

Smoky Mountain Conference Eligibility Policy

Last Revised: November 01, 2010



Preamble

The teams of the Smoky Mountain Conference of the Tennessee Rugby Association have adopted, through their elected representatives, an essential inter-related group of minimum eligibility requirements which establish the threshold for participation for all students and teams within the high school rugby league and which work together to define and preserve the fundamental nature of the program.

Eligibility Committee

The Eligibility Committee shall have sole responsibility on all matters related to player eligibility and participation. All teams shall have designated recruitment areas from which they are allowed to opening recruit eligible participants. Any participant that wishes to join a team from outside this recruitment area must first be approved by the eligibility committee.

Player Eligibility

Tennessee Rugby Association Membership

No athlete will be allowed to participate in any sanctioned conference competition until they have completed and submitted Tennessee Rugby Association membership enrollment and been approved for competition.

SMAC Player Participation Requirements

No athlete will be allowed to participate in any sanctioned conference competition until they have completed and submitted their SMAC Participation Agreement, obtained parental consent, paid all applicable fees and been approved for competition.

Enrollment and Attendance

To be eligible, students shall be regularly enrolled, in regular attendance, and carrying at least five full courses or the equivalent. A student is eligible to participate in rugby prior to the beginning of school if the student is enrolled at the school and meets all other eligibility requirements. A student shall not participate in rugby during any semester unless he/she is duly enrolled on or before the 20th day of the semester. This rule shall not apply to transfer students who have met the attendance requirements in the school last attended.

A student who drops out of school before the end of the semester shall be ineligible to participate in rugby until the student has been in school a semester and has passed in at least five full unit subjects or the equivalent.

Graduation

No student shall be eligible to participate in rugby after he/she has graduated from a secondary school. (A student who takes an accelerated course shall not lose his/her eligibility even though that student earns enough units to graduate provided he/she does not participate in a graduating exercise or accept a high school diploma, and provided the student has not attended a secondary school for eight semesters after enrolling in the ninth grade.) Students that are eligible for a December graduation and are participants of a team that is an officially recognized club/team of a high school may continue their participation in their senior year with the approval of the school. A student will no longer be eligible if they have received their diploma, participated in a graduation ceremony or competed in rugby for another team at any other level.

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4 Years (8 semesters) of Eligibility

A student, once enrolled in the 9th grade, has eight (8) semesters of athletic eligibility. Attendance of 40 school days of any semester shall be regarded as a "semester" under this rule. If a student participates in rugby during a period of attendance of any number of days less than 40, he/she shall be charged with a semester of attendance.

Age Limitation

No student shall be eligible to participate in rugby during any school year if he/she becomes 19 years of age on or before August 1.

Playing of Ineligible Student-Athletes

All rulings on eligibility must be in writing, and the accidental, intentional or other use of ineligible players by a member school shall require that team victories in which the ineligible player participated BE VACATED; and any one or more of these additional actions may be taken:

- (a) Team records achieved during participation by such ineligible players are vacated;
- (b) That team awards earned by such ineligible players be returned to the TRA & SMAC; and
- (c) That punishment for the playing of an ineligible player be assessed against the player, head coach and team, if deemed necessary.

If an otherwise ineligible student-athlete provides false information to a team, conference or state league and is erroneously determined to be eligible and is allowed to participate on the basis of that false information, the student shall be ineligible for participation in the high school competition for twelve (12) months from his or her last participation date.

Team Eligibility

Team Recruitment Area

Each team shall apply for and have an assigned recruitment area from which they are allowed to openly recruit participants from this area. For most teams this will be a single high school. A team may recruit from additional school only with the approval of the eligibility committee. Team Recruitment Areas may be expanded only with the approval of the membership at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Player Placement

The Eligibility Committee shall be responsible for the placement and approval of players for teams that are outside the team recruitment area. It is expected that a player play for his high school if that high school as an official school team as recognized by the school and the conference.

Home School – The Eligibility Committee shall place home school students on the nearest available team to their home. The committee has the authority to override this policy and place a player on a team other than the one nearest the student's home with compelling cause.

Players from schools without teams – Students from schools without rugby teams are eligible to participate and will be placed on the team nearest the student's home that is eligible to accept students from other schools. The committee has the authority to override this policy and place a player on a team other than the one nearest the student's home with compelling cause.

Transfer by Mutual Consent – A player may apply to transfer to another team with the consent of both head coaches. The Eligibility Committee must approve the transfer.

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Eligibility and Placement Waivers

- A. Request for exemption from these Eligibility Policies must be in writing, supported by required documentation, and received by the Eligibility Committee at least 14 business days prior to any match for which the player is requesting an exemption.
- B. The Eligibility Committee will have ten days from the date of receipt of all required documentation to respond to the applicant. Individuals seeking waiver requests should consider that backlogs of waiver requests can occur, and eligibility should be investigated and any waivers requested prior to the beginning of each Competitive Season.
- C. All waiver requests must be sent in writing to the address of record using the appropriate forms and documentation.

Appeals

Appeals of the eligibility committee's decisions shall be made to the full membership at the next scheduled meeting.