

Transparency, Standardization Key For Eligibility Committee

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Each of the USA Rugby's four new committees have a lengthy to do list, but some tasks rank higher than others. For the eligibility committee, the top priorities are standardization and transparency, says committee chair Marty Bradley.

"We're not transparent enough, because right now a kid hears a kid on another team got a waiver to play, and he feels like he has similar circumstance and his waiver's turned down," said Bradley.

"Now, the circumstances may not have been similar at all. I can tell you countless examples of kids who thought they were eligible and weren't and applied for a waiver and didn't get it, and then they walk up and find out another kid got a waiver, and then when I look into it I find it was a total different circumstance.

"I don't think we're transparent enough in our decision-making process right now, and that would be probably something to look at first and foremost for our committee."

Bradley wants to create a database of case summaries that shows examples of which eligibility waivers are commonly accepted and which aren't. A list of case summaries does currently exist on USA Rugby's webpage, but Bradley wants to enhance it and create one specifically for college waivers.

While the eligibility committee will do a full review of current eligibility practices, Bradley says he doesn't expect to see the parameters of what defines a college-eligible change drastically, but they will address issues as they come up.

"I don't anticipate the eligibility changing. I think most people are happy with five years," he said. "I know all those issues are out there; the non-traditional student, the 28-year-old player. I know that's out there. I get it, and those are all things that are probably going to come up on our plate at some point."

The membership of the eligibility committee is expected to be announced by week's end.