> or the NFHS at <http://www.nfhslearn.com/Courses.aspx>.
  - Certification through NFHS Coaches Education program (one time requirement) “Fundamentals of Coaching”
  - Online Concussion Management Class (required annually) “Concussion in Sports – What you Need to Know”
  - Online Steroid Training and Assessment Class (required once every four years) “ODE Steroid Training and Assessment”
  - First Aid /CPR Certification (required semi-annually) “First Aid for Coaches”
  - A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention
- All coaches must complete the USA Rugby Level 200 Coaching Course. This workshop is aligned with the ARM (American Rugby Model) designed to continue the learning process and education of a coach with a focus on the progressive implementation.
- The new coaching structure focuses on coaching the right thing at the right time with the best interest of the players at hand. The level 200 courses consist of a required prerequisite online session and a 1-day in person workshop. The shift in theory in the new course gets coaches on the field with ample opportunity to put into practice their coaching style and technical application. This course is aligned with the NFHS (National High School Federation), interscholastic coach certification and is required at a minimum for every USAR registered coach teaching the contact game.
- The goal of this workshop is for coaches to refine their coaching skills and knowledge with a focus on teaching the technical aspects of the game through the use of games, questioning and progression. Throughout the workshop coaches will not only get hands on experience but participate in continuous feedback, evaluation and a peer review processes aimed at improving and creating more well rounded coaching approach.
- All coaches are required to register with USA Rugby. USA Rugby conducts annual background checks on every youth and high school coach through the

registration process.

- A Level 200 Active and Certified coach is required at every match and practice.
- Coaches are required to ensure compliance with mandatory four tackle practices and two live scrum sessions for every player before they play in their first game. Coaches must avoid fast tracking elite athletes.
- Coaches are required to have a cell phone at all practices and matches.
- Coaches receive important player information through the Rugby Oregon registration process: parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, doctor's name and phone number, insurance information and any medical conditions, allergies, drug reactions and previous illnesses/injuries or surgeries relative to the athlete, as well as an electronically signed consent form giving authorization to Rugby Oregon to obtain medical treatment for a minor. Coaches are required to have on-hand carry the Master Player List report that contains the aforementioned important information.
- Possess parent/legal guardian waivers and authorization forms to consent to treatment for a minor for every athlete, at every practice and match. This information includes parents' phone numbers, Dr.'s name and phone number, insurance information, and any medical conditions, allergies, drug reactions, and previous illnesses, injuries or surgeries relative to the athlete.

For complete USA Rugby Background Check Policy see Appendix R

**For the Player:**

- Players are required to participate in at least four tackling practices, supervised by a certified coach before participating in their first game. Coaches must document the dates players attended these practices. The focus on this instruction is to teach safe tackling techniques and how to be tackled safely.
- Players are required to participate in two live scrum sessions, supervised by a certified coach before participating in their first game.
- Athletes must always wear appropriate safety gear and equipment that fits properly. Protective gear is sport-specific and includes mouth guards and cleats. Additional equipment such as shin pads, scrumcaps and shoulder pads, while optional, must meet the approval of the International Rugby Board.
- Every athlete must register with USA Rugby. Membership provides athletes 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability coverage and, as of August 2011, accident insurance.

**For the Game**

- Unique Emergency Plans are developed for each practice and game venues. Plan must include; address of venue, directions to venue, quickest route to and from nearest hospital/ER, hospital/ER address and contact information.
- Matches are officiated by USA Rugby certified referees.
- A Certified Athletic Trainer (AT) attends all matches. If an AT is not at the field the game may continue as long as coaches have a field emergency plan and a working cell phone.

- Coaches and referees check athletic grounds for hazards (rocks, holes, water, etc.). Also consider current and potential weather conditions (e.g. lightning).
- Referee inspects players for proper equipment and removal of jewelry before game.
- Parents, players and coaches agree to follow good sportsmanship guidelines as described in the Code of Conduct.

### **Insurance Requirements**

As of August 15, 2011 all USA Rugby registered members will automatically receive up to \$250,000 in accident insurance upon completion of registration. The insurance covers rugby-related accidents at sanctioned events. This is secondary coverage but will serve as primary coverage if the absence of other medical coverage.

What are the benefits?

- Excess Accident Medical Expense: \$25,000
- Deductible, with Primary Insurance: \$1,500\*
- Deductible, without Primary Insurance: \$3,500
- Catastrophic Accident Medical Expense: \$225,000

\* The \$1,500 deductible provided for those members who have primary insurance coverage can be met by payments made by the member as deductibles or co-payments under the member's medical insurance.

- If an accidental injury results in the need for medical care within 90 days of the accident, coverage will pay the reasonable and customary medical charges of medically necessary medical services up to the maximum amount. Medical expenses must be incurred within 52 weeks of the date of accident for coverage to apply.

For more info or to file claims go to <http://usarugby.org/insurance-2>. Click on the "Accident Insurance" and "FAQ" or "Claims" tabs. Follow the detailed instructions on how to file the incident report and claims with the insurance company. Please email [insurance@usarugby.org](mailto:insurance@usarugby.org) if you have any questions.

USA Rugby also provides third party liability insurance in case of property damage or bodily injury to third parties. These parties may include the venue owner, coaches, referees, sponsors, spectators and others.