



**WOMEN'S
ENG25**

WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP ENGLAND 2025

DRAW MEDIA GUIDE

17 OCTOBER, 2024





Sir Bill Beaumont World Rugby Chairman

The Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025 Draw marks an exciting milestone on the road to what promises to be the greatest celebration of women's rugby ever, a generational event that will supercharge the advancement of the sport as a whole on the world stage.

For fans, players and media alike, the draw, combined with next week's match schedule announcement, mark the moment that the 10th edition of the pinnacle event truly comes to life, the moment they can plan their Women's Rugby World Cup experience.

The rise of women's rugby is the most exciting development in our sport and its impact should not be underestimated. World Rugby's strategic mission is to supercharge global growth, increasing the sport's audience, participation and revenue share by making it more accessible and relevant to a broader audience. Women's rugby is at the heart of that mission, the biggest opportunity to grow the sport as a whole.

Girls and women are at the heart of rugby's global expansion with the number of new participants outstripping the number of new male participants two to one, while we are excited about the potential of our Rugby Rising Play strand of the Impact Beyond 2025 legacy programme, our first dedicated global mass-participation programme for girls.

On the field, we remain unwavering in our commitment to raising standards, increasing competition and providing greater opportunity for female coaches and match officials to thrive. Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025 with 16 teams and multiple venues is testament to that mission.

Global visibility is key to success, and I would like to thank the media whose tireless commitment to women's rugby and women's sport more broadly, has created the opportunity to showcase and celebrate our sport's biggest personalities, inspiring more girls and boys to get into rugby.



Sarah Massey

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Managing Director

As we rapidly approach Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025, the draw represents an exciting milestone that participating unions and fans have been eagerly awaiting.

The occasion will set the stage for what promises to be a groundbreaking tournament as England 2025 will capture hearts and headlines globally, inspiring the next generation of players, and welcoming new fans to the sport.

From 22 August to 27 September, we will see 16 teams from across the world vying to be crowned champions, with our qualified teams giving fans a glimpse during the recent WXV tournament of the compelling competition, unstoppable athletes and powerful personalities that will be on offer next year.

We continue to witness the increasing recognition of women's rugby on the global stage and it has been fantastic to work with our host broadcaster, BBC, in delivering and amplifying the draw on one of the UK's most-watched primetime programmes, *The One Show*, while allowing fans across the world to watch this moment on RugbyPass TV.

Following the draw, we will reveal the match schedule in another significant moment for the tournament, allowing teams and fans to start planning their Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 experience in earnest.

We've already seen unprecedented demand, as more than 60,000 tickets have been sold across the opening match at Sunderland's Stadium of Light and the bronze final and final at Twickenham and we are expecting huge demand when tickets for all matches become available later this year.

With the tournament being played across eight iconic locations the length and breadth of the country, there is no better opportunity for fans across the nation and beyond to join the biggest ever celebration of women's rugby.

See you at England 2025!



Rob Udwin

RFU President

This is a fantastic moment as we kick-off the biggest ever Women's Rugby World Cup by confirming the matches for the 16 competing teams in the 2025 edition.

Today's draw is not just about confirming matches, it's about igniting the excitement and anticipation that will sweep across England and the rugby world. With eight fantastic venues hosting the event, we are on the brink of witnessing unforgettable showdowns, heart-stopping surprises, and breathtaking performances that will leave us all on the edge of our seats.

Mark your calendars for the opening match in Sunderland, for pool games in Northampton and Salford, and for the quarter-finals and semi-finals in Bristol and Exeter. From the shores of Brighton to the historic streets of York, fans will have the chance to discover amazing locations while cheering on their teams in electrifying international matches.

The atmosphere will be inspirational – a celebration that will motivate a whole new generation of women and girls to lace up their boots and hit the pitch, and new fans

to follow this amazing sport! With all eyes on Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, we're poised for a huge momentum shift in the women's game, driven by passion, talent, and the fierce dedication of all 16 teams.

As we gear up for the grand finale on 27 September, get ready to feel the excitement reach fever pitch – a climax of everything we love about rugby.

So, let's get this party started! Today's draw has been eagerly awaited, and now the countdown to this epic tournament officially begins.

What a fantastic time to be involved in our game.

How the draw works

How does it work?

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will feature an expanded format of 16 teams compared to the 12 at RWC 2021 in New Zealand.

As the host nation for Women's RWC 2025, England automatically qualified for the tournament with Canada, France and New Zealand also securing direct qualification after finishing in the top four at Women's Rugby World Cup 2021, played in New Zealand in 2022.

Since then, six further teams qualified through regional competitions – Brazil, Fiji, Ireland, Japan, South Africa and the USA, while the remaining six places were determined through WXV 2024.

The six highest placed non-qualified teams in the competition earned a spot at Women's RWC 2025 – Australia, Scotland, Italy, Wales, Spain and Samoa.

These qualified teams have been seeded one-16 based on the World Rugby Women's Rankings as of 14 October, with the top four ranked teams being placed into band one and prepopulated into the first position in each pool (top seed, England, in Pool A, second seed, Canada, in Pool B, third seed, New Zealand, in Pool C and fourth seed, France, in Pool D).

The remaining 12 teams have been placed into bands two, three and four based on their rankings:

- Band 1:** England, Canada, New Zealand, France
- Band 2:** Australia, Ireland, Scotland, Italy
- Band 3:** USA, Wales, Japan, South Africa
- Band 4:** Spain, Samoa, Fiji, Brazil

The draw will take place live on BBC's *The One Show* on Thursday, 17 October from 19:00 (GMT+1) and for those outside the UK, it will be streamed live at 19:20 (GMT+1) on RugbyPass TV.

Each band will be drawn randomly to determine the four pools – starting with band four – with the first drawn going into Pool D, the second into Pool C, third into Pool B and fourth into Pool A.



