

Rhode Island Women's Soccer League By-Laws

1. Order of Business

The order of business at all regular Board meetings shall be as follows:

- Call to order
- Leading items
 - Motion to suspend Robert's Rules of Order
 - Recognition of Team Representatives
- Minutes of previous meeting
- President's, Vice President's and Treasurer's report
- Communications
- Old business/New Business
- Good and Welfare
- Adjournment

2. Meetings

- a. All teams must send a representative for their team to each quarterly league meeting. Any team/representative that misses 2 or more league meetings within a fiscal year will be disqualified from Championships.
- b. Annual General Meeting. The AGM of RIWSL shall be held in the month of November (following playoffs). Quarterly meetings of the BOD will be held at a place and time to be determined by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet quarterly or as needed at a location to be determined by the Executive Committee. Locations and times of meeting will be set periodically by the Executive Committee.
 - i. Purpose of AGM. The purpose of the AGM shall be as follows:
 - Election of officers of RIWSL
 - Normal agenda items

3. Quorum

A quorum is present if two-thirds of the members of the League Board are in attendance at a meeting. If a quorum is not present, the Board may not amend the By-laws. All such motions are tabled for one month and must appear in the agenda and meeting announcement.

4. Registration of Players

- a. All players will be registered with the Registrar in a manner to be determined by the League. Each registered player will be issued player credentials by the Registrar. All player registrations expire on December 31 and must be renewed for the next fiscal year.
 - i. All new players (or players requesting new photos on their player ID) MUST email the registrar (registrar@riwsl.org) a photo for their ID within 48 hours of

registering on TeamSnap. (Note: Included in the email with the photo should be the player's first and last name exactly as was registered on TeamSnap.)

- b. All registration materials must be at the Registrar's by 5:00 pm on Tuesday for a player to be registered for the next Sunday's game.
- c. All registered players will sign a release form absolving the League of responsibility in the event of accidents or injuries.
- d. Each team roster may contain a maximum of twenty-four (24) players at any time. Once the roster is full, players must be released before any new players may be registered.
- e. No new registrations will be permitted after one half of the regularly scheduled games for the fall or spring session have been played.
- f. Any team with non-registered persons competing on the field during a match will receive an automatic forfeit; if the incident was unintentional, only that game will be forfeited; if the incident was intentional (e.g. team was aware player was unregistered and still allowed to play), entire team will be banned from Championships.
- g. New teams may only be admitted to play prior to the approval of the final schedule for the regular session, either spring or fall. New teams may play exhibition games with League teams on open dates during the regular session.
- h. In the interest of developing women's soccer in Rhode Island, it is the intention of this Association to provide an opportunity for women over 18 years of age to play organized soccer. In special circumstances, females between the ages of 16 and 18 may submit an application to register prior to their 18th birthday. In these cases, the Procedures for Application of a Minor will apply.
- i. Procedures for Application of a Minor to register-females ages 16-18 are invited to submit an application to register under the following circumstances:
 - There is no high school, recreational, or competitive youth league available for that player to participate in.
 - The player registers as a youth player with a SRI team.
 - The SRI team provides in writing permission for the player to register in an adult league.
 - The player's parent or guardian signs all league and RISA registration paperwork and liability waivers.
 - The player's parent provides proof of paternity/maternity or guardianship.
 - The player and the guardian submit photo identification.
 - The player follows all other registration procedures as outlined by the league registrar.

