



15TH WORLD RUGBY GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2021

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE 15th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WORLD RUGBY

By Zoom / Hosted at Queen Elizabeth II Centre

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 25, 2021

PRESENT

Present

Chairman	Sir Bill Beaumont
Vice-Chairman / Fédération Française de Rugby	Bernard Laporte
Union Argentina de Rugby	Sol Iglesias
Rugby Australia	Marcelo Rodriguez
	Hamish McLennan
	Pip Marlow
	Brett Robinson
Rugby Canada	Pat Parfrey
Rugby Football Union	Deborah Griffin
	Bill Sweeney
	Jonathan Webb
Fiji Rugby Union	John O'Connor
Fédération Française de Rugby	Serge Simon
	Brigitte Jugla
Georgian Rugby Union	George Nijaradze
Irish Rugby Football Union	Susan Carty
	John O'Driscoll
	Philip Orr
Federazione Italiana Rugby	Giovanni Fava
	Antonella Gualandri
	Marzio Innocenti
Japan Rugby Football Union	Kensuke Iwabuchi
	Naoko Saiki
New Zealand Rugby Union	Bart Campbell
	Deb Robinson
	Mark Robinson
Federatia Romana de Rugbi	Alin Petrache
Lakapi Samoa	Tuilaepa S. L. Malielegaoi
Scottish Rugby Union	Mark Dodson
	John Jeffrey
	Lesley Thomson
South African Rugby Union	Mark Alexander
	Vanessa Doble
	Jurie Roux
Union de Rugby del Uruguay	Fernando de Posadas
USA Rugby	Bob Latham
Welsh Rugby Union	Robert Butcher
	Ieuan Evans
	Liza Burgess
Asia Rugby	Terence Khoo
	Ada Milby
Oceania Rugby	Richard Sapias
	Cathy Wong
Rugby Africa	Khaled Babbou
	Rolande Boro

Rugby Americas North

Rugby Europe

Sudamerica Rugby

Dennis Dwyer

Cristina Flores

Octavian Morariu

Veronika Muehlhofer

Marjorie Enya

Sebastian Pineyrua

UNIONS REPRESENTED

Full Member Unions in Attendance

American Samoa Rugby Football Union
Bahamas Rugby Football Union
Barbados Rugby Football Union
Bermuda Rugby Union
Botswana Rugby Union
Cayman Rugby Union
Ceska Rugbyova Unie
Chinese Rugby Football Association
Chinese Taipei Rugby Football Union
Confederação Brasileira de Rugby
Cook Islands Rugby Union
Costa Rica Rugby Union
Dansk Rugby Union
Deutscher Rugby Verband
Eswatini Rugby Union
Federação Portuguesa de Rugby
Federació Andorrana de Rugbi
Federación Colombiana de Rugby
Federación de Rugby de Chile
Federación Española de Rugby
Federación Mexicana de Rugby AC
Federacion Peruana De Rugby
Federación Venezolana de Rugby Amateur
Federatia Romana de Rugbi
Federația Sportivă Națională de Rugby
Fédération Belge de Rugby
Fédération Française de Rugby
Fédération Ivoirienne de Rugby
Fédération Luxembourgeoise de Rugby
Fédération Malagasy de Rugby
Fédération Monégasque de Rugby
Fédération Royale Marocaine de Rugby
Fédération Rwandaise de Rugby
Fédération Sénégalaise de Rugby
Fédération Suisse de Rugby
Fédération Tahitienne de Rugby
Fédération Tunisienne de Rugby
Federazione Italiana Rugby
Fiji Rugby Union
Georgian Rugby Union
Ghana Rugby Union
Guam Rugby Football Union
Guyana Rugby Football Union
Hong Kong Rugby Union
Hrvatski Ragbijaški Savez
Indian Rugby Football Union
Irish Rugby Football Union
Israel Rugby Union
Jamaica Rugby Football Union
Japan Rugby Football Union
Kazakhstan Rugby Federation
Kazakhstan Rugby Federation

Kenya Rugby Football Union
Korea Rugby Union
Latvijas Regbija Federacija
Lithuanian Rugby Federation
Magyar Rögbi Szövetség
Malaysia Rugby Union
Malta Rugby Football Union
Namibia Rugby Union
Nederlands Rugby Bond
New Zealand Rugby
Nigeria Rugby Football Federation
Niue Rugby Football Union
Norges Rugby Forbund
Osterreichischer Rugby Verband
Pakistan Rugby Union
Papua New Guinea
Persatuan Rugby Union Indonesia
Philippine Rugby Football Union
Polski Związek Rugby
Ragbi Savez Bosne i Hercegovine
Rugby Australia
Rugby Canada
Rugby Football Union
Rugby Union Mauritius
Rugby Union of Russia
Rugby Union of Serbia
Rugby Zveza Slovenije
Samoa Rugby Union
Scottish Rugby Union
Singapore Rugby Union
Slovakia Rugby Union
Solomon Islands Rugby Union Federation
South African Rugby Union
Sri Lanka Rugby Football Union
St. Vincent & The Grenadines Rugby Union
Suomen Rugbyliitto
Svenska Rugby Forbundet
Thai Rugby Union
Tonga Rugby Union
Trinidad & Tobago Rugby Football Union
Uganda Rugby Football Union
Ukraine Rugby Union
Union Argentina de Rugby
Union de Rugby del Paraguay
Union de Rugby del Uruguay
United Arab Emirates Rugby Federation
USA Rugby
Uzbekistan Rugby Union
Vanuatu Rugby Football Union
Welsh Rugby Union
Zambia Rugby Football Union
Zimbabwe Rugby Union

Associate Member Unions in Attendance

Algeria Rugby Federation
British Virgin Islands Rugby Union

Brunei Rugby Football Union
Burundi Rugby Union
Cyprus Rugby Union
Fédération Burkinabé de Rugby
Federation Malienne de Rugby
Guatemala Rugby Union
Iran Rugby Federation
Kyrgystan Rugby Union
Lao Rugby Union
Lebanese Rugby Union Federation
Mongolia Rugby Football Union
Slovakia Rugby Union
St. Lucia Rugby Union
Togo Rugby Union

Apologies were received from the following absent Full Member Unions

Bulgarian Rugby Federation
Mauritania Rugby Union

Apologies were received from the following absent Associate Member Unions

Azerbaijan Rugby Union
Tanzania Rugby Union

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman, Sir Bill Beaumont, extended a warm welcome to all the delegates on the occasion of the 15th General Assembly of World Rugby. The Chairman observed that the General Assembly was a first in that it was being hosted via zoom which was very different from what had been imagined when the Rugby family were saying its goodbyes at the end of an exceptional men's Rugby World Cup in Japan just two years ago.

The Chairman commenced by reflecting on the remarkable journey that World Rugby had been on during the preceding two years. The Chairman noted that Council elected himself and Bernard Laporte to lead the sport forward, to create new opportunities, to grow the sport and to attract new fans.

The Chairman paid a special tribute to all the unsung heroes, the doctors, nurses and scientists, including our own rugby front line heroes, who had worked so hard to contain the pandemic. The Chairman asked the General Assembly to join him in pausing for a moment to commemorate the members of the rugby family who have sadly passed during the pandemic.

The Chairman informed the meeting that he was a great optimist. The Chairman advised the meeting that when the pandemic hit, World Rugby got to work. The Chairman outlined that World Rugby's first priority was to support our Unions to help ease the financial strain and the second priority was to get the sport up and running through covid protocols, covid law variations and education. The Chairman expressed his pride at the leading role rugby has played in getting people back to sport around the world.

The Chairman noted that World Rugby had heard the moving accounts of former players who are struggling with their health as the concussion conversation grew. The Chairman stated to the meeting that World Rugby stand by these members of our family.

The Chairman observed that the World Rugby's values remain at the heart of everything the sport does and has guided World Rugby's thinking as it started to consider how to futureproof our sport, not just from the pandemic, but from a rapidly changing business, sporting and entertainment landscape. The Chairmen advised the meeting that the World Rugby leadership had posed the questions of:

- How can we advance our commitment to player welfare?;
- How can we grow our fanbase and unlock new revenue streams?;
- How can we harmonise our calendar?;
- How can we reimagining our hosting models and make our events more environmentally sustainable?

The Chairman informed the meeting that, with the input of the membership, World Rugby had launched a transformational strategic plan that provides direction and ambition. The Chairman highlighted that World Rugby had implemented transformational governance reform that promotes inclusivity, diversity, independence, and promotes the voice of Unions, Regions and players. Th Chairman added that World Rugby had launched an ambitious and leading six point plan to further cement rugby as the most progressive sport on Player Welfare. The Chairman noted that linked to this, World Rugby had launched a new participation plan which provides a roadmap for the sport to accelerate out of the pandemic and reinvigorate the community game and had remodeled the future of the women's game with the launch of WXV, and ensured that women are at the heart of our sport from the field to the boardroom.

