

TORONTO RUGBY UNION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Zoom Call
10:00 am
February 6th, 2022

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Please see attached – League Financial Summary 2021 (to be viewed at the AGM)

AGENDA

1. Motion to Open
2. A... New Land Acknowledge by Mark Walsh
2. Call to Order/President's welcome
3. Establishment of Quorum
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. TR Board Reports
 - President's Report
 - Director of Game Report
 - Treasurer's Report & Financial Summary
 - Discipline Director's Report
 - Technical & High-Performance Report
 - Secretary's Report
6. Other Business –
7. Election of 2022 TRU Board Members
8. Motion to Adjourn

Motion to open the meeting: Mike Kahn 1st, Don Maillet 2nd at 10:07. 31 members/board members present. 22 clubs represented out of 30 under the TRU branch.

Board members present: Mark Walsh, Peter Ratcliff, Brian Crothers, Mike Kahn, John Pryce, Shelley Ince, Don Maillet, Lesley Swan, Ian Royer

Quorum established with 85% of voting members.

Approval of agenda - Mike Kahn to approve, Pat Daniels 2nd

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Mark Walsh)

Dear Friends,

I sincerely hope that all of you and your families are well. These have been trying, if not difficult times for many, and I know that asking people to manage 2 years of pandemic lockdowns is a lot. I am wishing all of you continued strength and courage for the journey ahead.

At this point in the address, I usually begin lauding our successes for the previous season and laying out all the goals we have set for the upcoming one. But, with an abbreviated 2021 season that saw limited game activity for men and no sanctioned games for women, this report is a little sparse.

Let me start with our Champions! Congrats to Lyndsay, TRU Cup champions 2021. They had an incredible season going undefeated during league play and dominating in the final with an Impressive 53 -10 win over the Mississauga Blues. Balmy Beach had a strong showing in 2021 as not only did their 2's win the TRU Plate championship, defeating Bay St Pigs by a score of 44-17, this was a double for the famous club as their 1's took the Marshall Cup yet again. Congratulations to the Georgian Bay Titans, who took home the TRU Bowl championship in 2021 with their 43-23 win over the Toronto Buccaneer's. What an incredible result for the inaugural year of their men's program. We wish them much more success!

I am sure that we were all hoping for something that would resemble a more normal fixture list for 2022 but as I am writing this report, our Premier has already

enacted a new set of restrictions that will again halt indoor rugby related activities affecting all our clubs' offseason training. With the numbers of infections on the rise, I am unsure how they will affect our current plan for the 2022 season. But, as we have been doing since the pandemic started, the TRU board will continue to work with the other Unions across the Province as well as Rugby Ontario (RO) to keep our members informed of any updates to the COVID related safety protocols. We hope that the numbers will ease in the spring and allow us to have a safe 2022 season.

I am very proud of the efforts of my fellow board members and I would like to thank them for their efforts during these difficult times. During the pandemic we have worked with other sporting bodies both provincially and federally, regularly liaising with RO and sharing Rugby Canada's (RC) and RO's direction on Return to Play protocols. This created many challenges because on a few occasions' plans were made and agreed upon only to have the environment change and necessitate a new plan.

Early in the pandemic, we made it a priority to listen to our clubs and that started with a poll to inquire about their comfort in participating in any kind of league structure for 2021. Once we received the responses from interested clubs, we had numerous discussions as both a version 1 and version 2 of the schedule were scrapped due to lockdowns. It is at this time I would like to specifically single out Brian Crothers for his work as Director of Game. We are exceptionally lucky to have someone as dedicated as Brian has been and we would not have been able to put together a TRU league in 2021 were it not for his herculean scheduling efforts. Thank you, Brian!

My work with the Interbranch Council this year has been very interesting as RO is well into the information gathering and planning stages for its next Strategic Plan. Perspectives across the province are varied on several topics and strategies for tackling problems are presently more regional than one would hope but I am excited that RO is, at the very least, engaging its members and asking for feedback, something they haven't done over the last few years. I am hopeful

that this Strategic Plan will be more directed and more attainable because of these consultations.

As we approach the 2021 AGM the TRU looks to evolve and continue to provide exceptional leadership to our member clubs. One way we hope to do this is to be at the very forefront of diversity and inclusion. I will be stepping down as President for the 2022 season and putting my support behind Shelley Ince.

