



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 2025

The 2025 season was the most successful season we have had to date or 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, club members, players, parents, and the larger rugby community. As I completed my fifth 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 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). I do believe we were successful at reaching each of these goals.

Rugby

As with all rugby seasons, the planning started back in late 2024 and a lot of the major planning and building occurred in the months that led up to our Try Rugby kickoff weekend of April 26th. The off-season planning and divisional meetings allowed us at the CRU to be proactive with the season planning. Rugby membership has been growing across all age-grades which has caused some of our clubs some uncertainty regarding the actual number of players they may have at the start of the season. This then made it difficult for them to understand the right number of teams being entered into each league, be it senior or junior sides. To help with sporadic growth 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 growth and we have surpassed enrollment numbers year over year in a total. The CRU can be proud that we reached our goal of providing many opportunities for registered players to engage in rugby this season.

The season started strong and some of the accomplishments were as follows; the '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. We were very proud to win two bids this year to host two different major youth tournaments. We host the Rugby Alberta ARC tournament but as well the Canadian Regional Championships for all the U19 teams across the country. We were able to showcase the great rugby we have in Alberta. The CRU with the ERU were able to plan a successful series between the Mavericks Sr. Women and Men versus the Edmonton Gold. Allowing the provincial coaches opportunities to build their Wolf Pack teams. This was due to some hardworking staff, volunteers, players, coaches, clubs, and fans! It is great to be able to report that overall, the 2025 season was a great success in Southern Alberta!

Minis and Juniors

The minis festivals continued for 2025 which are always awesome to see as all the little ruggers running around each Saturday morning filling the fields with future rugby players! We did see our mini registration numbers continue to grow, and we reached our highest registration to date. This growth will be the 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 continued to grow in numbers annually. Kids were able to enjoy rugby, bouncy castles, get rugby balls and eat hot dogs.



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Junior rugby also saw great success with numbers growing by over 10% for the fifth year in a row and we are hoping to surpass 2019 numbers during the 2026 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.

Youth Rugby	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Minors U5-U11	617	586	553	463	351	538	563	455	419	350
Juniors U13-U18	1290	1174	959	839	731	1347	1156	1099	858	785

The major takeaway for the CRU is that going into the 2026 season will be focused on increasing our mini and junior rugby membership. As well we want to eclipse our mini numbers from 2025 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!

Senior Rugby

This year, we ran a recreational, developmental and AC divisions of Senior Men's and a developmental and AWP divisions of Senior Women's rugby. 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. We did see growth in rugby at the senior level, but we still have work to do especially with the senior men. The question will be how do increase the quality of play at the top level to increase registration across the teams. Now we have seen some great growth in our developmental levels but how to take that into the AC level. Overall continued growth has strengthen the league as a whole and we want to build on this moving forward. This was a season to be proud of and with continued growth in the future and collaboration across the province we cannot wait to see what 2026 will bring for rugby!

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Senior Women	347	334	243	248	221	221	214	331	269	341
Senior Men	620	640	550	540	463	589	653	776	706	848

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 (8 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 Saracens rugby club with an incredible win over the Clan women from Edmonton to claim the Provincial title. A title that has not been played for in over a decade! To cap the women's season off the Rams Rugby Club represented Calgary Rugby in the final for the second straight season but this year



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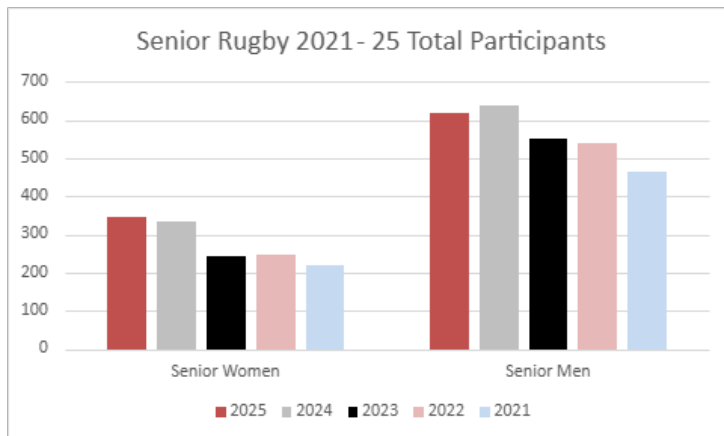
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they made sure to come away with the hardware. Making all fans in the South very proud of their team.

