

# MIDWEST YOUTH RUGBY NEWSLETTER

[www.midwestyouthrugby.com](http://www.midwestyouthrugby.com)

March 2009

## Dates

Boys' Championship - May 2-3 in Elkhart, IN

Girls' Championship - May 2-3 in Carmel, IN

National Boys' and Girls' Championship -  
May 15,16,17 in Pittsburgh, PA.

Midwest High School All-Star Challenge –  
June 13 and 14 in Elkhart, IN

## Open Brackets

There is still room in the open bracket of the girls' championship to be held in Carmel, IN on the weekend of May 2-3. Contact Midwest Youth Rugby [bc@midwestyouthrugby.com](mailto:bc@midwestyouthrugby.com) if you want to enter a team.

## Tight Five Rugby

The official sponsor of the Midwest Youth Rugby Website is Tight 5 Rugby Supply visit them on the web at [www.tightfiverugby.com](http://www.tightfiverugby.com) for all your equipment needs.

## The Girls' All Star Tournament

The girls will have two brackets in the Midwest High School Challenge. We will have a U-19 bracket and a U-17 bracket. The U-19 bracket will be according to USA Rugby guidelines. Kurt Weaver will use this tournament in the Midwest U-19 Select Side selection process.

The girls all star coaches have also requested that we move the girls tournament to the following weekend of June 20-21. We will do this if we can find a suitable venue. Any update will be posted on the Midwest

Youth Rugby website as it develops. The boys tournament will still be limited to high school players.

## U-19 Club Division

USA Rugby has changed the eligibility requirements for the national tournament for the club division. Any player is eligible as long as he is under the age of 19 as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. This is regardless if the player is in high school or not.

All the SBROs in the Midwest have voted not to adopt this eligibility ruling. All high school rugby in the Midwest will be played by students enrolled in high school.

## Website

The Midwest Youth Rugby website has been reworked. While you won't notice any major changes, hopefully you will be able to see the site in other browsers than Internet Explorer.

## Commentary

We have been trying to define the cut-off age for youth rugby for quite some time now, and we will probably be trying to do this for years to come. The decision by USA Rugby to let college freshmen and sophomores play in the club bracket is not well thought out. It allows club sides to load up with collegiate players. Under the new ruling, colleges would be eligible to enter sides. Imagine what a collegiate side with a few U-19 international imports would do against a legitimate high school program.

Recently, the SBROs in the Midwest voted to have youth rugby end with high school, and I

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think that this is a good choice. It is a good choice because it fits with other high school programs. If we are to ever gain acceptance in the high schools, we need high school programs to play other high school programs. It is hard enough for me to explain to school officials that we will be playing community sides. Imagine the difficulty in explaining to school officials that we will be playing collegiate sides. There is also the issue of safety. There is no way a college freshman, or sophomore should be on the pitch playing against a 14 year old. Think of our liability.

There is one problem with our decision in the Midwest to have only high school students playing high school rugby. What do we do with the winner of the club bracket at the Midwest Championship? We will be sending high school athletes to the nationals to play against collegiate athletes. Do we warn them by saying "You know, when you get to the Nationals, you will be playing against colleges. Do so at your own risk." Or, do we just not let our community sides pass through to the Nationals? Or, do we put the problem in the lap of the Midwest Vice President of Collegiate and Youth since it is a collegiate championship anyway.

*The opinions expressed here are mine and mine alone - BC*