



BC RUGBY



2023 / 2024

ANNUAL REPORT

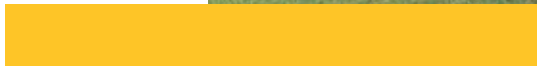
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



**BC RUGBY AND ITS MEMBERS
GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE
THAT WE LIVE, WORK AND PLAY
THE SPORT OF RUGBY ON THE
TRADITIONAL AND UNCEDED
TERRITORIES OF INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES ACROSS ALL REGIONS
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.**



BC RUGBY'S BOARD AND STAFF

2023/24 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

■ Bob Strachan	President
■ Tony Payne	Vice President (Finance)
■ Matt Gordon*	Vice President
■ Brennan Bastovanszky*	Director
■ Marvin Foss	Director
■ Denis Jones*	Director
■ Connie McGinley	Director
■ Theresa Weeks	Director
■ Andrew Ference	Director
■ Alan Snowden	Director

2022/23 STAFF

■ David Newson	Chief Executive Officer
■ John Tait	Technical Director
■ Rob Bartlett	Director of Marketing and Partnerships
■ Sam Crawford*.....	Director of Community Rugby
■ Chris Assmus	Officials Development Manager
■ Doug Tate	Coach Education Manager
■ Aimee Burley	Competitions and Membership Administrator
■ Madison Bradshaw*.....	Marketing and Brand Coordinator
■ Noah Pryce-Baff	Executive Coordinator



Bob Strachan, President of BC Rugby, presenting the Vancouver Thunderbirds with the Women's Premier League Trophy at the 2024 Senior Club Finals

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This marks the completion of my first year as President of BC Rugby. It's been an honour to lead this organisation. It seems like only a short while ago that we met here in the Annual General Meeting yet so much has been accomplished in the past 12 months.

Our Board continues to evolve with improved organisation, focus and practices. Recent additions to the Board and the Board's Committees have brought a depth and variety of experience, which have allowed us to tackle issues around Finance, capital generation, Risk, Human Resources, Governance, Safe Sport and Nominations in sophisticated and improved ways that were not previously possible. We have addressed ways to have more collaborative relationships with our Members and external stakeholders. The blend of Board Director expertise and the commitment of staff has enabled us to address both the sustainability of Rugby in BC and how we work with each other across our complex oversight responsibilities. It's a continuous journey to which we have made good progress this year.

We are two years into our Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 that was developed after extensive consultation with our Members. I am pleased to report that this document continues to provide the roadmap for areas of our focus. It provides the Board and staff with the outline of our strategic objectives as we deliver on pillars of Protect Well Being, Grow the Game, Develop Performance, Strengthen Our Community and Lead the Organisation. The impact of this work is both on BC Rugby the organisation and also on our Members and athletes who realize the opportunities and benefits of playing Rugby. We've been mindful to integrate the impact of our external stakeholders, including Rugby Canada's Strategic Plan, to ensure that we are a relevant and strong partner in the sport and in the community.

I'm appreciative of the good work done by our Board Committees this year. Each of them has fulfilled their fiduciary responsibilities by not only reviewing and updating existing practices, but also in making enhancements that will positively impact both Board and Member experiences going forward.

We can report good work done on all aspects of our governance: oversight of operations, oversight of the competitions structure, the dire need for capital funding to sustain growth of the sport going forward, ensuring our governance practices and bylaws are relevant, ensuring the support mechanism is in place for a safe sport and our robust nominations process that has provided the best ever recruitment of volunteers to serve on our Board and Committees. We continue to raise the bar on Board oversight but more importantly, we continue to ensure the sport of rugby is well founded for the years ahead.

I would like to extend the Board's thanks and appreciation to staff for their commitment to BC Rugby. In particular, I'd like to thank our CEO, Dave Newson, for his leadership in sustaining rugby across BC and for being a strong advocate on our behalf. We are grateful to the entire staff team and the resources they provide the Rugby community as they deliver the structure and organization for competitions and events. Each of them has supported the Board and Board's committees well through a year of dynamic engagement. They are a significantly valued part of Rugby in BC. I'd like to recognize that the lifeline to the success of Rugby is the role volunteers play in administering, coaching, managing and supporting the game. Often these roles are behind the scenes, yet essential to delivering our sport.

My primary message to Member Clubs is to encourage you to work with us to grow the sport in BC. Help us find new pathways to engage age-grade players and offer variations of Rugby that will retain old and attract new Members. We need to continue to keep an open mind as to how we can be innovative, welcoming and willing to try different things to help grow the game. We must work together to continue to improve all aspects of the game from coaching, officiating, training and financial support. We cannot only talk the talk of our core values of Safety, Integrity, Respect and Inclusion for All; we must also walk that walk. Collaboration is the pathway to sharing our perspectives and improving the delivery of the sport. We're all in this together.

Sincerely,



BOB STRACHAN
BC RUGBY PRESIDENT



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Thank you once again to all Members and extended community for another great year of Rugby in BC. It has been my pleasure to work with all of you for the betterment of the sport throughout the province.

In 2023-24, we continued on our path to bring the BC Rugby Strategic Plan to life in day-to-day operations. Our staff were guided by the five Strategic Pillars of the organization to drive our activity and decision-making.

We have had many successes along the way, but also several challenges to navigate.

We have seen success in expanding our geographical reach across BC and beyond. This season we have welcomed the Aurora Wolves Northern Regional Union as well as the Yukon Rugby Federation as BC Rugby Affiliate Members and we look forward to seeing their impact on the game in the North. We are also excited to be working with the Kootenay region to grow their Age-Grade and Senior Programs, after hosting a successful Saratoga Cup in Cranbrook in 2023.

In 2024, we have seen growth in many BC Rugby events, providing more high calibre competitions for BC athletes. The Provincial Regional Championships continues to grow and attract the top regional athletes from all corners of the province, with the addition of the Aurora Wolves and Kootenay entries for 2024.

The Kamloops 7s tournament has grown into one of the largest youth 7s events in North America. In 2024, BC Rugby hosted the Vancouver 7s Invitational alongside the HSBC SVNS week in Vancouver, allowing a regional event for 7s players that also allowed athletes to experience the full SVNS experience.

