



## Rugby NorCal Annual General Meeting (AGM) Meeting Agenda #25

Date: August 20, 2016

Time: 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Location: Walnut Creek Marriott

2355 North Main Street, Walnut Creek, CA, 94596

---

<b><u>Item/Time</u></b>	<b><u>Issue</u></b>	<b><u>Presenter</u></b>
1. 10:30-12:00pm	Coaches meeting	Gene Mountjoy
2. 10:30-12:00pm	CMS Admin Session	Marti Blum
3. 1:00-1:30pm	Canterbury	Canterbury Representatives
4. 1:45-4:00pm	Start of AGM	All
<b><u>Item/Time</u></b>	<b><u>Issue</u></b>	<b><u>Presenter</u></b>
1. 1:45-1:50pm	Call to Order	Kessler
2. 1:50-2:00pm	Review and Approve May's Meeting Minutes	All
3. 2:00-2:10pm	President's Report (since May's BOD)	Kessler
4. 2:10-2:40pm	Executive Director Report	Carney
5. 2:40-3:00pm	Operations Manager Report	Blum
6. 3:00-3:40pm	Committee Reports -VP Competitions -VP Junior Youth -Disciplinary Committee -Secretary/High Performance Committee -VP Operations/Girls Committee -Referee Committee	Straka McCarty Eason Benson Chance Williamson
7. 3:40-3:55pm	Officer Voting – Operations & Executive	Carney
8. 3:55pm	Any other Items on the Floor	Kessler
9. 4:00pm	Adjourn	Kessler

## **August 20<sup>th</sup> AGM Programming:**

### **President's Report – Paul Kessler:**

- “Create the dream of playing rugby after HS”
- Data shows a 6% decline from 2015 to 2016
- Continue to create local coaching clinics
- Activate our mentor program for smaller clubs
- Awareness campaign for Nationals
- RNC fund Ruggers Edge seminars once a year
- High School Retention Needs
  - Lack of Quality Coaching and Organization
  - Lack of Post HS Rugby (not 4 year colleges)
  - Need for well-organized High Performance/All-Stars
  - Need for path to Nationals
  - Need for path to college
- Youth & Middle School Retention Needs
  - Regions must step up to promote Rookie Rugby and Try on Rugby
- Clubs should look at establishing Junior College Rugby Programs and/or work with local Men's Teams to create a U20 league

### **Executive Director Report – Mark Carney:**

#### **Growth and Development:**

As Paul has eluded to, our numbers are down this year by roughly 330 players, with the majority coming from the High School ranks. This totaled roughly -5% growth, and a budget shortfall of roughly \$19,000. We see this negative as an anomaly, and not part of a trend for the following reasons:

1. New policies/procedures/disciplinary processes and code of conduct has allowed us to effectively trim the fat and has cleaned up the league to a point where we no longer have to focus a lot of our efforts on compliance issues
2. New Organization structure and league structures are designed to foster growth and development through the age grades
3. Rookie Rugby and Try on Rugby clinics and leagues are already starting and have been a big success. This is not an overnight problem solved initiative, however. This is something that will take a lot of time/effort not just from RNC, but also from the member clubs to help us activate your area

On top of that, the new league entry requirements are making sure that prospective new clubs are set up for success and no longer half-baked, which that data shows leads to those clubs disappearing within 2-3 years of inception.

#### **Policy Review:**

**Sideline Technical Zones:** Overall, we have been fairly impressed by the level of compliance in ensuring every game had proper technical zones in place at all matches. There are some pockets of resistance, and this will be an area of emphasis next season as this policy will not be going away.

**Mandatory Medical Personnel:** USA Rugby also made it mandatory to have a certified medical professional on site at every match. Last year, our definition of a certified medical professional included Doctor, Athletic Trainer, Nurse, EMT, or Paramedic. The compliance with this requirement was spotty from what we can tell, even though it is perhaps the most important thing you can do as a club/coach for game day. This year, we are rolling out a new Player Welfare Program, which will mandate Athletic Trainers at all matches. This program is comprehensive and is in partnership with three different companies. If all works out as planned, this will be a massive deal for us as a sport, Organization, and for your clubs. Players and parents alike will feel more secure and safe, and this program can become a great recruiting tool for you.

**Fends to the Face:** USA Rugby has now mandated that at the Youth and HS level, there are no longer any fends to the face allowed. They implemented this half way through our season last year, so we didn't follow it. However, this year, all the referees should be up to speed with the new policy and will be calling it. Repetitive infringements of this will likely result in yellow cards (red if egregious) so please make sure to coach your players on this and remind them constantly.

### **Coach Development:**

Over the coming year, we are going to focus more of our time to the continuation of coach development by offering more skill specific coach education courses to our members. Last year we ran a short series of courses offered by Gene Mountjoy and Andy Malpass, which went over really well, and which we received very positive feedback for. We want to follow a similar model this season, but need to know what topics are of interest to you? How can we help you become better and offer more to the players you coach?

### **Impact Custom Mouth Guard Sponsorship:**

We are extremely excited to introduce our newest sponsor in Impact Custom Mouth Guards. Details to follow and product demo at the AGM.

### **Potential USA Rugby CIPP Dues Increase:**

USA Rugby is meeting next weekend at the semi-annual Congress meeting to discuss the potential for a CIPP Dues increase. USA Rugby has not raised the CIPP portion of dues for 7-8 years, and are claiming that with the cost of living increases and inflation, they need an increase to bring salaries up to a national average, and to reduce the financial burden of office related expenses, which have significantly increased in Colorado over the past 4-5 years.

The number being discussed ranges from \$5-\$15, and may be an annual increase or one time increase depending on the \$ figure selected. All tiers of registration are included, and some are proposing a higher increase for their members than others.