Draw

POOL A	POOL B	POOL C	POOL D
England	Canada	New Zealand	France
.....			
.....			
.....			

QUALIFIED TEAMS

The venues

WOMEN'S RWC 2025

Most accessible Women's Rugby World Cup ever

Across six weekends from 22 August to 27 September, fans will have the chance to watch the world's 16 best teams and the biggest stars of the game compete at eight locations across the length and breadth of the country, culminating in a grand finale at the world's largest dedicated rugby union venue, Twickenham Stadium, in London.

The countrywide format makes it the most accessible Women's Rugby World Cup ever, offering an unparalleled opportunity across the six-weekend schedule for fans to see, engage with and support the stars of the women's game, with 95 per cent of the population within a two-hour travel time of a venue.

More than 40,000 fans from the North East of England and beyond will have a golden opportunity to watch the Red Roses in action on Friday, 22 August as they kick-off the 10th edition of the pinnacle event at Sunderland's Stadium of Light.

Six of the eight host locations will hold pool matches over three weekends, including Brighton and Hove (Brighton and Hove Albion Stadium), Exeter (Sandy Park), Manchester (Salford Community Stadium), Northampton (Franklin's Gardens), and York (York Community Stadium).

Exeter and Bristol (Ashton Gate Stadium) will host the quarter-finals on the weekend of 13 September, with the latter also hosting both semi-finals on the weekend of 19 September.



History of Women's Rugby World Cup

Tournament overview

Thirty-four years after the inaugural Women's Rugby World Cup was held in Wales, the competition will once again be held on the British Isles in 2025 as England play host for the second time.



The first three tournaments had three different winners. USA became the first team to lift the Women's Rugby World Cup trophy in 1991, a stirring second half seeing them overcome England 19-6 at Cardiff Arms Park, and the roles were reversed three years later as England triumphed 38-23 against the Women's Eagles in Edinburgh.

Another new name was etched onto the trophy in 1998 as New Zealand overcame USA 44-12, Vanessa Cootes scoring four of her side's eight tries in the Amsterdam showpiece.

That result ushered in an era of dominance for the Black Ferns, who went on to win the next three Women's Rugby World Cups – with England the beaten finalists on each occasion.

Spain hosted the first of those, in 2002, when Samoa were among the debutants – marking the occasion with a 22-0 win over Ireland. The Olympic Stadium in Barcelona hosted the final, which New Zealand won 19-9.

Four years later, the competition ventured outside Europe for the first time as Canada welcomed the world.

The hosts were narrowly beaten 10-6 by England in the semi-finals but New Zealand proved too strong in the final once more, winning 25-17 to give legendary hooker Farah Palmer a fitting send-off in her final match before retirement.

The Black Ferns' fourth consecutive triumph came on English soil in 2010, Kelly Brazier's

WOMEN'S RUGBY WORLD CUP WINNERS

USA	1991
England	1994
New Zealand	1998
New Zealand	2002
New Zealand	2006
New Zealand	2010
England	2014
New Zealand	2017
New Zealand	2021



penalty proving decisive in a nail-biting 13-10 win at the Twickenham Stoop. Fourteen years on, the final will be played at the nearby Twickenham Stadium, the home of English rugby, in a sign of how far the women's game has progressed in recent times.

After more than a decade of near misses, England lifted the trophy for a second time in 2014. New Zealand missed out on the semi-finals after a shock defeat at the hands of Ireland, ensuring a first-time finalist was guaranteed. Canada occupied that spot after beating hosts France in the last four but England proved too strong in the final, coming out on top 21-9.

Determined to put things right three years later, New Zealand were inspired by a hat-trick from prop Toka Natua as they defeated England 41-32 to earn their fifth crown. The 2017 tournament was also notable for Hong Kong China making their debut, as the number of teams to feature at a Women's Rugby World Cup climbed to 20.

Fiji made their debut at Women's Rugby World Cup 2021, which was played in 2022 having been postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. New Zealand hosted for the first time and celebrated by becoming the first hosts to lift the trophy, beating the Red Roses 34-31 in a thrilling final at Eden Park in front of more than 42,000 spectators.



Road to Women's Rugby World Cup 2025

How the 16 teams qualified

The road to Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 began two years ago in New Zealand when the first four teams confirmed their places at the tournament.

In reaching the semi-finals at the last Women's Rugby World Cup, Canada, France and New Zealand secured direct qualification to join England, who qualified automatically as host nation.

With an expanded 16-team tournament for 2025, there were a further 12 spots up for grabs. Six of these were decided through regional competitions, with the remaining six places then coming down to WXV.

In Europe, the 2024 Women's Six Nations served as the qualifying tournament with one spot available for the highest finisher out of Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales.

A year on from finishing last, Ireland turned things around and came third behind England and France, ensuring that they will return to the showpiece event after missing the last edition.

The World Rugby Pacific Four Series, contested by Australia, Canada, New Zealand and USA, also offered one place for the highest finisher out of Australia and USA.

As with Ireland, the USA hit form at the right moment, finishing third to clinch their spot in England following a come-from-behind victory over the Wallaroos in Melbourne.

South Africa won all three of their matches in the Rugby Africa Women's Cup 2024, a victory over hosts Madagascar in their final match booking their place.

Japan will contest a third successive Women's Rugby World Cup after winning the Asia Rugby Women's Championship 2024, although they needed two late tries to make sure of a 29-12 win over Hong Kong China in the decisive game.

Fiji made their Women's Rugby World Cup debut in New Zealand and secured back-to-back qualifications by winning the Oceania Rugby Women's Championship 2024, beating Samoa 27-13 in the title decider to avenge their loss the previous year.

Last, but by no means least, Brazil made history becoming the first South American team to qualify for a Women's Rugby World Cup.

It came down to a play-off between Colombia and Brazil with As Yaras triumphing 34-13 in Paraguay – their first-ever win over Colombia – to book their spot.

