



RUGBY

PROGRAM GUIDE

7075 Newington Road, Unit G • Lorton, VA 22079

Phone: (703) 339-3796 • Fax: (703) 339-8751

www.sycva.com

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INTRODUCTION AND MISSION

The mission of West End/SYC Rugby is to teach players and their parents about rugby, teamwork, fitness, and sportsmanship in a fun, relaxed environment by applying the rugby mindset: listen, support, compete, respect.

SYC Screaming Eagles Rugby was founded in 2000 and joined with West End Rugby in 2008 to offer Tag Rugby, 7s Tackle Rugby, and 15s Tackle Rugby for boys and girls. Tag Rugby is available for boys and girls from Pre-K thru 4th grade; 7s and 15s Tackle Rugby is available for girls and boys from 3rd thru 12th grade.

RUGBY COMMITTEE

The West End/SYC Rugby is managed by the Rugby Committee, which in turn reports to the Board of Directors of SYC. The Rugby Committee consists of seven members:

- Rugby Commissioner
- Treasurer
- Five at-large members

Members of the Rugby Committee are appointed by the Rugby Commissioner to three-year terms.

WHAT IS RUGBY?

Rugby is a fast-paced, creative game in which players attempt to score "tries" by touching down the ball in the end zone, much like a touchdown in football. Players may move the ball by carrying it, kicking it, or passing it laterally or backward to teammates. The action is constant, and players must play both offensively and defensively (as in basketball or soccer) because possession of the ball can change hands at any time. All players get a chance to run with the ball if they can keep up with the play.

Tag Rugby differs from the tackle code only in that two-hand Tag replaces the tackle. Nearly all other elements of rugby—including scrums, rucks, mauls, and lineouts—are allowed.

7s and 15s Tackle Rugby is played under U19 rugby laws modified to emphasize safety.

Players and parents should be aware that rugby requires a lot of running, and even in the Tag code involves some incidental contact. The tackle code is a full contact sport. The equipment required for both codes is a mouth guard.

TAG RUGBY PROGRAM

West End/SYC Rugby offers co-ed Tag rugby for Pre-K/K, 1st/2nd, & 3rd/4th graders. Proof of grade is required as part of the registration process.

Note that players may generally play “up” one grade group—that is, play with older kids—with parental permission. Parents should notify the Rugby Commissioner directly in writing. Only in exceptional circumstances may players play “down”.

The Tag program plays a Spring season governed by Rugby Virginia. The season runs from March through early May, culminating with a state tournament.

Tag rugby teams consist of 10-15 players per team. All players on a team will play approximately half of the match, as long as they attend practices and matches on a reasonably regular basis. “Same team” requests for friends, siblings, cousins, neighbors are usually honored.

TACKLE RUGBY PROGRAM

West End/SYC Rugby offers a tackle rugby for 3rd/4th, 5/6th, 7/8th, 9/10th, and 11/12th graders. 3rd/4th grade is co-ed by rule; 5/6th grade is co-ed by exception. All others grade groups are single sex.

3rd/4th and 5/6th players may generally play “up” one grade group—that is, play with older kids—with parental permission. Experienced high school players are allowed to play “up”; high school players new to rugby are generally allowed to play “down” within high school, i.e., a new 11th grader can play with 9/10th graders. High school players may not play “down” to 7/8th grade.

15s Tackle Rugby plays a Spring season governed by Rugby Virginia. The season runs from February through early May, culminating with a state tournament.

7s Tackle Rugby plays a Summer season governed by Rugby Virginia in June and July.

Tackle teams in these grade groups consist of 20-30 players per team, depending on overall registration numbers. All players who attend practices and matches on a reasonably regular basis and demonstrate the rugby mindset (listen, support, compete, respect) may expect to play at least half of a given match.

PRACTICES AND MATCHES

Practices: Teams practice 2 or 3 times per week in the late afternoon/early evening.

Matches: Home match locations are hosted at a FCPA park in the Springfield area; away matches take place anywhere in Virginia and occasionally in Maryland, DC, PA, or NC,

wherever we can find the best competition. Tag Rugby matches are 20 minutes; 7s Rugby matches are 14 minutes; 15s matches are 50 minutes (3rd/4th, 5/6th grade) 60 minutes (7/8th grade) and 70 minutes (high school).

PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Rugby Virginia Performance Program organizes practices and scrimmages in June to provide the opportunity for girls and boys -- 3rd- 12th grade with tackle experience -- to improve skills, fitness, and rugby IQ. To conclude the program, RV selects all-star teams for HSG, 11/12th HSB, 9/10th HSB, 78B (2 teams) to compete against other states in regional or national tournaments.