The time frame that this may be implemented is also up for discussion. This may go into effect as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, January 1<sup>st</sup> of next year or August 1<sup>st</sup> of next year.

I will have more information for all of you after I return from Colorado on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Marketing and PR Collateral:**

On the tables around the meeting you will see some marketing collateral we have invested in. We will be handing these things out at select events throughout the year, but feel free to take some now. The purpose of this is to try and broaden our reach a little bit and hopefully expand the brand name and attract new players to the game.

SportStars has been a great partner for us these past two years and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. Bringing High School sports news to the Bay Area, and Fresno and Sacramento Valleys is their business and has allowed us to get some great information and ads in the hands of tens of thousands of readers each month. We will continue to expand our offerings in their publications in the hopes of reaching more players!

### **The Ruggers Edge:**

Rugby NorCal is once again partnering with the Ruggers Edge to bring exciting college prep programming to our membership. This year, we are expanding on our offerings by also partnering with First15 Sport, and Arbor Bridge.

First15 Sport is a Sports Psychology company started by two female rugby players. They will be doing a session on test anxiety, preparation, and how to best prepare yourself both physically and mentally to succeed both on and off the field.

ArborBridge is the Ruggers Edge test prep partner. They will be offering a free ACT test to all attendees, which will be performed under test conditions, but will then also provide a full analysis of the test, which will help the student understand where their strengths and weaknesses are, as well as suggestions and strategies

for how to improve their score.

Karen Fong-Donoghue will obviously also give her patented College Bound Rugger presentation, which details the do's and don'ts of the college recruitment process, a detailed timeline of events and what students need to be doing and completing at what points during the year.

All in all, this is a comprehensive learning opportunity for parents and players alike! The dates are confirmed for November 12-13<sup>th</sup>. The 13<sup>th</sup> has been confirmed at CK McClatchy High School in Sacramento. The 12<sup>th</sup> is still awaiting confirmation and a venue. We have reached out to a couple of programs in the Bay area without much luck. We are looking for a fairly central facility that would need 1-2 large classrooms available, and an auditorium if possible. If you are interested in hosting, please contact the office immediately.

The total cost for this programming will likely be \$10 per attendee. Since we are expanding the offering and are having to fly people in for this, we need to defray the costs a little, but for the amount you are getting, the value is unreal. One session with a sports psychologist will run anywhere from \$150-350 an hour, and the ACT Test that is being offered free with the individual test analysis would likely run about \$300-500.

### **Operations Manager Report – Marti Blum:**

#### **Rookie Rugby and Try on Rugby:**

As Mark briefly touched on, we are working hard to grow the grassroots of rugby in Northern California through programs like Rookie Rugby and Try on Rugby. For those of you who are new to these terms and programs, Rookie Rugby is non-contact, flag rugby, focused on the young age groups of elementary school and younger, to introduce them to the sport and the skills needed for rugby. Rookie Rugby can be played in school PE programs, after school programs, scouts, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc. Try on Rugby is basically the same premise for youth growth, but it is directed specifically towards girls. Try on Rugby is also used for women, and empowering them to become coaches and referees, and more involved in the rugby community. Try on Rugby is great for moms that want to get more involved, HS players that want to try refereeing or coaching, and there is a direct pathway for growth in both youth and adult Try on Rugby programs.

Rookie Rugby and Try on Rugby will ultimately benefit your club by bringing in young players and provide a pool of players that will continue to filter into your club. Assistance from our clubs is key in creating successful programs and being the local contact, while RNC is still available for help and administration duties.

#### **Coach and Referee Courses:**

Starting next month, we will be holding more coaching and referee courses than ever before. There will be four Level 200 Coaching Courses and four Level 1 Officiating Courses throughout NorCal. We are looking at holding one additional Coaching Course in the Central Valley, and possibly a Level 300 Coaching Course and Level 2 Officiating Course, both would be in October.

There are online modules for coaches and referees to obtain more development. Coaches are required to have 10 Professional Development Credits for each membership cycle in order to keep your Level 200 coach certification. Online modules can be found at [USAR.org](http://USAR.org) – My Rugby – Coach – Professional Development

Dates and Locations will be discussed at the AGM.

#### **Coaching Level 200**

September 25 – Lamorinda – Acalanes High School

November 12 – Sierra Foothills

December 10 – TBD

January 7 – Solano Yolo – TBD Location

#### **Referee Level 1**

Dates and Locations in Referee Committee Report

## **Referees:**

Firstly, thank you to all referees from this past season, all the way from the KOT through to the end of the 7s Season. I appreciate everyone's willingness to help and step up for games! As most of you know, the need for referees is undeniable. We try our best to assign referees for all High School matches throughout the season, as well as have enough referees for all tournaments. This season, we were at about 85% fulfillment, with a few games per week being unassigned, and really struggling during tournaments for referees. As in previous years, we are still requiring clubs to submit at least one certified referee per team on their Club Information Form that will be available for games throughout the season. Too many times this past season and tournament season, did clubs submit the name of a referee who was not available to referee. We must make sure we are providing accurate contact information and confirming availability before submitting the names of any referees. One way to battle this is to register youth referees or parents and have them attend a Level 1 Officiating course in the offseason, and then attend the KOT in January to gain some game experience. Have them officiate a scrimmage at one of your practices, touch judge during a friendly, etc. The rule of thumb for youth referees is for them to referee two age brackets below their current age. Ex. A Middle Schooler should referee no higher than a U10 match, etc.

## **Policy Changes/Additions:**

This past season, due to some unforeseeable circumstances, we have made some changes to our 2017 Policies and Procedures.

