

**ROPSSAA RUGBY**

**PLAYING REGULATIONS**

**1. DATE**

- (a) The starting times for league games shall be determined by the Convenor on a school by school basis. Teams must be able to be at the site and ready to warm-up 30 minutes before game time. Games may be scheduled in a round robin league or festival format. In festival format, teams will play two games on a given day. In festival format games will not be back to back.
- (b) The Championship date(s) will be confirmed at the pre-season meeting.

**2. LOCATION**

- (a) The location of the finals will be at the school of the Convenor or at a site deemed suitable and announced by the Convenor at the pre-season coaches meeting.

**3. ELIGIBILITY**

- (a) All competitors must meet the eligibility requirements as per Article X of the ROPSSAA Constitution.
- (b) The age classifications for ROPSSAA rugby shall be,
  - (i) A Senior must not have reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the start of the school year in which the competition is held (for the 2023-2024 season, born in 2004 or later). Additionally for boys, the student must have reached his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 1st of the year in which the competition is held.
  - (ii) A Junior must not have reached their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the start of the school year in which the competition is held (for the 2023-2024 season, born in 2008 or later). In addition, they must be in their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year of high school.
  - (iii) The official birthdate shall be recorded in the student O.S.R.
- (c) Team Eligibility
  - (i) Individuals are eligible for one level of competition only.
  - (ii) For team sports, individuals must have participated in 50% of their team's regular season league games to be eligible for playoffs and OFSAA competition. In the case of an odd number of league games the number of games required to be played will be rounded down. Players missing games due to injury (INJ), or awaiting transfer approval (ATA), must appear so designated on a game sheet to maintain their eligibility. Games missed due to injury are subject to review of a doctor's note. Players under game or school suspension may not have their name included on a game sheet for participation percentages.

- (iii) All game sheets/rosters are to include the names of all those in the bench area (players, coaches, managers). In order to be in the bench area an individual's name must appear on the eligibility sheet. Players under game or school suspension may not sit in the bench area.
- (iv) Individuals are deemed to have played if their name appears on a game sheet. Individuals must be present at a game to be included on a game sheet.
- (v) A staff member must be present in the bench area from the start of the warm-up until the last competitor has left the area.

#### 4. OPERATING STRUCTURE

- (a) (i) Competition will be 15-a-side at the Junior Boys, Senior Boys, Junior Girls and Senior Girls levels. At the Junior levels, only one tier of competition will be offered. At the Senior Girls and Senior Boys levels, three tiers of play shall be offered. Refer to ROPSSAA Constitution, Article XI, Section IV for definitions.

There must be a minimum of 6 teams in Tier One for Tier Two to be offered. Senior boys and senior girls' teams must commit to Tier One or Two (for scheduling purposes) by the deadline given by the Athletic Convenor. Changing tiers after the deadline shall be considered a drop/add, and will be billed accordingly, assuming the change can be made. Wherever possible the OFSAA division will compete separately from the tier one and tier two teams.

- (ii) Teams will be assigned to tiers on a year-to-year basis based on the following criteria:
  - 1. All senior tier one teams from the previous season will remain in Tier One for the following year.
  - 2. The tier two champion and all tier two teams that have a winning percentage 75% or greater will be assigned to tier one the following year.
  - 3. Any winless team in tier one has the option of dropping to tier two without appeal. Indicated in 4a(iii) by an asterisk \*
  - 4. Any other teams wishing to drop down to tier two must appeal to the Jury of Appeal from the previous year by the deadline provided by the athletic convenor.
  - 5. Senior teams may move from tier two to tier one from year to year.
  - 6. Teams may choose to participate in the OFSAA division from year to year. Promotion/relegation rules will only apply to tier one and tier two leagues.

- (iii) *For the 2023-2024 school year, the following schools are assigned to Tier One:*  
*Boys: Applewood\*, Lorne Park, Streetsville, Humberview*  
*Girls: Applewood, Lorne Park, Mayfield, Robert F. Hall, Streetsville*

- (v) Teams appealing their placement in tier one can appeal to the Jury of Appeal from the previous season. The JOA will consider appeals with the following criteria in mind:
- 1) The number of years the program has been in existence or the school population. Older programs and larger schools are encouraged to develop a junior program to ensure that there are experienced players ready to fill spots lost to graduation.
  - 2) The number of junior players starting for and playing key positions for a varsity team.
  - 3) A high number of rookie players on a team.
  - 4) A very small varsity roster (under 23 players), combined with other factors listed above, leading to the risk of a high rate of attrition in tier one.

The onus is on the appealing team to provide a detailed explanation of how their situation applies to factors including but not limited to the guidelines listed above.

