

Year 2012 MARFU Sevens Procedures

Committee Members:

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1. **Qualifiers/Championship:** The 2012 MARFU Sevens Season will consist of “X” Qualifier Tournaments for a Qualifier Premier Division and a Qualifier Open Division and will begin in June. The MARFU Championships for both divisions will be held in July.
 - a. **Qualifier Premier Division (QP):** A division available only to teams representing recognized MARFU clubs striving to participate in the National Men’s Club 7s Championships.
 - b. **Qualifier Open Division (QO):** A division available to teams striving to participate in the MARFU Men’s QO 7s Championship. Any team, MARFU or non-MARFU, are eligible to enter the QO Division at each of the qualifying tournaments; however, only teams that are a part of a recognized MARFU Club (which may be a first, second and/or third side, etc.) may accrue points toward the MARFU QO Championships.
 - c. **Qualifier Tournament Venues**
 - **Richmond Va – June 9th – Richmond Lions**
 - **Norfolk Va – June 16th –Norfolk Blues**
 - **Wilmington De – June 30th –Wilmington RFC**
 - **Columbia Md – July 14th –Rocky Gorge**
 - **Finals – July 21st –Norfolk Blues**

2. **Eligibility for QP and QO teams and players:** MARFU follows the eligibility regulations of USA Rugby for the MARFU Championships. The following are taken directly from USA Rugby’s Eligibility Regulations for National Men’s Club Sevens Championships. A newly formed club that plays sevens exclusively will need to register as any other club would. June 15th, 2012 is the registration deadline for 7s season.

2.1. Club Eligibility

- a) Players may form and join any sevens club, regardless of their fifteens affiliation
- b) A club may be registered solely to play sevens
- c) Players may transfer from a fifteens club to a sevens club and transfers can be denied by their club for outstanding financial issues or disciplinary matters with their Territorial Union (TU) or Local Area Union (LAU)
- d) For USA Rugby Men’s and Women’s All-Star Sevens championships, players will be held to that TU in which their sevens club is registered
- e) For the USA Rugby Men’s and Women’s Club Sevens Championships, at least 10 players on the roster must meet National Team eligibility standards
- f) For the USA Rugby Sevens Men’s and Women’s All-Stars Tournament, all players must meet National Team eligibility standards

- g) Players may register with any sevens club, but may not play in any qualifying tournaments for any other club during a USA Rugby qualifying match

2.2. Player Eligibility

The purpose of these regulations is to prevent club hopping and the importation of guest players late in the season to strengthen teams for this USA Rugby Championship Event – players must meet all of the following criteria in order to participate in this USA Rugby Championship Event:

- a) Play in at least two sevens matches at least a week apart from each other prior to this USA Rugby Championship Event (in sevens qualifiers or other matches) for the club.
- b) Be CIPP enrolled for the club, through initial enrollment or transfer, prior to the earlier of (i) playing in any match pursuant to a) above and (ii) July 15th.**
- c) Have not played in any qualifying tournaments (unless outside the qualifying division) for any other club.
- d) Player must be at least 18 years of age, unless granted a waiver by USA Rugby Eligibility Committee.

Enforcement of USA Rugby laws is the responsibility of the MARFU Sevens Committee members. Absent a complaint, checking of passports is at their discretion. However, in the event of a complaint the MARFU Sevens Committee 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.

Non-compliance with eligibility regulations for clubs and players will result in disqualification/loss of points earned in any tournament where the requirements are not met.

***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 still participate in the MARFU Championships. Only one player per team will be permitted this waiver (because teams are seeded according to strength displayed at qualifiers, multiple injury waivers skew the seeding). A request for a waiver is decided on a case-by-case basis. Importing of guest players or ringers for MARFU Championships or for the National Championships is not permitted and will not be tolerated.

3. **Qualifier Tournament Registration:** Teams participating in the QP and QO Divisions must **register by 10:00PM on the Tuesday** prior to the tournament for guaranteed entry. (NOTE: This deadline has been moved up 24 hours to allow adequate time for seeding and schedule development.) **Entry to the qualifier tournament after the deadline is at the discretion of the Tournament Director for the event.** Entrant registration method must include acceptance of an emailed letter of commitment ONLY by the Tournament Director. MARFU will hold any team liable to a fine and the full entry fee (for each team entered) for backing out of a tournament after the above deadline if a Tournament Director is holding a faxed or emailed commitment. For example: Widget RFC confirms that Widget I and Widget II will attend a qualifier, but backs out after Tuesday at 10:00 p.m. EDT; each side owes the full entrance fee and can be fined by

MARFU. This holds true if a team registers after the deadline, is accepted into the tournament and then backs out prior to or on the day of the event.

