



RULES OF THE TOURNAMENT

MERCANTILE RUGBY SEVENS - 2026



The above-mentioned tournament will take place on **13th 14th & 15th November 2026**.

All matches will be played under the laws of the Game of Rugby with Sevens variations as framed by World Rugby and as adapted hereunder.

ELIGIBILITY

01. All member firms of the mercantile sector are eligible to participate, provided they are registered with the MRFA at least two months prior to the tournament.
02. The membership application form duly completed should be submitted along with a copy of the business registration and a fee of Rs. 30,000/- for registration purposes on or before 01st September 2026. Any team already registered and not taken part in Mercantile Sevens for three (03) consecutive years, will have to pay the registration fee applicable during that particular year if they are to re-enter a team in the 4th year.
03. Fees applicable for the tournament are as follows.

Membership registration fee - Rs. 30,000/- (Pls. refer above clause No 2)

Entry Fee - Rs. 50,000/- per Team

Annual Subscription - Rs. 50,000/- per Institution

04. **Entries will close on 30th October 2026.** The Entry fee and the annual subscription should be paid at the time of submitting the entry form. Please note that entry forms submitted without these payments will not be accepted.

All entry forms duly completed should be forwarded prior to the closing date along with the photocopies of NIC / Company identity cards of all players to either of the following.

Mahesh
Wijayanayake
Mobile: 0777 281071
HNB – City Office
Colombo 1

Dinushka Jayatissa
Mobile: 0773
858252
Hyde Park Corner
Colombo 2

Mindika Jayasinghe
Mobile: 0773 360031
Sampath Bank – Head
Office, Colombo 2

05. It is mandatory that the entry form should be certified by the Managing Director/Personnel Manager/ Head of HR with company seal.

Kindly note that all late and incomplete entries are liable to be rejected.

06. All players should have been employed on or before **1st of September 2026** to be eligible to be entered. If not, prior approval has to be obtained from the Mercantile Rugby Football Association, at least one week prior to the closing date of entries.
07. Non-Nationals will not be eligible to participate in the tournament unless they have completed a minimum of 3 years continuous residency in Sri Lanka immediately preceding the tournament.
08. Employees of the Sri Lanka Army, Navy, Air Force, and Sri Lanka Police are ineligible to participate in this tournament. However, players who represent Tri-Forces or Police teams and are not employed under the permanent or contract cadre may be permitted to represent their mercantile employers. Such participation is subject to the submission of an official letter, duly signed by the Director of Sports and the Head of Human Resources of the respective institution, together with the entry form.
The letter must confirm that the player is not a member of the permanent or contract cadre and is eligible to participate in the tournament on behalf of their mercantile employer as a bona fide employee.
09. Players failing to produce valid documents to prove their identity and proof of employment when called for will be liable to get the entire team suspended from the tournament.

ON FIELD PRESENTATION

01. It is mandatory that all teams carry an extra set of jerseys preferably in contrasting colors. In the event of a color clash of jersey / attire a toss of coin will decide which team should change the jerseys. No postponement of games will be allowed under any circumstances.
02. Numbers (1-15) will be assigned to the players and they should retain the same number for the entire duration of the tournament.

Numbers should be of sufficient size and clarity so as to be clearly identifiable from Commentary and match tracking positions in the stands.
03. It is mandatory for all teams to display the tournament logo and MRFA Logo on the playing Jersey as per the given guidelines by the MRFA.

DRAW

01. The organizing committee will be responsible for the draw and will decide on the format of the tournament & each team is required to send a representative to the tournament draw which will be held on **5th November 2026**.

02. The tournament will be conducted in the following segments.

CUP - There are no restrictions on the number of 'A' Division club players allowed.

BOWL -A maximum of four (04) 'A' Division club players may be included in the declared squad of 12 players. However, only three (03) club players are permitted on the field at any given time.

SHIELD - A maximum of two (02) 'A' Division club players may be included in the declared squad of 12 players. However, only one (01) club players are permitted on the field at any given time.

03. A Player who has been declared by any club in the 'A' Division 15 - A - Side league, knockout or Club sevens tournament after 01st October 2024 will be considered an 'A' Division Player.

04. Once the official draw is completed additions and deletions to the entry form will not be permitted except in the case of injury where the relevant player is unable to participate at the tournament. However, this will have to be conveyed to the MRFA in writing at least 2 days prior to the commencement of the tournament on a letterhead duly authorized by the Managing Director / Personnel Manager / Head of HR as per the entry form.

05. Firms fielding 2 or more teams will not be allowed to interchange players once the draw is finalized.

06. Other than in the Cup category, a firm cannot enter more than one team in each segment.

07. Any team that has won a championship in a specific category for two continuous years will be promoted to the next higher category and will not be eligible to compete in same category for the 3rd consecutive year.

SQUAD-REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION

Teams shall be required to register a squad of a maximum of 15 players, the details of which should be included as per the entry form.

The team manager / captain shall be required to declare a team of a maximum of 12 players from those already registered for the tournament, at least 20 minutes prior to each of their games. (A separate match declaration form has to be submitted for each game.)

