



Eastern Pennsylvania Rugby Union

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June 12, 2020

EPRU Members,

This is an unprecedented time in our history as a rugby community. While USA Rugby is working through Chapter 11 Bankruptcy and while local governing bodies are interpreting return-to-play guidelines through the Covid-19 Virus, we are also looking to ensure the sport of rugby remains accessible and inclusive to all, regardless of race, gender, and religion.

In the past few months, I have represented the EPRU in the newly formed Senior Club Rugby Council. As a group of geographical rugby union presidents, we have been forming our governing body and recently elected our first four officers to the Executive Board.

Senior Club Rugby Council Executive Board

Chairperson:	Kirk Tate	(Texas Rugby Union)
Vice Chair:	Ken Pape	(Empire Rugby Union)
Secretary:	Rick Humm	(No Cal Rugby Union)
Treasurer:	Jill Williamson	(Pac NW Rugby Union)

The following standing committees have been established:

- 1) Training and Development**
- 2) Competition**
- 3) Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion**
- 4) Eligibility**
- 5) Discipline**

Chairpersons for these committees will be open to all senior club members with the endorsement of their union. Position descriptions and nominations requests will be out to the Union members in the next week or so. If interested, look out for information on how to apply.

The member fee structure under the new organization of USA Rugby is still to be decided, but the Senior Club Rugby Executive board will be meeting with USA Rugby Leadership to discuss these fees soon. They will be advocating on behalf of senior club members and insisting that fees do not increase and that all fee distributions are transparent to club members.

Return-To-Play

The EPRU encompasses rugby clubs from three states, (PA, NJ, DE) that are in various levels of reopening as put forth by their state governing bodies. Though this is a fluid landscape, what we currently know is listed below:

Delaware

Delaware is set to enter **Phase 2 on June 15th**.

<https://governor.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2020/06/Delaware-Economic-Reopening-PHASE-2.pdf>

Currently, Delaware references only to youth sports with the following statement along with other restrictions on groups over 250 people.

*No-contact sports and physical activities for children may resume; Strict social distancing. Coaches and staff must wear face coverings. **Non-collegiate amateur level sport guidelines forthcoming.***

New Jersey

New Jersey is set to enter **Phase 2 on June 15th**

<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/general-public/when-and-how-is-new-jersey-lifting-restrictions-what-does-a-responsible-and-strategic-restart-of-new-jerseys-economy-look-like>

Please take note of New Jersey's ruling: **Organized Sports**

Beginning June 22, organized sports activities will be able to restart. At that time, they will be limited to outdoor activities that do not involve person-to-person contact or routinely entail individuals interacting within six feet of one another.

Pennsylvania

Some counties of Pennsylvania are in Yellow and others are in Green Phase.

<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#GreenPhase>

Pennsylvania is a bit more complicated because phases are by county. But if you are in the green phase, the following statement applies.

*Any gathering for a planned or spontaneous event of greater than 250 individuals is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, a concert, fair, festival, conference, **sporting event**, movie showing, or theater performance.*

On June 10, 2020, the PA State House and Senate passed a resolution to revoke the governor's coronavirus emergency order. This does not end the quarantine and in fact appears to only have complicated it more. This is an ever-changing landscape and we will do our best to keep you informed.

Please read USA Rugby's Return-to-Play Plan and compare your state's or county's restitutions to the plan. Look closely at Stage 4.

While the ability to pick up a ball and practice cannot be limited or restricted by the ERPU, we encourage everyone to follow the guidelines in the area you live and play.

Unfortunately, if your club does not adhere to the USA Rugby Return-to-Play policy, the EPRU can refuse to endorse your event or team, refuse to organize your schedule, refuse to assign you referees, and can reserve the right to sanction your participation in future events such as the MAC and EPRU Fall or Spring seasons. USA Rugby also reserves the right to limit insurance coverage for players, spectators, or venues that do not adhere to the policy they set forth.

If you need a copy of the USA Rugby Return-to-Play policy, please refer to the EPRU Website or Facebook Page. We are here to provide you any information you need.

In order to ensure we are ready to play when it is safe to do so, MAC and EPRU competition coordinators are working to create fall schedules with multiple variations and start dates. The EPRU Board of Directors is planning budgets and forming committees in anticipation of the upcoming seasons. We have been in discussions on various issues and just spent a couple of hours in training on our new competition management system. As we continue to plan and work, Southern Hemisphere Rugby will also be back on TV this weekend in ESPN+!

It appears we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel but in order to reach the light, we must continue to move forward. By committing to transparent reorganization, adhering to return-to-play guidelines, and by seeing better ways to foster a diverse and inclusive sport, we are moving forward.

With you,

Bryan Dewease

President
Eastern Pennsylvania Rugby Union