

## COVID-19 and NT RUGBY UNION

To all members of our Rugby community we would like to make it clear that the health and safety of our players, staff, volunteers and the wider community is the number one priority of the NTRU. Therefore we have been working hard over the past days to determine our position in respect to COVID-19 and its impact on our competitions.

This message outlines the position that has been reached by the NTRU and is effective immediately, and until further notice or amendment by the NTRU.

The Central Australian Rugby Union (CARU) and Katherine Rugby Union (KRU) competitions both have grand finals scheduled for this coming weekend.

The Darwin competition is scheduled to play further rounds of senior, women's and junior competitions this week.

COVID-19 announcements have been made by both the Commonwealth and NT Governments over the past days and weeks.

Rugby Australia yesterday issued an update in respect to Community Rugby and COVID-19, which broadly states that all Community rugby matches, training and face-to-face education courses are to be postponed until the first week of May 2020. A copy of this statement is attached to this message.

The NTRU board met last night to consider the government and Rugby Australia's responses to COVID-19, and based upon the information available to us at this time took the following local decisions:

1. The Darwin men's, women's and junior competitions are to be suspended in accordance with the Rugby Australia position until the first week in May 2020. The ongoing timing of this suspension will be subject to constant review by the NTRU and is subject to change in the future as required by the circumstances at the time.

The NTRU is currently investigating options for extending the current season to accommodate completion of all scheduled rounds and finals later in the year, however at this point in time it cannot be guaranteed that this can be achieved, or if in fact the season will be able to recommence at all.

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2. CARU's grand final scheduled for this Saturday. CARU has advised the NTRU that they have completed the NT Government recommended Risk Analysis for Mass gatherings outlined on the SecureNT website. This Risk Assessment had determined that the event is classified as Low Risk. Based on this local risk classification, and with the support of Rugby Australia, the NTRU has determined that the event be allowed to proceed subject to the following conditions:
  - a. That all risk mitigation measures outlined in Step 2 of the Risk Analysis undertaken be implemented by CARU prior to, during and where appropriate after the event;
  - b. That all participants in the game will be checked for COVID-19 symptoms prior to the game, and precluded from participating if symptoms are identified;
  - c. That CARU monitor, and if necessary, restrict attendance at the event to no more than 500 persons; and
  - d. Should there be a confirmed a case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) identified for any person within a 50km radius of the Alice Springs Post Office at any time up to the scheduled kick off time for the grand final, then approval for holding the grand final will be immediately withdrawn by the NTRU and the final will be suspended until further notice.
  
3. KRU's grand final scheduled for this Saturday. KRU today advised the NTRU that they had completed the NT Government recommended Risk Analysis for Mass gatherings outlined on the SecureNT website. This Risk Assessment had determined that the event is classified as Low Risk. Based on this local risk classification, and with the support of Rugby Australia, the NTRU has determined that the event be allowed to proceed subject to the following conditions:
  - a. That all risk mitigation measures outlined in Step 2 of the Risk Analysis undertaken be implemented by KRU prior to, during and where appropriate after the event;
  - b. That all participants in the game will be checked for COVID-19 symptoms prior to the game, and precluded from participating if symptoms are identified;
  - c. That KRU monitor, and if necessary, restrict attendance at the event to no more than 500 persons; and

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- d. Should there be a confirmed a case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) identified for any person within a 50km radius of the Katherine Post Office at any time up to the scheduled kick off time for the grand final, then approval for holding the grand final will be immediately withdrawn by the NTRU and the final will be suspended until further notice.

As you would expect, we have not taken these decisions lightly, but the safety of all of those involved in our game must be our number one priority, as we do not wish to expose anyone to unnecessary risk. We are confident that by utilising NT Government recommended processes, that these are the right decisions for this point in time.

Please contact the NTRU office (ph 8945 1444 or [info@ntrugby.com.au](mailto:info@ntrugby.com.au)) for any assistance or clarification of the matters raised in this message. Media enquiries should be directed to me on 0412 191 505.

We will keep you informed in a timely manner of any changes to our position over the coming days and weeks and ask that you heed the advice of medical experts.

We hope to see our great game back up and running in the not too distant future.

Yours in Rugby,



Denys Stedman  
NTRU President  
17 March 2020

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## STATEMENT REGARDING COMMUNITY RUGBY

MARCH 16, 2020

Today, following a meeting of the National Development Panel, Rugby Australia along with the State and Territory Member Unions have unanimously agreed to postpone all Community Rugby until the first week of May, effective immediately.

This recommendation covers Rugby matches, Rugby training and face-to-face Rugby education courses. Although this decision has not been made lightly, it has been made with the interests of the participants, families and the broader community as the priority.

In arriving at this decision, Rugby Australia and the Member Unions have considered public health information and the advice of the Rugby Australia Chief Medical Officer, Dr Warren McDonald. The group acknowledges that this decision is a more conservative approach than has currently been recommended by the Australian, State and Territory Governments. However, it has been made to provide clarity to the Rugby community in a challenging and disruptive time.

Rugby Australia and the Member Unions are fully committed to supporting the game through this difficult time and the decision will allow for six weeks of planning to deliver a modified season which will commence, at this stage, at the beginning of May. The modified season will vary at a local level to best support the needs of our local Rugby communities.

It is acknowledged that there are a variety of Rugby competitions underway and Rugby Australia will work closely with Member Unions to minimise this disruption.

It is not the intention for this decision to interfere with the non-rugby related activities of our Rugby clubs, such as operation of licensed facilities. Government advice should continue to be followed in this regard. Rugby Australia and Member Unions will also work to increase the opportunity for people to engage in online education to ensure our critical workforces are ready for the recommencement of Community Rugby.

The National Development Panel will meet weekly for the foreseeable future and will review this position and communicate any updates regularly.

**ENDS**

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