Secondary benefits: being selected to an all-star team provides exposure to college coaches as well as coaches that select players for the U20, U18, U17, U16, U15 & U14 national teams. 2 RV Performance Program coaches help select players for the national teams.

EQUIPMENT NEEDS

West End/SYC Rugby players must provide their own mouth guards, and cleats (“boots”) suitable for athletic activity. Rugby and soccer boots (molded or screw-in) work best; all boots and studs must conform to World Rugby laws (e.g., no toe cleat).

Mouth guards are *required* for all players.

Practice jerseys, match jerseys, rugby shorts, and matching socks are provided to all registered players; a rugby ball is provided to all new players.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

West End/SYC Rugby practices and plays in the rain (but not thunderstorms) unless the fields have been closed due to inclement weather. When in doubt, check the SYC Rugby web page or call the Fairfax County Parks Authority field closure hotline at 703-324-5264.

If the fields are open, assume that the practice or match happens. Any further decision about cancellation will be made **at the field** by the Rugby Commissioner based on current field conditions.

SAFETY, INSURANCE, AND INJURIES

West End/SYC Rugby and Rugby Virginia emphasize safety at all times. Rugby allows a

broad range to play together: it takes all sizes and abilities to make a competitive rugby team. However, injuries can and do occasionally occur.

West End/ SYC Rugby carries general liability insurance coverage and additional coverage through USA Rugby. Additionally, all players and coaches must have adequate medical insurance and will be required to sign a waiver accepting the inherent risks of participation in tag or tackle rugby.

When injuries occur, the steps taken immediately afterward can minimize their impact.

The head coach is responsible for ensuring that, if necessary, an injured player receives immediate medical attention. The head coach must also report all injuries to the Rugby Commissioner within 24 hours of occurrence.

The player's parents should be notified immediately. However, immediate medical attention for the injured player takes priority. When any doubt exists relative to the nature or extent of the injury, immediate medical assistance shall be obtained. Safety of the players takes precedence over all other situations, including continuation of a scheduled match.

LAWS AND REFEREES

Tag Rugby follows the Rugby Virginia non-contact variations to the World Rugby laws. Tackle Rugby follows U19 modifications or 7s modification of World Rugby laws.

West End/SYC pays qualified referees, but the lack of candidates also requires the program to follow rugby's "club referee" tradition in which the clubs participating in the match provide the referee. Hence, both teams' coaches or qualified parents may alternate refereeing duties during the match, changing off each quarter or half. Training is available each season to those interested in learning how to referee a rugby match, whether tag or tackle. The emphasis, as always, is on player safety and fun.

The Potomac Society of Rugby Football Referees may also provide referees when available.

COACHES

West End/SYC Rugby actively welcomes volunteers who wish to act as head or assistant coaches. Coaches must first submit an online coach's application, which is used to conduct a background check. Final approval and placement of coaches falls to the Rugby Committee.

Head coaches should ideally have previous rugby experience; this is not necessary for assistant coaches. Head coaches of tackle teams should have a minimum of Level 200 USA

Rugby coaching certification (or plan to seek it within the following year—SYC Rugby offers a small subsidy for this). Informal training clinics in the tag/non-contact laws for coaches, referees, and players may be offered if there is sufficient interest. Contact the West End/SYC Rugby Commissioner for more information about this or any training opportunities offered by USA Rugby.

Coaches will be reviewed annually by the Rugby Committee, and continued suitability will be determined based on attitude, ability to provide the necessary leadership and role modeling, and how well the coach supports the objectives of the Rugby program. By majority vote of the Rugby Committee, a coach may be removed for cause. Cause for removal of a coach may include a demonstrated inability to carry out the responsibilities of the position effectively, misconduct, or any other reason deemed just by a majority of the Rugby Committee.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer efforts are the lifeblood of the West End/SYC Rugby program and help ensure its success. Per SYC policy, West End/SYC Rugby requires a minimum of eight (8) hours of volunteer activity to fulfill the volunteer participation requirement. Many volunteers provide more, but all should strive to meet the minimum.

- Rugby volunteer activities include (but are not limited to):
- Coach and referee positions
- Team parents
- Field maintenance and preparation merchandise sales (t-shirts, magnets, etc.)
- Tournament help (e.g., tournament staff, concession stand)

Contact the Rugby Commissioner for more information about these and other volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers may also fulfill their hours by working for SYC in general. Contact the SYC office for details.

