



I am struck by how this seems so simple, so obvious, and yet seems so hard for certain people to grasp.

To watch, time and again, USA Rugby's various committees have been faced with decisions based on player movement, and time and again, those committees make decisions that prevent players from playing rugby.

The two most recent decisions by the new Club Strategic Committee are especially bad examples of how players are penalized.

In the first instance, the CSC instituted a new rule near the end of the season, that reduced the number of Super League games a player could play, and still be able to suit up for his DI team. Now I get that no one wants a club whose Super League team is not playing anymore to stack its DI team still in the playoffs. But ... to change the restrictions after most of the season has been played is simply unfair.

## GoffonRugby: How the CSC Got it Exactly Wrong

Written by  
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Clubs made player decisions based on existing rules, and were then told new rules were in effect, retroactively. This is simply bad governance and should not be tolerated.

In the second instant, a team folded. Aspen stopped playing, released its players, and its games were expunged from the record. USA Rugby allowed those players to transfer to new clubs, as they should.

We have no reserve clause on players, and even if we did, and this were a professional league, a team that folds mid-season cannot prevent its players from seeking playing opportunities elsewhere. Most of those Aspen players went to Glendale. Now Glendale is being punished for being an attractive option for those athletes.

Even if our club league was a professional league, this type of player movement would be allowed. In pro sports in the USA, if a club releases a player, that player can sign with another club. But in amateur rugby, where players are playing simply because they love it, we lock a player to a club even if the club isn't in operation. It's insanity.

Did Glendale recruit these players? Of course they did, and so did several other teams. There's nothing wrong with telling a player what's good about your club.

There is no gray area here. It's not as if a club folded late in the season, or a bunch of players bailed on a losing team and concocted new jobs in another city. It's straightforward, just as it was last season when Pearl City folded its DI tent. And because it's straightforward and obvious, USA Rugby's Matt Trenary made the call, the right call, to allow the transfers.

If your club is defunct, even for just one season, and the league the club was supposed to compete in takes them off the books, those players should be able to find someplace to play.

There should be no debate about this.

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But then the Club Strategic Committee, acting on the complaints of a couple of squeaky wheels who simply want to weaken an opposing club (something of an agenda there, isn't there?), decides to change Trenary's ruling. They did this despite there being no evidence whatsoever of any wrongdoing. What were these players supposed to do? Play soccer?

It's bad enough that the CSC starts making up new rules midway through the season. Now they backtrack on good decisions.

I am very disappointed on how the Club Strategic Committee addressed this issue regarding the Aspen players. Note, I speak of the players, not the club they went to. USA Rugby should look at it that way, also. The players were denied a chance to play, and no matter how hard I try (and I tried pretty hard), I cannot find a viable reason to do that.

This was all so unnecessary. USA Rugby is supposed to be in the business of encouraging people in America to play rugby. But those acting on the organization's behalf too often make decisions that have the opposite effect.