The remaining places have been decided through WXV 2024, with the six highest placed non-qualified nations earning a place at Women's RWC 2025.

Four of those came from WXV 2 in South Africa in Australia, Scotland, Italy and Wales.

In WXV 3, only Fiji had already qualified, meaning that the next two highest-placed finishers would complete the 16 teams in England.

Those spots were secured by champions Spain and Samoa, who will take their place in the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Draw.



Photo by: HKCR/AR- Ike Images



England overview

Interesting statistics:

- The Red Roses are one of four teams to have contested every Women's Rugby World Cup, alongside Canada, France and USA
- They are also one of four teams to contest a final with Canada, New Zealand and USA
- England have reached seven finals but only won two, in 1994 and 2014
- The Red Roses are the only team to have reached the semi-finals in every tournament to date
- England have always finished top of their pool in Women's Rugby World Cup history
- Six of England's seven Women's Rugby World Cup defeats have been against New Zealand



Coach:
John Mitchell

Captain:
Marlie Packer

Seeded:
1 (Band 1)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Spain on 6 April, 1991

Appearances: 9 - 1991-2021

Record: Played 44 - Won 36, Drawn 1, Lost 7

Best placing: Champions - 1994, 2014

Points for/against: 1627 / 475



Past pool statistics:

- England have never been drawn in a pool with Wales
- The Red Roses have played USA twice (2010 and 2017) in the pool stages
- They have been drawn against Spain more than any other team, being placed in the same pools on four occasions (1991, 2002, 2014 and 2017)



Canada overview

Interesting statistics:

- Canada played New Zealand in the first-ever Women's Rugby World Cup match in 1991, losing 24-8
- Canada are one of four teams to have contested every tournament, alongside England, France and USA
- They are also one of the four teams to contest a final with England, New Zealand and USA
- Canada have played the most matches in Women's Rugby World Cup history with 45
- They have been involved in the only two draws in Women's Rugby World Cup history, 9-9 v Wales in 1991 and 13-13 with England in 2014
- Canada have only finished top of their pool three times (2002, 2006 and 2021)



Coach:
Kevin Rouet

Captain:
Sophie de Goede

Seeded:
2 (Band 1)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v New Zealand on 6 April, 1991

Appearances: 9 - 1991-2021

Record: Played 45 - Won 25, Drawn 2, Lost 18

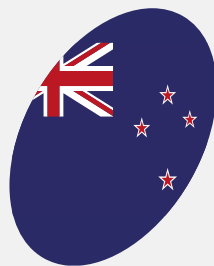
Best placing: Runners-up 2014

Points for/against: 1,090 / 790



Past pool statistics:

- They have never been in a pool with Australia, Brazil, Fiji or South Africa
- However, Canada have faced Wales three times (1991, 1994 and 2017)



New Zealand overview

Interesting statistics:

- New Zealand played Canada in the first-ever Women's Rugby World Cup match in 1991, winning 24-8
- They have lost only one pool match in tournament history – 17-14 v Ireland in 2014
- That loss ended a run of 20 consecutive wins on the Women's Rugby World Cup stage since their 1991 semi-final defeat by USA
- New Zealand become the first host nation to win a Women's Rugby World Cup last time out
- New Zealand have a 100 per cent win record in finals, winning all six
- They are one of four teams to contest a Women's Rugby World Cup final with Canada, England and USA
- New Zealand have scored the most points (1,794) and tries (317) in tournament history
- Portia Woodman-Wickliffe holds the overall record for most Rugby World Cup tries in history – men's or women's – with 20 after scoring seven on home soil to go with her 13 at Ireland 2017



Director of Rugby:
Allan Bunting

Co-Captains:
**Ruahei Demant and
Kennedy Tukuafu**

Seeded:
3 (Band 1)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Canada on 6 April, 1991
Appearances: 8 – 1991, 1998-2021
Record: Played 38 – Won 36, Drawn 0, Lost 2
Best placing: Champions – 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2017, 2021
Points for/against: 1,794 / 317



Past pool statistics:

- New Zealand have never been drawn in the same pool as Japan, Fiji, Samoa or Brazil
- The Black Ferns have faced Wales on four occasions (1991, 2010, 2017 and 2021)
- They were also drawn with Wales in 2002 but due to the competition format they did not meet – the winners of first matches meeting in round two so New Zealand played Australia after they beat Wales in their opener
- They have also faced Australia three times (2002, 2010, 2021)
- Italy (1998), Spain (2006), South Africa (2010), Ireland (2014), USA (2014) and Scotland (2021) are the other qualified teams they have previously faced at a Women's Rugby World Cup and could be drawn with for 2025



France overview

Interesting statistics:

- France are one of four teams to have contested every Women's Rugby World Cup, alongside Canada, England and USA
- France failed to finish top of their pool for the first time at RWC 2021
- Les Bleues have only once failed to make the semi-finals – in 1998 – but have never reached the title decider, coming close last time out with a 25-24 loss to eventual champions New Zealand
- France have finished third eight times, including in five of the last six tournaments



Co-Coaches:
**Gaëlle Mignot and
David Ortiz**

Co-Captains:
**Manaé Feleu and
Marine Ménager**

Seeded:
4 (Band 1)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Japan on 6 April, 1991

Appearances: 9 - 1991-2021

Record: Played 43 - Won 29, Drawn 0, Lost 14

Best placing: Third - 1991 (joint), 1994, 2002, 2006, 2014, 2017, 2021

Points for/against: 1162 / 487



Past pool statistics:

- France have never been drawn in a pool with Brazil, Italy, Spain or Samoa
- France have been drawn in the same pool as Australia and Ireland three times apiece
- Since their first match against Japan in 1991 France have only been drawn in the same pool as the Sakura Fifteen once, in 2017
- France have also met Wales and South Africa once in the pool stage, in 2014