## **CMS:**

We will be using the same CMS program as we have been for the last few years. According to the survey we sent out a few months ago, most people are happy with the current system, and the negatives only came from lack of knowledge on how to use the program. To combat the negatives, we will be holding a CMS training session on the morning of the AGM for all Club Registrars. Please encourage your registrars, as many as necessary, to attend this course. If you cannot/could not attend, I will still be available in the office for any questions.

There have been some changes made between the 2016/2017 seasons. These include, but are not limited to;

- Adding an Athletic Trainer assignment in the scheduler. This will mainly be used by our Player Wellness Program director to assign Athletic Trainers to games/tournaments
- Coach detail/contact information. This shows up on your Club-Detail tab and the contents can be edited in that page view, or the League-Teams tab for each different team. On the Club-Detail tab, you will also be able to see the contacts for all other clubs, so if you wish to communicate with other teams or coaches, please make sure your contact information is correct
- Field Locations – based on previous years and what field locations have been entered in the CMS, a list has been generated of pre-loaded field names/locations. Now instead of typing in each location, you can select a field from a drop-down menu. You are still able to manually enter an address. If you wish to permanently add a field location, please email me and I will add a location for you.

## New CMS Verification requirements:

### U8-Middle School

Birth Certificate Once

Headshot upon first registration at any age.

### Middle School

New Headshot

### High School

New Headshot - Freshman

School ID – Freshman

New Headshot – Junior

\*\*Eliminating the school ID verification half way through high school, no longer asking for School ID in middle school, just age verification.

### **CMS Match Day Rosters:**

Make sure to bring rosters with you to all matches, tournaments, etc. If you have a coaching bag, print the roster and put it immediately into your coaching bag, binder (if in HS), etc. You must be checking the opposing team's rosters for player registration and status. You are our eyes and ears. RNC cannot be at every match throughout the season, so we rely on coaches to make sure our policies are being followed. What is an adequate amount of time you typically input your rosters in the CMS? We want to make sure everyone has time to check the rosters and print them, as well as allowing our Athletic Trainers time to view the roster and players and prepare for the match ahead.

### **Registration:**

**Coaches:** Directly with USA Rugby. If you are coaching different levels, i.e. College/Club, and your registration is affiliated to one organization and not the other, you must go into your USA Rugby profile and add Rugby NorCal or your affiliated club to your USA Rugby Profile so that we know you are registered to that particular club. This will help alleviate issues of USA Rugby sanctioning and making sure all teams are in compliance.

**Referees:** Directly with USA Rugby. Assign to Rugby NorCal or specific club.

**Players:** Through the Rugby NorCal CMS.

**Player-Referees:** Through the Rugby NorCal CMS. If a player is not registered as a Player-Referee, do NOT register as a referee with USA Rugby, let us know and we will edit your profile within the CMS or register you within the CMS as Rugby NorCal. If you are registering as a referee before your club registers you as a player, please notify Rugby NorCal, and we will register you as long as we receive a check/cash/payment for your referee fees.

### **Club Information Form:**

We will be moving away from the file version of the Club Information Form. The word and PDF versions of this file has proven to be more time consuming than necessary and using word/PDF files are difficult to edit and read when handwritten. That being said, we have created an online JotForm that can be edited and submitted for each club. There is the same information as the previous Club Information Forms, but this is easier to submit, type, edit, etc. There are required fields that must be filled out, and enough spaces for extra contact information for team parents, extra coaches, etc. If there are any changes that need to be made to your submission, you will be able to follow a link and go back into your profile and edit your submission. This is a new venture for RNC, so any feedback is welcomed. The deadline to submit your Club Information Form is Monday, December 12, 2016 at 11:59pm. We have pushed it back from last year's deadline to help some clubs that may not know their coaches until closer to the start of the season. That being said, if you do not submit your form by the deadline, your club is subject to monetary fines, not being scheduled, loss in standing points, etc.

Will be adding the Code of Conduct to JotForm so that we can quickly and easily obtain a signature instead of clubs needing to scan and email back a paper form. Most likely going to create an individual coach code of conduct in addition to the club code of conduct for next season.

We are looking into putting the Referee Agreement on JotForm, but according to JotForm's policies, they are not allowed to collect SSNs, so we will most likely be sticking with the paper form of the Referee Agreement, which will provide you all with the most security of sensitive information.

### **Additional Email Addresses:**

We have created three new email addresses for Rugby NorCal – Staff, Referees and Events, all @rugbynorcal.org. This will help our clubs to sift through the multitude of emails we send. It should be understood that everything we send as an organization is important and should be read thoroughly, but this format will help decipher what needs immediate attention and what the purpose of the email is, so that I can create shorter subject lines. All emails are coming from me and responses will go directly to me. For one-off emails, my personal email is ideal.

**Staff** – Important emails and bulk emails to the entire membership regarding general operations throughout the season

**Events** – to inform the membership about upcoming events in NorCal, i.e. the Jesuit/SFGG and Harlequins sessions, Harrow, etc. Also included in events will be tournaments such as the KOT, Junior Youth Jamborees, Summer 7s.

**Referees** – Self-explanatory. All emails regarding assignment, need for help at tournaments, any referee information will go out from the referee email.