In addition, BC successfully hosted the U19 Canadian Rugby Championships in 2023. BC Rugby Age-Grade and Senior Club Finals brought the community together in celebrations of championship Rugby in Vancouver and Burnaby.

This season, BC Rugby established three separate Competition Committees in an effort to get better representation for each of the competitions. While there were some growing pains during the inaugural year of these groups, we are moving into a position where they will be an effective voice for the

community and respected advisory bodies working with the Clubs and community.

We continue to look for avenues to increase BC Rugby's financial stability, and diversify funding sources, in an ever-challenging environment with cost pressures and uncertain economic times. We are thankful for the many supporters of Rugby in BC that continue to invest in our athletes and programs.

We acknowledge our need to continue to work towards greater collaboration, and communication, with all our members and stakeholders. As we continue to grow and evolve as a sport, we will need teamwork and to prioritise working in a collaborative and respectful environment where meaningful dialogue and ideas can be exchanged.

I am grateful to the many community volunteers who keep our game strong throughout BC, particularly those who have served on our various committees and of course our dedicated BC Rugby Board of Directors.

I'm looking forward to working alongside you to celebrate the successes and tackle the challenges that will come in an exciting 2024/25.



**DAVID NEWSON,
BC RUGBY CEO**



ABOUT BC RUGBY

The British Columbia Rugby Union, commonly known as BC Rugby, is the governing body for the sport of Rugby and was founded in 1889. As a Member Union of Rugby Canada, BC Rugby is recognized by World Rugby and the BC Government as being the non-profit organization responsible for Rugby Union and its game Rugby.

BC Rugby was officially formed in 1889 in New Westminster and, across three centuries, has overseen remarkable growth in both the Men’s and Women’s game that has helped develop a diverse Rugby community. Clubs based in British Columbia began touring parts of Western America as early as 1893. Rugby’s seven-a-side format was first played in Vancouver in 1956. For over 130 years, British Columbia has hosted many prestigious Rugby Teams such as the All Blacks, New Zealand Maori, Japan, Australia, England, British Lions, Scotland, Barbarians and Fiji. As a Member Union of Rugby Canada, BC Rugby is a proud affiliate of World Rugby, the world governing body for the sport of Rugby. Many BC Players have gone on to represent Canada’s Men’s and Women’s Teams at the International and Olympic level over the years.



OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of BC Rugby is:

TO GROW, DEVELOP AND MANAGE THE SPORT OF RUGBY IN THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA; AND, TO UNDERTAKE ANY OTHER ROLES, FUNCTIONS RESPONSIBILITIES OR ACTIONS THAT BEST SERVE THE SPORT OF RUGBY IN THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

OUR STRUCTURE

BC Rugby is overseen by a Board of Directors that are elected at the Annual General Meeting by the Voting Members, in accordance with BC Rugby Bylaws. The Board appoints several Committees to advise and support them. These are the Safe Sport Committee, Competitions Committee, Appeals Committee, Discipline Committee and Adjudicative Committee. The day-to-day operations of BC Rugby are performed by Staff, whom are led by the Chief Executive Officer.



OUR VISION AND ENVISIONED FUTURE

OUR VISION:

To be the safest, most vibrant and inclusive Rugby Community.

ENVISIONED FUTURE:

BC Rugby will elevate the profile and appreciation of Rugby, and our game variations, welcoming and retaining an increasingly diverse BC population. BC Rugby will support Member Clubs in delivering high-quality Rugby experiences, while upholding BC Rugby's values.

BC Rugby will facilitate and deliver a Rugby Pathway from Club to Bears to Maple Leaf, accessible to Players, Coaches and Officials from all regions and backgrounds. The Organization will be known as a first-class amateur sport business, sustainably providing valued services to Stakeholders, Member Clubs and participants.



Elk Valley RFC's Women's Team celebrates winning the 2024 Women's Saratoga Cup hosted in Cranbrook, BC.

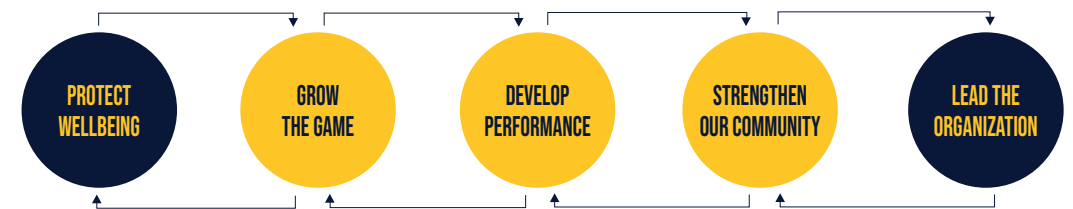
2022-2025 STRATEGIC PILLARS

In May of 2022, BC Rugby announced its new Strategic Plan, setting out its key priorities and initiatives for the Organization for the next three years.

The new Plan aims to elevate the Organization to be the safest, most vibrant, and inclusive Rugby community as our Sport recovers from the impact of the COVID pandemic.

The Plan is built upon five strategic pillars; protect wellbeing; grow the game; develop performance; strengthen the community and lead the Organization.

The Plan was created through facilitated engagement and consultation with BC Rugby's Board of Directors, operational staff, Members and Stakeholders, and the wider Rugby community.



Pillar 1

Participants' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing is safeguarded.

Pillar 2

Everyone is welcomed and finds their game, enjoying high quality Rugby experiences.

Pillar 3

All aspiring Players, Coaches and Officials are supported towards success on the world stage.

Pillar 4

Our diverse community is bolstered, engaged and celebrated.

Pillar 5

BC Rugby exemplifies organizational excellence in policies, practices and people.

