

NEWS

## Tiyan rugby coach calls for ban on transgender players after injuries at weekend match

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Guam's High School Rugby league kicked off another season over the weekend and concerns arose quickly from families as well as both coaches and players about a transgender competitor from the Home of the Panthers.

Three Tiyan High School female rugby athletes were injured Saturday by a transgender player from Guam High. In light of the incident, Conrad Kerber, the head coach for both Tiyan Boys and Girls Rugby teams is calling out the league to address the concerns.

"The aggressive nature that was witnessed clearly showed that it's a definite issue that we have to deal with," he said. "I had three players that were injured in that first game against Guam High directly by that particular player. Right now, we just have to come together as a group and discuss the proper path to take, discuss what the parameters are with allowing transgender males in full contact sports such as rugby."

Although no official decision has been made and while discussions are ongoing, Kerber hopes the league will adopt the "World Rugby Law" Transgender Guideline which states that "transgender women may not currently play women's rugby because of the size, force- and power-producing advantages conferred by testosterone during puberty and adolescence, and the resultant player welfare risks serious injuries."

"Body size, body strength, and the ability to apply force with that size and strength completely dominate any girl that I have on my team," Kerber said.

The Academy of Our Lady of Guam's rugby team coaches unanimously agreed to enforce this rule over the weekend.

Aiming to follow the footsteps of the Home of the Cougars, Kerber says it's a matter of safety for his female athletes.

"It's purely a safety issue when we discuss transgender males playing in female sports at a youth level particularly at this type of contact sport as well. I'm basically in line with the world rugby guidelines regarding transgender males playing female sports and basically across the world it's not permitted," he said.

To prevent any serious injuries throughout the season, Kerber stated the World Rugby Law should be acknowledged on Guam.

"It has to do purely with the size, force, and strength disadvantage that transgender males will have over females in this type of sport," he said.

There is no policy in place currently for outdoor leagues that bans the participation of transgender women in rugby.

"My players will get through it and heal," Kerber said. "We will use these next two weeks so that we can heal properly."

Guam Rugby Football Union and Interscholastic Sports Association stated discussions are ongoing.

KUAM News has reached out to Guam High coach Joe Mancuso and did not respond as of news time.

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