



## **Steps to 501(c) 3 for Rugby Clubs**

**By: Ron Myers**

There are two significant parts to starting up a Non-Profit Youth Rugby Organization or Club (herein “club”). Many of these steps are ones that should be considered regardless of whether you are starting a 501(c)3 club or just starting one to join your Local Area Union or Local Youth Rugby Organization.

### **Incorporating Your Club:**

*How to set up a 501(c)3 – overview:*

Initially, the easiest thing to do is to go to [www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com). Nolo is an online legal resources service that offers overviews of various topics (including forming a non-profit) as well as the documents (whether in hard or electronic copy form) for a fee.

Once on Nolo’s site, click on the “Business & Human Resources” tab at the top of the home page.

When that page opens look under the “Main Topics” heading and click on the “Nonprofit Organizations” hyperlink.

When the Nonprofits page opens, look under the “Related Topics” heading, and click on the “How to form 501c3 non-profit Corporation” hyperlink.

The section is 5 pages long and is a general overview of all the steps needed to create a 501(c)3 club both at the state and federal level.

Note: many of the steps recommended in the Nolo document apply to creating any type of corporation and should be consider as good business practice in any event. These practices include, but are not limited to: filing your Articles of Incorporation; drafting Corporate Bylaws; and Appointing/Electing Directors.

### *Additional Resources:*

The forms and information needed for the Internal Revenue Service can be found here:

<http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/index.html>

The forms and information needed for your individual State Corporations Division can best be found by going to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and using the following search term “[Name of your] State Corporations Division”, then search your respective state’s site for information on non-profit services.

Consulting an attorney before filing to make sure all of the proper steps have been taken may also be of interest, but is not essential.

### **“Branding” Your Club:**

Once you have established a Corporation name that is unique to your club, you must consider “branding” for your club. Branding is important as it will create an image and an easy reference point for your members to focus on. It will also create a sense of professionalism which will pay dividends not just at the club level, but also when dealing with those whom you are trying to interface. This may include schools, state based athletic organizations, sponsors, the Local Area Union Clubs, Local Area Union Referee Society and of course both the USA Rugby as well as the IRB.

Image sells. An incorporated, branded (logo trademarked) and professionally run (club specific website w/ email) club will reap the benefits of these organizational components.

*To that end the following "branding" processes must be considered:*

Choose a domain name and web hosting service. One company that provides both domain name registration and a large number of hosting services is [www.hostingmatters.com](http://www.hostingmatters.com). By going over their site you can get a general idea of what is required for this process and then you can pick and choose your own hosting service.

Note: as your club is going to be a nonprofit you should be looking for domain names ending in the ".org" suffix. An example would be [www.youthrugby.org](http://www.youthrugby.org). While a ".com" suffix is not incorrect, it is best to make your branding as a nonprofit club as complete as possible and thus an ".org" suffix is best.

Consider registering your club name and logo w/ the US Patent and Trademark Office which can be linked to at [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov). Trademark protection is useful for various reasons and can serve to stave off challenges to your club for various branding issues as well as again projecting an image of professionalism which can only accrue to your benefit.

Once on the USPTO website, click on the "Trademarks" tab on the left side of the page and you can search (for free) to see if your name/logo are already trademarked, as well as beginning the process of filing an application online with TEAS (Trademark Electronic Application System).

Again, you may choose to seek guidance from and/or retain an attorney to do this work for you.

As a final important step remember to register your club with USA Rugby through the CIPP process which can be accessed via the USA Rugby website at <https://register.usarugby.org>.

**DISCLAIMER:**

*\* This document was prepared to introduce you to the process of forming a 501(c)3 non-profit rugby organization; issues that are related to that formation; and any attendant organizational issues. It is for informational purposes only. While every attempt is made to maintain the accuracy of the information, it is not guaranteed to be complete or to represent the latest legal developments.*

*Obtaining legal advice is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements or website information. You may wish to contact your respective State Bar Lawyer Referral Service if you feel you are in need of further legal assistance."*

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

*\* Ron Myers is a member of and the current Treasurer for the Pacific Northwest Rugby Referee Society. He is also a referee with Oregon Youth Rugby and the Northern California Rugby Referee Society. He has served USA Rugby as a Match Commissioner for the Collegiate D1 Men's Round of 16 and #4 at the Collegiate D1 & D2 Men's & Women's National Championships. He has also coached both Collegiate Men and Women in Northern California as well as Mini-Rugby in Oregon. He is currently on staff as a Paralegal with the Oregonians In Action Legal Center. A dedicated litigation and appellate law non-profit legal services provider that handles civil rights cases at all levels of the Oregon, Washington and Federal Judicial Systems.*

*He can be reached at [rmyers\\_iv@hotmail.com](mailto:rmyers_iv@hotmail.com) if you have any specific questions.*