REGISTRATION AND PAPERWORK

Online and walk-in registration is available each season, usually a month or two before the season begins. For the Spring season, registration is open late December through March; for the Summer season, registration is open April through late May. For online registration, visit the SYC web site at www.sycva.com. For walk-in registration, visit the SYC office during business hours.

Current registration fees will be posted on the SYC Rugby web page at

www.sycva.com/rugby.

Note that the posted West End/SYC Rugby registration fees do not include any SYC club initiation fees, SYC volunteer fees, or Fairfax County fees. Contact the SYC office for details about fees.

Also note that registration is not complete until the player additional paperwork as follows:

Player information form (includes emergency/medical info)

- USA Rugby waiver form
- Codes of conduct
- Photocopy of ID with proof of grade

Blank forms are available on the SYC Rugby web site. This paperwork should be completed and submitted to the SYC Rugby Commissioner, in person or in care of SYC, 7075 Newington Road, Unit G, Lorton, VA 22079.

REFUNDS

West End/SYC Rugby follows the official refund policy of the Springfield/South County Youth Club:

Participants who submit the [Refund Request Form](#) prior to the close of on-time registration will receive a full refund of the registration fee minus a \$15.00 administrative fee.

Participants who submit the [Refund Request Form](#) during the late registration period and prior to the date of the first scheduled match will receive a 50% refund of the registration fee.

NO REFUNDS will be issued to participants who submit the [Refund Request Form](#) after the date of the first scheduled match.

Separate uniform refunds do not apply to this sport.

Refund Requests are submitted electronically via the [SYC website](#).

Note: Under extenuating circumstances, the individual sport commissioners and/or members of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors may approve deviations to the official SYC refund policy.

WEST END FOR LIFE/DAVE BAILEY MEMORIAL

SCHOLARSHIP

The Dave Bailey Memorial Scholarship is an annual scholarship (\$300-\$500) awarded to a deserving high school senior. Candidates must complete an application, and criteria for the award include active and regular participation with West End/SYC Rugby, demonstration of the rugby mindset, rugby ability, and intention to play rugby in college. The winner is chosen by consensus of SYC West End's coaches. The scholarship is a one-time award, presented at the team's post-season banquet.

The scholarship honors Dave Bailey, who played high school rugby for West End in the 1990s and coached a SYC Rugby U-11 team in the early 2000s. Dave died in March 2006 at the age of 29 from an allergic reaction to medicine.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Concerns, questions, and complaints about the Rugby program should be directed to program leaders in accordance with SYC's Complaint Procedures, which are available on the SYC Web site at www.sycva.com. In sum, these procedures call for addressing the complaint at the lowest level possible.

Problems should first be brought up with your child's coach. If not resolved, the complaint may then be directed to the Rugby Commissioner and Rugby Committee. Further escalation may be brought to the SYC Board of Directors.

Note: These complaint procedures do not apply to issues related to the SYC Refund Policy or the SYC Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Players, and Spectators.

WEST END/SYC CODE OF CONDUCT

SYC Rugby endorses and abides by the Springfield/South County Youth Club's Codes of Conduct for players, coaches, and parents/spectators. These codes of conduct help to ensure that the principles of sportsmanship, fair play, skill development, and mutual respect among players, coaches, officials, and parents/spectators are the primary considerations governing competition in Springfield/South County Youth Club sports activities.

WEST END/SYC PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Each player will ensure that his/her conduct demonstrates the highest level of sportsmanship and fair play consistent with the rugby mindset: listen, support, compete, respect. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the player is expected to:

1. Know the laws and abide by them.
2. Respect the match officials and refrain from addressing them or commenting on

their decisions during the play of the match. The team captain may address the officials during the match but only within the provisions of the laws, and in a courteous, respectful manner.

3. Maintain control of his/her emotions, avoiding the use of abusive language or profanity, humiliating remarks, and/or gestures of ill temper, and physical assault upon another player at any time.
4. Respect the coaches and players of the opposing team. Demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship during and at the conclusion of the match, being humble and generous in victory, proud, and courteous in defeat.
5. Follow all building and facility rules and regulations, respecting the property of others.
6. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on sportsmanship, courtesy, and manners of each individual player.

Players are to abide by the Springfield/South County Youth Club Code of Conduct whenever participating in an SYC sponsored activity. Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or banishment from SYC activities.