The Chairman advised the meeting, that the World Rugby Council at its Interim Meeting the previous day had taken progressive and defining decisions for the future of the Game as follows:

- Council approved a new Rugby World Cup hosting model that promotes partnership and optimizes outcomes for all parties;
- Council agreed new Game On community law variations designed to make the sport more accessible, sustainable and safer;

- Council agreed transformational national eligibility reform which is good for players, Unions and the global competitiveness and growth of the game;
- Council agreed new community law variations designed to ensure that rugby is accessible, a sport for all, as we look to welcome new players to our family;
- Council also agreed an updated women's strategic plan that will ensure we continue to lead the way in harnessing the unstoppable momentum of women in rugby at all levels;

The Chairman noted that the Game was only at half time. The Chairman highlighted that the Rugby family must continue to work in order to attract more fans and must not let complacency set in. The Chairman added that only by working as a team will we ensure our collective legacy is one that cements rugby as the sport of choice for young people, for parents, for broadcasters and sponsors.

The Chairman advised the Meeting that World Rugby are making strong progress on aligning the global calendar for Unions, clubs, players and competitions and highlighted the importance of not let this commitment slip as the world exits the pandemic. The Chairman noted that World Rugby are defining a new direction of travel for sevens to ensure it is relevant, exciting and accessible for new fans, broadcasters and partners and cements our Olympic future. The Chairman added that World Rugby are going to redouble our efforts to strategically invest in the growth of the game, to advance Player Welfare at all levels, attract a new fan base and to grow revenues for reinvestment in our great sport.

The Chairman highlighted that underpinning this new direction, under Alan Gilpin's leadership, World Rugby are undertaking an exciting and impactful business transformation project that will enable World Rugby to deliver on these pledges in full partnership with you. The Chairman added that as the Game advances, it is important that the next generation of players and fans are at the heart of what we do and that it is key that World Rugby understands the changing needs of young people and society as a whole.

The Chairman informed that meeting the Rugby family must work harder to protect our environment, to tackle racism in sport and act on our pledges to further diversity across our organisations and every level of the sport.

2. OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 15TH WORLD RUGBY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly received a video from Dr. Thomas Bach OLY, President of the International Olympic Committee to officially open the 15th World Rugby General Assembly.

Dr. Bach extended a warm welcome to the delegates on the occasion of the virtual World Rugby General Assembly.

Dr. Bach noted that since the last gathering of the Rugby Family, two years ago, the world has changed immeasurably. Dr. Bach added that nobody was unaffected by the global pandemic, but the unifying power of sport had shone brightly during the challenging times. Dr. Bach highlighted that the strength, resilience and determination of athletes around the world, including rugby players, brought hope, unity, inspiration and enjoyment to people around the world during the difficult times.

Mr. Back recalled that in 2021 sport had experienced a magical Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo with billions of people around the globe being united by emotion, sharing moments of joy. Dr. Bach pointed out that Rugby Sevens was part of that incredible story, and congratulated all the participating athletes, and in particular congratulated the Fiji men's and New Zealand's women teams on winning gold.

Dr. Bach observed that this spirit of solidarity, so evident at the Games, demonstrates that, by standing together, the world can address the many challenges of our time.

Dr. Bach added that solidarity means more than respect or non-discrimination, it means, helping, sharing, caring and working together to affect change and it fuels the IOC mission to make the world a better place through sport.

Dr. Bach congratulated World Rugby on the launch at 15th General Assembly of its environmental sustainability plan, setting out ambitious goals to work, like the IOC, towards a carbon-free world.

Dr. Bach also noted that World Rugby are launching an updated strategy to supercharge the growth of women in rugby at all levels, driving for gender equality on the field and in the boardroom, adding that this is very important as World Rugby head into a massive year for the women's game.

Dr. Bach congratulated World Rugby on its ongoing commitment to advance athlete welfare and mental wellbeing adding that our athletes are the heartbeat of our sport and are rightly at the centre of all that we do.

Dr. Bach concluded that Rugby is a growing sport, an Olympic sport all of which is possible through passion, dedication and solidarity and teamwork. Dr. Bach thanked World Rugby and the delegates of the General Assembly for their strong contributions to the global sporting family and wished everybody a successful General Assembly.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Bach for his kind words.

3. WORLD RUGBY PRESENTATION

Mr. Alan Gilpin, CEO/Secretary General of World Rugby welcomed the delegates to the 15th World Rugby General Assembly.

Mr. Gilpin commenced his address by noting that this was the first time he had spoken to the Membership at the General Assembly. Mr Gilpin acknowledged that a lot had changed in the past year for everyone, but Rugby was tackling the challenges together as a family, and are looking to a future full of opportunity.

Mr. Gilpin informed the meeting that the Game was looking forward to a future where together Rugby can further the attractiveness, reach and growth of the sport, and highlighted that's exactly what World Rugby intend to do through a series of transformational moves: organisational transformation for World Rugby, a reshaped RWC hosting model, the acceleration of women's rugby, the reimagination of Sevens and a focus on our digital and fan-facing offering. Mr. Gilpin added that this will be a step-change for World Rugby in how it behaves as a "business" as well as a governing body and international federation.

Mr. Gilpin advised the meeting that at the centre of the new strategic plan, and the transformation World Rugby are building around it, is a commitment to a different type of engagement with the game as a whole and a commitment to World Rugby engaging with, and listening to, all members of the rugby family.

Mr. Gilpin noted that Rugby spent much of the past year learning from the challenges created by the global covid pandemic; and reflecting on the role that rugby can play in society; the mental and physical benefits of the unique team sport that rugby is; looking at how we can evolve the way we support the growth of rugby. Mr. Gilpin added that part of this, World Rugby is reimagining its competitions, rapidly re-evaluating fan engagement and audience growth, and restructuring World Rugby as an organisation to ensure that it can deliver change and take advantage of the many opportunities the Game has to grow.

Mr. Gilpin equally recognised the huge amount of work that the Unions and Regions are doing to drive our sport forward on and off the field. Mr. Gilpin the noted it had been challenging, but collectively the Game was making progress.

Mr. Gilpin outlined that for Rugby to grow, the Game must continue to tackle perceptions regarding the safety of our sport. Mr. Gilpin stated that Player Welfare is at the heart of everything World Rugby do and is a clear enabler for us to market the game to parents

and young people with credibility and purpose. Mr. Gilpin highlighted that World Rugby must lead the player welfare debate in order to have the permission we seek from those outside and inside the family to grow rugby around the world.

Mr. Gilpin informed the meeting that there is no doubt that Rugby, like many other sports, is facing challenges. Mr. Gilpin highlighted that Rugby, moving forward, must answer key questions such as:

- How do we ensure our sport is a safe environment for our children?
- How do we tackle concussion and head impacts? And;
- How do we best support our players – current players, former players, and the players of the future?

Mr. Gilpin pointed out that while rugby shares some of these challenges with other sports, Rugby should also celebrate the uniqueness of our sport in being a global game that stays true to the spirit and values of a family, community based sport. Mr. Gilpin added that once you have played rugby, at whatever level, you join that family for life. Mr. Gilpin acknowledged the bravery of our former players who have come forward with their own stories about early onset dementia, adding that the Game owe them a debt of gratitude for bringing these issues to the fore.

Mr. Gilpin reminded the meeting that Rugby must continue to be led by science and research. Mr. Gilpin observed that Rugby must keep up momentum in our evolution as a sport, while not rushing into lazy assumptions nor quick fixes. Mr. Gilpin reiterated that Rugby tackling the challenge together as one.

Mr. Gilpin informed the meeting that earlier in 2022, with the memberships full support, World Rugby outlined a six-point strategy for rugby to continue to be the most progressive sport in the world when it comes to Player Welfare. Mr. Gilpin provided the meeting with an update on the progress of the six pillars of that strategy:

- 1) **A focus on former players:** in addition to ongoing dialogue with representative groups such as Progressive Rugby at a working group level, we have recently launched a significant education initiative relating to Brain Health;
- 2) **Innovation led by science and research:** in addition to the annual open-sourced Medical Commission Conference which happened earlier this month, backed by our commitment to double research spending, we have the most wide-ranging research into the impact of concussion in the community game, with the University of Otago in New Zealand, currently being peer reviewed. We expect to publish these findings early next year. We are also using instrumented mouthguards to build a better picture of impacts of sustained contacts in both the community and elite games;
- 3) **Continuing to review and evolve the Laws of the game to safeguard players:** most recently you will have seen the 50:22, goal-line drop out and breakdown trials, plus evolution of technology to support the HIA and GRTP protocols, and now the guidelines we have released following detailed consultation with member unions and directors of rugby on limiting contact training loads;
- 4) **A dedicated focus on the women's game:** late last month I was in Exeter, a hot bed of rugby in the South West of England, to announce the establishment of a Women's Player Welfare Steering Group focusing specifically on advancing player welfare in the women's game. That group has already met. Our trip to Exeter coincided with the Autumn Test between the Red Roses and the Black Ferns, who have both now agreed to take part in a season long study into head impacts, using instrumented mouthguards;
- 5) **Continued investment in education:** So far, ahead of the new season in the community game in the Northern Hemisphere, we have launched the Tackle Ready best-practice safe tackle technique programme for the whole game, and rolled out the Activate injury prevention warm-up programme in partnership with your unions; and

6) **Open engagement with the rugby family:** I've certainly been in listening mode over the first six months of my tenure in this role, in informal conversations with those involved in the game from top to bottom.

