

## **Director of Rugby Operations Report**

Over the past year, our programs in Alberta experienced significant growth, particularly highlighted by the success of the Alberta Regional Championship 7s. A remarkable 14 teams, spanning both boys' and girls' competitions at Foote Field, contributed to a record-breaking event. The surge in age-grade regional rugby led us to strategically split the tournament into two separate events, each featuring eight teams.

The momentum of expansion persisted with the inclusion of provincial teams from Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the Alberta Regional Championship 15s, held at St. Albert Rugby Club. Once again, this event not only set a new participation record but also solidified its status as the largest ARC 15s to date.

The collaborative efforts between the Calgary Rugby Union and Rugby Alberta resulted in the Western Championship, a spectacular event that attracted teams not just from the western provinces but also from Ontario, Newfoundland, and the United States. This edition marked the largest Western Championship yet, featuring spirited competition with 20 teams over three days.

The season also welcomed back the Women's Wolf Pack through the North v South Battle of Alberta series. This initiative allowed the senior Women's National Team coach to visit Alberta, observe training sessions, and witness matches. Across the two-game series, more than 70 athletes from both regions participated, with two individuals earning their first national caps in 2023. Plans are underway to expand this program, introducing a senior men's component to the North v South Series.

The summer schedule boasted a robust 10-week run of the Alberta Women's Premier League, culminating in the Hornets emerging victorious over the Lep Tigers. The Alberta Cup extended the season to 12 weeks, with the Hornets securing the top spot against the Lep Tigers once again. Notably, in the junior age grades, the first provincial championship since the COVID pandemic featured four outstanding matches in the U18 and U16 divisions. We aspire to expand the youth provincials into a larger tournament in future years.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Board, the dedicated staff, including Christi Sue, Breanne, Sandy, and many others, for their contributions to a fantastic year. We eagerly anticipate the opportunities and successes that 2024 will bring.

Sincerely,

Peter Houlihan  
Director of Rugby Operations