**Master Schedule:**

Will Discuss at AGM

<b>2017 Season</b>	<b>HS</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>U12</b>	<b>U10</b>	<b>U8</b>
3-Dec	Week 1 practices	Week 1 practices	Week 1 practices	Week 1 practices	Week 1 practices
10-Dec	Week 2 practices	Week 2 practices	Week 2 practices	Week 2 practices	Week 2 practices
17-Dec	PreSeason Friendly	PreSeason Friendly	PreSeason Friendly	PreSeason Friendly	PreSeason Friendly
24-Dec	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday
31-Dec	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday	Holiday
7-Jan	Holiday	League Match 1	League Match 1	League Match 1	League Match 1
14-Jan	Elk Grove Tourney?	League Match 2	League Match 2	League Match 2	League Match 2
21-Jan	KOT or friendly	KOT or Self-schedule	KOT or Self-schedule	KOT or Self-schedule	Self-schedule
28-Jan	HS Friendly	League Match 3	League Match 3	League Match 3	League Match 3
4-Feb	League Match 1	League Match 4	League Match 4	League Match 4	League Match 4
11-Feb	League Match 2	League Match 5	League Match 5	League Match 5	League Match 5
18-Feb	League Match 3	League Match 6	League Match 6	League Match 6	League Match 6
25-Feb	League Match 4	League Match 7	League Match 7	League Match 7	League Match 7
4-Mar	Vegas 7s	Vegas 7s or Self-schedule			
11-Mar	League Match 5	League Match 8	League Match 8	U10 Jamboree	U8 Jamboree
18-Mar	League Match 6	League Match 9	U12 Jamboree		
25-Mar	League Match 7	MS Tournament			
1-Apr	Spring Break/Playoffs	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
8-Apr	Spring Break/Playoffs	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
15-Apr	Easter Weekend				
22-Apr	Tournament?				

**Competitions Report – Jon Straka, VP-Competitions:**  
**2016 VP Competitions Report and 2017 Proposals**

**Schedule:**

2016 brought more of the same issues as we have had in past seasons. Despite efforts to schedule matches early, too many clubs who committed to fielding sides came up short. In turn, full schedules turned into half schedules in some cases.

**Premier League:**

7 clubs made up the Premier League. In almost all fixtures, clubs were able to field 3 sides which was the requirement set forth by the league. Travel was easier with all matches taking place at the same venue. The hope is that more clubs will want to join the premier league in 2017, ideally 4-5 clubs from each geographic region (Bay and Sac Valley).

**Bay Area and Sac Valley D1 and D2:**

Scheduling continues to be a nightmare. Clubs need to be more proactive in scheduling their own matches during scheduled bye weeks to ensure a sufficient number of matches. Example given, Pleasanton played 10+ matches before and during the regular season despite having the same league schedule as everyone else, many of whom expressed dissatisfaction about only having 4-5 matches after clubs dropped out of the league.

An effort was made in Sac Valley to split the divisions by numbers. For the most part, D1 clubs were able to field a JV side and D2 clubs were strictly varsity. There were also some crossover matches scheduled between divisions which seemed to work well.

**Junior Varsity:**

JV numbers were down and a number of clubs were not able to field sides.

**Redwood Conference:**

The Redwood Conference was highly competitive once again in Division 2. Any given weekend produced an upset or surprising result.

**Central Conference:**

The Central Conference continues to be more competitive. The conference benefited from the 2016 playoff format and was able to host their first ever playoff matches.

**Girls Conference:**

See report from Karen Chance

**Playoffs**

The 2016 playoffs were a step in the right direction, with additional matches added to play for a Plate, Bowl, and Shield Championship where enough teams participated. Any club who wished to participate in the post season was welcomed.

Division 2's model looks to be the best moving forward with everyone guaranteed at least two additional matches, usually against competition from other regions.

**Competition Committee**

The Competition Committee was stretched too thin the past two seasons. Most of the time, about half of the committee would respond to emails to determine resolutions to on field issues.

**2016 Competition Committee Structure (14 members)**

- Boys Division 1 has two representatives from each conference (Bay Area and Sac Valley). (4)
- Boys Division 2 has two representatives from each conference (Redwood and Central). (4)
- Boys Premier League has two at large representatives. (2)
- Girls Conference has two at large representatives. (2)
- The Referee Society has an at large representative. (1)
- The Rugby NorCal VP Competitions chairs the committee. (1)

**2017 Competition Committee Proposal (11 members)**

- Sac Valley has two reps (Varsity and JV). (2)
- Bay Area has two reps (Varsity and JV). (2)
- Girls Conference has two reps (Bay Area and Sac Valley). (2)

- Redwood Conference has one rep. (1)
- Central Conference has one rep. (1)
- Premier League has one rep. (1)
- The Referee Society has an at large rep. (1)
- The Rugby NorCal VP Competitions chairs the committee. (1)

Each Committee member will take on a bigger role in scheduling for the conference or league they represent. The committee member will work with the VP Competitions and clubs in their region to determine where they will play (D1, D2, JV, etc.). They will also work with the VP Competitions and clubs in their region to determine necessary bye weeks and schedule requests for each club. The committee will also determine the final playoff structure and seeding.

### **Junior Youth Report – Bob McCarty, VP-Junior Youth:**

#### **Season review:**

Numbers for age group players continue to grow. We are marginally down at Middle School. New clubs include EWLCP, Sacramento PAL, East Bay Rugby Academy / San Leandro, and the West Bay Rams. Welcome to Rugby NorCal.

This year saw the mandate to establish technical zones for match officials and coaches' boxes at the Middle School, as with High School. Reports are that we had good compliance, especially by the second month of the season. Identifying a Field Monitor, and indeed selecting the right people to play the role of a Field Monitor, are important steps to achieving the separation of coaches, players, and supporters from the administrative area, player areas, coach areas, and the playing enclosure.