Mr. Gilpin outlined that the Game is only at the start of this journey and added his pride at the progress the Game had made. Mr. Gilpin committed to the membership that World Rugby will never stand still when it comes to its efforts to make rugby safer.

Mr. Gilpin recognised that World Rugby can always do more when it comes to consultation and listening. Mr. Gilpin advised the meeting that over the course of the next six months, World Rugby intend to engage with the community and elite games with a series of 'open' Question & Answer sessions.

Mr. Gilpin stated that the World Rugby family should remain steadfast in our belief that playing rugby brings life-long benefits to improved health and happiness. Mr. Gilpin added that by ensuring strong Player Welfare there is huge scope to grow the global game with new formats, particularly in women's and girls' rugby, and in emerging rugby markets.

Mr. Gilpin shared his belief that the Game had come a long way in the past two years since the General Assembly last met but still has further to travel, and added that the World of Rugby must not become complacent. Mr. Gilpin concluded that all General Assembly delegates share a common goal: for our children and their children to continue to enjoy playing the game we all love, and to do so safely.

4. **MINUTES OF THE 14TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Minutes of the 14th General Assembly of World Rugby held in Tokyo, Japan on October 31, 2019 were received and approved. There were no matters arising.

5. **COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL**

The meeting noted the composition of the Committees of the World Rugby Council.

6. **GLOBAL FINANCIAL OUTLOOK FOR WORLD RUGBY**

Following an introduction from Mr. Jurie Roux, Chair of the World Rugby Finance Committee and Ms. Deborah Griffin, Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, the meeting received a presentation as set out in **APPENDIX ONE** from Mr. Robert Brophy, World Rugby Head of Finance on the current position relating to World Rugby Finances.

7. **WORLD RUGBY UPDATES**

Mr. David Carrigy, World Rugby Director of Development & International Relations provided the General Assembly with a number of updates relevant to the Unions. In particular, Mr. Carrigy reminded Unions of their Eligibility responsibilities under World Rugby Regulation 8. Mr. Carrigy drew the General Assemblies attention to previous correspondence sent to all Unions in June 2018 which included a number of documents detailing Union's responsibilities together with a Regulation 8 checklist to assist Union. Mr. Carrigy informed the Unions that an eligibility database was under development and that Union cooperation would be critical to the success of the database.

8. **WORLD RUGBY STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

The meeting received a presentation from Mihir Warty, World Rugby Director of Strategy as set out in **APPENDIX TWO**, introducing the World Rugby Strategic Plan which was formally launched in April 2021. Mr. Warty reminded the meeting that the 2019 General Assembly had contributed to the development of the plan during workshops at the meeting. The General Assembly noted that the Strategic Plan consisted of five pillars

- Competition
- Participation
- Engagement
- The Game

- Ways of Working

Mr. Warty advised the meeting that the Strategic Plan forms a strong basis for the Game to move forward. The meeting noted that General Assembly would receive an overview of the key pillars during the meeting.

9. REIMAGINING SEVENS UPDATE

The meeting received a presentation from Nigel Cass, World Rugby Director of Competitions as set out in **APPENDIX THREE**, providing an overview of the ongoing review of Sevens. Mr. Cass outlined that initial feedback from stakeholders indicates that:

1. The enhancement of the Olympics is paramount;
2. Gender equity is crucial
3. Protecting player welfare can't be compromised
4. The annual calendar needs to allow players to play at multiple levels

The meeting noted an overview of the options developed in consultation with Two Circles and heard that World Rugby are consulting with participating Unions, Regions and potential hosts on the proposed option. Mr. Cass concluded by noting that to provide certainty to stakeholders, the existing HSBC World Sevens Series has been confirmed for 2022 and 2023 with the Challenger Series dates and venues being finalised to play in the first half of 2022.

10. THE GAME: PLAYER WELFARE PROGRESS

The meeting received a presentation as set out in **APPENDIX FOUR** from Dr Eanna Falvey, World Rugby Chief Medical Officer, on Player Welfare initiatives. Dr Falvey advised the meeting that Player Welfare is World Rugby's number one priority and highlighted progress in the area of Player Welfare since the 14th General Assembly held in October 2019.

The General Assembly noted an overview of the six key areas of focus for advancing welfare for player, present, future and past at all levels of the Game. Dr. Falvey provided the meeting with an update on the World Rugby Player Welfare initiatives as follows:

- Orchid Study;
- GRTP Review;
- Neuroflex Study;
- Eyeguide Study;
- Kumanu Tāngata-the after match project; and
- Brain Health Clinic.

11. PARTICIPATION

The meeting received a presentation from Jason Lewis, World Rugby General Manager Development as set out in **APPENDIX FIVE**, detailing the development of the World Rugby Participation Plan. In particular, Mr. Lewis advised the meeting that World Rugby would work with Unions and Regions to improve their capability to deliver growth and adopt a differentiated approach that services all whilst also prioritizing those with most potential. Mr. Lewis concluded that success of the plan would be measured by:

- Increased capability and capacity of Regions and Unions to grow the Game;
- Growing the number of active registered players and teams;
- Increased quality of experience for all participants.

12. WOMEN'S RUGBY

The meeting received an update from Katie Sadlier, World Rugby General Manager Women's Rugby on developments and progress in the Women's Game. Ms. Sadlier provided the meeting with an overview of the vision, purpose and ambition of the Women's Plan 2021 – 2025 which aims to accelerate the global development of women in rugby at all levels of the game.

Ms. Sadleir advised the meeting that the key six key objectives of the Women's Plan 2021 – 2025 are as follows:

- Grow sustainable participation
- Dedicated focus on women's player welfare
- High performance quality competitions
- Inspirational leadership on and off the field
- Profile with impact inspiring engagement
- Strategic sustainable investment

13. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The meeting received a presentation from Mihir Warty, World Rugby Director of Strategy as set out in **APPENDIX SIX**, providing a brief overview of the World Rugby Environmental Sustainability Plan. Mr. Warty advised the meeting that World Rugby's Environmental Sustainability Plan is a statement of intent and a tangible roadmap for tackling environmental issues, setting out what World Rugby believe rugby can and should be doing to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable society.

The General Assembly noted an overview of the four key pillars that World Rugby as an organisation, an event owner and International Federation need to focus on to support the implementation of the plan as follows:

- **Pillar One** – Governance
- **Pillar Two** – Addressing our direct impacts
- **Pillar Three** – Delivering and supporting sustainable rugby events
- **Pillar Four** – Promoting sustainability in rugby through education, advocacy and knowledge sharing

14. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE PANEL

An interactive Forum updated the General Assembly on the World Rugby Strategic Plan was hosted by Keish-Ann Downes. Ms. Downes was joined on the panel by:

- Mihir Warty, World Rugby Director of Strategy
- Nigel Cass, World Rugby Director of Competitions
- Eanna Falvey, World Rugby Chief Medical Officer
- Marissa Pace, World Rugby Chief Marketing Officer

The panel discussed in detail the implementation of the key pillars of the Strategic Plan and the progress to date.

The topic was then opened for a question and answer session to the General Assembly.

15. BERNARD LAPORTE, WORLD RUGBY VICE-CHAIRMAN – SHAPE OF THE GAME

Mr. Bernard Laporte, World Rugby Vice-Chairman welcomed the delegates to the 15th World Rugby General Assembly. This Vice-Chairman noted that was his first General Assembly as Vice Chairman and extended his gratitude, to the members, for the exceptional work they do for the game worldwide on a daily basis.

Mr. Laporte noted that Rugby is perhaps one of the most complex and dynamic of all sports and if it is to grow, to attract new players and fans, World Rugby must ensure that it is accessible, understandable, safe and enjoyable. Mr. Laporte highlighted that World Rugby are concentrating on enhancing safety and spectacle.

Mr. Laporte noted that since the last General Assembly, World Rugby had been working hard on improving the sport on and off the field. Mr. Laporte added that with the support of the Unions and Regions World Rugby had designed and implemented global law trails, built on data, to improve the playing experience and Player Welfare.

Mr. Laporte highlighted that World Rugby had implemented the Head Contact Process that is designed to change player behaviour in the tackle and at the breakdown. Mr.

Laporte added that World Rugby had also implemented training contact load guidance designed to aid welfare and performance. Mr. Laporte added that World Rugby has worked hard with its referees to prioritise safety, space and speed and it continues to work on the set piece. Mr. Laporte assured the meeting that he would lead a thorough review of the protocols relating to water carriers.

Mr. Laporte noted that since Covid, World Rugby had witnessed a worrying trend that the respect for match officials appears to be eroding. Mr. Laporte reminded the meeting that there is a shared obligation to set an example and preserve and champion the values that are the essence of our sport, that are integral to the sport's reputation, to parental decisions about children playing and our overall growth of the Game.

Mr. Laporte informed the meeting that Joe Schmidt, World Rugby Director of Rugby & High Performance, had been at the heart of these important areas during the year. Mr. Laporte noted that Joe Schmidt was departing World Rugby shortly and extended his gratitude on behalf of the game for his passion and dedication and wish him well with his new adventure.