DURATION OF A MATCH

All matches including the Cup final will be seven minutes each half plus lost time with 1-minute half time interval.

All matches will kick off at the time on the schedule or at the immediate completion of the previous match, whichever is later.

TOSS

The toss will take place at half time in the preceding match. All team Captains must come to the toss wearing the team jersey they will wear for the match.

If one or neither teams captain is in attendance, the referee will determine the outcome of the toss.

POINTS & RANKINGS - POOL COMPETITION

Points awarded	-	Win	03
	-	Draw	02
	-	Loss	01

01. No extra time will be played in group games. Any Matches un-played or in-completed due to adverse weather conditions in the league stage, will be treated as a draw and both teams will share 2 points each.
02. On completion of the group games the teams will be ranked in each group according to the following in order of sequence.
 - A. Best Record
 - B. Head to head competition (The winner of the match between the teams concerned.)
 - C. Best point differential. (difference between the number of points scored and the number conceded)
 - D. Most points scored.
 - E. Toss of a coin

03. A team conceding a walk over shall not take further part in the tournament. All match results against such team shall be deemed null & void and all points previously scored against them shall be deducted to determine the team positions in the respective group.
04. A team walking out of the field during the game before the final whistle is blown, will be liable for disciplinary action including disqualification which will carry an automatic suspension on future tournaments conducted by MRFA for a period to be decided by the MRFA committee.

KNOCKOUT COMPETITION

01. When there is a tie in any of the games during the knock-out stage, a 2 minutes water break will be held at the end of normal time and captains will toss for the right to kick off or choice of ends. Extra time will be played on sudden death basis and will be in periods of 5 minutes when teams will change ends without an interval. However, extra time will not exceed ten minutes and the team scoring first during extra time will immediately be declared the winner without further play.

If at the conclusion of extra time there is still a tie, the winner will be determined according to the following order of sequence.

- a) 3 drop kicks to be taken by 3 different players nominated by the Captain from amongst those who were playing at the conclusion of extra time. The 3 kicks will be taken on the 22-meter line as follows: -
 - First kick from the center of the posts
 - Second kick from 15-meter mark to the left of the posts.
 - Third kick from 15-meter mark to the right of the posts.

The winner will be decided on the team converting the most number of kicks.

- b) Toss of a Coin (However this will not be applicable in the finals of each category. If both teams are equal at the end of the drop kicks, they will be declared as joint winners.)
02. During the knockout stage, apart from will full abandonment, in the event of a match having to be stopped after its commencement under the provisions of the law of the game, the result shall stand during any stage of the game. If both teams are tied, the team that scored first will be declared as the winner. If either side had not scored any points, the winner will be decided by the toss of a coin.
 03. If for any reason a match in the knockout stage is un-played, the matter will be referred to the tournament committee which shall decide the most appropriate method for determining the winner.

BENCH / TECHNICAL ZONE

Only 5 reserves, 3 Officials (Manager, Coach and Trainer) are allowed to stay on the bench whilst the match is in progress. The officials cannot enter the playing field and must remain in the area assigned except during half time and the break prior to the commencement of extra time.

Each team is allowed to have two (2) water carriers and One (1) Medical personnel. They have to wear the relevant bibs and remain in the technical zone allocated.

If a player gets injured while the game is on, the medic can go, but not the water carriers. Water may only be taken on to the field during stoppages in play for injuries or when a try has been scored. Water bottles must not be thrown on to the field of play.

The two water carriers should be from the squad declared for the tournament.

SUBSTITUTES / REPLACEMENTS

- (i) The rolling subs will be in effected during this tournament.
- (ii) A team may substitute or replace up to five (5) players.
- (iii) Substitutions for blood injuries will not be counted. However, if the injured player does not return within 10 minutes (actual time), it becomes a permanent replacement
- (iv) In case of Head Injury Assessment (HIA), even if all the substitutes / replacements have been used, the player who is to have the HIA must leave the field of play and shall be replaced by a player who got substituted not due to injury but only for tactical reason.
- (v) A player replaced due to injury cannot come back as a temporary replacement in that match.
- (vi) No replacement or substitution can may be made except with the permission of the referee, and only during stoppage in play.

TEAM ACTIVITIES

- 01. Managers / Captains meeting will be held on **20th October 2026**. The relevant personal of each team must attend this important meeting.
- 02. Players are only allowed to use the dead goal area for their warm up. Only the two teams playing the next game are permitted to warm up during the match immediately preceding theirs. It is of utmost importance that all teams adhere to the time schedule.

03. It is mandatory that all teams are lined up in the tunnel at least two minutes before the commencement of their game and should enter the playing area in an orderly manner as per the instructions of the Pitch Marshal.
04. It is the responsibility of all teams to clear the bench and technical zone of all litter soon after their game is over and to ensure that the bibs worn by the water carriers and medic are handed over.

CONCUSSION

If at any point during the match, a player is concussed and or has suspected concussion, that player must be immediately and permanently removed from the field of play. This is known as “Recognized and Remove”.

