



CALGARY RUGBY UNION

Box 5888, Station "A", Calgary, Alberta T2H 1Y4

Office: 403-255-9199

Fields 9025 Shepard Rd SE

MEMBER
Canadian Rugby Union
Alberta Rugby Union
Sports Alberta

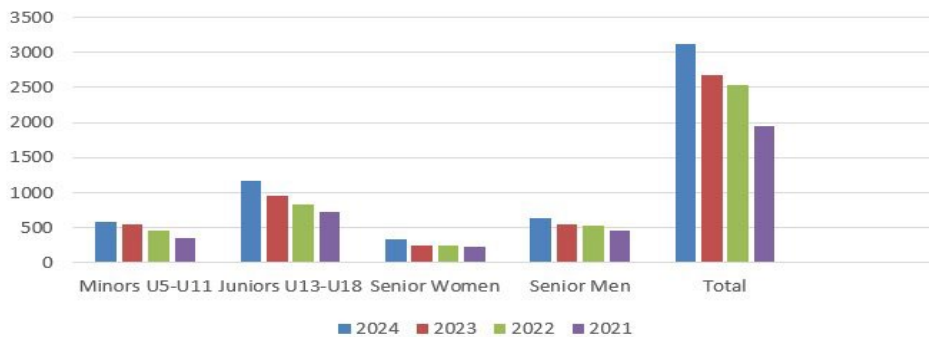
CRU Presidents Report 2024

The 2024 season was another successful one for both the Calgary Rugby Union (CRU) and the Calgary Rugby Park (CRP). This success came about due to the hard work and passion of the staff at the CRP and CRU, our board members, volunteer coaches and club members, players, parents, and the larger rugby community. As I completed my fourth year at the helm of the union and park, I am very proud of how far we have come both as a union with membership and leagues, and as a park with providing a home for rugby and the larger community. In my fourth year the focus was to continue to maximize the facility utilization (CRP) and strengthen the local rugby programs with higher numbers and lots of opportunities to engage in rugby activities (CRU).

Rugby

As with all rugby seasons, this started back in late 2023 and a lot of the major planning and building occurred in the months that led up to our Try Rugby kickoff weekend of April 27th. As we are seeing continual growth within our clubs this did cause for some uncertainty with the number of teams being entered into each league with our senior groups and with our junior sides, we continued to look for club matchups to combine to create as many full sides as possible. Our overall numbers in every age grade have displayed a positive growth and we have surpassed enrollment numbers from prior to COVID. The CRU can be proud that we reached our goal of providing many opportunities for registered players to engage in rugby this season. We had 'try' rugby days, full season fixtures, seven's tournaments (Stampede and Oktoberfest), touch rugby with the Geese, masters' games, U23 Mavs that played until the end of October and a fall league for juniors and women. This was due to some hardworking staff, volunteers, players, coaches, clubs, and fans! It is great to be able to report that overall, the 2024 season was a great success in Southern Alberta!

2024-2021



Minis and Juniors

The minis festivals continued for 2024 which are always awesome to see as all the little ones are running around each Saturday morning filling the fields with future ruggers! We did see our mini registration numbers continue to grow, and we reached our highest registration to date. This growth will be the future foundation for all our rugby leagues in the future years to come. The year started off again with a bang with a very successful 'Try Rugby Day' event which has



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continued to grow in numbers annually. Kids were able to enjoy rugby, bouncy castles, get rugby balls and eat hot dogs.

Junior rugby also saw a great success with numbers growing by over 20% for the fourth year in a row and we are hoping to surpass pre-Covid numbers during the 2025 season. Our Executive Director Kim and Youth Development Officer Aden were a great team and worked closely with club managers and coaches weekly to put together meaningful games for all junior players.

The major takeaway for the CRU is that going into the 2025 season will be focused on increasing our mini and junior rugby membership. As well we want to eclipse our mini numbers from 2024 and increase our junior numbers but maintain the integrity of the league. By increasing our junior numbers for each club, it will allow us to run a robust league throughout the spring and summer months. To do so we will need support from and to work with Rugby Alberta, AJRA, and each of our clubs. This is a great challenge but not one this community cannot take on!

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Minors U5-U11	586	553	463	351	538	563	455	419	350
Juniors U13-U18	1174	959	839	731	1347	1156	1099	858	785

Senior Rugby

This year, we ran three divisions of Senior Men's and two and half of Senior Women's rugby successfully. At times we continued to use 'Game On' rules in third division men's and second division women's when needed. With the goal that rugby wins, we got off as many games as possible. With the growth of senior women's registration, it became apparent quickly that we needed to see growth in the AWP teams. We doubled the number of AWP teams from 2 to 4 and still maintained a strong SW1 league. Even though this was not the original plan working with RA and the clubs in the South we were able to reschedule the AWP league to maximize games and teams in the league. Ultimately the CRU and the clubs pulled together to run a great season.

We continued to value the input of our clubs and ran pre, mid and post season information sessions. Also, each VP of men's and women's work with Rugby Alberta and our Executive Director to put together a solid season for our top divisions of AC and AWP. Overall, I am very proud of their efforts, and it was great to see rugby played at each of these levels every Friday night and Saturday afternoon!