Note: There must be a minimum of 6 teams participating in a level for ROPSSAA sponsorship.

- (b) The Convenor will determine the number of conferences and the size of each conference.
- (c) All teams in each conference will play the same number of games.
- (d) In the event of a default the non-offending team will be awarded a 50 – 0 win.
- (e) The Convenor will attempt to keep the number of games played per calendar week during the regular season and playoffs to a maximum of two, with a minimum of three calendar days between games.
- (f) Tie Breaking Procedures
- (i) League Play  
Ties in games during league play shall stand.
  - (ii) Playoff Games  
In the event of a tie at the end of regulation time in a single playoff game, two five-minute halves with one minute between halves will be played.

*In the event of a tie at the end of regulation time in a festival format playoff game, one 5 minute period will be played.*

If still tied at the end of the two five-minute halves, the following procedure will be utilized:

Each team will select up to three players from among the players on the field at the end of the overtime period. Each player will kick at the goal from one of the three designated spots. The kick may be a placed kick or a drop kick.

The three designated spots in Junior and Senior Boys are (in order of kicking):

- a) Midway between the sidelines on the 22 metre line.
- b) On the left side of the field at the intersection of the 22 metre line and the 15 metre line-out line.
- c) On the right side of the field at the intersection of the 22 metre line and the 15 metre line-out line.

If tied after three kicks, the procedure is repeated on a sudden death basis (with an equal number of kicks).

The three designated spots in Junior and Senior Girls are (in order of kicking):

- a) From the left side 15 metre line and 22 metre line intersection.
- b) From the middle at the 22 metre line.
- c) From the right side 15 metre line and 22 metre line intersection.

If still tied after three kicks the procedure is repeated on a sudden death basis (with a equal number of kicks).

Note: In sudden death kicks, the kicking maybe made by any player in any order.

(iii) League and Tournament Standings

Tie-breaker games will not be scheduled to determine final standings.

Any team defaulting a game who is tied in league standing will automatically be given a lower position in the standings.

A) Two Teams

If two teams are tied in league or tournament standings, the following criteria shall be used to break the tie:

- 1) Result of game(s) between the tied teams. If the teams played each other twice and each team wins one game, aggregated scoring will be used to satisfy this priority.
- 2) Team with more wins in the season (league play).
- 3) Team with less losses in the season (league play).
- 4) Teams with better recorded point differential between common opponents.
- 5) Better offensive record (total points for versus common opponents).
- 6) Coin toss.

B) Three or more Teams

If three or more teams are tied in league or tournament standings, the following criteria shall be used to break the tie:

- 1) Result of game(s) between the tied teams. If the teams played each other twice and each team wins one game, aggregated scoring will be used to satisfy this priority.

- 2) Team with the better point differential between the tied teams (only if they have played each other).
- 3) Team with better recorded point differential between common opponents.
- 4) Better offensive record (total points recorded vs common opponents).
- 5) Coin toss.

(g) Playoff Structure

- (i) The Convenor will determine the playoff structure based on the guidelines laid out in the ROPSSAA Constitution. All playoff structures must be approved by the ROPSSAA Executive.
- (ii) The location of the playoff games will be determined based on:  
  
The team with the best record (same number of games played).  
The team with the best defensive record.  
Coin toss.
- (iii) In leagues with three or more divisions, playoff matchups will be determined following the seeding of teams. Only teams who qualify for playoffs and the convenor(s) may take part in the seeding process.
- (iv) A second-place team cannot be seeded higher than a first-place team in their division.

Note: If a seed meeting is necessary a date will be announced at the pre-season meeting.

- (v) Teams who declare A/AA will be removed from the ROPSSAA AAA playoffs to compete in their own playoffs. The number of teams that qualify for the A/AA playoffs will be based on the rules laid out in the ROPSSAA Constitution. A playoff will be held following the regular season if there are at least 2 teams that declare A/AA. Tier 2 teams are eligible to declare for the A/AA playoffs, however, tier 1 teams will always be ranked ahead of tier 2 teams. Teams that declare for the A/AA playoffs will not be eligible for the AAA playoffs. If only 1 team declares for A/AA then they are eligible to play in the AAA playoffs if they declare so before the first regular season game. However, if they withdraw following this date they will not be eligible to represent ROPSSAA at the A/AA OFSAA championship.