We entered the second year of the policy to conduct weigh-ins at every U10 and U12 match, with a few play restrictions on our heaviest players, termed "X-Players", per the Jr Youth Playing Regulations. Results here were more uneven. Reports are that the Bay conference teams generally conducted player weigh-ins, though a few issues arose with X-Players in matches. Reports are that player weigh-ins did not appear to be broadly implemented among Sac Valley clubs, and compliance with play limitations for X-Players was not consistent in any area. More investigation with Sac Valley clubs will happen in August and September, and a corrective action plan will be created, including any resulting changes to practices around player weights for age groups, for approval by the RNC board at its fall 2016 meeting. A guiding principle is that Rugby is a game for all. A guiding objective is to provide youth of all ages, sexes and socio-economic status an opportunity to participate in a positive, rewarding and safe athletic experience.

Thanks go to all the clubs, administrators, referees, and coaches that participated in the Rugby NorCal Jr Youth Jamborees. 15 clubs brought 63 teams to the age group jamborees. All that rugby happens due to hard work by a small group of club representatives on the Jr Youth committee, the coaches who get their teams ready, the referees who officiate the matches, a small army of conscripted volunteers on jamboree day, the RNC staff, and above all the players, who got in to the car early in the morning to play rugby in the rain and the wind. Special mention to Lamorinda, hosts of the age group jamborees, and Solano-Yolo, hosts of the Middle School tournament and several Sevens events this summer that featured Jr Youth pools.

#### **A look ahead:**

The Jr Youth committee want to take this coming year to look long and hard at how Jr Youth should work in 2017-18 and beyond, to grow the game in NorCal. We take seriously research done by the RFU on how best to build player skills in a safe environment that led to their New Way of Play. We also recognize that most of the SROs in the country compete with smaller-sided games and start contact and full U-19 rugby later than we do in NorCal.

The experience at the Summer 7s events is attractive, with several hundred rugby people at the same

location. The super-site concept may apply to Jr Youth play just as easily as at High School, with the same benefits of community, administrative oversight, referee availability, utilization of EMT/CAT time, and so on. If by adjusting our way of play we can grow the game faster, and offer a better, more rewarding, and safe experience to more NorCal youth athletes, and ultimately deepen the pool of athletes playing High School rugby, the Jr Youth committee is obliged to investigate that. We expect that work to happen this fall and winter.

**A few requests of club leadership:**

Referee recruitment, training, and development must be a focus for all clubs, even at the Jr Youth level. Referees manage the game, keep players safe by tamping down foul play, ensure a fair contest for the ball, and interact with the players on the pitch. Without them, we can't have fair matches. And coaches know how frustrating it is to see a referee struggle to manage a game. So every club needs a program all club leaders can follow to identify people that will become good referees, recruit them to get certified, and give them the best opportunities to improve the quality of their officiating. There's no referee fairy. They don't grow on the pitch overnight. Make it an organizational priority.

Coaches of older elementary students and middle school players have a big responsibility: we need to teach young players how to play the game right: how to tackle, take tackles, and ruck effectively and safely; how to manage the game at set pieces; how to make tactical game decisions rapidly and effectively; and what "urgency" means.

Rugby is very physical, and there's great joy in that. It's part of the appeal of the game. But remember that you are building the skills that are going to give the players the confidence and the knowledge to play the game well and keep playing it as they move to High School and beyond.

Lastly, continue to work to hand down the spirit and the culture of the game. It won't just happen. A lot of youth sports organizations talk about sportsmanship, exciting games, camaraderie, integrity, developing athletes, respect for the game and the opponent... if only they had what Rugby has. But we can lose what we have if we don't continue to build up what's special about Rugby. The good news is that for a lot of players in northern California now, becoming a rugby player starts as a Jr Youth player.

**Disciplinary Committee Report – Matt Eason, VP-Discipline:**

Overall, the amount of disciplinary reports and cards issued during games this past season has dropped since the 2015 season. In total, there have been 24 fewer cards issued, with 30 fewer Red Cards and 6 more yellow cards. The majority of these cards have been issued in the first month of the season, which is understandable, as the beginning of the season can be bumpy. However, this can be combatted by providing more organized and structured training sessions to discuss penalties and safe play.

**High Performance Committee Report – Bob Benson, Secretary and Chair-High Performance Committee:**

**Rugby NorCal High Performance (All Star) Committee Report**

Members:	Robert (Bob) Benson [Chair]	Peninsula Green	Bay
	Karen Chance	Mother Lode	Sac
	Mateo Medrano	North Bay	Bay
	Josh Fitzgerald	Jesuit	Sac
	Moses Similai	Peninsula Green	Bay
	Rob Salaber	Solo	Sac
	Steve Heberle	Jesuit	Sac

---

## **Goals (for this report)**

- 1) Report on the activities of the High Performance Committee for the 2016 season for the Rugby NorCal Annual General Meeting.
  - 2) Evaluate which goals were met and offer suggestions for improvement in the spirit of “Continuous Improvement.”
- 

## **Summary**

The overall results for the High Performance / All Star Program were very positive despite a bumpy start for the year and the added problem of having the budget reduced to zero from roughly \$20,000 in the prior year. The bumpy start occurred because Rugby NorCal started the year with the intent to follow the lead of other State based programs, and planned to rely on Rugby Academies to provide the basis for the Elite program. The Committee reversed this decision after a “less than adequate” result with Rhino Rugby at the Las Vegas Sevens tournament in February. Fortunately the Committee had made some plans for contingency and the Committee was able to quickly pull together a program that allowed the largest participation ever in the All Star Program and generally “Ran the Table” by winning all the Championship games (except MS) at the Oregon RAS.

Thanks to all the Committee members, Coaches and Other Administrators, and Special thanks to Karen Chance for yeoman duty to organize the tour.