Australia overview

Interesting statistics:

- Australia beat Ireland 21-0 on their Women's Rugby World Cup debut in Amsterdam in 1998
- It took the Wallaroos until 2010 to win two pool matches in a tournament, a feat they repeated four years later
- The Wallaroos have only made the semi-finals once, as the best pool runner-up in 2010, but their title dreams ended there with a 15-0 loss to hosts England
- Australia's Rio 2016 Olympic gold medallists Shannon Parry and Sharni Williams captained the side at Women's Rugby World Cup 2017



Coach:
Joanne Yapp

Captain:
Michaela Leonard

Seeded:
5 (Band 2)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Ireland on 2 May, 1998

Appearances: 7 - 1998-2021

Record: Played 33 - Won 18, Drawn 0, Lost 15

Best placing: Third - 2010

Points for/against: 640 / 566



Past pool statistics:

- Australia have never been in the same pool as the USA, Italy, Fiji, Canada or Brazil – however they did face the USA in 2006 as part of the cross-pool format
- The Wallaroos were drawn in the same pool as England in 2006 but did not face the Red Roses as the format saw teams play across pools
- They have faced Wales, Ireland and New Zealand three times in the pool stages



Ireland overview

Interesting statistics:

- Ireland are the only team to have ever defeated New Zealand in the pool stage of a Women's Rugby World Cup, doing so in 2014 when they beat the Black Ferns 17-14
- Ireland failed to qualify for RWC 2021, ending a streak of seven consecutive tournaments
- Ireland recorded their best-ever finish at a Women's Rugby World Cup in 2014 with fourth, losing to eventual champions England in the semi-finals and hosts France in the third-place play-off
- They are one of eight teams to have made it to the semi-finals of a Women's Rugby World Cup



Coach:
Scott Bemand

Captain:
Edel McMahon

Seeded:
6 (Band 2)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Scottish Students on 13 April, 1994

Appearances: 7 - 1994-2017

Record: Played 34 - Won 15, Drawn 0, Lost 19

Best placing: Fourth - 2014

Points for/against: 490 / 691



Past pool statistics:

- Ireland have been drawn alongside France and Australia the most times— three apiece including facing both in 1998 and 2017
- Ireland also faced France in the 2006 pool stage where teams met opponents from a different pool
- Ireland hosted Women's Rugby World Cup 2017, finishing second in their pool behind France, before going onto finish eighth
- Ireland have never been drawn against Wales, South Africa, Fiji, Spain or Brazil in the pool stage at a Women's Rugby World Cup
- They won their only meeting with New Zealand at a Women's Rugby World Cup, making them the only team with a 100% record against the Black Ferns at the tournament



Scotland overview

Interesting statistics:

- Scotland are the only nation other than Wales in the inaugural tournament to have made their Women's Rugby World Cup debut as hosts
- Scotland won the Shield in 1994, beating Canada 11-5 in the final at Boroughmuir
- Scotland ended an 11-year wait for a Women's Rugby World Cup appearance after beating Colombia in the Final Qualification Tournament decider in Dubai in February 2022
- RWC 2021 was the first time Scotland failed to win a match at a single edition of the tournament, having done so in each of their first five appearances
- Two of their three defeats – against Wales and Australia – came by a combined total of five points



Coach:
Bryan Easson

Captain:
Rachel Malcolm

Seeded:
7 (Band 2)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Russia on 13 April, 1994
Appearances: Six - 1994-2010, 2021
Record: Played 27 - Won 11, Drawn 0, Lost 16
Best placing: Fifth - 1994
Points for/against: 348 / 536



Past pool statistics:

- Scotland faced different opposition in each of their first six pool matches
- They were then drawn against Canada and Samoa in 2006, having played them in 2002. However, because of the format of the competition, they did not play either team
- Scotland finished with an identical record of one win and one defeat from the pool stage in 1994, 1998 and 2002
- Women's Rugby World Cup 2021 was the first time Scotland had been drawn against Wales or Australia
- Scotland have been drawn against New Zealand twice – in 1998 and 2021, while they also met in 2006 in the cross-pool format
- Scotland have never been drawn against ever-present USA



Italy overview

Interesting statistics:

- Women's RWC 2025 will be the first time Italy have played in three consecutive tournaments
- Italy have won at least one match in every Women's Rugby World Cup they have participated in
- Italy have faced Japan in each of their past three Women's Rugby World Cup appearances – in the pool stage in 2002 and 2021 and the ninth place semi-finals in 2017, winning all three matches
- The Azzurre became the first Italian side to reach a Rugby World Cup quarter-final at New Zealand 2021 with Italy's men yet to progress from the pool stage



Coach:
Giovanni Raineri

Captain:
Elisa Giordano

Seeded:
8 (Band 2)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v England on 8 April, 1991
Appearances: 5 - 1991, 1998, 2002, 2017 and 2021
Record: Played 22 - Won 8, Drawn 0, Lost 14
Best placing: Quarter-finals - 2021
Points for/against: 320 / 429



Past pool statistics:

- Italy were drawn alongside England and Spain in 1991 and 2002
- Italy have never been drawn alongside France, Wales, South Africa, Samoa, Fiji or Brazil
- The Azzurre have played USA in the last two Women's Rugby World Cup pool stages, losing by 12 points in 2017 before winning by 12 points in 2021
- Italy finished bottom of their pool in 2017 before qualifying for the quarter-finals as runners-up in 2021
- In 1998, Italy finished the pool stage with a points difference of 0 – the only side in history to do so



USA overview

Interesting statistics:

- USA are one of four teams to have contested every Women's Rugby World Cup, alongside Canada, England and France
- They are also one of the four teams to contest a final with Canada, England and New Zealand
- They reached the first three RWC finals, winning the inaugural title in 1991 and losing in 1994 (v England) and 1998 (v New Zealand)
- It would be 19 years before the Women's Eagles would reach another semi-final
- USA have not topped a Women's Rugby World Cup pool since they last reached the final in 1998



