

MADISON UNITED RUGBY



MADISON MINOTAURS • WISCONSIN RUGBY CLUB • WISCONSIN WOMEN'S RUGBY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MEN'S & WOMEN'S RUGBY • YOUTH FLAG RUGBY
LAFOLLETTE BOYS • MIDDLETON BOYS • OREGON BOYS • WESTSIDE BOYS

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MADISON TO HOST USA RUGBY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Wisconsin Welcomes Nation's Top Men's & Women's Rugby Teams May 31 – June 1, 2014

MADISON, WIS. — Madison's rugby community reaches back more than 50 years and spans nine teams, but this hard-hitting sport has quietly built up a tradition of success and camaraderie here for players of all ages.

Now Madison, and the nine teams that form [Madison United Rugby](#), are poised to step into a brighter national spotlight this spring as the city will play host to the USA Rugby Emirates Airlines Senior Club National Championships at Breese Stevens Field, May 31 – June 1.

The Championships will see single match battles for three divisions of men's senior club rugby and two divisions of women's senior club rugby to determine the nation's best teams.

"We're excited to be awarded this opportunity by [USA Rugby](#) to host the national rugby finals here in Madison," said Max Zukowski, President of the [Wisconsin Rugby Club](#), the city's Division II men's club team and a member club of Madison United Rugby. "Last year, our men's team won the 2013 national championship in Glendale, Colorado. To know that this year's championships will be held right here in Madison is an honor for our team and for our entire community. We're ready to host an outstanding event for all of the teams and fans."

This year's National Championships will also mark the first time that both men's and women's club team titles have been played for at the same USA Rugby event. For Madison's Division II women's rugby team, that makes hosting the event a historic honor.

"This is a great opportunity for us to showcase championship women's rugby in Madison," added Bob Jafferis, head coach of the [Wisconsin Women's Rugby team](#). "People coming out to watch will see some fantastic women athletes competing in a tough and physical sport. Rugby has been a bit of a secret in Madison for nearly half a century. I'm looking forward to showing people what the sport is all about."

In addition to both Wisconsin clubs, Madison United Rugby also includes men's and women's club rugby teams at the University of Wisconsin- Madison, four high school boys teams (LaFollette, Oregon, Middleton, and West Side), and the [Madison Minotaurs](#). The Minotaurs are an all-inclusive men's team that partners with the Wisconsin Rugby Club in fall Division IV competitive league games



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and plays spring games in the International Gay Rugby Association and Board (IGRAB) league.

"The Madison Minotaurs are thrilled that USA Rugby had chosen Madison to host the National Club Rugby Championships," said Tim Lom, President of the Madison Minotaurs. "As some of the newest members of Madison's diverse rugby scene, the Minotaurs are proud to help represent IGRAB within the greater rugby community during what will surely be a tremendously exciting event."

In addition to hosting the events, both of Wisconsin's men's and women's Division II teams are both currently in position to potentially qualify towards the championships if they continue to play well. Both teams turned in undefeated fall seasons in their respective Midwest Rugby Union leagues. Spring will see the clubs work towards playoffs and a shot at playing on home grass at the end of the season.

For more local club information and interviews regarding Madison hosting the 2014 USA Rugby Emirates Airlines Senior Club National Championships, please contact Jessica Burda at 608-712-1481 or email rugbyfinals@gmail.com.

For more information on USA Rugby and the 2014 USA Rugby National Championship Series, please contact USA Rugby Events Communications Manager Laura Gill at 612-850-5619 or email at lgill@usarugby.org. USA Rugby has also set up a [Facebook event for the National Championships](#). Media interested in applying for credentials can apply online via [USA Rugby's website](#).

FAST FACTS ABOUT RUGBY & MADISON UNITED RUGBY:

- Madison United Rugby's three adult teams currently practice on Sunday nights. Interested media may attend practice for interviews and photos/video. Practice frequency will pick up in March and April.
- Rugby will return to the Olympics in 2016 after a 92-year hiatus. Rugby sevens (7-a-side) will be played in Brazil for the Summer Olympics. The United States is the most successful nation in Olympic rugby tournaments, having won the gold medal in both 1920 and 1924. Madison's local teams play rugby sevens in the summer, but compete in 15-a-side competitive league play in the fall and spring.
- The Wisconsin Rugby Club (men's senior Division II) has won the USA Rugby national championship twice – 1998 and 2013. Wisconsin's latest national title marked the third trip in the past five years to the national championships finishing third in 2008, second in 2012, and winning it all in 2013.
- The nine teams of Madison United Rugby count many Wisconsin, Midwest and USA All-Star players in both their current and alumni rosters. The most recent Madison United Rugby player to don the red, white and blue for the national team is Grace Hovde, a 2013 USA Collegiate All-American.
- Both the Wisconsin Rugby Club men's team and the Wisconsin Women's Rugby team are currently undefeated in Midwest Rugby Union league play. The men compiled an 8-0-1 overall record and are first in the Midwest Division II West Group 1 standings. The Wisconsin Women finished their fall season at a perfect 6-0-0 and will finish their Division II west league play in April to qualify for playoffs.
- All Madison United Rugby teams welcome new players at any experience level. The teams will teach new players how to play safely and competitively. For more information, visit www.rugbymadison.org.

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