Shelley has been a board member serving the TRU in the role of Secretary for the last 2 years and I believe she will bring energy and enthusiasm to the role along with fresh perspective. I hope that the membership will support her bid at the AGM in February. I will be taking on a new role for the organization, aiding in our corporate partnerships, an area that I have been interested in and one that we definitely will need some help in for the future.

I look forward to seeing you all at our on-line AGM, and I am hopeful that our efforts will bear fruit in the form of safe and healthy return to rugby in 2022!

Yours in Rugby,

M. Walsh

TRU President

No questions from the membership

DIRECTOR OF GAME REPORT (Brian Crothers)

I'm elated to report about actual rugby that took place in the 2021 season. I also look forward to a full Women's and Men's rugby season for 2022.

The 2021 Season

The TRU Men's Division held a single tier league in 2021. Eight teams were able to compete this past season and were scheduled into an East and West division, with each club scheduled for 3 fixtures. Only two games out of both divisions could not be held, both due to weather, which resulted in draws, while all other matches scheduled were played.

Lindsay RFC finished top of the East, while the Mississauga Blues RFC finished top of West. Playoffs were a challenge as the games were held very late in the year, however a Cup, Plate and Bowl championships were played. Congratulations to Lindsay RFC as Cup champions, Balmy Beach RFC winning the Plate championship, and Georgian Bay Titans RFC (in their inaugural year no less!) winning the Bowl championship.

Regarding the Women's league for 2021, there were not enough teams who could commit to a full XV season, however, there was an excellent turnout for clubs playing in weekly tournaments of 7s, 10s and some 15s exhibition games.

For 2022 I'm proud to announce Lesley Swan as the TRU Women's Convenor. Lesley is the president of the Mississauga Blues RFC and longtime player of women's rugby within the TRU. It'll be exciting to see a full time Women's league back in action in 2022.

TRU clubs competing in the Marshall Division completed a 5-game season in 2021, and held a Finals day on October 23. Congrats to championship finalists Oshawa Vikings RFC and Balmy Beach RFC with the Beach taking home the hardware to be Marshall champs.

TRU Reds Senior Men & Women XV

I am pleased to see the TRU Senior Reds Women's and Men's XV rep program officially sanctioned by Rugby Ontario. The co-directors of this program are myself, and TRU Treasurer Peter Ratcliffe. More paperwork will need to be submitted for the men's and women's programs to commence in 2022, but the foundation is complete. A big thank you to the coaches and program consultants for each program whose enthusiasm has been a big help in getting these programs off the ground.

TRU Senior Women's had their first Talent ID session on October 17. Coaches Dallas Price and Eric Noyes ran the session. 12 women from a wide variety of TRU clubs participated. Coaches were happy with the session and it was a great opportunity to work together for the first time.

Program info & FAQs are included at the bottom of this report.

2022 Season

Regarding next year, I'll be working with a blank slate for setting up men's and women's divisions, with Lesley handling the women's schedule while I will be taking care of the men's divisions. The TRU will need to remain flexible to accommodate teams for entering 1 or 2 teams, and, offering teams the option as to where they feel what division they should play. We'll be looking at 2022 as a 're-establishment year' to see which clubs come back with proper numbers to support a full season. Promotion and relegation from Keenan to Marshall and McKenna to OWL will be back on in 2022.

Depending on the number of clubs who are able to commit teams to a full schedule in 2022, we're looking at approximately an 8-game season, beginning May 14, 2022 and finishing July 23, 2022. There would be a few extra weekends off to accommodate rescheduled games (I believe we will still need to be prepared for games being rescheduled due to possible Covid outbreaks, and of course, our unpredictable summer weather).

2022 Playoffs & Promotion

A TRU Men's and Women's league Cup champions would be determined on August 13 (a single match between the two top clubs of each league). This would be followed by a 'home and away' series with an OWL and Marshall club for promotion on August 20 and 27. The remaining TRU clubs would complete in playoffs for the Plate and Bowl championships which would run August 13, 20, 27.

In Conclusion

Although at the time of writing this report the province of Ontario is on our latest 'lock-down' and there isn't much going on related to rugby, however, as an eternal optimist, I'm confident this summer will see the return of a full rugby season for both the Men and Women's leagues.