16. THE GAME – SHAPE OF THE GAME

The meeting received a presentation from Joe Schmidt, World Rugby Director of Rugby & High Performance as set out in **APPENDIX SEVEN**, providing an update on the Shape of the Game. In particular, Mr. Schmidt reiterated that Rugby Union has values that outline the behavioural expectations of participants. Mr Schmidt pointed out that whilst he understood people are emotionally connected to the Game, participants need to continue to demonstrate behaviours that promote the values of the game.

Mr. Schmidt provided the meeting with an overview of the Law applications, key focus areas and current referee priorities which all have Player Welfare at the forefront. The meeting further noted an update on the Head Contact Process calibration, Global Law Trials and the contact load guidelines.

17. BERNARD LAPORTE, WORLD RUGBY VICE-CHAIRMAN – COMMUNITY GAME

Mr. Laporte advised the meeting that it was his great pleasure to introduce the Community Game section of the General Assembly. Mr. Laporte noted that Rugby consists of a diverse group of people and nations who are bound by a common love of our sport and its power to bring people together, to develop character, develop healthy bodies and minds and set a positive example in society.

Mr. Laporte acknowledged that without a thriving community game in every Union there would be no international or professional game. Mr. Laporte added that as Chairman of the Community Rugby Committee, he was determined to do everything in his power to ensure that the sport, played by 99% of our players, is at the forefront of our planning and thinking.

Mr. Laporte highlighted that it must be never forgotten that rugby is a game for all shapes and sizes, that it must be accessible, welcoming and provide a safe and friendly environment for all participants. Mr. Laporte noted that the community game not only develops players, coaches and match officials, but also is the foundation of our fan base who allow our sport to remain economically viable.

Mr. Laporte stated that World Rugby is committed to ensuring the long term health of the community game and had been working in partnership with our member unions to address issues that impact on the health of the game by:

- Developing a new strategic plan built on partnership that has participation at its heart;
- Updated Get Into Rugby in 2022 to provide a successful entry point for new players;
- Player welfare – community law variations and head impact studies aimed at supporting the community game;

- Non-contact rugby – reviewing this offering with a view to standardizing the approach; and
- Marketing – a dedicated focus on the community game, its benefits and values to support recruitment and retention.

The Vice-Chairman concluded by noting that these areas are at the very heart of our strategic plan and will lay the foundations for a growing, vibrant and attractive sport for all.

18. THE GAME – COMMUNITY GAME

The meeting received a presentation from Jason Lewis, World Rugby General Manager Development as set out in **APPENDIX EIGHT**, providing an update on developments within the Community Game. In particular, Mr. Lewis advised the meeting that World Rugby has:

- Increased its focus on the community game;
- Adopted a clear strategy to support Unions to grow capability and capacity in community provision.
- Broadened the appeal and is safeguarding the Game through Player Welfare and flexible law initiatives.
- Developed products to engage new players and support the retention of existing players.

Mr. Lewis reminded the meeting that Participation is a strategic pillar within the World Rugby Strategic plan and added that the new Participation Plan recognises the community and domestic game. Mr. Lewis advised the meeting that World Rugby would work with Unions and Regions to improve their capability to introduce and popularise the Game and assist in creating differentiations between the elite game and community game.

19. THE GAME PANEL

An interactive Forum on the shape of the game was hosted by Keish-Ann Downes. Ms. Downes was joined on the panel by:

- Bernard Laporte, World Rugby Vice-Chairman
- Joe Schmidt, World Rugby Director of Rugby & High Performance
- Jason Lewis, World Rugby General Manager Development

The panel discussed in detail their views on the Shape of the Game moving forward and shared their visions on how the Game can grow at both the elite and community level.

The topic was then opened for a question and answer session to the General Assembly.

20. CLOSURE

In formally closing the 15th General Assembly Sir Bill Beaumont, Chairman of World Rugby, highlighted the key points of the General Assembly programme. The Chairman expressed the thanks and appreciation of World Rugby for the attendance and constructive participation of all delegates throughout the session. The Chairman further thanked the presenters and panellists for their engaging content.

The Chairman spoke about the importance of continuing to work together during the challenging times that still lay ahead. The Chairman expressing his deep gratitude to everyone in the Rugby family for continuing to grow the Game despite the backdrop of the pandemic. The Chairman in particular thanked the Regions, national Unions and competition organisers for a truly outstanding show of unity, leadership and support.

In conclusion, the Chairman noted that a conference like the General Assembly took a lot of organisation and he thanked those who had contributed to the General Assembly, World Rugby Staff and Interpreters for all their hard work in ensuring its success.

Sir Bill Beaumont CBE DL
Chairman
World Rugby

November 25, 2021

General Assembly Financial Update November 2021

Robert Brophy



1

General Overview



Review of updated Financial Forecast 2020 – 2023



September 2021

Overall Financial Forecast For 2023 Business Cycle

	Budget Mar 20	Budget Mar 21	Forecast May 21	Forecast Sep 21
Revenue	£628m	£566m	£584m	£585m
Costs	£600m	£565m	£565m	£570m
Net	£28m	£1m	£19m	£15m



4

Commentary on Financial Forecast 2020-2023

- The forecast reflects latest information for both revenues and costs
- Strong recovery in revenues during 2021 with over 80% contracted
- Revenues exclude investment income
- Costs expected to be under budget in 2021
- Surplus of £15m considered appropriate in advance of the 2027 cycle



Review of 2021 Financial Performance



Budget V Actual 2021 £M

	Original Budget	Current Forecast	Actual to Aug 21
Total Cost	£159m	£147m	£49m
Competitions	£43.8m	£35.6m	£10.9m
Development High Performance Union Fund	£71.8m	£71.1m	£25.9m
Other Operations	£43.4m	£40.3m	£12.2m

7



Consideration of financial risks and financial outlook



Update on Current Key Financial Risks related to 2022

RISK	COMMENTARY
Group legal action against World Rugby re Concussion	Extensive mitigation already in place and supported by external advice from Kennedys (legal) and Teneo (PR)
Overall financial impact from HSBC Sevens Series schedule	Significant continuing risk with further adjustments made in the financial forecast
Increase in competition costs due to COVID	The cost risk is significant but offset by events not taking place or postponed (RWC 2021)
RWC 2023 Revenue & Cost challenges	TF1 contract subject to a legal challenge Host Broadcast Costs may increase
Brexit, Inflation, Currency & cashflow challenges	These are being managed successfully so far with external advice where appropriate
Member Union Financial Challenges	We continue to liaise with member unions as they deal with Covid challenges



WORLD RUGBY STRATEGIC PLAN



PLAN FOR THIS SESSION

1. Introducing the World Rugby Strategic Plan
2. Progress thus far
3. Q&A



THE STORY SO FAR

2019 • October – Consultation exercise at General Assembly

2020 • July – EXCO session approved broad framework
• September – Vision and Purpose consultation with Regions and Unions
• October – Draft strategic plan reviewed by Regions and Unions
• November – EXCO & Council unanimously approve Strategic Plan

2021 • April – Strategic Plan formally launched



STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

VISION

A GLOBAL SPORT FOR ALL – TRUE TO ITS VALUES

PURPOSE

GROWING RUGBY BY MAKING IT MORE RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE



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INTEGRITY

RESPECT

SOLIDARITY

PASSION

DISCIPLINE



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PILLARS

COMPETITION

PARTICIPATION

ENGAGEMENT

THE GAME

WAYS OF WORKING

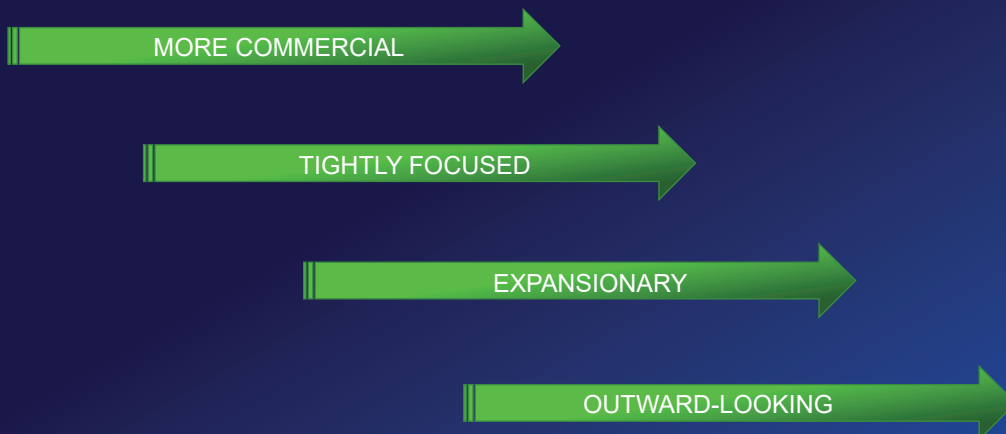


WE BELIEVE THIS PLAN FORMS A STRONG BASIS FOR THE SPORT TO MOVE FORWARDS

- 1 Strong support for the overall vision, purpose, values and overall framework
- 2 Acknowledges the impact of Covid-19 but not bound by it
- 3 Key deliverables identified and tested by stakeholders and colleagues
- 4 Objectives are focused, stretching and measurable
- 5 Builds on strengths and addresses challenges and key risks