STATE OF PLAY FOR RUGBY IN BC

8,024

Total Members Registered in the 2023/24 Season

34%

of Total Members Registered were Female

357

Members Registered as a Coach

153

Members Registered as a Match Official

55

Members Registered as an Athletic Therapist



1 : 22 RATIO

of Coaches to Players in BC



MINIS MEMBERS

- 1,136 Male Members
- 371 Female Members

AGE-GRADE MEMBERS

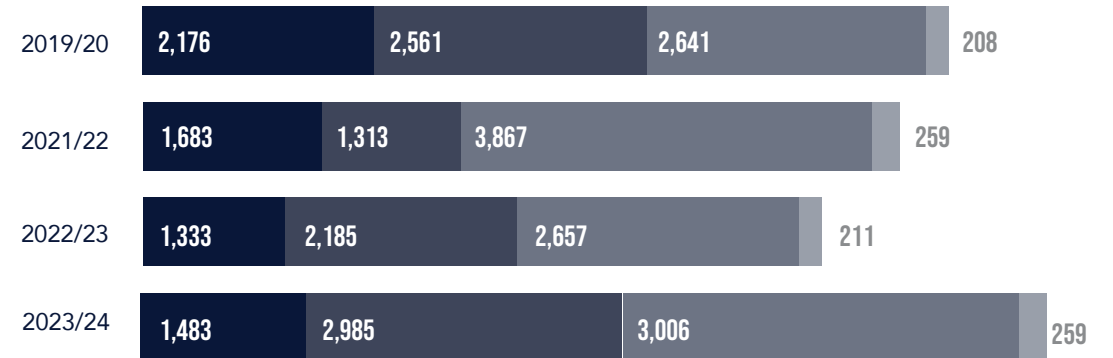
- 1,891 Male Members
- 1,094 Female Members

SENIOR MEMBERS

- 2,165 Male Members
- 841 Female Members

MASTERS MEMBERS

- 250 Male Members
- 9 Female Members



Minis Members | Age-Grade Members | Senior Members | Masters Members

STRATEGIC PILLAR #1: PROTECT WELLBEING

ENSURING A SAFE SPACE FOR DELIVERY

BC Rugby's number one priority remains protecting our Members' physical and emotional wellbeing. The 2023/24 Strategic year saw our Safe Sport Committee meet once per month to discuss and review the best practices to help make our sport safer.

Throughout the year, BC Rugby continued to work with partners including viaSport to promote safe and inclusive environments for all Members and our extended community.

In August 2023, we continued our partnership with SHRed to participate in vital concussion research within the junior game. Over 400 junior athletes and Coaches from Bayside Sharks RFC, Langley Rugby Club and United RFC participated in the study, which focused primarily on gathering information from high-school athletes (age 13-17) to improve the ways in which concussions among young athletes can be better prevented, recognized, managed and treated.

In September 2023, we focused on BC Concussion Awareness week and Rowan's Law Day to help increase awareness on the impact of concussions within our sport. In promoting this campaign, we highlighted vital resources for the BC Rugby community to help better recognise the signs and symptoms of concussion, and educate further on protocol both on and off the field.

This year also saw us review the BC Rugby Code of Conduct to ensure it better aligns with the BC Universal Code of Conduct, while we targeted BC Rugby events as key opportunities to improve the safety of our sport. This included increasing our investment in medical therapists at all junior and senior BC Rugby events, as well as education opportunities for participants and coaches.

Furthermore, we ensured all BC Rugby Event volunteers had completed World Rugby's Concussion Management for the General Public training.

COACH AND OFFICIAL EDUCATION

This has been an important year as BC Rugby strives to build towards our strategic goal of ensuring all Rugby Programs are led by a fully certified Coach and officiated by a fully certified Official. Registered Coach numbers are up 24% on last year, while registered Match Officials have seen a 32% increase compared to 2022-23.

To coincide with the kick-off of the 2023/24 Fall/Spring Senior Season, a Tight 5 Coaching Summit presented by the Friends of Rugby Group and ONNI was held at UBC in Vancouver to focus on the development of set-pieces and coach delivery. Held in conjunction with the 2023 U19 Canadian Rugby Championships, 50 Coaches attended the session, which also provided an Officials perspective on set-pieces by BC Rugby Officials Development Manager Chris Assmus.

BC Rugby Technical Director John Tait and BC Rugby Coach Education Manager Doug Tate presented sessions at the 2023 Coaching Clinic held at Trinity Western University during the 2023 Canadian University Men's Rugby Championships in November. The Clinic featured four sessions covering a variety of topics, with over 35 Coaches in attendance.

In January 2024, 42 Coaches attended Level 1 (16) and Level 2 (26) Coaching Courses held in Abbotsford with some still awaiting L2 certification. In partnership with Grassroots Rugby, Doug Tate assisted in the delivery of 12 weeks of intro to rugby for Elementary Schools across the Cowichan Valley. This initiative was to support new programming in schools and recruitment towards local clubs, with over 400 children participating.

As part of the HSBC SVNS returning to Vancouver in February 2024, over 60 attendees participated in a free Rookie Rugby Junior Coaches Program Course held at Langley Rugby Club. The participants went on to assist Rugby Canada and BC Rugby Staff at various community events and activations throughout HSBC SVNS week.



An Official gets ready to run the touchline during the 2023 Provincial Regional Championships at UBC.

2024 Gerald McGavin Coaching Award Recipients Jonathan Mergui and Darcy Patterson attended a Leadership Program at Super Rugby outfit Crusaders in Auckland in May 2024. The two-week course gave BC Bears Coaches Jonathan and Darcy an overview of the Christchurch organisation and focused on the leadership values within the Club.

The 2023/24 year yielded eleven Level 1 Introduction to Rugby Officiating Courses held throughout the province, as well as one Level 2 Course and one Coaching Match Officials Course. A total of six Educators, including BC Rugby Officials Development Manager Chris Assmus, delivered these Courses which attracted 147 registrants. 41 of these Course attendees (28%) then registered to referee during the 2023/24 season, surpassing a targeted 20% conversion rate.

BC Rugby successfully appointed a fully certified Official to all Age-Grade and Senior Contact matches throughout the 2023/24 Lower Mainland Season and 2024 Northern/Interior season, and will continue to do so moving forward. A total of 848 matches took place across Age-Grade and Senior Club competition, 100% of which were refereed by a registered Match Official. 32% of Matches played were officiated by a full team of three Match Officials, including all matches at the 2023 Saratoga Cup, 2023 Age-Grade Club Finals and 2024 BC Rugby Senior Club Finals.

14 registered Match Officials in BC were appointed to at least one national or international fixture this year, with 45 national or international fixtures featuring at least one Match Official registered with BC Rugby.

Shanda Assmus was nominated as a Finalist for Sport BC's Official of the Year Award, while BC Rugby Officials Kristine Lovatt, Brad Schwalger, Cole Pedrick, Derek Horton and Ben Lambrick were at the heart of the action at HSBC SVNS Vancouver in February 2024 as part of the World Rugby Officials Team at BC Place. Lovatt was also selected to officiate at the World Rugby Sevens Challenger Series in Uruguay in March.