### **The Key goals for the year can be summarized as the following:**

- Provide a forum for Elite player development where players at a higher level will be able to play together and be coached to a higher level than they receive at Club level.
- Form and Coach Northern California teams that play competitively against competition from other state All Star teams and Touring All Star teams.
- Facilitate the placement of Elite players from Northern California on USA Rugby National teams (HSAA, U-20, etc) and College teams.

### **The Key results for the year:**

- The Committee formed teams in the following categories which competed in the Rugby NorCal All Star Championship games on Jun 4, and the Oregon RAC (Regional All Star Competition) Jun 24 -26.
  - Varsity Boys – Bay and Sac
  - JV Boys – Bay and Sac
  - MS Boys – Sac
  - Girls – Combined Varsity and JV
- The Rugby NorCal teams competed in the Rugby NorCal All Star Championship games on Jun 4 at the Cal Maritime Fields – Varsity Boys (2 games), JV Boys (2 games), MS Boys (1 game), Girls (Practice)
- The Rugby NorCal teams competed in the Oregon RAC (Regional All Star Competition) Jun 24 -26.
  - Varsity Boys (Bay) - Won 1<sup>st</sup> place
  - Varsity Boys (Sac) - Won 2<sup>nd</sup> place
  - JV Boys (Sac) - Won 1<sup>st</sup> place
  - JV Boys (Bay) - Won 3<sup>rd</sup> place
  - MS Boys (1 team participated)
  - Varsity Girls (Practice) - Won 1<sup>st</sup> place
  - MS Girls (Practice) - Won 1<sup>st</sup> place

- The Rugby NorCal Boys Varsity played a game late in the season against an Elite touring side from Harrow and lost with a very credible performance.
- The Rugby NorCal players named to Elite National teams
  - HSAA Boy December Camp [2015] - 16 players. Only So Cal with 19 players is higher (112 in camp), See Appendix A for names
  - HSAA Boys Touring side – 6 players
  - HSAA Girls Touring side – 5 players
  - EIA Boys Touring side (U18/U16) to BC – 6 players
  - U20 Boys Team v Canada – 1 player (+ 1 player who transferred to Utah)
  - U20 Girls Team – 1 player
- The Rhino Academy took multiple teams to Las Vegas, where many Rugby NorCal Elite players were able to gain valuable experience.

### **Key Areas for Improvement**

1. Early planning for all teams. No reliance on Academy management of the All Star program.
2. Program funding – Early planning and identification of coaches.
3. Middle School – Early planning and a decision on coaches and level of participation.
4. Education of coaches and players prior to the trip on procedures and disciplinary measures.

### **Appendix A – National Team Participation**

#### **NorCal players in HSAA 2015-2016 Winter Camp**

People

Will Thompson <saltythompson@gmail.com>

To

Robert Benson

Today at 8:02 AM

Bob,

Split between u16s through u19s.

16 players. Only So Cal with 19 players is higher.

112 in camp

Cortinas, Jacob	N Cal	06/01/2001	Scrum Half	Peninsula Green
Dhillon, Amar	N Cal	01/11/2000	Wing	Mother Lode Rugby Club
Dyer, Christian	N Cal	12/26/1997	Center	Jesuit High School Sacramento
Hogue, Allan	N Cal	10/06/1999	Lock	United Varsity Rugby
Kay, Garrett	N Cal	05/11/1999	Flanker	Jesuit High School Sacramento
Kruse, Isaia	N Cal	02/04/2000	Scrum Half	Bullard High School
Kruse, Mikaele "Mika"	N Cal	06/27/1998	Center	Bullard High School
Macauley, Clayton	N Cal	08/05/1998	Prop	Mother Lode Rugby Club, Men, 15s
Mitchell, Skyler "Princess"	N Cal	12/08/1998	Flanker	Mother Lode Rugby Club, Men, 15s
Monroe, Daniel "DJ"	N Cal	10/27/1999	Flanker	Los Gatos Lions, Men, 15s
Talapusi, Faitala "Tala"	N Cal	12/03/1999	Center	Peninsula Green, Men, 15s
Tameilau, Thomas "Moe"	N Cal	06/16/1999	Prop	Peninsula Green, Men, 15s
Van Tonder, Kyle	N Cal	09/02/1999	Fly Half	Rocky Mountain HS Grizzly Bears
Warnock, Joshua "Yoshi"	N Cal	08/11/1997	Lock	Peninsula Green, Men, 15s
Mitchell, Douglas "Doug"	N Cal	09/29/1999	Prop	Granite Bay Rugby, Men, 15s
Strehlow, Austin	N Cal	01/26/1999	Lock	Danville Oaks, Men, 15s

---

The following ladies were chosen for the GHSAA teams and have competed in the National All-Star season.

That team's record was 6-0!

Atumata Hingano — Danville, Calif.  
Daisy Manoa — Danville, Calif.  
Maryjane Pasioles — Sacramento, Calif.  
Ana Polaulu — Sacramento, Calif.  
Mele Tausinga — Sacramento, Calif.  
Salote Tausinga—Sacramento, Calif

## **Appendix B**

### **2015 Rugby NorCal All-Star Pathway and Schedule**

Apr 27 at 11:10 AM

Coaches and Club Admins,

The high school 15s season has drawn to a close and the All-Star process is upon us. This email serves as our official announcement of the All-Star selection process and schedule for the 2016 season.

We are already starting off in a very strong position with very impressive victories for our Boys Varsity and Girls Varsity All-Stars over the England Lambs and the Canadians respectively. This puts us in a great position to build on the momentum already gained.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of available coaches in the Bay Area, Middle School will NOT have all-star teams this year.