THIS STRATEGIC PLAN REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT FOR THE ORGANISATION



WORLD RUGBY STRATEGIC PLAN



Reimagining Sevens Update General Assembly November 2021



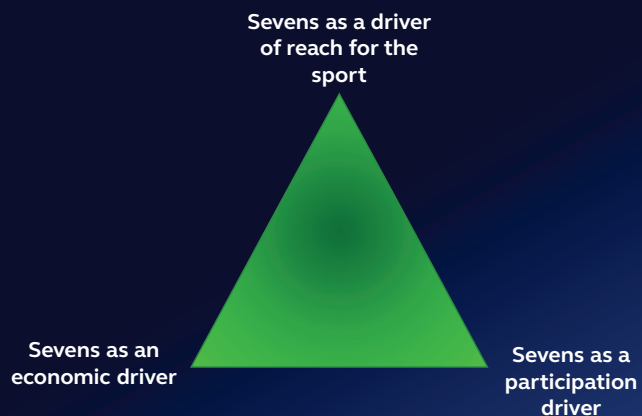
Olympics represent the pinnacle of the game and a prize asset



77% growth of social media engagement v Rio



We can all see the potential of Sevens



A sport with pace, panache and personality

A great introduction to the sport

Olympic presence

Complementary for modern lifestyles



We started this Review trying to understand what was holding Sevens back



Jamie Aitchison Report, November 2020

The Sevens calendar, competition models and event format is loss-making for its key stakeholders

Broadcast is the weak-point and untapped opportunity



Review process

1

SEVENS STRATEGY
GROUP

2

COMPETITIVE
TENDER PROCESS

3

STAKEHOLDER
CONSULTATION

4

FINANCIAL DUE
DILLIGENCE



5

Initial feedback from stakeholders tells us.

1. The enhancement of the **Olympics is paramount**
2. **Gender equity** is crucial
3. **Protecting player welfare** can't be compromised
4. The annual calendar needs to allow **players to play at multiple levels**



6

The option developed alongside Two Circles Sports Marketing has emerged as the strongest for further consideration

15 TEAM ROUND ROBIN REGULAR SEASON :

- 35 short single evening events each involving 3 men's and 3 women's teams
- Each team playing the other 14 teams in 7 events
- 2 games per team at each event



5 TOURNAMENT-BASED PLAYOFF SERIES:

- Top 8 teams playing to be Series Champion
- Bottom 7 teams and 5 teams qualified from Regional and Challenger Competition playing for places in next years Series.

7

Taking this feedback into account, consideration has been given to how we **balance the desire to innovate** and create commercial value, with the desire to **retain the traditions of the sport.**



Currently we are consulting with participating Unions, Regions and potential hosts on the proposed option



To provide certainty to stakeholders, the existing HSBC World Sevens Series **has been confirmed for 2022 and 2023.** The **Challenger Series** dates and venues being finalised to **play in the first half of 2022.**



Recommendations to Exco and Council early next year.

Any questions please contact me:

nigel.cass@worldrugby.org



World Rugby General Assembly – 25th November 2021

CMO Update



ADVANCING WELFARE FOR PLAYERS – PRESENT, FUTURE AND PAST – AT ALL LEVELS OF THE GAME

1 **AFTERCARE FOR FORMER PLAYERS**
Developing a best-practice approach to care and support for former players.



2 **INNOVATION LED BY SCIENCE AND RESEARCH**
Investing in concussion and head impact studies, and acting on the evidence.



3 **LAWS OF THE GAME EVOLUTION**
Reviewing and updating the laws to further safeguard players at all levels.



4 **DEDICATED FOCUS ON THE WOMEN'S GAME**
Holistic approach including bespoke scientific research and game adaptations.

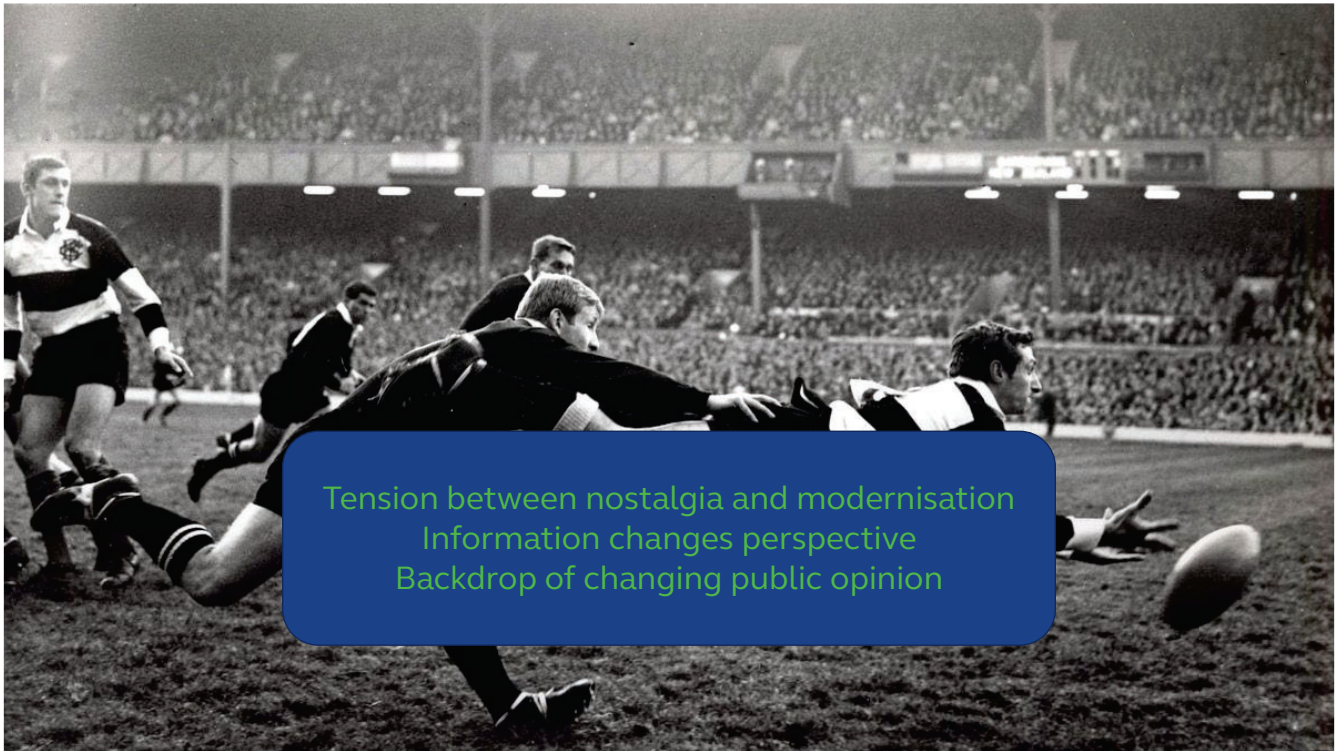


5 **EDUCATION AND INJURY-PREVENTION INITIATIVES**
Easy access to information, tools and resources for everyone involved in rugby.



6 **OPEN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE RUGBY FAMILY**
Engaging with players, coaches, medics, fans and parents to shape together the future of the game.





Tension between nostalgia and modernisation
Information changes perspective
Backdrop of changing public opinion