STRATEGIC PILLAR #2: GROW THE GAME

A SEASON OF PROMISE

Following a successful return to a full calendar season in 2022-23, this has been a year of growth for Rugby in BC that has seen positive progression across our Membership and Affiliate Member Organizations.

UBCOB Ravens lift the Rounsefell Cup after winning the Men's Premier League Final at the 2024 Senior Club Finals.



Overall, our Membership figures are up 15% on the previous season (2022/23) with a total 8,024 Members registered. Senior Memberships are up 13% compared to last year, with 22% growth in female Members on 2022/23. We have seen significant growth in Age-Grade Memberships compared to the previous year (up 37%), while Mini Rugby Memberships have also increased 11%.

This year, we have also welcomed three new Affiliate Member Organisations to the BC Rugby family in the Vancouver Highlanders, Aurora Wolves Rugby Union and the Yukon Rugby Federation. The Highlanders aim to showcase the best of Senior Men's Rugby in BC and are represented by BC Rugby Member Club athletes, competing in the 2024 Rugby Players Challenge and hosting matches against high-quality international opposition.

Spearheading Northern BC, the Aurora Wolves Rugby Union will be vital in growing the sport in the upper regions of the province. The Yukon Rugby Federation aims to grow and develop Rugby programming in the Territory, with a focus on inclusion, education, competition, and fun.

Our Provincial Representative Teams returned to action in the summer of 2023, which saw success for our BC Bears U16-U18 Provincial Representative teams, as well as vital experience for our U19 Men's and Women's Programs – this is detailed further in the Develop Performance section.

It was another big year for Senior Rugby in BC. For our Northern and Interior Clubs, the summer season culminated at the 2023 Saratoga Cup in August with a bumper event hosted in the Kootenays. The Rocky Mountain Rogues made it a hat-trick of Men's Saratoga Cup wins, while Elk Valley RFC lifted the Women's Saratoga Cup after a thrilling five-match series against their Cranbrook rivals. In 2024, there has been growth in the North and Interior Leagues with the introduction of Women's and Youth programming throughout our Central Interior, Thompson-Okanagan and Kootenay Clubs, showcased at events such as Rucking in the Rockies and Club Weekends in Prince Rupert and Prince George.

In the Lower Mainland, our Senior Men's and Women's Club Teams contested a full Fall-Spring season for the second successive year since the global pandemic. Based on Member Club feedback from the previous year, regional pre-season play returned in September 2023 alongside the Coastal Cup for Men's University Programs and the U20 Dunbar Keg for BC's Regional-Unions. The Vancouver Wave defeated the Vancouver Island Tide 29-17 in the Final to bring the Keg back to the Mainland. The 2023/24 Senior Season then comprised of eight Divisions ranging from elite competition to regional development leagues, all leading to a fantastic 2024 BC Rugby Senior Club Finals Day attended by over 2000 people at Burnaby Lake RFC.

AGE-GRADE AND MINI RUGBY SHINES

The 2023 Fall Age-Grade Club Season provided buzz and excitement in both 7s and XV's format. Early in the season we saw well-attended Festivals as well as the newly-formed PR7s in August, which provided athletes with a fun start to the campaign. This ultimately led to a sellout 2023 Kamloops 7s event in October that featured 92 teams and 1200 athletes compete across 274 matches. The Kamloops 7s continues to grow rapidly, and we are expecting an increased capacity for the 2024 event in September. The Fall season also saw the return of Mainland and Island Regional Finals at U14, U16 and U18 levels before the 2023 Age-Grade Club Crossover Finals were held at UBC's Thunderbird Stadium for U16 and U18 Boys and Girls Leagues. With the 2022 event cancelled due to inclement weather, this marked an important return to the calendar.

Another welcome return to the calendar was the Vancouver Sevens Invitational in the week leading up to the HSBC SVNS Vancouver in February 2024. Taking place at UBC, the VSI featured over 400 athletes and 30 teams vying for glory across U15 Girls, U16 Boys, U18 Girls and U18 Boys Divisions.

Teams from Vancouver Rugby Union, Vancouver Island Rugby Union, North Vancouver Island Rugby Union, Fraser Valley Rugby Union, the Thompson-Okanagan Rugby Alliance, Aurora Wolves Rugby Union, Edmonton Gold, Celtic Barbarians (USA), Washington State (USA), and Nova Scotia competed in a festival-like atmosphere.

Mini Rugby also enjoyed growth this past year. 16 Clubs participated in the Sea-to-Sky (Mainland) and Vancouver Island Regional Jamborees in Fall 2023, while 22 Clubs participated in the Sea-to-Sky, Fraser Valley/Tri-City and Island Regions in Spring 2024. Furthermore, Mini Rugby Programs were started at new Clubs throughout the province, including Elk Valley RFC in Fernie and Yeti Rugby Club in Salmon Arm.

The return of the HSBC SVNS Vancouver in February 2024 saw Rugby at the heart of BC's communities once again. BC Rugby staff worked alongside Rugby Canada Community staff to provide Rugby opportunities to over 10,000 fans and athletes in a busy HSBC SVNS week that included four Rookie Rugby Festivals and two Let's Play Rugby sessions, engaging with both local Clubs and schools. 220 athletes from 12 BC Rugby Clubs were represented during the Rookie Rugby Family Day at BC Place, while 150 Mini Rugby athletes from 11 BC Rugby Clubs participated in the on-field Rookie Rugby activation on the final day of the HSBC SVNS at BC Place. This continued strong community work alongside the Paris 2024 Olympic Qualifiers in Langford the previous August, that saw over 100 participants attend a Rookie Rugby Festival and Let's Play Rugby Festival as part of the festivities.



Castaway Wanderers RFC score a try against Abbotsford RFC in the U18 Girls Final at the 2023 Age-Grade Club Finals.

STRATEGIC PILLAR #3: DEVELOP PERFORMANCE

THE BC BEARS PATHWAY

Under the leadership of BC Rugby Technical Director John Tait, 2023/24 yielded another successful year for our BC Bears Provincial Representative Teams as we continue to work towards establishing a consistent, accessible and challenging pathway for Age-Grade and Senior athletes.