#### **Process:**

This year, we are forgoing the "HP Camps", and will move straight into Talent ID/Elimination Try-outs in May. We have created player nomination forms for Boys Varsity, Boys JV, and Girls Varsity/JV, which can be found on our website [here](#). Please note, that due to USAR Eligibility restrictions for All-Stars, no Middle School player (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade) can participate in High School All-Star events. The general framework of the process is in order as follows:

- Coach nomination
- Try-out performance
- Probables vs. Possibles (Training)
- Selection to Bay or Sac Valley team – depending on area
- Selection to NorCal All Star team

**Clubs are allotted a MAXIMUM of 5 players per nomination. IF you have enough QUALITY players for a second nomination, you will have to use a different email address to nominate them.** (Note: Boys Varsity All-Star players already identified and who made the squad for the England Lambs game do not need to be nominated, but should attend the Talent ID/Elimination practices. Please notify these players of the

schedule below).

### **KPI's for Players:**

Players will be judged on a number of criteria listed below:

- Fitness – This is the most critical area of HP, and one where we have been found lacking in the past. Fitness levels indicate the level of commitment, or lack thereof of our players. We will send out separately the fitness requirements.
- Player Skills – The basic skills are necessary (pass, catch, run, evade, tackle, ruck, etc)
- Player Team Skills – Team skills (reading the field, team play, add positive team performance when on the field)
- Positive Attitude – Practice attendance; desire to be a team player, positive influence on the team.

**It should be noted that the Regional All-Star Tournament we are attending this year is in Bakersfield on the weekend of June 20<sup>th</sup>. We will leave on 6/19, returning 6/21. ALL players wanting to be considered for regional All-Star teams MUST be available for the RAST on 6/20!**

### **Sacramento:**

**Sacramento Valley All Star Program – Note: Central Valley Players will play with Sac Valley**

#### **Varsity -**

Head coach: Jason Divine (Granite Bay)

Asst coach: Andy Malpass, (Davis)

Asst coach: Josh Fitzgerald (Jesuit)

Possible guest coaches: Orene Ai'i, Lou Stanfill, Andy Katoa

#### **JV -**

Head coach: Steve Seifert (Jesuit)

Asst coach: Bob Ericksen (Mother Lode)

Possible guest coaches: Orene Ai'i, Lou Stanfill, Andy Katoa

#### **HS Team Manager -**

TBD

#### **Girls –**

Head Coaches: Rod Chance (Mother Lode); Sefesi Green (Amazons)

### **Schedule:**

The Schedules below for the Bay Area and Sacramento are for Boys JV and Varsity Only. Once players are nominated for the Girls, they will receive notification from the regional coaching staff of practice/camp times and locations. What is below for the Girls is tentative, but we are hopeful that it sticks..

Central Valley players may elect to attend the Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> camp in which they will complete the fitness portion of the try-outs instead of coming to the ID camp on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The ID Camp on the 20<sup>th</sup> will be for all players.

### **MAY:**

Sa 9 - Player identification camp <For Boys players NOT going to Nationals> – 11am – 1pm / Girls Practice – 1pm – 3pm Danny Nunn Park, 6920 Power Inn Rd, Sacramento, CA 95828

W 13 - NorCal teams leave for Nationals

Su 17 - NorCal teams return from Nationals

T 19 - Player identification camp <For All Players – BOYS & GIRLS> – 4pm – 6.30pm – most likely at Danny Nunn Park, 6920 Power Inn Rd, Sacramento, CA 95828

W 20 - Player identification camp <For All Boys Players> – 4pm – 6.30pm – most likely at Danny Nunn Park, 6920 Power Inn Rd, Sacramento, CA 95828

Sa 23 – Girls Practice – 11am – 1pm – Danny Nunn Park. / Sac Valley Boys All-Star squads announced

M 25 - Memorial Day

T 26 – Training – Jesuit HS (Boys Varsity & JV)

W 27 – Training – Jesuit HS (Boys Varsity & JV)

Th 28 – Training – Jesuit HS (Boys Varsity & JV)

F 29 – Training – Jesuit HS (Boys Varsity & JV)

Sa 30 - NorCal Rugby All-Star Game @ Cal Maritime (Sac Valley vs. Bay Area)

### **JUNE:**

1 – 17 Rugby NorCal Varsity (2), JV (1), Girls Varsity (1), Girls JV (1) Squads are selected. Cuts made to get to roster of 23 for each team. Practices to take place likely at Cal Maritime Academy, Dates and Times TBD.

19 – Leave for Bakersfield RAST Tournament

21 – Return late evening from Bakersfield.

### **Bay Area:**

#### **The Bay Area All Star Program – Note: Redwood players will play with the Bay**

##### **Boys Varsity -**

Head coach: Roy Helu (Danville)

Coach: Jon Straka (Danville)

Coach: John Comisky (Pleasanton)

Coach: Alistair Robinson (SFGG)

##### **Boys JV -**

Head coaches: Bob Benson, Moses Similai (Peninsula Green)

##### **Girls –**

Head Coach: Steve Lopez (Pleasanton)

### **Schedule:**

#### **MAY**

Sat 2 - Player identification camp – SFGG – Treasure Island – 9.00am to 11.30am (Mandatory for consideration)

Sat 9 – GIRLS – Practice, Emerald Glenn Park, Dublin, CA, 9am – 11.30am

Sun 17 – Bay All Team Selection Announcement.

Tue, Thu (19, 21) – Practices for Boys Bay All Team – Time and Place – TBD

Sat 23 – GIRLS – Practice, Emerald Glenn Park, Dublin, CA, 10am – 12.30am

Tue, Thu (26, 28) – Boys AND Girls Practices – Time and Place – TBD

Sat 30 - NorCal Rugby All-Star Game @ Cal Maritime (Sac Valley vs. Bay Area)

#### **Girls Committee Report – Karen Chance, VP-Operations, Chair-Girls Committee:**

16 teams participated in the regular league schedule; 10 in the Sac Valley and 6 in the Bay Area.