5. General Rules

a. Rules for Games

The current FIFA Laws of the Game and Universal Guide for Referees shall serve as the official game rules for the League, with the following exceptions:

- i. Players may be re-substituted freely up to 24 players in any game. Only 24 players may be listed on any game roster.
- ii. Unlimited substitutions may be made, either on a throw-in when the substituting team has possession or on any goal kick.
- iii. Unlimited substitutions may be made on the opposing team's throw in if they are also substituting.

b. Rules for Season Play

- i. The home team is responsible for all field fees. Each team shall pay half of the referee fees.
- ii. The home team is to provide a game ball.
- iii. The home team is responsible for having the field properly marked and equipped with nets and corner markers. If the field is not properly prepared, the home team is assessed the League poor field fine, and the game is played. If the field is considered not fit for play (i.e. no goals, no lines) the visiting team wins the game by forfeit. It is the referee's decision which level of penalty is assessed.
- iv. Each team shall wear uniforms of different major colors, goalkeepers shall wear uniforms that distinguish them from all field players. In the event of similar uniforms, the home team shall be required to change color through the use of pinafores or alternate uniforms.
- v. Each player on a team, with the exception of the goalkeeper, shall wear a visible, legible, and unique number on the jersey. Each player shall wear the same number throughout the game.
- vi. No player shall play with jewelry, metal cleats, or cleats with metal showing. Glasses must have plastic frames and safety bands. It is the sole discretion of the referees to determine if any jewelry is acceptable for play. The player is required to comply with the referee's request to remove jewelry. Taping over jewelry is not considered removal. In almost all cases, wedding bands are permitted.
- vii. Each team must fill out two line-up cards. One card goes to the referee, the other to the coach of the opposing team. Line-ups must be legible.
- viii. Regulation game time consists of two forty-five (45) minute halves separated by a ten-minute rest period. A game must be played for at least sixty minutes to count in the season standings.

- A team can request to the opposing team to shorten the match; however, the opposition does not have an obligation to agree. No other authority (i.e. Referees or Executive Board) can make this decision.
- ix. Each team is expected to field 11 players per match; however, the minimum is seven. A team playing down players may request the opposing team to match numbers. The opposition does not have an obligation to agree.
 - x. Individual games may be canceled, postponed or rescheduled.
 - If a team cancels for any other reasons aside from weather, the opposing team can decide to take a win for a forfeit or may choose to reschedule with the team canceling.
 - In the event of inclement weather, only the home team can cancel a game based on direction of field authorities and/or if the referee deemed the field unplayable based on weather conditions upon their inspection of the field.
 - xi. If a game is canceled or postponed, a make-up game must be scheduled with the League President or Vice President within three weeks. If a single game is canceled, the game must be made up before the end of the season. If all League games are canceled in a particular weekend, those make-up games will be scheduled for a previously established make-up date, at the end of the session.
 - xii. Each team is responsible for the good conduct of its own fans and supporters. Poor conduct of fans or supporters will be referred to the League Board for action.
 - xiii. Each player will present her player pass to the referee personally as she enters the game. A player may present their player pass either electronically or hardcopy.
 - xiv. Players without player passes will not be allowed to play.
 - In rare circumstances and only with the approval of the league President, or Vice President under the advisement of the league Registrar and in accordance with RISA polices, By-law may be altered in the following manner so that a player may play without a player pass.
 - Any player playing without a player pass must be registered with the League.
 - The opposing coach may protest. If the player is not registered, the protest is upheld.
 - xv. A player or coach cautioned (awarded a yellow card) in two games in either the spring or fall sessions is suspended for the next game. Yellow cards awarded are not carried over from one session (spring or fall) to the next session.
 - xvi. A player or coach ejected from a game (awarded a red card) is suspended for at least the next game, depending upon the severity of the offense. A red card

suspension will carryover from one session to the next.

- xvii. It is the responsibility of each team to email the results of each match to scores@riwsl.org.

6. Protests

- a. A protest must be sent, via, to the Vice-President at vicepresident@riwsl.org within 72 hours of game time.
- b. If grounds for protest exist before the game begins, such as field conditions, nets, and player registrations, then the protest must be registered with the referee, in writing, before the game begins. If a reason for a protest should arise during the game, the referees must be notified before the end of the game and confirmed in writing at the end of the game.
- c. The Vice-President will obtain written statements from both coaches and all referees and determine the outcome of the protest, unless involved in the protest. If the Vice-President is involved, the President shall appoint an unbiased committee to decide the protest.
- d. The Vice-President, or Protest Committee, will present the protest and decision at the next League meeting. The decision may be appealed to the League Board, which requires the presence of a quorum in order to vote.