The 2023 Representative season kicked off in July with the Provincial Regional Championships at UBC in Vancouver. This event continues to be our biggest junior event in our calendar, with over 1000 athletes competing at the 2023 tournament in front of approximately 2500 spectators. BC Bears Provincial Representative Coaches were once again in attendance, finalising their respective squads for the upcoming summer season.

Selected BC Bears athletes then attended Training Camps in July 2023 before competition. Our BC Bears U16-U18 Boys and Girls XV's Teams competed at the 2023 Western Canadian Championships in Calgary, bringing home three Championship victories! The U16 Boys, U18 Girls and U18 Boys Teams brought back the gold, with the U16 Girls Team clinching silver after a fantastic final against Rugby Ontario. The U16 Boys Program finished unbeaten in both warm-up matches and competition and did not concede a single point all summer.

BC hosted the 2023 U19 Canadian Rugby Championships at UBC in July/August, which saw the BC Bears U19 Men's and Women's teams finish third and fifth in their respective campaigns. The goal for 2024 is to fight for both Championships in Nova Scotia this coming summer.

It was a busy summer for our Senior Representative XV's Teams. The BC Bears Senior Women's Program played out a two-match Blue vs. Gold Series under the direction of Rugby Canada's Senior Women's Programming. This helped prepare and showcase female athletes for selection of the Senior Women's National Team ahead of the 2023 PAC4 Series, and U20 selection ahead of the summer U20 Tests in Eastern Canada.

The Senior Men's XV's Program, led by Head Coach Curry Hitchborn, returned to compete at the 2023 Coast-to-Coast Cup in Halifax against the Atlantic Selects and Toronto Arrows Senior Academy in June. Following a Blue vs. Gold Trial Match at the 2023 BC School Sports Rugby Provincial Championships in Abbotsford, Hitchborn named a 26-man squad to travel to Nova Scotia. The team put in two spirited performances but ultimately fell short against their opponents.



The BC Bears U16 Boys team competes against the Alberta Wolfpack U16 Boys at the 2023 Western Canadian Championships in Calgary, Alberta.

For our BC Bears Age-Grade 7s Teams, the U18 Girls 7s team enjoyed a fantastic experience at the inaugural 2023 Global Youth Sevens Gold Coast edition in December. Led by Program Lead Darcy Patterson, the Bears U18 Girls 7s Team rallied to two wins and one defeat against top international opposition on the opening day, before falling to the eventual Tournament Winners in the semi-finals.

For the first time since 2019, the BC Bears U16 Girls 7s Program returned in 2024 with the aim of building towards the 2024 BC Summer Games in Maple Ridge and 2025 Canada Summer Games. Under Program Lead Darcy Patterson, the program kicked off with Open ID Sessions in early 2024 and culminated with 12 selected athletes representing the BC Bears at the 2024 Tropical 7s in Florida. The Bears finished fourth in Tampa following an action-packed week of training, matches and tropical storms!

Meanwhile, the hard work continued in 2024 for our BC Bears Programs. In February, a joint U19 and U20 Women’s Identification and Development Camp was held to utilise athletes for the BC Bears U19 Program and Rugby Canada U20 Program.

Following the selection of the 2024 BC Bears Age-Grade Coaches, the Bears XVs Pathway was confirmed for athletes with the U16 and U18 Boys Teams hosting a two-match Series against the Eagle Impact Rugby Academy in July. The U18 Girls will contest at Top 40 Camp and Blue vs. Gold Series, while the U19 Men’s and Women’s Programs will compete at the 2024 U19 Canadian Rugby Championships in Nova Scotia. The U18 7s Programs will once again head to New Zealand in December 2024 for the Global Youth Sevens.

The BC Senior Women’s Program contested an exciting three-match Blue-Gold Series in May-June 2024, with the Island Blues defeating the Mainland Golds 2-1 after three high-quality matches.

There is still hard work to be done in keeping BC Bears Programming affordable and offsetting player fees for allowing greater access, as well as finding competitive events to for our Programs to attend.

BC ATHLETES REPRESENT NATIONALLY

Rugby Canada’s 2023/24 Junior and Senior Programming garnered strong representation from BC athletes across the year with the following notable highlights.



Canada’s Senior Women’s XVs National Team lifts the trophy after winning the 2024 Pacific Four Nations.

13 BC athletes represented Canada at the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games in Trinidad and Tobago, with Canada’s U18 Girls bringing home the silver medal and Canada’s U18 Boys finishing fourth.

Victoria’s Adia Pye and North Vancouver’s Savannah Bauder were two of 12 athletes to represent Canada’s Women’s 7s team at the 2024 FISU World University Championship Rugby Sevens in France.

Meanwhile, nine BC athletes earned selection to the Canada U18 Boys XVs Coredon Rugby Summer Tour in Amsterdam. There was also good representation for the province in Canada’s U20 squads across the course of the year.

BC’s Sophie de Goede has been an integral fixture in Canada’s Women’s XVs and 7s Programs throughout the past year. De Goede led Canada to a historic 2024 Women’s PAC4 victory, which included a first-ever win over the New Zealand Black Ferns. The team also included BC’s Shoshanah Seumanutafa. Canada now sits second in the World Rugby Rankings.



Canada’s U18 Women’s Team won silver at the 2024 FISU World University Championship Rugby Sevens in France.

Canada had lost to New Zealand in the 2023 tournament, before beating Australia to qualify for the inaugural Women's XV1. De Goede also featured heavily in the Women's 7s Program and was BC's sole representative in the squad that confirmed qualification for the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris.

Five BC athletes made Canada's Senior Women's XV's selection for the 2023 Tour to England, with two matches against the English national team. This Tour served as preparation for the inaugural 2023 WXV1 tournament in New Zealand, with four BC athletes selected to the squad that finished second behind England in the standings.

For the Senior Men's XV's Program, 10 BC athletes were selected by Head Coach Kingsley Jones for the Canada Men's XV's Tour to Tonga in 2023 which ultimately ended in two defeats. Eight BC athletes were then selected for the team's tour to Spain in November, which featured matches against Brazil, Spain and the USA.

Several BC athletes were included in Canada's Men's 7s and Women's 7s squads throughout the year on the HSBC World Rugby 7s Series tour. Meanwhile, nine BC athletes made the Men's and Women's 7s teams that brought home 2023 Pan-American Games bronze and silver medals respectively.

