

MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY

# PRESS RELEASE



## MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCES EXPANSION INTO CHICAGO

*The Chicago Hounds will compete as 12th MLR team in the 2023 season*

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**Chicago** (Nov. 17, 2022) – Major League Rugby (MLR) today unveiled the team name, logo, and color scheme for its newest franchise, the Chicago Hounds. Holding a press conference to officially announce MLR’s latest expansion, Commissioner George Killebrew was joined by Chicago Hounds Head Coach Sam Harris and current players Mike Mattarazzo, Sydney Shoop, and Caleb Strum, all of whom were selected by Chicago in the MLR expansion draft on November 10.

The Hounds will compete in MLR’s Western Conference, donning team colors of green and sky blue. Chicago will play its inaugural match on the road at Old Glory DC on Saturday, February 18. The team’s home opener at SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview, IL will be on Sunday, March 4 vs the Utah Warriors.

“We are thrilled to add the Chicago Hounds to Major League Rugby for the 2023 season,” said MLR Commissioner George Killebrew. “Chicago is one of the best sports towns in North America and we couldn’t be happier to be part of the competitive landscape. Rugby has a long-time tradition in the city and throughout Northern Illinois and we look forward to growing the game even further.”

Led by longtime Chicago rugby players and fans Matt Satchwell and Phil Groves, the Chicago MLR Founders Group is deeply committed to rallying Chicago’s community spirit to establish rugby as America’s next great sporting pastime. Satchwell, an attorney who also serves as Board Chair, has been playing rugby his entire life and for the past 20 years in Chicago. Groves is president of DAC Management and a part team owner who has been playing with and sponsoring rugby teams in Chicago and around the world for years.

Chicago MLR CEO James English led Rugby United New York to the semi-final in 2019 as their first GM, and Irish rugby legends Rob and Dave Kearney round out the Founders with their collective decades of world-class rugby on the pitch and civic leadership off the pitch.

“This is a special day for all of us,” said English. “We are very excited to formally introduce the Chicago Hounds name, as well as our logo and team colors. This organization plans to continue growing the game of rugby at the grassroots level here in Chicago and build a fanbase that can be proud of the way our team operates and competes.” Chicago’s

inaugural season schedule can be viewed here.

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### **ABOUT MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY**

Major League Rugby is a professional sports league entering its sixth season that represents the highest level of rugby competition in North America. The League evolved from seven teams in 2018 to 12 teams in 2023, featuring 11 from the United States and one from Canada. Matches are televised on Fox Sports, among other national and local market platforms. Select matches are available to stream live in North America on The Rugby Network, and all matches are available on The Rugby Network for international fans. MLR prides itself in fostering intense and high-stakes competition, while bringing together a passionate community built on the values of Respect, Inclusivity, and Tradition. For more information about MLR, visit [www.MajorLeague.Rugby](http://www.MajorLeague.Rugby)

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