CONTACT LOAD

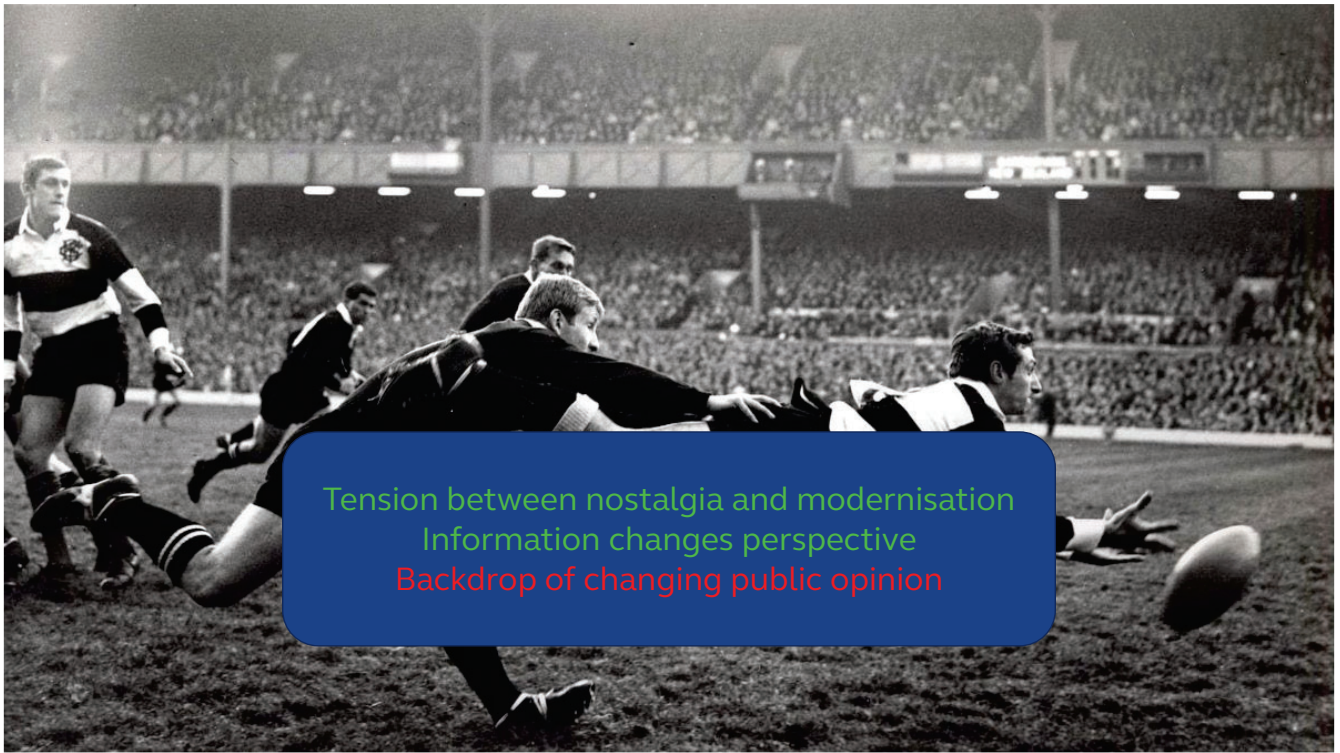


THE PROCESS





Objective data about impact in the game
Information about the community game
Risk factors in women's rugby
Progression to elite game



Tension between nostalgia and modernisation
Information changes perspective
Backdrop of changing public opinion



What is the level of care?
What is the scientific information?
Do players support the process?



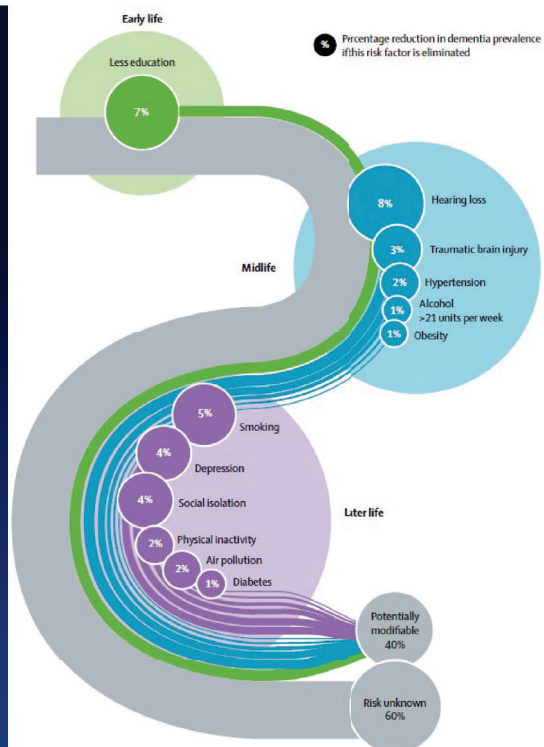
2011
Concussion rate 4/1000 hrs
20% RTP <6 days
Mean return time 7 days



2021
Concussion rate 16-19/1000 hrs
0% RTP <6 days
Mean return time 16 days

Retired players – an alternate narrative

- Brain injury one of 12 identified risk factors for dementia
- Many other risk factors are modifiable, lifestyle related factors.
- Mental health a key factor
- Anxiety and stress related to unquantified risk may itself drive poor cognitive outcomes
- Restore retired player’s sense of agency
- Return those who have been marginalised

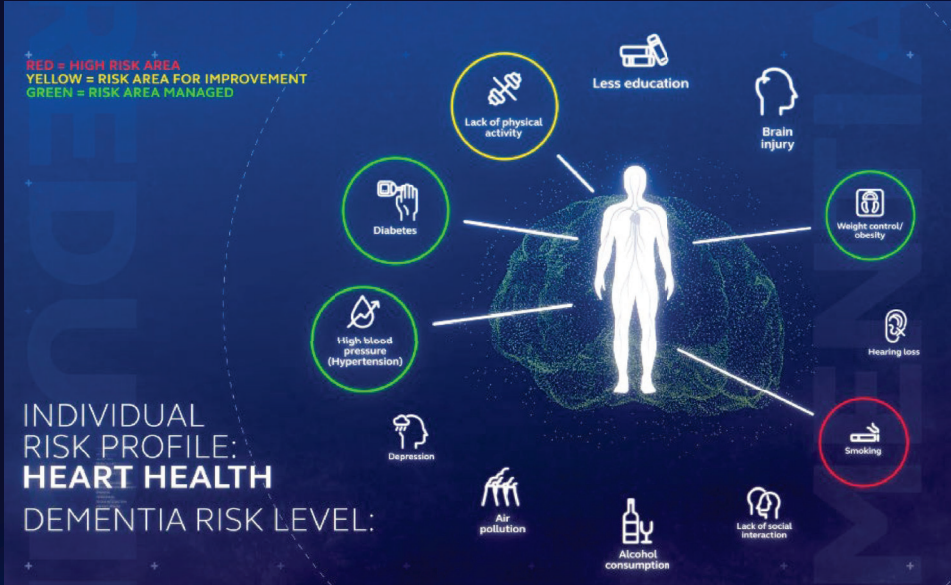


INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY
PLAYERS





SENE NAOUPU
Ireland and International Rugby Players





Collaborate with Players
Associations to create network for

Promote central role for rugby in providing
social network for retired players.

Promote club and team involvement
Coaching, mentoring, officiating

Player Welfare Initiatives

World Rugby Medical Unit



ORCHID STUDY

Community Rugby Safety.
Women & Men



GRTP REVIEW

Addition of independent review,
for early return and high-risk
players



NEUROFLEX STUDY

Virtual reality eye tracking test –
Super Rugby



EYEGUIDE STUDY

Smooth Pursuit Test – Pro-14



RESEARCH CALL

Call for commissioned research –
submissions under review



Kumano Tangata - the aftermatch project

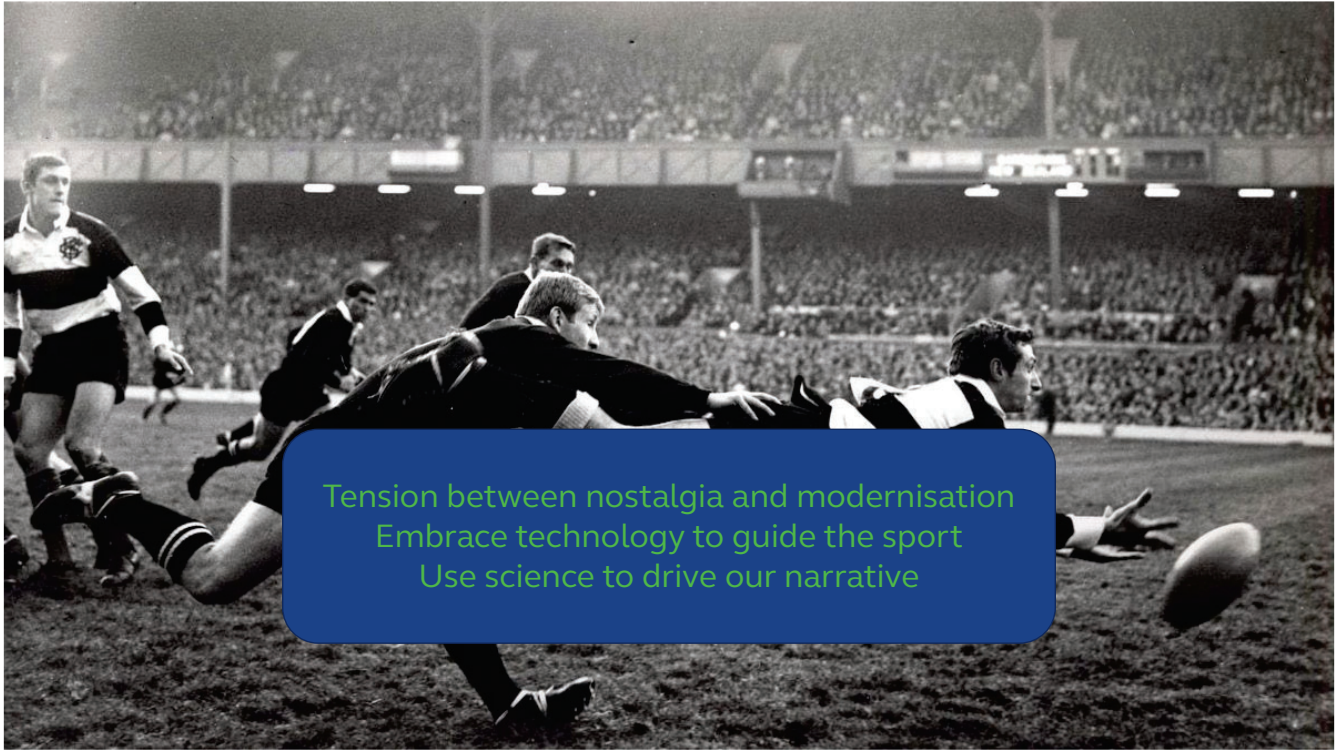
Standardised approach to research
creates a large prospective
database.