(h) Scheduled Games

- (i) Coaches are responsible for reviewing final league game schedules and playoff schedules as to locations, dates, and times to ensure their attendance.
- (ii) Failure to attend at the scheduled time will result in forfeiture of the game and/or loss of opportunity to compete. The defaulting team will cover all cost associated with the game as determined by ROPSSAA Council.
- (iii) Failure to fulfil game requirements leading to the abandonment of a game will result in a loss for that team. An incident report must be completed and submitted to the ROPSSAA Athletic office by the abandoning team within 24 hours of the game. No scores shall be entered until after a

Board of Inquiry. A team abandoning a game may be required to cover any cost incurred as determined by ROPSSAA Council.

- (iv) a) Schools must bring their own warm-up equipment and first aid kit.
- b) i) Schools must endeavor to arrive no earlier than 60 minutes before game time. Teams arriving earlier than this must be supervised by the head coach in an area where students from the home school do not congregate. Schools with team members who do not travel with the head coach (in taxis, cars, on foot, etc.) must inform players that they must wait for their head coach and should ensure that the head coach is the first to arrive at the host school.
- ii) Schools arriving for an away game between 30 and 60 minutes before game time must accompany the head coach to the competition area and liaise with the host school. The visiting team will be provided a safe waiting area and change room during this time and the visiting head coach must provide supervision of his/her players. Visiting athletes must bring all belongings with them to the competition area.
- iii) Visiting schools are entitled access to the competition area at the same time as the host school, and no later than 30 minutes before the game time (pertains to the first game).
- iv) Visiting schools are entitled access to a safe waiting area and change room at the completion of the competition.

## 5. ENTRIES

- (a) Each school may enter one team per age level. Each school must provide a representative to attend the pre-season meeting. Failure to do so will exclude that school from that year's league.
- (b) Each team may dress an unlimited number of players for the league games. The minimum number of players required to start a game is 13.
- (c) All teams in each conference will play the same number of games and the Convenor will attempt to keep the total number of league and playoff games played between a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 8.

## 6. EXPENSES

- (a) For a round robin league format, expenses for all regular season, quarter final and semi-final games will be met by the host school. For the festival format, expenses will be split equally between all participating teams. All operating costs for the final Championship games may be met by ROPSSAA.

## 7. RULES AND OFFICIALS

- (a) Games shall be played as per the World Rugby Laws of the Game: Rugby Union, Under 19 Variations with the exception of modifications referred to below.
- (b) Replacement and Substitution

Substitution in all games is unlimited. The referee must be notified and the referee will allow substitutions after stoppages in play, except penalties.

(c) Officials and Coaches

Qualified referees will be appointed for each game. No match shall commence without a qualified official present.

(d) Touch Judges

Each team will provide a touch judge (trained by the coaches) for all league, quarter-final, and semi-final games. Touch judges should not show support from the sidelines. The home team is to provide the touch judge on the spectators side of the field, for both halves of play. Assistant referees to be centrally assigned to all Championship games.

(e) Length of Game

- (i) In a round robin league, all regular season games will involve two thirty (30) minute halves. In festival format, teams will play two twenty (20) minute halves.
- (ii) At the first sign of thunder and/or lightning the referee is to stop the game. All participants must go indoors. The weather stoppage is to be a MINIMUM of 30 minutes from the last visual observation of lightning or sound of thunder. In instances where the game cannot be restarted after 30 minutes the game result to stand if at least 75% of the game was played. In instances where the game is not 75% played the game is to be rescheduled.

(f) "Sin Bin"

- (i) Under Law 9 Foul Play: Anything a person does within the playing enclosure that is against the letter and spirit of the Laws of the Game. It includes obstruction, unfair play, repeated infringements, dangerous play and misconduct which is prejudicial to the game, a player may be temporarily suspended (Yellow card).
- (ii) Referees will use a more relaxed standard when dealing with repeated offences, especially when at a school level, as infringements may be the result of poor knowledge of the Laws, or lack of skill.
- (iii) Suspended players must stand on the dead ball line of their in-goal. They do not have access to coaches or spectators. In extreme conditions they may be brought additional clothing and water. Contact should be minimal.
- (iv) Temporary suspensions (yellow cards) are for **5 minutes** when games are 20 min halves and **7 minutes** for 30 minute halves, judged by the referee's watch.
- (v) When players have been temporarily suspended (sin-binned), they cannot be replaced or substituted, except in the case of a tight forward. If this forward is replaced, another player must leave the field.

(g) Uncontested Scrums

- (i) When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front row positions and the two lock positions, must have been suitably trained in these positions and be aware of the "Mayday" call and what to do.
- (ii) When a school has large numbers of substitutes, they are expected to have suitable numbers of substitutes suitably trained in these positions.
- (iii) If a team cannot field such suitably trained players at the three front row positions, or at lock, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.
- (iv) If in the opinion of the referee, a front row player repeatedly breaks the law (eg. boring, not binding, collapsing), after consultation with the players' coach, the referee will allow a substitution before moving to uncontested scrums. In any case of doubt, the referee will move directly to uncontested scrums.