The Women's season ran Competitive (4 teams AWP), and Developmental (7 teams SWD) divisions. The competitions were stronger this year and with the insurgence of registered players there were more games played than ever. The SW1 title went to the Lethbridge rugby club and the Rams represented Southern Alberta in the AWP final in which they conceded to the mighty Leptigers.

For the Senior Men there were three distinct levels with Recreational (6 teams 3rds), Developmental (10 teams 2nds), and Competitive (3 teams AC). This year at the CRU level we decided that any club that had only one team had to enter in at the Developmental level. If a team was concerned due to player welfare, they could ask for dispensation to the Recreational level in which we had one team did so. This then helped to create a more balanced recreational



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level allowing all teams to play as many games as possible The Irish rose to the top of the Recreational league and represented Southern Alberta in the provincial finals. They lost a very tough battle against the Edmonton Clansmen.

Our strongest level this year was the Developmental level with ten teams vying for the top spot. The season was very competitive, and some great rugby was played. Ultimately the Canucks finished the top of the South and took home the provincial title.

The AC ran like the year before with only 3 clubs from the South and 5 up North. Unfortunately, the North teams overextended themselves and there were some forfeited matches which made for a disjointed season. The Hornets did represent the South at the provincial finals for the second year in a row but lost a tough battle to the Leptigers.

This year was the third year for a falls U23 men's league in which we ran under our Maverick Colt's banner. This league was in conjunction with Edmonton Gold, and the Alberta Universities (U of A, U of C, Mount Royal, SAIT and U of L). It was great to see this age grade playing games in the fall and we look forward to this continued development. The Maverick Colt's finished the season undefeated with a 6-0 record.

Our goal of increasing the player base at the senior level was very successful for both the men and women. With the growth of over 90 registered members in both leagues we saw a 37% increase in women's membership and a 16% increase in men's membership. We will need to continue to increase our numbers to increase the level of play at our top levels. To do so we will need to work with the ERU and RA to develop a plan to really showcase rugby in social media and attract more players to the game as well as attract and develop coaches at these levels.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Minors U5-U11	586	553	463	351	538	563	455	419	350
Juniors U13-U18	1174	959	839	731	1347	1156	1099	858	785
Senior Women	334	243	248	221	221	214	331	269	341
Senior Men	640	550	540	463	589	653	776	706	848

Facility

The Calgary Rugby Park is a facility run by the Calgary Rugby Union. The park and union have continued to have great financial success for the third year in a row due to lots of hard work from our board, employees and of course with the buy-in from our rugby community. This is something the board is quite proud of and glad to have such an active board and dedicated employees. This success has set a strong foundation for years of rugby success and we will be looking not only at making improvements within the park but by looking at ways to build a strong league and expanding the opportunities for our members to engage in rugby activities.

By being financially stable, the board and the park could start looking forward to new ventures and planning. The board challenged the facility to utilize the park in times that rugby is not always played there, and this challenge was met.

It started with hosting the Six Nations watch parties in February and March. Then in late April we hosted our annual Try Rugby event. Then for the second year in a row we hosted the high school try rugby day in early May, attended by over 300 athletes and 30 local coaches. We also



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continue to be the host of the annual high school sevens Clear Water Cup tournament. We were able to host the Senior Wolf Pack games in April and May with teams from Northern Alberta, Southern Alberta, and Manitoba playing for the bragging rights. The beginning of summer saw us host the Stampede 7s tournament which had over 70 teams registered. As the summer rolled on the CRU put on multiple summer youth camps that were a huge success both financially and rugby wise. To cap the regular season off we hosted our 3rd annual Oktoberfest tournament but changed the format to a 7's tournament and it proved to be a huge success. The park was also able to entice the university PUMRC teams to play at the CRU and we saw games hosted until the end of October.

Each weekend of rugby we saw substantial numbers coming back to the park and we had record sales at the bar most weekends. Players, coaches, and families continued to share their love and passion for our game weekend after weekend. The CRU with support from RA was able to purchase two VEO cameras and Live Streaming membership. This allowed us to stream games live on fields one and two every weekend for viewers from all over to watch Calgary rugby. This also produced videos for clubs and players to use to develop a better understanding of the game they play and to support coaching. The CRP continues to evolve its practices to allow for more growth of both the sport and community.

Conclusion

For a fourth straight year I am grateful for the board members and staff that work countless hours for rugby to run as smoothly as it has been in Calgary.

Board Members

- Secretary - Luke Demeter
- Treasurer - Martin Rejman
- Commercial Director - Thomas Calvert
- Discipline Director - John MacDonald
- Junior Rugby Director - Roger Duurtsema
- Men's Rugby Director - Matt Suter
- Women's Rugby Director - Jess Bateman
- Representative Rugby Director - Matt Squires
- CRUMOS President – Matt Bourdot

Key Employees

- Kim Endicott – Executive Director
- Wally Anderson – Facility Superintendent
- Erin Steyn – Bar Manager
- Aden White – Rugby Development Officer
- Kyla Arneson – Kitchen Manager (Transitioning to Will Way for 2025)

This is no easy feat but an appreciated one. We hope that next year in 2025 we will be able to continue the growth of rugby, especially in the youth rugby, the U16 & U18 leagues and senior men's representative opportunities and continue to work cohesively with all partners in rugby including the ARU and ERU. Grass roots rugby is where we need to focus our time. Thanks again to the rugby community and I look forward to the 2025 season!

Peter Rowe
President
Calgary Rugby Union