We lost Sonoma, Fresno, Humboldt, Silicon Valley and Lancers. Marin and Elk Grove tried to establish teams but they didn't manage to get enough players to form. A few Marin players combined with Berkeley to play some of their season games.

On Jan 16<sup>th</sup> 2016; The Girls 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Kick-Off Festival was held in Elk Grove and every team attended.

Great venue, but artificial turf fields caused more injuries than usual. Hopefully weather will permit grass fields this coming season

8 Girls teams along with the Celtic Barbarians from Alberta, Canada played at the Sac Valley KOT the following weekend.

Biggest News was the formation and success of the Girls Middle School Division. 4 teams played a full league season and competed at the Middle School Championships in Dixon. The foundation has been established for a significant increase in teams playing in this division the coming season. World Rugby guidelines call for NO coed competition in ages 12 and above. If all clubs abide by this policy, the league will automatically increase to 6 or more teams.

The league season commenced the weekend after the SV KOT. The schedule was played but many teams forfeited on the Amazons and some on Danville. Alameda folded mid-season leaving few teams in the Bay Area. The Committee and the Girls league need to address this problem this coming season.

A tournament format similar to the Youth programs along with a mentoring program has been recommended by Bob Stephens of Danville. This could potentially elevate the playing level of the lesser skilled teams along

with giving the more highly skilled teams more league playing time. A win, win in my opinion. We will address this at the Annual Coaches meeting the first Sunday in October.

The Amazons won the League Championship and also won the National Championship at the NIT in Central Washington. Pleasanton and Land Park also attended and Pleasanton placed.

The NorCal Girls All-Stars travelled with JV and Varsity squads. They competed and dominated the Great Northwest Challenge in Corvallis, winning all their games and both Championships!

The Summer 7's series was well attended by the Girls league in the High School Divisions teams. We will hopefully have enough Middle School Girls teams to compete next summer.

### **Referee Committee Report – David Williamson, Chair-Referee Committee:**

**Will be presented at the AGM**

### **Central Valley Regional Development Manager Report:**

I took over the Regional Development Officer position for the Central Valley on June 1, 2016. My goals from that day forward were to promote rugby in the Central Valley focusing on the ages of 6 to 14. Strategy implementation focused on promoting Rookie Rugby to kids, teachers, schools, school districts and Parks and Recreation Departments. After introducing Rookie Rugby to youth through their after school programs, PE Classes, and through leagues generated by Parks and Recreation Departments, we will then promote tackle rugby as the season approaches.

I am delighted to say that this strategy is working incredibly well. As of today, Fresno Unified School District is proposing to their Board of Directors that Rookie Rugby should be implemented into every single 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Physical Education Class throughout Fresno. We plan on training upwards of 25 physical education instructors in Rookie Rugby so that they can teach our game to their kids during this upcoming school year. Also, Sunnyside High School has bought into Rugby as a whole. After creating their after-school club rugby program last year, they have now decided to implement rugby into their physical education courses throughout their entire high school and both of their feeder middle schools. The local private high school, San Joaquin Memorial, will also be introducing Flag Rugby into their Freshman PE classes. I have also been teaching rugby tackling technique to Varsity and Youth Football programs throughout the Valley. This has allowed me to reach an extra 150 kids throughout Fresno as well as educating football programs about proper rugby tackling technique. We are hoping to get these football coaches on our side and this strategy is working.

We will also be creating our first Rookie Rugby league in partnership with Fresno PARCS division. This will be the first flag league of its kind in the Fresno Area. This league will be promoted through the PARCS division to youth ages 6 to 12. We are also hoping to partner with Clovis Parks and Recreation to create inter-city competition. This inaugural flag league would start in the beginning of November and end mid-December. This will allow our youth tackle teams to take over at this point as we introduce youth to the contact version of the sport after they've played flag.

Another exciting opportunity is our partnership with the Lemoore Naval Air Station to promote rugby through their Youth Sports Division. We will be holding youth clinics in mid-October to create interest in the game and to hopefully create a flag league. These kids will have the opportunity to play for our new Lemoore Youth Rugby team after the clinics and league conclude.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions. [centralvalley.rdo@usarugby.org](mailto:centralvalley.rdo@usarugby.org)

## **Officer Voting:**

- Membership Vote: The Membership voted upon instillation of our new By-Laws that all Officer Positions are open for re-election and change in personnel every year at the AGM. The positions, those currently installed and their bid for re-election, are below.
- President: Paul Kessler – Seeking 3<sup>rd</sup> term
- VP Operations: Karen Chance – Seeking 2<sup>nd</sup> Term
- VP Competitions: Jon Straka - Seeking 3<sup>rd</sup> term
- VP Discipline: Matt Eason - Seeking 3<sup>rd</sup> term
- VP Junior Youth: Bob McCarty – Seeking 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- Secretary: Bob Benson - Seeking 3<sup>rd</sup> term
- Treasurer: Richard Reynolds – Stepping down - VACANT
- Nominees received thus far for the positions above other than those listed are as follows:
  - Jason Gaskins – Treasurer

## **Executive Board Members:**

- We have two new Executive Board Members joining the Rugby NorCal Executive Board this year on three year terms.
  - Derek Mendez
  - Joe Devlin

See slides and introductions at the AGM.

## **Other Items on the Table:**

## **Adjourn!**

**Additional Handouts/Attachments: P&L and Balance Sheet (handout at the AGM)**