7. Forfeits

A team which cannot have seven players on the field within fifteen minutes after the scheduled game time and field at least seven players throughout the entirety of the match, forfeits the game. If a team notifies the opposing team and the President/Vice President within 72 hours prior to the scheduled game that they will be forfeiting, then no fees will be assessed. However, if the forfeiting team does not provide 72 hour notice then they are responsible for paying 100% of the referee, field fees, and any other fees that may be imposed by RISA.

The score of a forfeited game is 3-0.

Teams with 3 or more forfeits within 1 annual season will be disqualified from Playoffs/Championships.

8. Tie Games

If a regular season game ends in a tie score, the tie stands. In playoff games, a tie-breaker shall be used as follows: at the end of regulation game time, after a five-minute break, two ten-minute overtimes will be played with no break between. Teams will change ends of the field between overtimes. Both overtimes are always played. If the score remains tied at the end of both overtimes, a shoot-out is played. Each team takes five penalty shots, alternating teams, with the team scoring the most goals winning the shoot-out. Once kicked, the ball is dead to

further play by the kicking team. If the score remains tied at the end of a shoot-out, another shoot-out is played until the tie is broken.

9. Mercy Rule

If a team exceeds a 4-goal differential (i.e. 4-0, 5-1, etc.), the leading team must remove (only) one player from the field throughout the remainder of the match or until the score no longer becomes a 4-goal differential. However, if the leading team scores an additional 3 goals (i.e. 7-0, 8-1, etc.), the leading team must remove another player from the field (resulting in the leading team playing 2 players down) throughout the remainder of the match or until the opposing team scores a goal. This point will continue for every additional 3 goals. Note that the leading team can not drop below 7 players on the field.

10. Season Schedules

During regular season play, each team will play every other team in its division at least once in each session. Every attempt will be made to provide each team with a similar home-away schedule, more than two away games in a row are to be avoided in the regular season, if possible. No games shall be scheduled on holidays unless the league determines that need to meet the schedule.

If a team drops out of either session after the final schedule has been approved, a fine will be imposed.

11. Season Standings-During Season

League standings are established by awarding three game points for each win, one point for each tie, and no points for each loss. If two teams are tied in game points, the team with more total wins leads. If both teams have the same number of wins, the team with the most goals scored leads. A maximum differential of three goals per game will be considered when computing standings. If the teams have the same number of goals scored, the team with the least number of goals scored against them leads. If both teams remain equal after goals against, they share the highest standing available, with the next team in its normal ranking.

12. Season Standings -Final

At the end of the fall and spring sessions, playoffs in each division will be played to determine the league champions of each division. The format of playoffs will be determined by the league board. To determine playoff spots, ties will be broken in the same manner as regular season games. In the event that a tie to determine playoff spots is unbreakable, the board will appoint a committee of impartial members to determine a process to break that tie.

13. Regular Season Rules

- a. The regular season will be comprised of games played during the fiscal year, beginning in the spring and concluding in the fall.
- b. The spring session will begin, at the board's discretion, typically the first Sunday in April.

- c. The fall session will begin, at the board's discretion, typically the first Sunday after Labor Day.
- d. During both session's, League teams will be competing for their ranking in standings to determine their playoff eligibility. Teams that join the League after the spring session will be disqualified from playoffs.

14. Playoffs/Championships

Playoff/championship structure, game lengths, qualifications, and prizes will be determined on an annual basis at the League meeting by the Board.

15. State Select Team

- a. The League Board selects the State Select team Coach at the annual meeting for any year where there will be a State Select Team. The selection of the State Select Team Coach shall be based on names submitted by League teams and coaches.
- b. The State Coach selects the team, with guidance from the League Board. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the State Select Team shall be selected with a concern for representation from all League teams and the best interests of promoting women's soccer.
- c. The State Select Team shall be selected each year that the League Board determines it will be feasible to fund the team and provide for opportunities to play.
- d. The League will work to provide a sponsor to support the state team during the years in which a team is assembled.