Cheers

Brian Crothers

TRU SENIOR REDS **PROGAM INFO**

The first round of try-outs will be held on **Sunday May 15, 2022** (after the first league game for the OWL, Marshall and TRU leagues). Field and time TBA. This is a non-contact training session. **Players cannot show up day-of and must have registered ahead of time.**

There is NO cost to try-outs. An interested player simply emails the coach of the program. That's it! **All players MUST be registered with a TRU rugby club.**

For Women, interested players please mail 'dallas@torontorugby.ca'.

For the **Senior Men's XV** any interested players please email 'patrick@torontorugby.ca'.

PROGRAM FAQ'S

What is the point of this program?

To provide a low cost, low-time commitment rep program for TRU senior men & women. The program would not have an 'age preference' and hopes to find some late-bloomers. The program plans to provide a 'Barbarian' style environment where the spirit of the game is the priority, while also providing a pathway to higher level rugby.

What is the time commitment to participate?

The program involves 7 training sessions at a maximum during the rugby season. All of which will take place on a Sunday, and all of which are **non-contact**. The first three sessions will be try-outs. The next four are practice sessions for the selected squad. The plan is for one try-out in May, two in June, followed by two squad practices in both July and August.

There would be one either ***one weekend-tournament and one fixture***, or, ***two fixtures***, during the summer season over a long weekend, or a possible mid-week match. Fixtures will **NOT conflict with any club rugby games.**

How do selections work?

Selectors will be scouting TRU club games, relying on input from club coaches, and assessing a player's performance at training sessions. Club coaches are encouraged to nominate players from their club.

What teams would the squads be playing against?

Possible opponents for both programs would include other branch union select teams, touring sides, and other provincial rep teams. The NRU, EORU branch unions are working on launching their own senior rep squads.

What would this cost?

We will be keeping costs per player to a minimum; approximately \$150-\$200. This would include some great team swag that players would keep. **The program has the ability to cover the fee for any player in financial need, so cost is not a barrier.** A player simply needs to contact a program director or let one of their coaches know.

Who are the coaches and staff?

The coaching staff for the women's team are; **Dallas Price** (HC Dallas@torontorugby.ca), and **Eric Noyes** (Forwards Eric@torontorugby.ca). The Program Consultant is **Jenn Russell** (Rugby Canada, Rugby Ontario)

The coaching staff for the men's team are; **Patrick Maulson** (HC Patrick@torontorugby.ca), and **Ken Darch** (Forwards Kenneth@torontorugby.ca). The Program Consultant is **Phil Murphy** (Rugby Canada, London Irish, Ontario Blues).

Program Directors are Peter Ratcliffe (TRU Treasurer) and Brian Crothers (TRU Director of Game).

More questions about the program? Feel free to contact Peter at treasurer@torontorugby.ca or Brian game@torontorugby.ca

No questions from the membership

TREASURER'S REPORT (Peter Ratcliffe)

2021 we saw a return to domestic rugby. As a board we made the choice not to collect fees for membership because we knew clubs were still recovering and building back. We also didn't know for certain how many games would be played and if there would be another lockdown. We knew that we have the ability to keep all costs as low as possible so as to not be a financial burden on our membership. For this past year the only expenses were to our webmaster, plaques for league winners, and ORU fees.

Moving forward, we will be reinstating fees for teams so that we can get our programs back up and running. Team fees will remain at the 250\$/125\$ split for senior and junior teams respectively. As always if there are teams that are having financial pressure, we are certainly here to work with you. As always, these fees go towards providing opportunities to our junior players to enroll in a cost-effective program, providing a stipend to directors and convenors, and supporting senior league finals. A complete breakdown is included in the proposed budget document for 2022.

I hope that we can get back to growing our game moving forward.

All the best,

Peter Ratcliffe

No questions from the membership

DISCIPLINE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Michael Kahn)

I am happy to report that **not a single sanction** was issued during the 2021 season. The season was somewhat truncated vs. a normal year. Matches resumed later than typical and under various conditions and scenarios with many teams providing accommodations to ensure the matches could go off. There were no red cards reported. Perhaps this was due to match officials not sending in reports but I choose to believe that players were just so happy to be playing competitive contact rugby again that the spirit of sportsmanship led them to play a much cleaner game.

