



ERU Presidents Report

2024 AGM

Overview

It was my pleasure to rejoin the Rugby Alberta board 17 years later and I am deeply grateful for the support I've received from its members, along with the ERU staff, current and past board members, and the Club Presidents. Each of you has been instrumental in helping me learn the functions of our Union and develop the strategies we've begun to implement. Thank you all for your guidance and encouragement.

Senior Rugby

Northern Alberta teams showcased exceptional performance this season. The Leprechaun Tigers dominated both the Women's and Men's Provincial competitions, ultimately finishing as Champions. While SARFC experienced a tough loss in Men's Division 2, this was offset by the Clansmen's victory in Division 3. If the ERU Women's Division 1 winners, the LA Crude, had had the chance to play against Lethbridge (whose CRU season ends in August), I believe we might have secured 4 out of 5 Provincial Championships. Moving forward, we remain committed to fostering meaningful competition and enjoyment for our Senior players.

Junior

Our Juniors followed in similar fashion taking 3 of the 4 championships. U16 Boys: Strathcona Druids RFC; U18 Girls: St. Albert RFC; U18 Boys: Strathcona Druids RFC with the U16 Girls ERU Combo team still showing well in a loss. The enthusiasm displayed at Junior festivals—spanning spring, summer, and fall—was inspiring. I thoroughly enjoyed witnessing the dedication of players, coaches, referees, staff, and volunteers.

Representative Rugby

The juniors kicked off the year with a U18 trip to Los Angeles and a U16 trip to Vancouver. Great start to the rep season and setting the tone.

Next was the Wolfpack Mens North vs South series with the south narrowly taking both of the 2 matches with other games against Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The ERU Gold sent a Women's side to the Stampede 7s tournament and came out with Championship in the Premier competition. Huge win and something to be very proud of. Should also congratulate the Nor'Westers who took home the win in the U15 Boys & Girls Competition. Amazing wins.

Big changes as we worked to welcome an additional junior representative side, the County Warriors from Zone 7&8, to stand beside the Gold and provide an additional level of competition for elite and development athletes at the Alberta Regional Competitions. Learning how to work together wasn't always easy but I hope that as we continue to support getting boots on the ground that we will find ways to support all of the participants.

Finally the Gold U23 program has had continued success and has been a great place for competitive fall mens rugby alongside the University competition. This is the start of getting our Senior Men's competition back in the hunt for a renewed Bateman Cup in the future.

ERU Trust Fund

This was the first year in which we provided grants totaling \$49,731 to ERU stakeholder clubs to help develop the sport. Clubs applied for and received money that helped to improve their facilities, support junior rugby programs, subsidize travel, provide playing kit and equipment, as well as contribute to endowment funds. Ensuring that we manage this asset effectively is vitally important to our ongoing success

Social

Both of the key tournaments, Jasper 7s & Rugbyfest were well planned and organized by their boards. If the ERU is here primarily to support our member club and deliver the league competitions I would love to see how we can assist in helping these events continue in the future.

Challenges both past and current

- **Referee Recruitment:** Registered referee numbers increased by over 30% this year, surpassing 30 total. However, we cannot lose momentum—without referees, we have no games.
- **Gold Senior Men's Program:** Revitalizing this program is a top priority for 2025.
- **Board Engagement:** While this year saw good engagement, we must continue finding ways to make participation rewarding and effective.
- **Rural Rugby:** Reviving teams like the Knights, Penguins, Reapers, Riggers, and Sharks is essential. We need to support these clubs and make travel competitions more appealing.

Opportunities for 2025

- **Strategic Plan:** Formalize the ERU Strategic Plan.
- **Governance Alignment:** Ensure alignment with boards delivering rugby across the province.
- **Player Pathways:** Clearly define pathways to our National teams.
- **Bylaws and Policies:** Update bylaws, policies, and procedures to reflect current needs.
- **Growth Initiatives:** Drive game growth through enhanced marketing, better communication, and a focus on fun both on and off the field.

Thanks to all and I look forward to continuing on with the Edmonton Rugby Union, be it as a board member, volunteer, supporter, player(?), coach, referee, and as a fan. Let's all strive to keep advancing rugby together.



Dave Logan
President
Edmonton Rugby Union