

Dear Parents,

So, your child wants to play High School Rugby. I bet you are asking yourself more than a few questions about the sport, and that your anxiety level has shot through the roof. Well, before mothers break down in tears and fathers decide to start issuing ultimatums, let us give you some information about the sport.

If you have ever seen or heard anything about rugby it was probably in college. The game was played hard and the partying afterwards was notorious. As an uninformed spectator, the game probably looked like pure mayhem. A pack of sweating, grunting bodies running wildly up and down a field with an abnormally plump football.

High School Rugby is still a pack of sweating, grunting bodies running up and down a field with an abnormally plump football, but there is a well-orchestrated method to the madness. As for the rowdy partying, it is a relic of the past even for the College teams. To paraphrase the MTSU coaches “we outlawed drinking at our events, you can’t rise to the next level in that atmosphere”.

Our league has very strict rules governing conduct and illegal substances. Our coaches are very diligent in this regard; we want an environment suitable for your son, and ours!

Even though the game looks rough, there are fewer injuries than in other contact sports. The reason for the reduced number of injuries is two fold. First, you can’t block for the ball carrier or in any way make a play on a man not carrying the ball. Second, the only man who can be tackled is the ball carrier and high tackling or lifting the man off the ground is not permitted. Most injuries in American Football occur away from the ball, but in rugby this has been greatly reduced. You may also be concerned about the lack of pads. Just remember that none of the players wear pads. This changes the way that tackles are made. Players are not emboldened by the perception that pads will protect them as they make a tackle. Further, the object is to get the ball, not just tackle the player.

We typically host a small get together at the field after each game. This allows the players of both teams to talk and socialize over hot dogs and soft drinks. The goal is to promote good will between players of opposing teams. All rivalries are left on the field after the whistle blows. We want your sons to feel a part of something larger than just his team.

Sincerely,

The Middle Tennessee Rugby Conference