BC's Phil Berna made his 50th HSBC World Sevens Series tournament appearance at the 2024 HSBC SVNS Vancouver, which also saw De Goede represent the Women's 7s team that took bronze in front of their home crowd. The Women's 7s Program, which also saw selections from Abbotsford's Shalaya Valenzuela and Caroline Crossley, finished fourth overall while the Men's 7s Team finished bottom and subsequently missed out on qualification for the 2025 Series.

UNIVERSITY SUCCESS ON A NATIONAL SCALE

It's been a busy year of Rugby for BC's University Programs. UBC Thunderbirds claimed its third successive national title with Championship victory at the 2023 Canadian University Men's Rugby Championships, hosted at Trinity West University in BC. The University of Victoria finished with the silver medal after defeat to UBC in the Final, while TWU Spartans finished fifth overall.

Vancouver Thunderbirds Women's XV's Program claimed its fourth straight Can West title with the University of Victoria finishing runners-up, while UBC won its second successive Can West 7s title with the Vikes claiming silver and TWU Spartans in fifth spot.

The Vikes also claimed its highest-ever program finish at the 2023 U SPORTS Women's Rugby Championships in Quebec City, with UBC Thunderbirds finishing fifth overall.



UBC made it three successive title wins at the 2023 Canadian University Men's Rugby Championships held at TWU.

STRATEGIC PILLAR #4: STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Following a strong 2022/23 year, we have continued to work on representation within our community and further improving Member satisfaction.

2023/24 has seen the expansion of our Competition Committees with Fall-Spring Senior, North/Interior Senior and Age-Grade Competition Committees meeting regularly to improve competition at both junior and senior levels.

We have also hosted Town Halls with our regional unions to improve communication and transparency as we work together to improve the experience and competition at regional level.



For the third successive season, Kamloops RFC auctioned off their jerseys for a good cause - this time raising funds for YMCA Kamloops.

Furthermore, the continuation of Member Satisfaction Surveys at the end of their respective seasons as well as post-event surveys have been vital for us in gathering information and feedback on how to improve BC Rugby events and competition. We will continue this work in 2024 and beyond as we look forward to working closely with our Clubs, Regions and athletes to improve the experience at all levels of the grassroots game.

In June 2023, we saw the return of the BC Rugby Hall of Fame Gala dinner where we inducted 2022 and 2023 Members. We plan to host the 2024 Gala Dinner in the Fall to celebrate the Class of 2024 Inductees.

The Vancouver Rogues, BC's only gay and inclusive Rugby Team, competed at the 2024 Bingham Cup - the biennial world championships for gay and inclusive Rugby teams - in Rome. The team enjoyed success and represented BC with pride. As part of the team's campaign, BC Rugby teamed up with partners Gilbert Rugby Canada to design and provide the Rogues with some inclusive training balls; the yellow, blue and black design makes the ball easier to see for people with visual impairments.

BC's Indigenous Rugby Team, Thunder Rugby, embarked on a special two-week Tour to New Zealand which featured six matches across their Boys and Girls teams, as well as numerous cultural visits and exposure to high level training programs. Thunder Rugby is planning a similar tour for 2024, and has already completed a successful Tour to Kamloops, BC this year.

Several Clubs achieved historic milestones this past year, with the Meraloma Club celebrating its 100th year with a special Gala Dinner in Vancouver in September. United RFC celebrated its 60th year of Rugby excellence in the Tri-Cities and New Westminster regions, while Langley Rugby Club also officially opened its brand-new field with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Eight BC Rugby Clubs were awarded Community Rugby Club funding across 2023 and 2024: Rocky Mountain Rogues, Thunder Rugby, Aurora Wolves, Axemen Rugby Club, Elk Valley RFC, James Bay AA, Langley Rugby Club, Williams Lake Rustlers RFC. Aurora Wolves Rugby Union's Katie Gordon was also awarded the 2023 Rugby Canada Women in Leadership Fund.

There was strong BC Rugby Club representation as BC Rugby partnered with the Vancouver Warriors to host a BC Rugby night at Rogers Arena - something we hope to continue through 2024 and beyond. BC Rugby also teamed up with Justice RFC to deliver some fun activities at BC Place as part of the 2024 Canucks Autism Day, which saw 1000s of participants enjoy 11 stations ran by BC provincial sports organisations and professional sports teams.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

2024 BC RUGBY HALL OF FAME

BC Rugby can confirm that there will be seven Inductees into the BC Rugby Hall of Fame for 2024.

The Class of 2024 will be announced this summer, with the Inductees celebrated at the BC Rugby Hall of Fame Gala Dinner in Fall 2024.

2023 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP FUND

KATIE GORDON, AURORA WOLVES RUGBY UNION

Katie Gordon, Organizer and Treasurer of Prince George's 1697s Rugby, was named as one of six recipients of the 2023 Women in Leadership Fund by Rugby Canada. In the third year of the program, the 2023 edition of the fund awarded six recipients from Rugby club executive committees and provincial boards across the country funding of up to \$2000 to pursue development opportunities that will enhance their ability to lead from within our sport. It is the goal of the program to provide a strong and diverse leadership base in Canada.



2023 SPORT BC OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

SHANDA ASSMUS

BC Rugby Official Shanda Assmus was a Finalist in the Official of the Year category at the 2023 Sport BC Awards. Shanda was the first person to referee both Men's and Women's National University Finals in the same year, as well as being the first person to officiate both BC Rugby Men's and Women's Premier League Finals. She has officiated at international level in both 7s and XV's Rugby, represents the BC Rugby Referees Society Board of Directors, is a World Rugby Educator, and also mentors new referees in the community. Shanda continues to officiate both Senior and Age-Grade matches every week across the province.



STRATEGIC PILLAR #5: LEAD THE ORGANIZATION

GETTING IT RIGHT WITH GOVERNANCE

2023/24 has seen positive change in BC Rugby Leadership across the organisation.

In August 2023, BC Rugby announced its new President, Bob Strachan, to replace the departing, Mark Lewis. Bob had served as Vice President since 2019 and brings a wealth of experience and passion to the role. BC Rugby also welcomed new additions to its Board of Directors in Andrew Ference, Theresa Weeks and Denis Jones.