Coach:
Sione Fukofuka

Captain:
Kate Zackary

Seeded:
9 (Band 3)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Netherlands on 6 April, 1991

Appearances: 9 - 1991-2021

Record: Played 42 - Won 26, Drawn 0, Lost 16

Best placing: Champions - 1991

Points for/against: 1,306 / 681



Past pool statistics:

- They have never faced Fiji or Brazil in the pool stages
- The Women's Eagles were in the same pool as England in 2010 and 2017 but also faced them in 2006 due to the cross-pool format in operation
- USA have been drawn in Pool B on six occasions, including the last four tournaments



Wales overview

Interesting statistics:

- Wales drew their first Women's Rugby World Cup match 9-9 with Canada, which was the tournament's only draw until 2014 when Canada drew 13-13 with England
- Only once have Wales won more than one pool match – in 1994 when they beat Canada and Kazakhstan
- Wales finished fourth in 1994, losing 27-0 to France in the battle for third place
- Wales qualified for the quarter-finals at RWC 2021 as one of the two best third-placed teams in the pool stage



Coach:
Ioan Cunningham

Captain:
Hannah Jones

Seeded:
10 (Band 3)



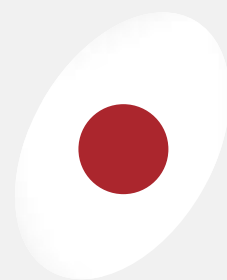
RWC statistics:

Debut: v Canada on 8 April, 1991
Appearances: 8 - 1991-2002, 2010-21
Record: Played 36 - Won 14, Drawn 1, Lost 21
Best placing: Fourth - 1994
Points for/against: 643 / 808



Past pool statistics:

- They have never been in a pool with England or Fiji
- Wales have been drawn in a pool with New Zealand on five occasions but only played them in four of those editions (1991, 2010, 2017, 2021) as in 2002, the format meant that only the two Pool A winners on day one faced each other in a de facto quarter-final and Wales were beaten by Australia
- Wales have faced Australia four times in 2002, 2010, 2014 and 2021
- RWC 2021 was the first time in history Wales had faced Scotland in a pool match, winning 18-15 thanks to Keira Bevan's late penalty



Japan overview

Interesting statistics:

- Japan's first-ever international outing was at Women's Rugby World Cup, making their debut in 1991 in a 62-0 loss to France
- Japan will compete at a third consecutive tournament for the first time at England 2025
- Only one of Japan's four wins has come in the pool stage, 10-5 against Sweden in 1994
- Japan competed at two of the first three editions of Women's Rugby World Cup but endured a 15-year wait for a fourth tournament in 2017
- The Sakura Fifteen head coach Lesley McKenzie played in two Women's Rugby World Cups for Canada in 2006 and 2010



Coach:
Lesley McKenzie

Captain:
Iroha Nagata

Seeded:
11 (Band 3)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v France on 6 April 1991

Appearances: 5 - 1991-94, 2002, 2017-21

Record: Played 20 - Won 3, Drawn 0, Lost 17

Best placing: 8th in 1994

Points for/against: 173 / 769



Past pool statistics:

- Japan have never been drawn in a pool with Fiji, Brazil, Scotland or New Zealand
- They have been pitted against France and Italy twice in the pool stage
- Sweden – the only team that Japan have registered a win against in the pool stage – have also been drawn against the Sakura Fifteen in more than one tournament
- In all of their five of their Women's Rugby World Cup appearances, Japan have never been drawn in a pool containing the eventual champions



South Africa overview

Interesting statistics:

- The Springbok Women have only missed one Women's Rugby World Cup since their debut in 2006, in Ireland 2017
- South Africa ended a seven-year absence from the Women's Rugby World Cup stage in New Zealand but failed to win a match in the tournament
- The closest they came was a 21-17 loss to Fiji
- Only one of South Africa's three wins has come in the pool stage, 15-10 against Wales in 2010
- South Africa qualified for Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 as Rugby Africa Women's Cup 2024 winners



Coach:
Swys de Bruin

Captain:
Nolusindiso Boo

Seeded:
12 (Band 3)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Australia on 31 August, 2006
Appearances: 4 - 2006-14, 2021
Record: Played 18 - Won 3, Drawn 0, Lost 15
Best placing: 10th in 2010, 2014
Points for/against: 146 / 736



Past pool statistics:

- South Africa have never been drawn in a pool with Canada, Scotland, Ireland, Italy or Brazil
- The Springbok Women have met Australia in all bar one of their previous Women's Rugby World Cups, 2006 under the cross-pool format in operation
- They have been drawn in the same pool as France three times (2006, 2014 and 2021) but did not actually play them in 2006
- The Springbok Women have also been drawn in the same pool as New Zealand once (2010)



Spain overview

Interesting statistics:

- Spain return to the Women's Rugby World Cup stage after missing the 2021 edition
- Spain took on England in their very first Women's Rugby World Cup match in 1991, losing 12-0 in Swansea
- They followed that up with wins over Italy, Japan and the Netherlands before losing the Plate final to Canada
- Spain have won at least one match in every edition of the tournament in which they have competed
- They hosted the tournament in 2002, beating Japan in their opening game before losing 13-5 to England in a de facto quarter-final
- Spain have won the last seven editions of the Rugby Europe Women's Championship



Coach:
Juan González Marruecos

Captain:
Laura Delgado

Seeded:
13 (Band 4)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v England on 6 April, 1991
Appearances: 6 - 1991, 1998-2006, 2014-2017
Record: Played 29 - Won 14, Drawn 0, Lost 15
Best placing: Sixth - 1991
Points for/against: 458 / 577