BRAIN HEALTH CLINIC

Retired players brain health
initiative- pilot clinic Murrayfield
August 2021





Tension between nostalgia and modernisation
Embrace technology to guide the sport
Use science to drive our narrative



GROWING



PARTICIPATION PLAN

THE GLOBAL
RUGBY FAMILY



CONTEXT

Getting better at what we do...

SITUATION

The game is **GROWING**, participation has increased. World Rugby must guide that growth, to promote long term sustainable participation.

GROWTH STRATEGY

STRATEGY

PARTICIPATION

STRENGTHENING OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Work through Unions and Regions to improve their capability to deliver growth. Adopt a differentiated approach that services all whilst also prioritizing those with most potential.

GROWTH STRATEGY



HOW DATA DRIVEN + ALIGN + INCREASE + PROMOTE

Create a **DATA DRIVEN** culture to guide decision making and measure impact

ALIGN resource provision according to union health-status and identified needs

INCREASE the capability of stakeholders to provide participants with a higher quality game experience

PROMOTES critical areas of the game that have been recognized as having global significance

GROWTH STRATEGY

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

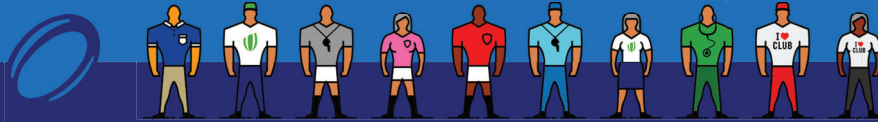


1

INCREASE THE CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY OF REGIONS AND UNIONS TO GROW THE GAME

2

GROW THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE REGISTERED PLAYERS AND TEAMS



3

INCREASE THE QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS



UNION

MEASURING SUCCESS

STRENGTHENING UNIONS

UDQ 360 UNION HEALTH CHECK

- > ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE
- > MEN SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATION
- > WOMEN SUSTAINABLE PARTICIPATION



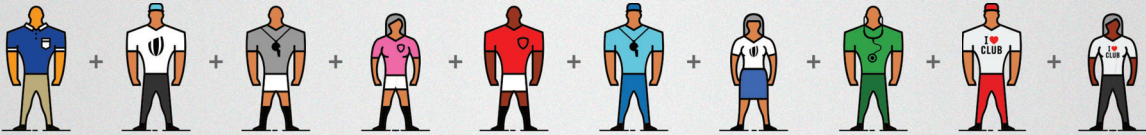
- > NUMBER OF ACTIVE PLAYERS
- > NUMBER OF ACTIVE TEAMS
- > RATIO OF TEAMS IN CLUBS & SCHOOLS

GROWING PARTICIPATION

ENHANCING QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE

- > NUMBER OF ACTIVE COACHES
- > NUMBER OF ACTIVE MO'S
- > UNION AND REGIONS SATISFACTION

THANK YOU!



TOGETHER!



Thank you

WAYS OF WORKING

Environmental Sustainability



WHY DO WE NEED TO PRIORITISE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?

1. Real risks to rugby
2. Ability to attract fans
3. Creates value
4. It's the right thing to do



OUR PLAN IS BUILT AROUND THREE KEY THEMES:

1. Climate action
2. Circular economy (managing materials and resources)
3. Protecting the natural environment



WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO AS AN ORGANISATION, AN EVENT OWNER AND AN INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION?

PILLAR 01 GOVERNANCE

Ensure sustainability is embedded in our day-to-day operations and in all major decision-making processes

PILLAR 02 ADDRESSING OUR DIRECT IMPACTS

To reduce the environmental impact of our own activities

PILLAR 03 DELIVERING AND SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE RUGBY EVENTS

To ensure all World Rugby events are delivered to the best international standards of sustainability

PILLAR 04 PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY IN RUGBY THROUGH EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Support, promote and encourage the uptake of sustainability practices across the global rugby family

WAYS OF WORKING

Environmental Sustainability



STRATEGIC PLAN

Q&A



General Assembly – Shape of the game update November 2021



VALUES

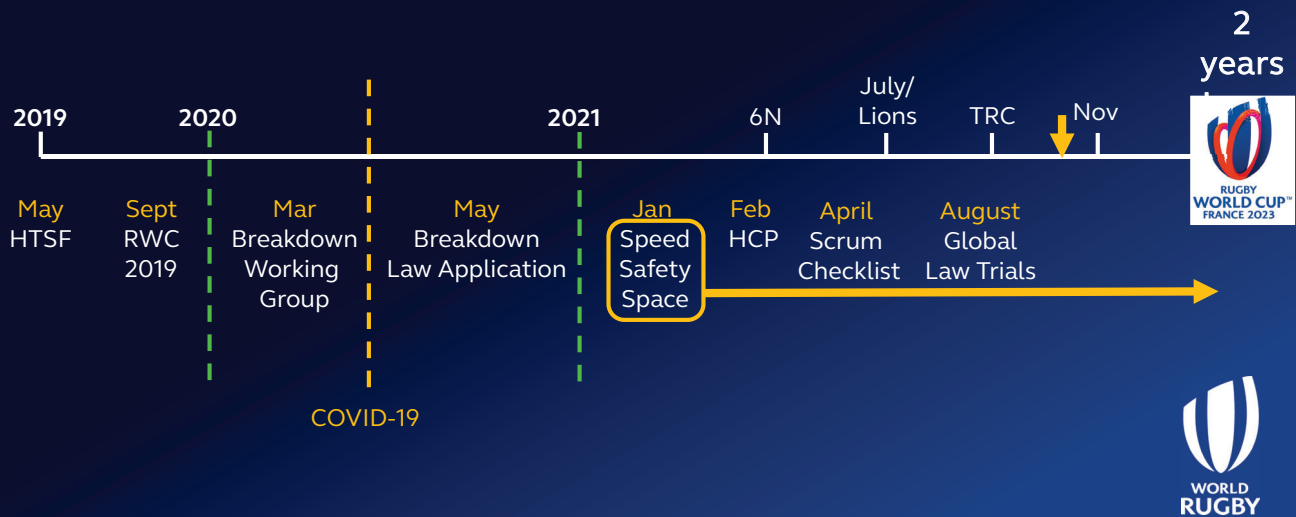
Rugby Union has a code of conduct that outlines the behavioural expectations of participants



Understandably people are emotionally connected to the game, but we need to demonstrate behaviours that promote the values of the game



Law applications and focus areas



Referee Priorities

SAFETY:

- Applying the Head Contact Process
- Key focus for the 'Team of 4' with the TMO involved as a key contributor

SPEED - Breakdown focus

- Ball Carrier – one dynamic movement
- Tackler – release and roll
- Assist Tackler clear release before going onto the ball
- Jackler – entry, on feet, onto the ball and a *clear* lift
- Arriving players – entry, on feet, avoiding tucked shoulders and neck rolls/head contact

SPACE:

- In Front of Kick, Set Piece offside lines and players need to be clearly onside during phase play

SET PIECE

- Scrum expertise and scrum coach meetings – Mike Cron, Stability, elbow horizontal, square/straight



SHAPE OF THE GAME

	2019-20 6N/TRC	2020-21 6N/TRC	Difference	
Match length	94m 06s	97m 00s	+2m 54s	Longer matches
PK/FKs	18	25	+7	38% more PKs Higher in all 3 focus areas
Ruck PKs (<i>speed</i>)	7	10	+3	
Offside PKs (<i>space</i>)	2	4	+2	
Foul Play PKs (<i>safety</i>)	2	3	+1	
Ruck speed	3.00s	2.79s	-0.21s	Quicker ball
Mauls	10	12	+2	More Mauls
Scrum resets	4.4	3.8	-0.6	Fewer issues on setup



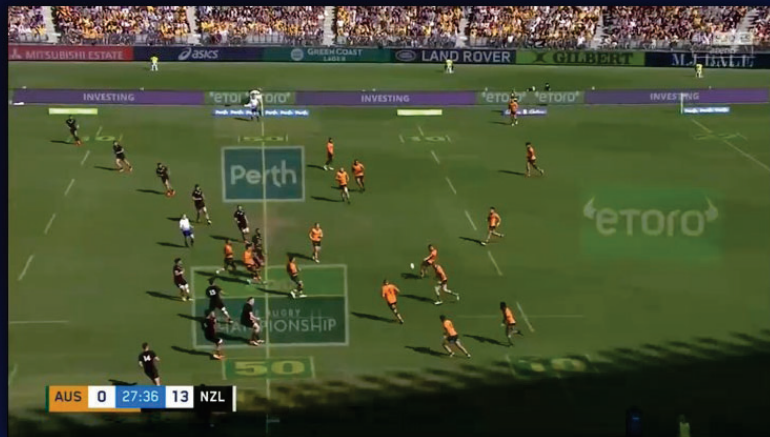
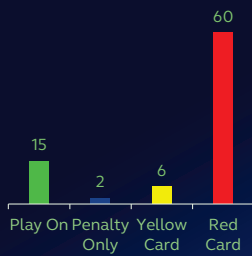
Head Contact Process calibrations:

HCP Working Group
Citing and Judicial Officers



Clip 1 - Duty of Care

Decision	Total
Play on	15
Penalty Only	2
Yellow Card	6
Red Card	60

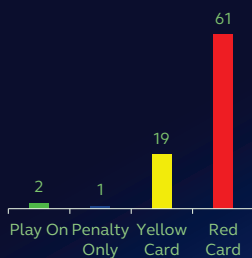


Clear RC, clear majority. The receiver must demonstrate a duty of care to the kick chaser. It does not appear to be deliberate but outcome is dangerous and need to have consequence



Clip 13 - Clean Out

Decision	Total
Play on	2
Penalty Only	1
Yellow Card	19
Red Card	61



Action is unnecessary and you can't hit a player on the ground. The head contact might not be high danger but the action appears deliberate and justifies a RC



Clip 13 – Clean Out - Intervention



Global Law Trials



Global law trials | World Rugby

Footage shows the impact better than the small data pool at present.