In terms of partnerships and sponsors, BC Rugby announced a multi-year partnership with O'Neills as the organisation's Official On-and-Off-Field Sportswear Provider. Founded in 1918, O'Neills is renowned for its commitment to quality and innovation across the globe and will further elevate BC's Rugby community to new heights. O'Neills will provide all BC Bears Provincial Representative Teams with playing and training kit, as well as design and produce fan and event merchandise for BC Rugby.

The BC Rugby Board has invested time this year in reviewing each of its committee charters to ensure that they are up to date and reflect good governance and oversight of the areas that each is responsible for.

BC Rugby is thankful its to its many funding partners including Viasport, BC Government, Rugby Canada, and Sport Hosting Vancouver. Additionally, BC Rugby is grateful for the continued support of our donors and attendees at the annual fundraising luncheon.

There is still work to do to continue to grow sustainable funding sources, and diversify the revenue streams to be able to expand programming.



BC RUGBY IN THE DIGITAL SPACE

BC Rugby social media statistics across platforms in the 2023/24 Year (Hootsuite):

	POST ENGAGEMENT	POST REACH	TOTAL FOLLOWERS
INSTAGRAM	99,762	2.42m	9,600
FACEBOOK	97,729	1.08m	7,834
TWITTER	7,877	212,047	5,629
LINKEDIN	3,410	13,679	446
YOUTUBE	707	21,358 views	1,495

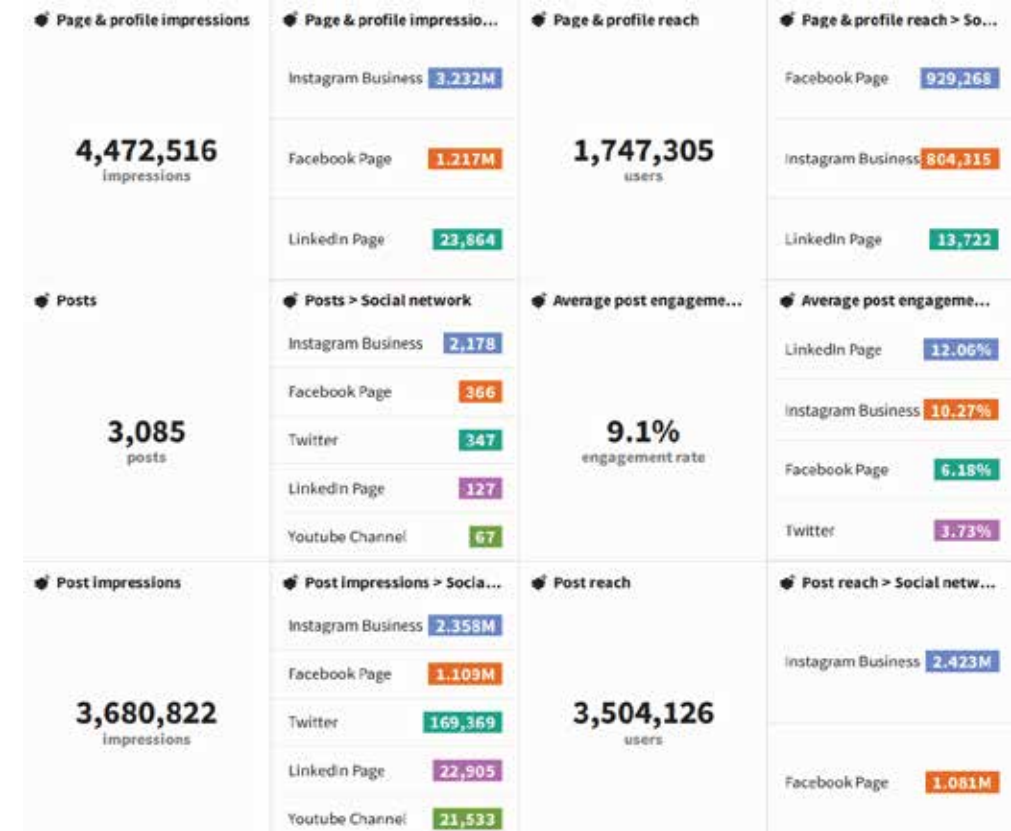
↑ 13%

increase of followers across platforms compared to 2022/23 metrics

↑ 22%

increase of average post reach across all platforms compared to 2022/23 metrics

Key metrics from BC Rugby Social Media Accounts (July 1, 2023 - June 14, 2024):



Key BC Rugby Website statistics from the 2023/24 fiscal year (Google Analytics):

133,461

Website visitors

497,833

Page views

1:55

Average Session (Mins)

2023/24 FINANCIALS

*Excerpts from the 2023/24 BC Rugby Audited Financial Statements

BRITISH COLUMBIA RUGBY UNION Statement of Financial Position 31 March 2024

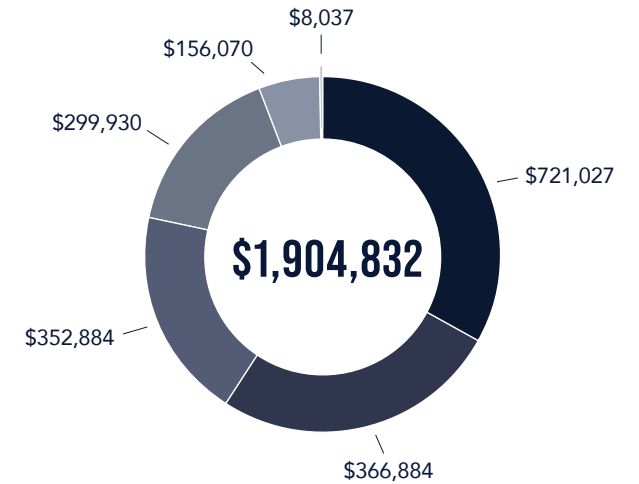
	Operating Fund		Tour Legacy Fund		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Assets						
Current						
Cash	326,326	431,356	91,660	89,245	417,986	520,601
Accounts receivable	72,567	125,204	-	-	72,567	125,204
Prepaid expenses	75,679	49,146	-	-	75,679	49,146
	474,572	605,706	91,660	89,245	566,232	694,951
Liabilities						
Current						
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	62,078	95,210	-	-	62,078	95,210
Deferred revenue (Note 3)	82,100	107,010	-	-	82,100	107,010
Refundable deposits	7,800	8,400	-	-	7,800	8,400
	151,978	210,620	-	-	151,978	210,620
Commitments (Note 6)						
Fund Balances						
Internally restricted	-	-	91,660	89,245	91,660	89,245
Unrestricted	322,594	395,086	-	-	322,594	395,086
	322,594	395,086	91,660	89,245	414,254	484,331
	474,572	605,706	91,660	89,245	566,232	694,951

Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balances For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Revenues		Expenses		(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses for the year	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Operating Fund						
Government grants	366,884	696,385	-	-	366,884	696,385
Dues - Schedule 1	156,070	115,637	-	-	156,070	115,637
Commercial activities - Schedule 3	721,027	552,873	428,647	410,389	292,380	142,484
Administration - Schedule 2	8,037	3,003	119,592	137,770	(111,555)	(134,767)
Representative teams - Schedule 6 (Note 5)	299,930	403,782	386,494	506,942	(86,564)	(103,160)
Rugby central - Schedule 4	352,884	330,088	268,404	279,089	84,480	50,999
Human resources	-	-	774,187	733,663	(774,187)	(733,663)
COVID-19 government subsidies - Schedule 5 (Note 7)	-	1,736	-	-	-	1,736
	1,904,832	2,103,504	1,977,324	2,067,853	(72,492)	35,651
Fund balance - beginning of year					395,086	359,435
Fund balance - end of year					322,594	395,086
Tour Legacy Fund						
Administration	2,415	1,009	-	-	2,415	1,009
Fund balance - beginning of year					89,245	88,236
Fund balance - end of year					91,660	89,245
Fund Balance Totals						
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenses for the year					(70,077)	36,660
Fund balance - beginning of year					484,331	447,671
Fund balance - end of year					414,254	484,331

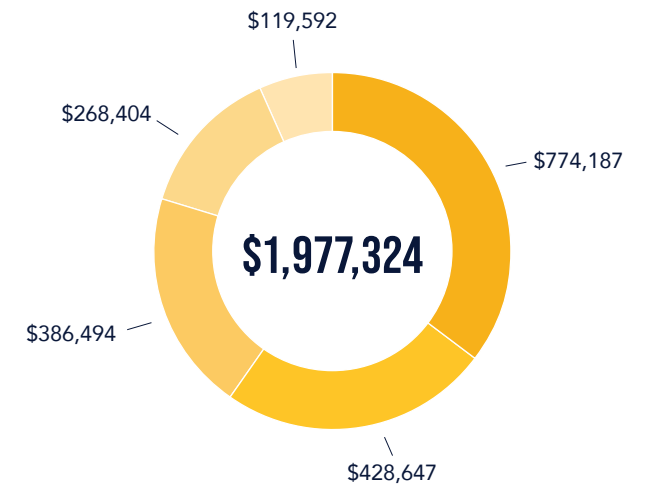
2023/24 REVENUES

- Commercial Activities
- Government Grants
- Rugby Central
- Representative Teams
- Dues
- Administration



2023/24 EXPENSES

- Human Resources
- Commercial Activities
- Representative Teams
- Rugby Central
- Administration



2023/2024 SEASON RESULTS

2023 PROVINCIAL REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

- U14 BOYS** Fraser Valley Rugby Union East
- U14 GIRLS** Fraser Valley Rugby Union East
- U16 BOYS** Vancouver Island Rugby Union
- U16 GIRLS** Vancouver Island Rugby Union
- U18 BOYS** Vancouver Island Rugby Union
- U18 GIRLS** Vancouver Island Rugby Union



2023 WESTERN CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

- U16 BOYS** BC Bears U16 Boys - Gold
- U16 GIRLS** BC Bears U16 Girls - Silver
- U18 BOYS** BC Bears U18 Boys - Gold
- U18 GIRLS** BC Bears U18 Girls - Gold



2023 U19 CANADIAN RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIPS

- U19 MEN** BC Bears U19 Men - 3rd
- U19 WOMEN** BC Bears U19 Women - 5th



2023 GLOBAL YOUTH SEVENS

- U18 GIRLS** BC Bears U18 Girls - Semi-Finals



2024 TROPICAL 7S

- U16 GIRLS** BC Bears U16 Girls - 4th



2023/2024 SEASON RESULTS

2023 SARATOGA CUP

SENIOR WOMEN Elk Valley RFC

SENIOR MEN Rocky Mountain Rogues



2023 KAMLOOPS 7S

U14 BOYS Castaway Wanderers

U14 GIRLS James Bay AA

U16 BOYS Abbotsford RFC

U16 GIRLS Calgary Irish Athletic Association

U18 BOYS Capilano RFC/MaDowell Rugby

U18 GIRLS Edmonton/Castaway Wanderers RFC



2023 DUNBAR KEG

1ST PLACE Vancouver Rugby Union

2ND PLACE Vancouver Island Tide

3RD PLACE Fraser Valley Rugby Union



2024 VANCOUVER SEVENS INVITATIONAL

U15 GIRLS Vancouver Island Tide

U16 BOYS Vancouver Island Tide

U18 GIRLS Fraser Valley Rugby Union

U18 BOYS North Vancouver Island Tsunami



2023/24 SEASON RESULTS

2023 AGE-GRADE CLUB FINALS

- U14 BOYS ISLAND** Castaway Wanderers RFC
- U14 BOYS MAINLAND** Capilano RFC
- U14 GIRLS ISLAND** Comox Valley Rapids Rugby
- U14 GIRLS MAINLAND** Abbotsford RFC
- U16 BOYS** Bayside RFC
- U16 GIRLS** Langley RFC
- U18 BOYS** UBCOB Ravens
- U18 GIRLS** Castaway Wanderers RFC



2023 SENIOR CLUB FINALS

- MEN'S PREMIER** UBCOB Ravens
- WOMEN'S PREMIER** Vancouver Thunderbirds
- MEN'S PREM RESERVE** UBCOB Ravens
- WOMEN'S DIVISION 1** Meraloma Rugby
- MEN'S DIVISION 1** Abbotsford RFC
- WOMEN'S DIVISION 2** Comox Valley Kickers RFC
- MEN'S DIVISION 2** Axemen RFC
- MEN'S DIVISION 3** Comox Valley Kickers RFC



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GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



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