4. **Rosters:** Teams in both the QP and QO divisions are required to complete and email the Excel Roster Form located on the MARFU website by **5:00PM Thursday** prior to each of the tournaments in which the team is participating. The roster form is to be emailed to all of the Sevens Committee's representatives listed at the beginning of this document. Teams may list as many players as they would like on the roster form and the Transfer, CIPP and residency columns must be completed. However, it is not necessary to indicate exactly who is actually playing for each team until the day of the tournament when the team checks-in. For each qualifier, teams only need to add players to their master form.

(NOTE: "CIPP PENDING" is not acceptable – CIPP registrations and transfers must show up on the club CIPP list from USA Rugby dated no later than the Friday immediately prior to the tournament. Failure to provide proof by 6:00PM on the Monday following the tournament that the CIPP and/or transfer process was completed by the required Friday deadline will result in a delay of the awarding of points. Teams playing ineligible players forfeit all points earned in the tournament and face possible additional sanctions.)

5. **Player Swapping:**

- a. Any swapping of players between sides on tournament day will result in forfeit of all points earned that day by both offending teams.
- b. Teams are permitted to enter as many QP sides or QO sides as they want so long as they keep separate rosters.
- c. Within the QP division, a club may borrow one or more players from their first, second or third team to fill out another team but if they do, the team the player(s) came from forfeits all points earned to date and that team is not permitted to re-enter QPs. The players not immediately borrowed are only eligible to play for their BEST club team in the QP or their BEST club team in the QO. If the club did not have a team in the QO, the players not immediately borrowed may enter a team in the QO .

Example #1: Maryland I and II enter Qualifier #1 in the QP division and Maryland III enters in the QO division. For Qualifier #2, Maryland I is hit by injuries and brings up three (3) players from Maryland II. Maryland II's remaining players can only play for Maryland I or for Maryland III for the remainder of the season.

Example #2: Maryland I and II enter Qualifier #1 in the QP division. For Qualifier #2, Maryland I is hit by injuries and brings up three (3) players from Maryland II. Maryland II's remaining players can only play for Maryland I or enter a team in the QO.

- d. Within the QO division, upward movement of a player or player(s) from a first, second or third team is permitted without penalty to the team the player(s) came from. Once a player or player(s) moves up, they are not permitted to return to the team they came from in subsequent qualifier tournaments.

Example: Richmond I and II enter Qualifier #1 in the QO division. For Qualifier #2, Richmond I is short a player or players and moves two

players up from Richmond II. Richmond II retains their points from Qualifier #1 and may continue in subsequent qualifying tournaments.

- e. A player or player(s) from a club's team(s) in the QO may move up to play for a club's QP team without penalty to the team that they came from. The player or player(s) may move back to the QO team they came from in subsequent qualifying tournaments.
Example: Maryland I enters Qualifier #1 in the QP division and Maryland II and III enter in the QO division. For Qualifier #2, Maryland I sustains injuries and moves two (2) players up from Maryland II without loss of points to Maryland II. For Qualifier #3, one or both of the players may stay with Maryland I or return to Maryland II.
- f. A player or players from a club's QP team may not move down to play for the club's QO team for the first time, in the event that the QP team will not be participating in that particular tournament. If a player has played for both the QO and QP side during the season, they may return to the QO side.

6. Qualifier Tournament Guidelines:

- a. **Tournament Registration Fees:** Tournament hosts cannot charge QP and QO teams more than the fixed rate of \$250.00. Tournament hosts may charge non-MARFU teams or teams not interested in the QO any rate they choose.
- b. **Tournament Seedings:** The Tournament Director will email a list of the teams that have registered in each division for the upcoming qualifier tournament to the Sevens Committee's representatives listed at the beginning of this document soon after the TUESDAY, 10:00PM DEADLINE. The first 2010 Qualifier will be seeded by 2009 results according to: 1) finish at Nationals 2) finish at MARFU Championship 3) Point Standings at completion of Qualifiers.
- c. **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 may also change it if they find it reasonable and have the resources to do so.
- d. **Kick-off Time:** The QP Division will kick-off no earlier than 10:00AM. The QO Division can kick-off earlier or later according to the desires/resources of the Tournament Director.
- e. **Tournament Formats:** The format for pool play and play-offs will be determined per qualifier tournament dependent upon the number of teams registered within each division. Tournament Directors will work with the MARFU Sevens Committee members to determine the best possible options of play.

Pool advancement is determined by:

- i. record in pool
- ii. head-to-head competition
- iii. point differential
- iv. tries scored
- v. converted tries scored

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.

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).