16. League Fees

- a. All fees are paid to the League.
- b. Annual team dues shall be set at the annual meeting of the Association and shall include any team fees charged by RISA and/or USASA. Team dues are valid from January 1 to December 31. Liability insurance coverage through USASA, or a similar plan, must be included.
- c. The registration fee per player shall be the sum of the player fees charged by RISA and/or USASA and may include a league administration fee in the amount to be determined by the board. The league administration fee can be waived at the discretion of the league board. Player registrations are valid from January 1 to December 31. Player fees may include a health insurance coverage premium if mandated by RISA or USASA.
- d. Teams are responsible for any fees imposed on them, or their players, by RISA and/or USASA in addition to those listed above. These fees may include, but are not limited to,

a player release fee.

17. Referee's Fees

Referee's fees are paid to the referees, half by each team, as established by the Referee's Association in conjunction with this Association.

All referees must be licensed in Rhode Island per instruction from RISA. Any Massachusetts based teams must have RI licensed referee for their home games.

One center referee is the standard for all regular season games. If a team would like additionally referees, the League President must be contacted in advance to arrange that. Any team requesting additional referees is responsible for 100% of the additional referees' fees, unless agreed upon by both teams to split the cost.

18. Board of Directors

The authority of RIWSL, shall be vested in the Board of Directors, consisting of the duly elected offices of RISA and a representation from each team.

- a. Right to Vote. In all matters which are properly presented to RIWSL, each elected Officer and each team representation, shall have the right to vote. In the absences of any representation, this right shall be vested in a properly appointed alternate whose appointment shall have been made in writing to the Secretary. No person shall have more than one vote on any matter.
- b. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of RIWSL, the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and New Player Advocate. The Registrar shall serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee, unless she should be an elected officer of RIWSL. The Executive Committee, except in matters herein otherwise delegated, shall transact all business of RIWSL directly or by delegation of its authority to such person or persons whom it may from time to time designate. The Committee shall enforce the rules of RISA and RIWSL and shall fill any vacancy amongst the officers which may occur during any current term in the manner herein after provided.

19. Officers

The officers of RIWSL shall be the following: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and New Player Advocate.

- a. Terms. The Officers of RIWSL shall be elected at the AGM (the last meeting of the fiscal year, end of fall season) for a one-year period.
- b. Votes Required. In order to be elected, an individual shall receive a majority of all votes cast. Any person nominated for an election as an officer, may request the election ballot be conducted in secret.

- c. Casting of Votes. Each RIWSL Officer and team representatives shall be permitted to vote for each officer. Each RIWSL Officer and team representatives may only vote one time.
- d. Voting Strength. Each RIWSL Officer shall be entitled to one vote. Each team registered in the league shall be entitled to one vote. (Note: If a team has 3 team representatives, they still only receive 1 vote. 1 vote per team not per representative).
- e. Duties of the Officers. Refer to the “Board Officers Responsibilities” document.
- f. Absences. Any officer absent from half of the scheduled league/executive meetings (without a valid excuse) shall there by forfeit without additional formality their right to hold their respective office for the unexpired term.
- g. Vacancy. In the event a vacancy occurs in any office other than President, the President may appoint a temporary successor until the next AGM. In the event the office of President becomes vacant, the Vice President shall assume the office of President, who shall serve until the next AGM.
- h. Resignation. Any office wishing to resin must present a letter (or email) of resignation to the President of RIWSL. Upon notification and acceptance of the BOD such office shall be declared vacant.
- i. Removal of Officers for Cause. Any office may be subject to removal from office upon a unanimous vote of the executive committee and ratification by the BOD. Any officer subject to this section shall be barred from voting upon their removal from office.

-----End of By-Laws-----

These By-laws were approved by unanimous vote of the League Board on July 10, 1984.

These By-laws were modified and approved by unanimous vote of the League Board on August 3, 2020.