If a Player is suspected of having concussion or diagnosed with concussion and declared by the tournament medical officer, the player must be removed from the field of play and take no further part in the Match or Tournament.

FOUL PLAY

01. When a player received a yellow card, the player's period of suspension will be two minutes playing time. If half time occurs during the sin bin period, the player may join the team but must return directly to the sin bin for the remaining time of his suspension when the second half resumes.
02. A player who receives the second (2nd) yellow card in the same game must be sent off (Red Card). A one (01) match ban will be imposed on such players and will not be permitted to play in their teams next match.
03. A player directly ordered off a Red Card may not take part for the rest of the tournament.
04. A player who has been temporarily suspended on three (03) occasions (3 Yellow Cards) at the tournament shall not take part in any further match and shall be suspended from all on-field activities on match day/s.
05. If a player is sent off or shown a Yellow Card, the referee shall give a written report to the Tournament Director immediately after completion of the match.
06. If a player has been sent off or shown a Yellow Card following an assistant referee's signal and report to the referee, the assistant referee shall give a written report to the tournament director immediately after the completion of the match.

07. In line with the tournament rules, the judicial officer nominated by the MRFA will handle any appeals/disputes with regard to Red card issues during the tournament and will make the final decision on same.
08. If a player is suspended from playing under the tournament disciplinary program, the suspension shall be effective immediately. The player must not play the game anywhere during the period of suspension.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

01. During a game, a player/official sent off for blatant misconduct by the officiating referee will be suspended from playing or coaching for the rest of the tournament. The MRFA will determine whether to impose further sanctions based on the finding from the reports of the officiating referee/the officials and MRFA disciplinary committee.
02. All teams and their players shall at all times comply and adhere to the tournament rules.

In the event of any violation or non-compliance, based on the findings of the inquiry conducted by the disciplinary committee of the MRFA, the offending team (Company) &/or player shall be liable for serious disciplinary action including disqualification from the tournament which will carry a maximum suspension of 3 years on tournaments conducted by the MRFA.

INTERPRETATION OF RULES

01. Any protest regarding a player/s violating any tournament rules should be made in writing to the Secretary - MRFA with a fee of Rs. 10,000/-. This will be refunded only if the decision of the disciplinary Committee/ Tournament Committee is in favor of the protester. Please note that any protests must be lodged on the first day of the tournament.
02. In the event of any dispute or difficulty arising in regard to the interpretation of these rules or in regard to a matter of which no effective provision has been made, the dispute or difficulty will be referred to the tournament committee who will recommend its decision for ratification by the general committee of the MRFA.

The Mercantile Rugby Football Association shall be empowered to amend, alter, add or vary these rules at their discretion and the decision of the MRFA shall be final on all matters arising out of the tournament.

MEDICAL

Each participating team should ensure that its players are suitably fit to participate in the tournament.

Participating teams are required to provide support for promoting the world rugby 'Recognize and Remove' concussion message.

The tournament appointed medical team will only attend to a player who has been referred by the referee or the match doctor. The player is then under the responsibility of the match doctor. This responsibility ends when the match doctor considers that the player is in a fit state to rejoin his team.

The cost of treatment for all illness contracted or injury sustained by a player at any time during the tournament shall be paid by the participating team. In addition to the above costs, the participating team shall be responsible for strapping, bandages, mouth guards and similar items.

CODE OF CONDUCT

01. All participating teams are reminded that they are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their players, team members and other persons in attendance at the tournament in an official capacity. All participating teams must ensure that their conduct is of the highest standard and that matches are played in accordance with disciplined and sporting behavior.
02. Each participating team and team member agree to be bound by and comply with the provisions and requirements of the tournament disciplinary regulations and any decisions made thereunder. Each participating team also acknowledges its responsibility and accountability for the acts and / or omissions of other persons in attendance at the Tournament in an official capacity with the team.
03. All participating Unions, Players other team members and other persons in attendance at the tournament:
 - Must ensure that the Game is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behavior and acknowledge that is not sufficient to rely solely upon the Match Officials to maintain those principles.
 - Shall co-operate in ensuring that the spirit of the Laws of the Game is upheld and shall not repeatedly breach the Laws of the Game.
 - Shall accept and observe the authority and decisions of referees, touch judges, Match Officials and all other rugby disciplinary bodies.
 - Shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which a referee or touch judge handled a Match.

- Shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which Council or any other rugby disciplinary body handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the Bye-Laws, Regulations or Laws or the Game.
 - Shall promote the reputation of the Game and take all possible steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
 - Shall not abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, touch judge or other Match Official, whether on or off the field of play.
 - Shall not use crude or abusive language or gestures towards referees, touch judges or other Match officials or spectators.
 - Shall not do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the ground of their religion, race, sex, sexual orientation, color or national or ethnic origin.
 - Shall not do anything which adversely affects the Game of Rugby Football, the Board, any member Union or Association or any commercial partner of the Game.
04. Each team is under an obligation to comply with and to ensure that each of its members comply with this code of conduct and adopt procedures to monitor compliance with and impose sanctions for breaches of the code of conduct by persons under its jurisdiction.