Championship Ties will be resolved according to the 'Standard Set of Variations Appropriate for the Seven-a-Side Game' in the current Law Book.

f. 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 quarter-finals will receive 1 point (only if the tournament permits quarterfinalists).
- Pool ties will stand and will count for ½ point for each team.
- All teams will receive 1 point for entering the tournament and participating to the satisfaction of the Tournament Director.
- A win in any bracket leading to the championship match counts as 1 point. Third place wins count for ½ point.
- Any team that enters all 4 qualifiers in the same competitive division will be awarded 2 bonus points

g. Tournament Cancellation: If one tournament needs to be cancelled or end early due to adverse weather conditions, point totals stay as they are at the time of cancellation.

7. Qualifier Tournament Hosts – Administration/Set-up Requirements:

- a. Designate a single individual to be a Tournament Director (TD) whose responsibilities include managing brackets, ensuring timely kick-offs, securing and briefing referees and moderating any disputes that arise.
- b. Provide for access to water/fluids either free or available from a vendor at the field, or within 0.25 mile from the tournament facility.
- c. 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.
- d. Entry to the QP and QO divisions must remain open to all entrants until Tuesday, 10:00PM before the qualifier is held.
- e. Tournament organizers must collect CIPP rosters of each qualifier entrant club.
- f. Tournament organizers must submit win/loss records and scores for all teams entering qualifying divisions by e-mail on the Monday following the tournament to the Sevens Committees members listed at the top of this document. A running record of the standings will be available via the MARFU web site.

8. MARFU Championships

- a. **Format:** The MARFU QP and QO Championship entrants will be determined by total number of total number of points accrued at qualifiers. Qualifier winners will automatically secure a spot in the championships but will not be guaranteed a Top 3 Seed.
- b. **Intent to participate in Championships:** If a team accrues enough points or a win that places them in the top 8 teams in either the QP or QO, it is assumed that teams will fulfill their obligation to participate in the MARFU Championships. A team not intending or able to participate in the MARFU Championships must

inform the MARFU Sevens Committee members of this decision by 5:00PM on Monday, July 16th, 2012, at the latest. Any team that cancels after this date or does not show for the Championships will be fined \$500.00.

- c. **Seeding:** A team may enter and win as many qualifiers as possible. Final seeding will be determined by:
- i. total points earned
 - ii. total qualifiers won
 - iii. total qualifiers attended
 - iv. head-to-head competition in matches played in the qualifying tournaments (in the case of a tie in head-to-head, the win from the last head-to-head match will be the deciding factor)
 - v. point differential from all qualifiers attended
 - vi. total tries scored
 - vii. total tries converted
 - viii. total points
- d. **Number of teams in each Championship Division:** There will be a maximum of 8 teams permitted to participate in the MARFU Championships Tournament for each division. If only the odd number of seven (7) teams commit to the tournament in either division, the team placing as the 7th seed will not be participating and the tournament will go to a six (6) team division. The following outlines the formats for the number of team options dependent upon the participation commitment as required in 8.b.

- i. **Eight (8) Team Division:** Two pools of four (4) teams with all 8 teams seeded according to 8.c.

Pool 1	Pool 2
1	2
3	4
6	5
8	7

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 and #2. For the QP, if MARFU has more than two (2) teams in the National Men's Club Sevens Championship, the teams losing in the semi-finals will play for #3.

The seedings for these final four (4) teams will be determined by:

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

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

- ii. **Six (6) Team Division:** Two pools of three (3) teams with all 6 teams seeded according to 8.c.

Pool 1	Pool 2
1	2
3	4
6	5

In pool play, each team plays the other two teams in their pool in addition to one cross-pool match. Following pool play, the first place team in Pool

1 will play the second place team in Pool 2. The first place team from Pool 2 will play the second place team from pool 1. The winners of these games will play for the championship. The seedings for the final 2 teams will be determined by:

- a.) number of wins
- b.) record in pool
- c.) head-to-head competition
- d.) points differential
- e.) tries scored
- f.) tries converted

There are no additional matches for the 3rd – 6th teams.

For the QP, if MARFU has more than two (2) teams in the National Men's Club Sevens Championship, each team plays the other two teams in their pool in addition to one cross-pool match. Following pool play the first place team in Pool 1 will play the second place team in Pool 2 and the first place team in Pool 2 will play the second place team in Pool 1. Winner will play winner for #1 and #2 and the teams losing in the semi-finals will play for #3. The seedings for these final four (4) teams will be determined as outlined immediately above in this section. There are no additional matches for the 5th and 6th teams.

- iii. **Five (5) Team Division:** One pool of the five (5) teams seeded according to 8.c. Each team will play each of the other teams once. The first and second place team after round-robin play will play for #1 and #2. The seedings for these final two (2) teams will be determined as outlined in 8.d.i.
- iv. **Four (4) or fewer Team Division:** Will be decided by the Sevens Committee members within the week prior to the MARFU Championships, should the situation occur.