(h) Score Reporting

*If a score exceeds a 25 point difference, the game score will be recorded as a 25 point differential (losing teams score +25). For teams who qualify for OFSAA, the actual score may be included on seeding forms.*

8. AWARDS

- (a) ROPSSAA Gold Medallions (up to a maximum of 40) will be presented to each member of the winning teams in the Junior Boys, Senior Boys, Junior Girls and Senior Girls Tier One and Tier Two divisions. ROPSSAA Silver Medallions (up to a maximum of 40) will be presented to the individual members of the runner-up teams.
- (b) ROPSSAA trophies will be awarded to the Championship teams in Junior Boys, Senior Boys Tier One, Senior Boys Tier Two, Junior Girls, Senior Girls Tier One, and Senior Girls Tier Two.

9. UNIFORMS

- (a) All team members must wear a numbered team jersey. Visiting teams are responsible for avoiding colour conflicts. Players without a numbered jersey may not participate in the game.
- (b) All players must wear an internal mouth guard.
- (c) Athletes may not change their clothing in the competition area. For all outdoor sports, athletes must arrive dressed to compete. Visiting teams requiring the use of washroom facilities must send a staff member into the school with the team member(s). For all indoor sports, athletes must move to the designated locker room or change area to change their clothing.
- (d) Players may wear athletic "tights" under rugby shorts.



10. SCORING

- (a) Schools are to have their game sheets completed prior to the start of the game. At the conclusion of the game the referee and both coaches must sign the game sheet. The winning team is responsible for reporting the score. Each team is responsible for uploading their own game sheet to the ROPSSAA website.

11. EQUIPMENT

- (a) Each home team shall make available the necessary equipment for the successful staging of rugby games. The field must be suitably equipped with padded goal posts, 14 flexible flags and an appropriate game ball as per the current rule book.
- (b) Field markings to include; 5 yard line, 22 yard line, 10 yards from half, the in goal area (end zone), and 5 yards from side and end.

12. DEPORTMENT

- (a) Competitors and coaches are expected to behave in a sportsmanlike manner as per Article XVI, Section II of the ROPSSAA Constitution.
- (b) No games will be played unless a coach is present and responsible for the competing team.
- (c)
  - (i) Any player ejected from a game sustains an automatic suspension from the next league or playoff game.
  - (ii) Ejection of any head coach/staff sponsor results in forfeiture of the game and/or match if there is only one school staff member eligible to coach as per Article X. If there are more than one eligible staff members on the bench at the time of ejection, the game will be allowed to continue and the ejected individual must leave the competition area (i.e. gymnasium/field).
- (d) At the time of an ejection(s) the referee will:
  - (i) Record the names.
  - (ii) Inform both teams.

At the completion of the game the referee will:

  - (iii) Record the ejected player(s) name(s) on the game sheet.
- (e) For a second ejection at any time during league and playoff games the player is automatically suspended for the remainder of the season and any playoffs.
- (f) At the Championship Games, team benches to be on the same side of the field. Team personnel are to remain on their own half of the sideline. Coaches are permitted to be on the sideline/dead-ball line but not on the field of play. For all other games, team benches to be on opposite sides of the field, with the home school taking the spectator side.

- (g) Players and spectators are expected to remain 5 meters and/or natural barrier mark back from the field of play at all times. Home teams to rope/pylon this line off on the home side.

13. JURY OF APPEAL

- (a) A Jury of Appeal constructed at the pre-season meeting will rule on all disputes which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the officials. This Jury will consist of the Convenor and four coaches from participating schools.

14. MEDICAL PERSONNEL

- (a) Schools are required to bring first aid kits to all games and tournaments.
- (b) An athletic therapist may be provided for both teams through a central booking procedure.
- (c) When a therapist is unavailable, the host school is required to identify to the official and the visiting coaching staff a designated individual who is current in first aid certification and will be responsible for first aid during the game. Current first aid credentials must be available for presentation should they be requested.

15. CHAMPIONSHIPS AND OFSAA REPRESENTATION

- (a) The sidelines will be roped off for crowd control.
- (b) As per OFSAA requirements, the top team from the OFSAA Division Championship will advance to OFSAA "AAA" competition, unless already declaring their intention for "A/AA" competition. As per OFSAA requirements "A/AA", will have separate play downs to advance to OFSAA.
- (c) In the event of a second ROPSSAA entry at any OFSAA Championship (not including the host entry) the other school in the championship game will be awarded the entry.