REMINDER:

1. 50:22 - Not too many but plenty of attempts and backfield adjustments visible
 - Most often occur from return kicks and turnovers
 - The space behind the front line more exposed with backfield players deeper
 - Some space visible on edges
2. Goal Line dropout – Most teams try to avoid conceding them – added ball in play and excitement
 - Less likely to wait for ball to roll into the in-goal
 - Teams trying to avoid circumstances where ball carrier can be held up
 - Dropout often taken from 15m to avoid offering midfield options, including drop goal
3. Latcher – Can only be one player pre-bound prior to contact
 - MOs still adjusting but latching has been less common and more effort to stay on feet
4. Arriving players must not drop weight onto Jackler or target lower limbs
 - A few examples with players and MOs still adjusting but very keen for these to be sanctioned

11



Contact Load Guidelines



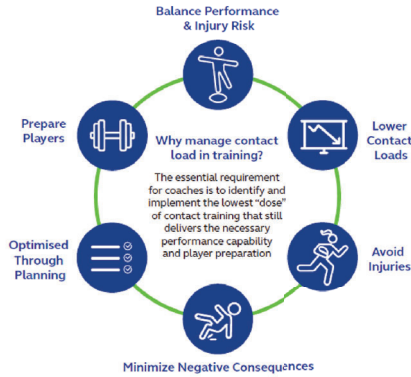
12

CONTACT LOAD



WHY IS CONTACT LOAD IMPORTANT?

Contact during training must be carefully managed. Doing enough contact at the right intensity to prepare players for performance should be balanced against avoiding excessive contact, which leads to a greater risk of injuries. Training injuries caused by contact and the accumulation of too much contact can both be minimized through good planning and monitoring of contact. The Contact Load Guidelines are based on a survey of elite players, include input from an expert panel and can be applied at the elite and non-elite levels of the game.



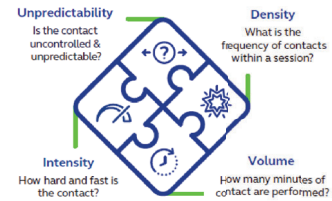
CONTACT LOAD



THE PROCESS



WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS?



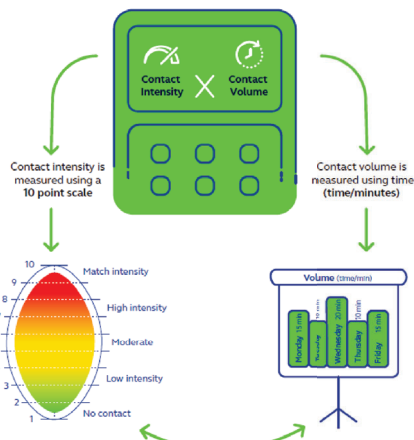
CONTACT LOAD



INTRODUCING CONTACT INDEX

How to calculate the Contact Index?

Contact load should be managed primarily using contact intensity and contact volume, to calculate a Contact Index



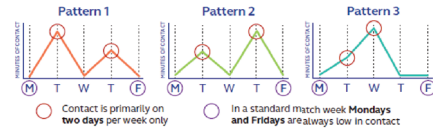
CONTACT LOAD



HOW SHOULD CONTACT TRAINING BE SPREAD OUT IN A WEEK?

The expert group has identified three patterns of contact load which satisfy best-practice principles for load management.

Contact load must be spread out during a training week to ensure adequate recovery from matches and training sessions



HOW MUCH CONTACT TRAINING SHOULD BE PERFORMED EACH WEEK?

Some upper limits for guidance are detailed below, but the contact load may often be less

<p>Full contact training</p> <p>Body on body, no shields or pads, intensity 8 or higher, all involved players unrestrained at high speed</p> <p>15 mins x 8 per week or higher intensity</p>	<p>Controlled contact training</p> <p>Uses shields & pads to avoid body-on-body, intensity 7 or lower; players show restraint & reduced speed</p> <p>40 mins x 7 per week or lower intensity</p>	<p>Live set piece contact training</p> <p>Set piece training (scrum, maul, lineout) that is contested, intensity 8 or higher</p> <p>30 mins x 8 per week or higher intensity</p>
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These guidelines are for the professional game but the principles & upper limits are applicable to levels below the elite game

CONTACT LOAD

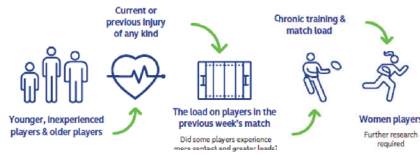


THE COACH'S CHECKLIST



- 1 Are players recovered from matches or training prior to the upcoming session?
- 2 What is the specific goal or purpose of the contact in the session?
- 3 Identify and plan the four contact elements: Volume, Intensity, Density and Unpredictability
- 4 What is the progression of activities to ensure players are well prepared for the contact session?
- 5 What is the expected Contact Index of the session?
- 6 Are all players "fit for contact"? If not, what are the modifications?

SPECIAL GROUPS: PLAYERS WHO MAY NEED SPECIFIC CONTACT LOAD MANAGEMENT



Further details on these concepts and principles can be read in the full Contact Load Guidance document.



THANK YOU





Community Rugby Update 2021

Headlines

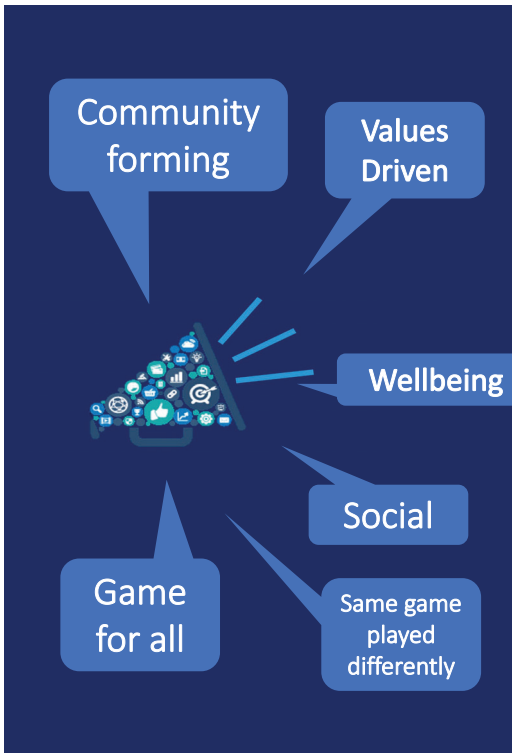
- Increased focus on community game.
- Adopted a clear strategy to support unions to grow capability and capacity in community provision.
- Broadening the appeal and safeguarding the game through player welfare and flexible law initiatives.
- Developing products to engage new players and support the retention of existing players.



World Rugby Strategic Plan 2021-2025

- Participation a strategic pillar in strategy.
- New Participation Plan recognizes the community/domestic game.
- Plan focuses on building union capability and capacity





- Need to shift perceptions around community game-

'Sell rugby's USP'

- Develop support for unions to help them-introduce and popularize the game.
- Shift the narrative to positive experiences in the game.
- Create differentiation between the elite game and community game



Player Welfare

Game On

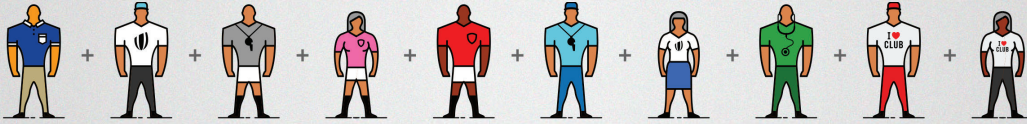
GET INTO RUGBY

Non- Contact

Supporting the Community Game

- Otago Rugby Community Head Impact Detection (ORCHID) study- Community based head impact assessment.
- Game on- Flexible laws Framework to promote play in community game.
- Get Into Rugby Relaunching this successful scheme to promote longer-term retention.
- Alternative Game Formats- Currently undertaking a review of all non-contact game formats

THANK YOU!



TOGETHER!

 WORLD RUGBY

Thank you