



National Championship Structure & Scheduling Proposal (2026–2028)

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1. Executive Summary

This proposal outlines the structure and scheduling plan for the USA Club Rugby National Championships from 2026 through 2028. It includes fixed annual dates for the Championships, outlines the qualifying pathway through Geographic and Territorial Unions (Union) and Super Regional (SR) playoffs, and defines requirements for SR MOUs. The intent is to establish a consistent and transparent competition framework to improve planning, equity, and competitive integrity across all divisions.

2. Background

In past seasons, lack of clarity around National Championship scheduling has created logistical challenges for participating clubs and organizing bodies. This proposal addresses that by setting firm dates well in advance and establishing guardrails for upstream playoff scheduling.

3. National Championship Date Recommendations

The USA Club Rugby National Championships should be held annually on the weekend prior to Memorial Day, utilizing Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Below are the proposed dates:

Season	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2026 Championship	May 15, 2026	May 16, 2026	May 17, 2026
2027 Championship	May 21, 2027	May 22, 2027	May 23, 2027
2028 Championship	May 19, 2028	May 20, 2028	May 21, 2028



4. Championship Divisions

The USA Club Rugby National Championship includes competition in the following divisions:

- Men's Division 1
- Men's Division 2
- Men's Division 3
- Women's Division 1
- Women's Division 2

Each division follows the same qualification pathway through Union Playoffs and Super Regionals, culminating in a national title match during the Championship weekend.

5. Playoff Structure

USA Club Rugby's competitive pathway to Nationals follows this order:

1. Union Playoffs
2. Super Regionals (SRs)
3. National Championship

Union Competitions

Unions are given leeway to determine how they structure their leagues and playoffs. The results of these competitions will determine their entry to Super Regionals. This representative must have earned their entry on a competitive basis and must meet the qualifications set forth in the USA Club Rugby Eligibility Regulations.



Super Regionals

The four Super Regional competitions have been organized to group Unions together in such a way that travel is reasonable and that combined memberships roughly represent a quarter of the total membership.

The Gulf Coast Super Regional
Texas Rugby Union (TRU)
Florida Rugby Union (FRU)
True South Rugby Football Union (TSRFU)
Georgia Rugby Union (GRU)
Carolinas Geographic Rugby Union (CGRU)

Northern Super Regional
Mid-America Rugby Union (MARU)
Rocky Mountain Rugby Union (RMRU)
Midwest Rugby Union (MRU) *
* The Midwest is the only Territorial union which is comprised of 8 local area unions (LAU)

Pacific Super Regional
Pacific Northwest Rugby Football Union (PNRFU)
Northern California Rugby Football Union (NorCal)
Southern California Rugby Football Union (SoCal)
Southwest Rugby Union (SWRU)

Atlantic Super Regional
New England Rugby Football Union (NERFU)
Capital Rugby Union (CRU)
Eastern Pennsylvania Rugby Union (EPRU)
Empire Geographic Union (EGU)

6. Scheduling Recommendation

Timing Guidelines:

- Super Regionals (SRs) must take place at least two weeks before the National Championship weekend.
- Union Playoffs must conclude on the weekend two weeks before their respective SR, ensuring proper lead time. It is acceptable if the playoff concludes on the Sunday that is twelve days prior to the Friday of the SR weekend.



Recommended Scheduling Windows:

	Union Playoffs (No Later than)	Super Regionals	National Championship
2026	April 12 or April 19	April 24–26 or May 1-3	May 15–17
2027	April 18 or April 25	April 30-May 2 or May 7-9	May 21-23
2028	April 16 or April 23 or	April 28–30 or May 5-7	May 19-21

7. Super Region Coordination Requirements

Each Super Region must have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place prior to the start of the competition year. The MOU must include:

- Confirmed SR playoff dates
- Hosting plan and backup options
- Financial/logistical responsibilities of the participating unions
- Confirmation of divisional competition (e.g., Men's 1–3, Women's 1–2)
- Process for resolving conflict of agreements
- Process for determining resolution of vacated bracket slots

It is the expectation that each Super Regional participating union will have a qualified team for each of the Men's Division 2 & 3 and Women's Division 2 competitions.

If a union is unable to supply a qualified team for the divisions Men's D2/D3 and Women's D2 as expected, resulting in a vacancy at the Super Regional level, it becomes the responsibility of the other GUs within that SR to identify a suitable replacement. This ensures competitive integrity and prevents bracket gaps at SR events.

If the unions within the Super Region are unable to fill the vacancy, the USA Club Rugby Competitions Committee will identify and invite a competitive replacement from another union in the same division to preserve the integrity and structure of the SR playoff bracket.

For both Men's and Women's Division 1, the USA Club Rugby Competitions Committee will be responsible for determining the appropriate pathways to the National Championships.



8. Implementation Timeline

Milestone	Deadline
GU Playoff Dates Submitted	December 15, 2025
SR MOUs Finalized	August 15, 2025
National Championship Host Secured	December 15, 2025