



USA Club Rugby: 'Match Played' & Weather Cancellation Policies

All senior club matches sanctioned by the USA Club Rugby Competitions Committee shall adhere to the following weather cancellation policy.

Match Played.

Matches must be played for at least 60 minutes to stand, and any match played for less than 80 minutes must be allowed by a League Commissioner or Match Commissioner per the 'Incomplete Matches' guidelines contained within this document.

Matches must contain at least 12 properly registered players on the field per team to constitute a match. In accordance with World Rugby Law 3, there must be 3 front-row eligible players at the start of the match required for contested scrums. If there are not 3 front-row eligible players, the match is considered a forfeit.

Rosters must be exchanged before kickoff. Rosters as of kickoff are locked. No non-rostered player may be added to the team roster after kickoff. Rostered players arriving after kick off may only enter the field with the permission of the match official. Players arriving after Kickoff must remain present after the match to allow the opposing team the opportunity to perform an ID check.

Incomplete Matches.

If a match cannot be completed due to severe weather, the following guidelines shall be adhered to:

1. Matches played for less than 40 minutes. If a match is not played for at least 40 minutes in a single day, the match result shall not stand and any/all future re-matches shall start from the first minute.

Example: A match with a score of 12-7 that is stopped in the 30th minute on a Saturday may not be resumed on Sunday. The match starts over on Sunday in the 1st minute with a score of 0-0.

2. Matches played for between 40 and 60 minutes. If a match is played for at least 40 minutes, but not played for at least 60 minutes, the match may be suspended and re-started at the time it was stopped at a future date.

Example: A match with a score of 17-12 that is stopped in the 48th minute on a Saturday may be resumed on Sunday in the 48th minute with a score of 17-12.

3. Matches played for between 60 and 80 minutes. If a match is played for at least 60 minutes and cannot be resumed the same day, the match result stands.

Example: A match with a score of 24-19 that is stopped in the 63rd minute on a Saturday stands as played and will not be resumed on Sunday.

Multi-Match Weekends.

In the event that multiple matches are scheduled in the same weekend and matches from the first day that determine the second day's schedule cannot be completed to at least 60 minutes on the first day, the first day matches shall be resumed or restarted on the second day. Matches scheduled for the second day may then either be played on the second day or made up on the next available weekend. It is heavily advised that teams not play two full matches on the same day.

If teams scheduled to face each other on the second day of a multi-match weekend end differently (example: one completed to 80 minutes; one stopped at 47 minutes), it is advised the first matches are completed and the scheduled second day matches be made up on the next available weekend. It is heavily advised teams not play second-day matches with different rest, and that playoff events endeavor to schedule teams that may face each other at the same kickoff time if severe weather is possible. It is also heavily advised that teams not play two full matches on the same day.

Role of the Match Commissioner / League Commissioner.

It is the Match Commissioner's role to determine if matches can be resumed under severe weather and/or how to manage the scheduling of second day matches in multi-match weekends.

If a Match Commissioner is not assigned to a match or event, the League Commissioner shall have the Match Commissioner's authority to make a determination. In the absence of a League Commissioner, an Approved Governing Body representative for the affected competition shall assume the role/authority of the League Commissioner. In the absence of an Approved Governing Body representative for the affected competition, the Senior Club Competitions Committee Chair shall assume the role/authority of the League Commissioner.

For local union playoff events, if a Match Commissioner is not assigned to a match or event, the Approved Governing Body Chair shall assume the role/authority of the Match Commissioner.

Severe Weather Policy.

For severe weather guidelines, see: **Severe Weather & Lightning Policy**



USA Rugby Policy - Severe Weather & Lightning

In the United States, there are an estimated 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes each year (Orville and Huffines, 2001). Lightning has been the second greatest cause of storm-related deaths (after floods) in the United States during the past 40 years. This is a serious issue with severe consequences given the correct precautions are not taken.

The National Weather Service has established a multi-level awareness plan:

Level 1 – If planning outdoors activities, obtain the weather forecast beforehand. Know your local weather patterns.

Level 2 – If you are planning to be outdoors, identify and say within traveling range of a proper shelter. Employ the “30-30 Rule” to know when to seek a safer location. The “30-30 Rule” states that when you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less go immediately to a safer place. If you can’t see the lightning, just hearing the thunder means lightning is likely within striking range. After the storm has apparently dissipated or moved on, wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving the safer location

Level 3 – When lightning strikes, go to a safer location. Do not hesitate. What is a safer location? The safest place commonly available during a lightning storm is a large, fully enclosed substantially constructed building. Substantial construction also implies the building has wiring and plumbing, which can conduct lightning current safely to ground. Once inside, stay away from corded telephones, electrical appliances, lighting fixture, microphones, electric sockets and plumbing. Inner rooms are generally preferable from a safety viewpoint.

If you can’t reach a substantial building, an enclosed vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable second choice. Close the windows, lean away from the door, put your hands in your lap and don’t touch the steering wheel, ignition, gear shifter or radio. Convertibles, cars with fiberglass or plastic shells, and open framed vehicles are not suitable lightning shelters.

Level 4 – If you cannot flee to a safer location, take action to minimize the threat of being stuck. Proceed from higher to lower elevations. Avoid wide-open areas, including sports fields. Avoid tall, isolated objects like trees, poles, and light posts. Do not consider unprotected open structures such as picnic pavilions, rain shelters and bus stops. Avoid contact with metal fences, metal bleachers, or other metal structures.

Level 5 – If circumstances or a series of bad decisions have found you outside of a shelter, far removed from a safer place when lightning is occurring, there are still measures to be taken. Put your feet together, squat down, tuck your head, and cover your ears. When the immediate threat of lightning has passed, continue heading to the safest place possible.

Level 6 – If the worst happens, there are key Lightning First Aid guidelines. First, if at all possible, call “9-1-1” immediately. Since all deaths from lightning strikes result from cardiac arrest and/or stopped breathing, begin treatment as soon as possible. CPR or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is the recommended first aid, respectively.

We cannot control the weather, however we can decrease the possibility of injury through education and proper precautions.

Please note at USA Rugby National Championships an air horn will sound three times after which all matches must stop immediately and the advice outlined above should be observed.

Appendix A. Lightning Safety Education Resources

National Weather Service:	www.LightningSafety.noaa.gov
National Severe Storms Laboratory	www.nssl.noaa.gov/researchitems/lightning.html
National Lightning Safety Institute	www.LightningSafety.com/index.html
National Collegiate Athletic Association	http://www.ncaa.org/sports_sciences/sports_med_handbook/1d.pdf
National Athletic Trainer’s Association	http://www.nata.org/publications/orhterpub/lightning.pdf