Past pool statistics:

- Spain have been drawn in the same pool as England more than any other team, having faced them on four separate occasions (1991, 2002, 2014, 2017)
- Spain have never been drawn against neighbours France in a Women's Rugby World Cup
- Las Leonas have faced Italy in the pool stage on three occasions, including the very first edition in 1991 and their last appearance in 2017
- While Spain have been drawn in the same pool as New Zealand once at a Women's Rugby World Cup, it was in 2006 when teams from the same pool did not play against one another
- Spain have never been drawn in the same pool as Australia, Ireland, Scotland or South Africa



Samoa overview

Interesting statistics:

- Samoa played their first game at Women's Rugby World Cup 2002 against Scotland, losing 13-3
- Their first victory came against Ireland at that same tournament, with further wins over Kazakhstan and Wales as Samoa finished ninth
- Samoa booked their place at Women's RWC 2025 through WXV, beating Fiji and Madagascar after an opening draw against the Netherlands in WXV 3
- It will be their first appearance in the showpiece event for 11 years



Coach:
Ramsey Tomokino

Captain:
Sui Pauaraisa

Seeded:
14 (Band 4)



RWC statistics:

Debut: v Scotland on 13 May, 2002
Appearances: 3 - 2002, 2006, 2014
Record: Played 14 - Won 6, Drawn 0, Lost 8
Best placing: Ninth - 2002
Points for/against: 201 / 294



Past pool statistics:

- Samoa have been drawn in the same pool as Canada in every Women's Rugby World Cup in which they have competed – although in 2006 they did not meet as sides played against teams from different pools
- Samoa have never been drawn in the same pool as New Zealand, however they faced the Black Ferns in 2006 as a result of the cross-pool format
- Samoa have never been drawn in the same pool as France, Australia, Italy, USA, Wales, Japan or South Africa



Fiji overview

Interesting statistics:

- Fiji will make their second Women's Rugby World Cup appearance in 2025
- Fiji became the 21st team to play in the tournament when they debuted at New Zealand 2021 and tasted victory in their second match, scoring with a late try to beat South Africa 21-17
- Alowesi Nakoci wrote her name into the history books as the first Fiji try-scorer at a Women's Rugby World Cup, scoring the first of their three tries in an 84-19 loss to England at Eden Park
- Fiji's first Women's Rugby World Cup appearance came only six years after they returned to the international stage in 2016 following a 10-year absence

Captain:
Karalaini Naisewa

Seeded:
15 (Band 4)

- The team qualified for Women's RWC 2025 by winning the 2024 Oceania Rugby Women's Championship
- The Fiji Rugby Union opened a High Performance Women's Academy in July 2020



RWC statistics:

Debut: v England on 8 October, 2022
Appearances: 1 - 2021
Record: Played 3 - Won 1, Drawn 0, Lost 2
Best placing: Pool stage
Points for/against: 40-145



Past pool statistics:

- Fiji were drawn in a pool with England, France and South Africa in their first appearance on the Women's Rugby World Cup stage
- Of the other teams they could be drawn with for England 2025, Fiji have only faced Australia, Canada, Japan and Scotland



Brazil overview

Interesting statistics:

- Brazil became the first team from South America to qualify for a Women's Rugby World Cup
- Brazil's first-ever match was played against the Netherlands in Amsterdam in 2008. They have not played a match outside South America since then but are due to head back to the Netherlands for a two-test series later this year
- Brazil booked their place at England 2025 by beating Colombia 34-13 in a play-off in Paraguay. It was their first-ever win over Colombia at the sixth attempt
- As Yaras have played eight tests since their return to international rugby in 2019 with Portugal their only other opponents
- While Brazil's 15s team is still relatively new, they have enjoyed success in women's sevens, featuring at three Olympic Games
- Their greatest success came on home soil at Rio 2016 when Brazil won three of their five matches to finish ninth



Coach:
Emiliano Caffera

Captain:
Eshyllen Coimbra

Seeded:
16 (Band 4)



Photo by: @Fotojump

RWC statistics:

Will make their debut at Women's Rugby World Cup 2025



Photo by: @Fotojump

Past pool statistics:

- Brazil have not faced any teams who have qualified for Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 so will come up against three new opponents in England. Their only Test opponents have been the Netherlands, Colombia and Portugal
- In their three Olympic appearances in rugby sevens, Brazil have been drawn against Canada and France twice each. They could face either side at Women's Rugby World Cup 2025
- Brazil have also competed on the Rugby World Cup Sevens stage on four occasions, being drawn against Ireland and Canada in the first round in their two most recent appearances

Statistical look at Women's Rugby World Cup 2021

New Zealand became the first host nation to win Women's Rugby World Cup with a dramatic 34-31 win over England in the final at Eden Park. As we prepare for another festival of rugby in England in 2025, here are some of the most important statistics from New Zealand.

4 – tries scored by Claudia Macdonald in England's opening 84-19 victory against Fiji at Eden Park. No player scored as many in a single match at RWC 2021.

5 – England players scored three tries or more in a match during RWC 2021, including Amy Cokayne in the final. Eight players in total achieved that feat.

6 – Women's Rugby World Cup titles for the Black Ferns following their victory at Eden Park. New Zealand have now beaten the Red Roses in five finals.

7 – tries scored across the tournament by Black Ferns winger Portia Woodman, more than any other player. Woodman notched a hat-trick against Australia on opening night and followed that up with four tries in two matches against Wales to take her overall tally to 20 – the most of any player in men's or women's Rugby World Cup history.

8 – Matches decided by seven points or less at New Zealand 2021

12 – conversions by France fly-half Caroline Drouin in six matches, more than any other player at the tournament.

18 – offloads supplied by Black Ferns co-captain Ruahei Demant in five matches at RWC 2021, to top the charts.