WEST END/SYC COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

Each coach will ensure that his/her conduct demonstrates the highest level of sportsmanship and fair play consistent with the rugby mindset: listen, support, compete, respect. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the coach is expected to:

1. Know the laws and abide by them.
2. Instruct team members in the laws of the match and motivate each player to compete according to the laws.
3. Respect the match officials and refrain from questioning their decisions or from addressing them in a loud, disrespectful, or abusive manner.
4. Ensure that the players and spectators follow all building and facility rules and regulations.
5. Ensure that the fans of his/her team conduct themselves with sportsmanship and maturity while in attendance at match sites. Assist match officials in maintaining control of spectators and players during the matches.
6. Respect the coaches and players of the opposing team both during the play of the match and at its conclusion, win and lose.
7. Teach each player, especially through personal example, to be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.

8. Maintain control of his/her emotions and avoid actions, language and/or gestures that may be interpreted as hostile or humiliating.
9. Instruct team support personnel (i.e. assistant coaches, line persons, scorekeepers, and timekeepers) in their responsibilities in accordance with established rules and procedures.
10. Not consume or allow being consumed alcohol at SYC activities or being in an inebriated state during practices, matches or in the presence of my players.
11. Never encourage, tolerate, or indulge in substance abuse.
12. Never smoke or use tobacco products in front of players during practices or matches.
13. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy, and manner.

Coaches are to abide by the Springfield/South County Youth Club Code of Conduct whenever participating in an SYC sponsored activity. Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or banishment from SYC activities.

WEST END/SYC PARENT/SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Each coach will ensure that his/her conduct demonstrates the highest level of sportsmanship and fair play consistent with the rugby mindset: listen, support, compete, respect. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the spectator is expected to:

1. Respect the laws of the match.
2. Respect the match officials and refrain from questioning their decisions or from addressing them in a loud, disrespectful, or abusive manner.
3. Cheer for their team in a positive, supportive manner, refraining from making hostile, negative, or abusive remarks about the opposing team.
4. Refrain from coming onto the playing surfaces or from throwing objects or other foreign materials onto the playing surfaces. Exit in an orderly manner at the conclusion of the activity. Enter indoor facilities quietly and remain seated during the conduct of the activity.
5. Follow all building and facility rules and regulations, respecting the property of others.
6. Demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of the match, win or lose.
7. Realize, accept, and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on sportsmanship, courtesy, and citizenship of its fans.

Parents/Spectators are to abide by the Springfield/South County Youth Club Code of Conduct whenever participating in an SYC sponsored activity. Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or banishment from SYC activities.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

West End/SYC Rugby expects the highest order of sportsmanship in all rugby practices, matches, and related activities. In addition to the guidelines outlined in the Codes of Conduct for players, coaches, and spectators, all persons associated with SYC Rugby should abide by the following disciplinary procedures:

1. Misconduct and/or abuse (physical or verbal) by coaches, players, officials, and spectators will not be tolerated. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their teams' sidelines, and responsible for the behavior of their teams' parents during the match.
2. Misconduct by a player, coach or spectator will be referred to the Rugby Committee for resolution.
3. Any club member may file a grievance provided it is in writing (e-mail is appropriate). Once receiving the official grievance, the Rugby Committee will schedule a hearing within 7 days to seek appropriate disciplinary action. A panel of at least 3 members of the Rugby Committee will conduct the hearing. The Rugby Committee shall provide the individual with written notification of its action.
4. The Rugby Committee has the authority to bar any or all members of a family from participating in SYC Rugby. Any person or family banned from participating in SYC Rugby may file a written request for review by the SYC Board of Directors.
5. Any person suspected of violating the disciplinary action levied by the Rugby Committee will be asked to appear before the Committee. Failure to appear at the date and time set by the Committee will be grounds for immediate removal of all members of the family from all SYC Rugby activities.

Head coaches may administer playing time restrictions to players for unexcused absences from practices or misconduct during practices or matches. In the House program, the Rugby Commissioner, prior to implementation, must approve such action. In the Travel program, the coach will notify the Rugby Commissioner and the player's parent.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROGRAM GUIDE

The Rugby Committee will review and re-submit the Rugby Program Guide for approval

by the SYC Board of Directors on an annual basis prior to each season.

The Rugby Committee always welcomes constructive, written comments about how to improve the SYC Rugby program and/or program guide. Please submit them to the Rugby Commissioner in care of SYC, 7075 Newington Road, Unit G, Lorton, VA 22079; or by email to rugby@sycva.com.