

MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY

**PRESS  
RELEASE**



***Major League Rugby Announces Schedule Details for  
2023 Championship Series Presented By Fastenal and  
Four Nominees For Community Impact Award***



**DALLAS** (June 21, 2023) -- Major League Rugby (MLR) today released schedule details for the Championship Series Presented by Fastenal, in addition to the finalists for the second annual S. Marcus Calloway Award.

The Eliminator Rounds are scheduled to begin with the Western Eliminator hosted by the Seattle Seawolves on Saturday, June 24th, at 6:00 p.m. EST on Fox Sports 2. The Eastern Eliminator hosted by the New York Ironworkers is set for Sunday, June 25th, at 6:00 p.m. EST on Fox Sports 2.

The Conference Finals will begin with the Eastern Conference Final hosted by the New England Free Jacks on Saturday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, at 5:30 p.m. EST on Fox Sports 1 and the Western Conference Final will be hosted by San Diego Legion at Snapdragon Stadium on Sunday, July 2nd, at 6:00 p.m. EST on Fox Sports 2.

MLR's newest expansion team, the Chicago Hounds, will host the Championship Final featuring the winners of both Conference Finals on July 8th, at 3:00 p.m. EST at SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview, Illinois. For the second year in a row the Championship game will be broadcast live on FOX to approximately 123 million U.S. households.

[Tickets for the MLR 2023 Championship match are now on sale](#) and include access to all of the day's festivities.

DJ Diesel, otherwise known as Shaquille O'Neal, is set to perform before the match, and American Celtic band Dropkick Murphys are set to perform after the championship match. The day of festivities begin at 10:30 AM, and will include the Dawg Town Block Party fan festival, showcasing the best of Chicago rugby and culture through Windy City-themed vendors, musicians, and drinks, as well as a youth rugby tournament, high-performance combine, social sevens tournament, and rugby 101 sessions.

"We are eagerly anticipating this year's MLR Championship Series presented by Fastenal," said Major League Rugby CEO Nic Benson. "Our athletes play with grit, determination, and passion all season. It's special to see that hard work come to an exciting crescendo in the Championship game. With this year's party in the Chicago area, we will reach scores of new fans and continue to thrill those who've been with us since season one."

At halftime during the Championship Final, MLR will announce the winner of the 2023 *S. Marcus Calloway Community Impact Award* Presented by Fastenal. This annual award, named after the founder of Rugby ATL and prominent rugby and MLR advocate who sadly passed away in December of 2021, honors the player who most shows passion, excellence, and integrity on and off the field, inspires others to action, shows strength in character, aids those less fortunate, and embraces the core values of rugby, while displaying solidarity, discipline, and respect.

The four nominees include Olive Kilifi of the Utah Warriors, Michael Te'o of the San Diego Legion, Calixto Martinez of Old Glory DC, and Dan Kriel of the Seattle Seawolves.

From the four nominees, one player will be selected as the 2023 recipient by a panel consisting of CEO Nic Benson, Deputy Commissioner Bill Goren, and Marcus' widow, Clea Calloway, Marcus' dear friend Bob Taylor and a Fastenal representative. The winner will be announced live at the Championship Final during halftime and receive a commemorative trophy and a \$5,000 donation in their name to a non-profit of their choice.

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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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