21 – Fiji made their Women's Rugby World Cup debut in New Zealand, the 21st nation to grace the tournament, and earned a first win, 21-17 over South Africa



44 – tries by New Zealand in six tournament matches (7.33 per match). The Black Ferns collectively crossed the whitewash once more than England (43), the only other team to score more than 27 tries during RWC 2021.

50 – clean breaks from New Zealand players during the tournament, 10 more than second-placed England (40).

75 – points, the biggest margin of victory in the 26 matches in New Zealand. It came when England beat South Africa 75-0 at the end of the pool phase.

80 – the number of tackles made by both Alex Callender of Wales and France second-row Madoussou Fall, more than any other player at RWC 2021. Callender amassed that tally in four appearances, one of which was as a replacement, while Fall played five matches in New Zealand.

101 – runs made with ball in hand across the tournament by Canada captain Sophie de Goede. That is 27 more than the next highest, England flanker Marlie Packer (74).

270 – points scored by England in six tournament matches (45 points per match). The Red Roses scored two more points than hosts New Zealand (268), who were the only other team to score more than 200 points.

916 – tackles made by French players during RWC 2021, over 150 more than second-placed Canada (757). Wales made the third-most tackles in the tournament (753) despite exiting at the quarter-final stage.

42,579 – fans filled a sold-out Eden Park, for a day that culminated in the Black Ferns' dramatic defeat of England in the RWC 2021 final.

Past pool draws

The new system will see 16 teams split across four pools with the top two from each pool qualifying for the quarter-finals. This is a change to the previous 12-team format which had been in place since 2010. As the table shows, Pool A has been the most successful pool, producing the last five champions.

	POOL 1/A	POOL 2/B	POOL 3/C	POOL 4/D
RWC 1991 (Wales)	New Zealand Canada Wales	France Sweden Japan	USA Netherlands USSR	England Spain Italy
RWC 1994 (Scotland)	USA Sweden Japan	England Scotland Russia	France Ireland Scottish Students	Wales Canada Kazakhstan
RWC 1998 (Netherlands)	England Canada Netherlands Sweden	USA Spain Wales Russia	New Zealand Scotland Italy Germany	France Australia Kazakhstan Ireland
RWC 2002 * (Spain)	New Zealand Australia Wales Germany	France USA Kazakhstan Netherlands	England Spain Italy Japan	Canada Scotland Samoa Ireland
RWC 2006 ** (Canada)	New Zealand Spain Kazakhstan	England Australia Ireland	France USA South Africa	Canada Scotland Samoa
RWC 2010 (England)	New Zealand Australia South Africa Wales	England Ireland USA Kazakhstan	France Canada Scotland Sweden	
RWC 2014 (France)	England Canada Spain Samoa	Ireland New Zealand USA Kazakhstan	France Australia Wales South Africa	
RWC 2017 (Ireland)	New Zealand Canada Wales Hong Kong	England USA Spain Italy	France Ireland Australia Japan	
RWC 2021 (New Zealand)	New Zealand Australia Wales Scotland	Canada Italy USA Japan	England France Fiji South Africa	

■ = Winner

* At RWC 2002 teams did not play in a conventional round-robin pool format, the winners on day one met in a de facto quarter-final with losers also meeting but unable to finish higher than ninth

** At RWC 2006 teams played across pools, so Pool A teams met those in Pool D and Pool B those in Pool C

Expectations for 2025

What to expect from Women's Rugby World Cup 2025

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will be the 10th edition of the global tournament and will take place in England from 22 August to 27 September.

Women's RWC 2025 will be an era-defining tournament, providing the ultimate stage for the best players, teams and coaches from across the globe.

A joint venture between World Rugby and the RFU, with support from the UK Government, England 2025 aims to be a spectacular celebration of women's rugby, family and togetherness.

For the first time ever, the expanded showcase event will be hosted across eight venues and cities around the country with 16 teams competing to be crowned world champions.

The countrywide format makes it the most accessible Women's Rugby World Cup ever, offering an unparalleled opportunity across six week-ends for fans to see, engage with and support the stars of the women's game in towns and cities around England.

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will represent a generational moment for global rugby that will set new standards, welcome new fans and families to the sport and inspire a new generation of players, providing an exciting catalyst to nation-wide and global rugby growth.



Examination of the growth of Women's rugby

Women in rugby

The impact of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will be a game-changer for women's participation across the sport, shaping positive perceptions at all levels of the game and benefiting local communities.

World Rugby continues to support and launch women and girls' specific programmes globally, seizing the opportunity to supercharge the rise of women's rugby across the world beyond 2025.

Impact Beyond 2025

World Rugby launched Impact Beyond 2025, its ambitious programme with the aim of capturing the long-standing positive impact of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025.

The global impact programme is built around three core themes of profile and participation, careers and gender equity, and capability and expertise within a whole-game approach with the mission of inspiring more women and girls to get into rugby on and off the field of play.

Each theme articulates a series of strategic initiatives that will ensure the positive impact of Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025 is felt for generations to come, cementing the foundations for a strong a sustainable women's game around the world.

[VIEW FULL IMPACT BEYOND 2025 PLAN >>](#)



Rugby Rising Play

The biggest driver for change will be Rugby Rising Play, World Rugby's first bespoke girls' participation programme focused on expanding the active teenage female player base globally and creating the next generation of players retained in the game.

The initiative enables member unions to implement a tailored rugby programme for girls that also creates an holistic learning environment aligning with rugby's values.

Applications opened in July 2024 for eligible unions which led to more than 40 being selected to take part in the programme with the overarching objective to welcome more girls than ever into rugby over the next 12 months.

The benefits of this programme are already starting to be felt following a successful pilot which ran across nine unions in five regions from 2023 through to 2024 and saw 5,300 girls play rugby for the first time.