For the Senior Men there were three distinct levels with Recreational (7 teams 3rds), Developmental (11 teams 2nds), and Competitive (3 teams AC). This year at the CRU level we continued to have any club that had only one team to enter 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 do so for the second straight season. This then helped to create a more balanced recreational level allowing all teams to play as many games as possible. With the rec level always having a wide range of players mid-season we group the top 4 teams to finish off against each other and then the bottom three played a round robin and shared players so rugby could win. The

Canucks rose to the top of the Recreational league and represented Southern Alberta in the provincial finals. They won a very tough battle against the Parkland Sharks.

Our strongest level this year for the second year in a row was hands down the Developmental level with eleven teams vying for the top spot. The season was very competitive, and some great rugby was played. Ultimately the Banff Bears finished at the top of the South and took home the provincial title in a very tough final against a strong Nor'Westers. It was great to see the growth of Banff Rugby and the talent they produced on the field.

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 lopsided matches which made for a disjointed season. The Canucks did represent the South at the provincial finals for and brought a great team, crowd and exciting play but came up short in the end to a strong Nor'Westers team.

This year was the fourth 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 5-0 record. 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

We did not have as much growth at senior level as we would have liked to see. There was a small growth at the women's side but a small dip in registrations for the men. 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.



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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. On the books we have had our most successful season to date. 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 third year in a row we tried to host the high school try rugby day in early May, but weather did not work with us, and we needed to cancel at last minute. We will look forward to bringing it back in 2026. We also continue to be the host of the annual high school sevens Clear Water Cup tournament. This then led us to our annual Women's Day a celebration we are always proud of as we are able to showcase in a creative way the impact our women have not only on the rugby community but the global Calgary area. We also continued to host 100's of high school games which has been a mandate to bring more youth rugby through our park.

This year rep rugby at the senior level looked different but working closely with the ERU and brought back a battle of Alberta between Mavericks and Gold. With a series of games in May with the CRU and ERU hosting matches. From these teams Alberta was able to select Wolf Pack teams that then went on to represent Alberta in Nova Scotia. As for the juniors, we were able to be the host of the ARC tournament in which we saw the best of Albertas U19 and U17 players from across all areas of province. New this year there was a U15 Mavs team to play against a Gold team which was a fantastic expansion to our player pathway program.

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. This summer brought another huge tournament to Calgary. We were able to win a bid and host the Canadian Rugby Championships. This is a national tournament that showcases the U19 players from both men and women.

This summer we also had a wonderful opportunity to work with Rugby Canada to bring international rugby back to Calgary. Due to the size of the expected crowd the venue used was the McMahon Stadium. We were able to host the Canadian men's team for almost three weeks as their main practice facility. This brought a huge excitement to our facility and opportunities that we brought back to the rugby community from youth through coaches. We even had the mayor down for a day where she was displaying her tackling skills. The game was a huge success with over 11 000 fans cheering on a Canada win over America.

As we rolled into September, we were able to host not only the Southern Alberta senior rugby finals but also the provincial rugby finals. These events bring many fans and players to our fields and provide for excellent rugby and an excellent day of celebrations. To cap the regular season



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off we hosted our 4th annual Oktoberfest tournament and continued the format to a 7's tournament and it proved to be a huge success. The tournament had a boost to our numbers as we hosted a huge watch event for the Women's World Cup final in which Canada played England in a final that over 70 000 people attend. With 4 Albertans on the team the Canadians left everything in the field but did lose a very hard-fought battle. They walked away with a silver medal but won a gold across all Canadian fans. It was a day that we could not anticipate that we tried to prepare for. We rent chairs, table sand even a huge 10 v 8 LED tv to showcase the game. We not only filled the club house with 120 viewers, but we also added another 450 viewers in our event tent! With all three major tv channels having a reporting presence and our kitchen doing its best to try and feed over 500 people!

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 fifth 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 – Alex Hill-Tout
- Men's Rugby Director - Matt Suter
- Women's Rugby Director - Jess Bateman
- Representative Rugby Director - Vacant
- CRUMOS President – Matt Bourdot

Key Employees

- Kim Endicott – Executive Director
- Matt Suter – Operations Manager
- Wally Anderson – Facility Manager
- Eric White – Bar Manager
- Aden White – RDO
- Will Way – Kitchen Manager

This is no easy feat but an appreciated one. We hope that next year in 2026 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 2026 season!

Peter Rowe
President
Calgary Rugby Union