[VIEW MORE ON RUGBY RISING PLAY >>](#)

The Gallagher High Performance Academy

World Rugby and Gallagher announced in September 2024 the 11 female coaches that have been embedded with their national team while they are competing at WXV 2024, as part of the Gallagher High Performance Academy.

The Academy forms part of World Rugby's strategic plan to accelerate the global development of women in rugby and has supported 26 female coaches since 2023.

With a focus on talent identification, professional support and championing the next generation of international coaches, the Gallagher High Performance Academy develops existing coaching talent, and identifies opportunities for new coaches and women in other high performance roles.

[2024 GALLAGHER HIGH PERFORMANCE ACADEMY PARTICIPANT PROFILES >>](#)

Capgemini Women in Rugby Leadership Programme

Earlier this year, World Rugby and Capgemini announced the 25 inspiring female leaders from around the world that will participate in the Capgemini Women in Rugby Leadership Programme in 2024 and 2025, driving visibility of female leaders from within the rugby family and helping to accelerate the development of the women and girls' game, on the road to Women's Rugby World Cup 2025.

The 25 scholars on the programme will be granted access to the best learning programmes from the Capgemini University. They will also be paired with a mentor assigned by World Rugby as well as a Capgemini coach, and eligible to apply for an additional discretionary grant of up to £5,000 to help aid their development and learning.

Since its launch in 2018, the Women in Rugby Leadership Programme has already awarded 98 scholarships to the next generation of female leaders globally with the aim to support their personal and professional development, increasing the number of women in key positions within unions, and regional associations.

[WOMEN IN RUGBY LEADERSHIP 2024-2025 SCHOLARS >>](#)

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



Mastercard

Mastercard, Worldwide Partner of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, is giving its cardholders priority access to be first to secure their tickets to all matches, shortly after the full fixture schedule has been announced. Tickets for all matches will be available from 11:00 BST on 22 October until 11:00 BST on 24 October via the official Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 website (tickets.rugbyworldcup.com)



Gallagher

Gallagher, a global insurance brokerage, risk management and consulting services company, has deep roots in rugby and is an Official Partner of Women's Rugby, WXV and the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025. The partnership signifies Gallagher's commitment to supporting women's rugby around the world. Gallagher is the founding partner of The Gallagher High Performance Academy. This global development and leadership programme is dedicated to increasing the number of women in coaching and other high-performance roles at elite levels of the sport. The Academy forms part of World Rugby's strategic plan to accelerate the development of women's rugby and increase the competitiveness of Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 and beyond to have a lasting impact on the women's game. Find out more via www.ajg.com and www.women.rugby/high-performance-academy/2024



Capgemini

Capgemini is a diverse, global team of 340,000 experts who are partnering with companies to transform and manage their business by harnessing the power of technology. Capgemini is a Principal Partner of World Rugby, sponsoring Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, WXV and the Women's Rugby Leadership Programme. The company has played an active role in supporting projects that have been helping World Rugby in its efforts to transform the sport, whether that is through vital technological solutions, creating a more inclusive pathway for female leaders in rugby, or helping World Rugby to embed sustainability into its operations. [Get the future you want](#)



Asahi

Asahi Super Dry is the world's first super dry beer. Curiosity led us to invent a crisp, clean tasting beer that truly embodies the refreshing taste of Modern Japan. As Japan's interest in rugby has grown, so has our investment in the sport. The successful partnership with Rugby World Cup will continue through a long-term commitment as Official Beer and Principal Partner of all tournaments until 2029. This includes Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025 and Australia 2029, as well as Men's Rugby World Cup Australia 2027. The three-tournament partnership with World Rugby will see Asahi Super Dry foster a cross-culture activation platform showcasing rugby like never before, bringing intrigue and a fresh perspective to rugby fans around the globe.

OFFICIAL PARTNERS



Mitsubishi Electric

Every year, rugby loses many promising young female players. In a growing sport, financial rewards and job security can be a gamble – forcing many women to face incredibly tough decisions. #ParallelLives At Mitsubishi Electric, our goal is to create the opportunity for young women to thrive both on and off the pitch – all while supporting World Rugby's ambition to grow the women's game. The sport demands teamwork, dedication and perseverance – values that mirror the way we work at Mitsubishi Electric. It's why we're a proud global partner of women's rugby, WXV, and Women's Rugby World Cup England 2025. EMEA. MitsubishiElectric.com



ChildFund Rugby

As World Rugby's Social Impact Partner for Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, ChildFund Rugby is championing the power of sport to create lasting, positive change across the globe – impacting lives at every level of the game. Together, we're building a more inclusive, equitable, and safer world through the power of rugby. We leverage rugby's potential to drive meaningful social impact by enabling children and young people in vulnerable communities to play, learn, and lead. Through partnerships with unions and federations worldwide, ChildFund Rugby delivers groundbreaking initiatives, reaching over 75,000 participants in 36 countries to date. Find out more: www.childfundrugby.org



Gilbert Rugby

Gilbert Rugby is a legendary brand with 200 years of expertise in crafting the finest rugby balls. From humble beginnings in the 1820s, Gilbert Rugby has become the ball of choice for the world's greatest rugby competitions. With a reputation for innovation, precision and quality, Gilbert Rugby is the ultimate symbol of rugby excellence. Proud to be the official ball of every Rugby World Cup since 1995.

Media contacts

Media information

All 16 participating teams will be conducting a virtual media session within 24 hours of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Draw.

Details of timings will be available in the dedicated Women's RWC 2025 section in the World Rugby Media Zone at www.world.rugby/media-zone/rwc-2025/dashboard



ALICE MACFARLANE

Communications Manager

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025



alice.macfarlane@england.rwc.rugby



WWW.RUGBYWORLDCUP.COM/2025



[MEDIA ZONE](#)



[@rugbyworldcup](#)



[/rugbyworldcup](#)



[@rugbyworldcup](#)