I, and the rest of the Board of Directors, met regularly throughout the year to keep informed of whatever rugby related activity was relevant at that time and I feel we are going into the 2022 season well prepared. I look forward to serving in a more normal capacity this year. I realize I said this last year, but this year I am more optimistic!

Regards,

Michael Kahn

Director, Discipline

Toronto Rugby

No questions from the membership

TECHNICAL & HIGH-PERFORMANCE REPORT (John Pryce)

TRU Reds High Performance programs unfortunately did not run in 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

2022 will see closer coordination with RO and other unions making for smoother High Performance throughout the province.

2022 planning will start in January with both junior & the new exciting senior Red's teams running under Peter Ratcliffe & Brian Crothers which brings new dynamics to the gifted athletes within the TRU.

Men's U16 & U18 will be strongly run by Don Maillet. They look forward to a strong start back at it in 2022.

The Reds look forward to getting back on the early to mid to late-2022 under COVID rules of operation and tours restrictions.

We expect Ontario Summer Games to be back-to-back years with 2 age categories the Reds will send teams starting in 2022 & 2023.

Hoping tours will continue in 2022.

Thank you,
John Pryce

No questions from the membership

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Shelley Ince)

The last 2 years for rugby and the TRU have not been like others however, it has still been met with enthusiasm and commitment.

The board has met monthly to fulfill its duty of regular scheduled meetings through zoom calls and continuously monitored all information regarding the return-to-play of rugby during provincial restrictions. It was a pleasure to see many clubs playing this past summer even if it wasn't what we are all use to. Even with several clubs unable to participate, the rugby community was fortunate to see the birth of two new clubs.

The board has worked hard to provide a more current and updated website and continues to broaden its reach to its membership.

The TRU board remains committed to keeping all members engaged and informed.

Personally, I am optimistic and hopeful that the 2022 season will see more games, tournaments, clubs strengthening and lots of laughter on the pitch!

It has been a pleasure to serve as secretary for the last 2 years in the TRU.

The position of Secretary is up for election and I would like to express my interest in running for President.

Sincerely,

Shelley Ince

No questions from the membership

ELECTION PROCESS FOR VACANT BOARD POSITIONS

(President, Treasurer, Discipline Director, Technical & High Performance, Secretary and Director(s) at Large)

Nomination

Nominations, including self-nominations, must be submitted to the TRU Board. These nominations can be made orally while attending the AGM or in advance in writing or by electronic mail.

Nominations for a position are accepted until the start of voting for that position. A nomination will only be valid if the candidate declares orally at the meeting, or in writing or by electronic mail prior to the meeting, that the candidate is willing to take office if elected.

A candidate who fails to be elected for a position may be nominated for a subsequent position.

Voting

Any candidate may make a statement to the Board regarding their candidature. The presentation of such a statement shall take no longer than five minutes. The order of candidates' statements shall be determined by the Officer presiding over the election using a random selection process.

To be elected, a candidate must receive votes marked with his or her name from a majority of the voting membership present at the AGM. Ballots should be cast marked with the name of an announced candidate or with the word "abstain". A candidate can withdraw at any time from subsequent votes. Ballots will be provided at the AGM.

In the instance there are more than two candidates running and none receive a majority of affirmative votes in a vote, the vote is rerun with only the candidates receiving the two highest vote counts eligible. (This may result in more than two candidates being eligible.) The vote is retaken in the case of a tie for first place. A new call for candidates is made and the voting process restarts in the case where there is a single candidate but that candidate does not receive enough affirmative votes.

Other business:

Lisa D from Beach asked what the ref situation was looking like. Mike K has not heard of any concerns, should be business as usual. Did have some new refs come in last year. Lisa's concerns were specific to women's as last year was difficult to secure refs. Mike K feels this year will be better than last year because of reluctancy with paying to register as a ref when there were not a lot of games to ref. Mike K did say if any women's team is having problems with ref's he would gladly advocate on their behalf.

Mark W- stated they have had trouble attracting refs. There is movement to attract refs in the future by the RO. Feels they are on top of it with a solid plan in place.

Kevin B – will the junior league be staying with the RO. Mark, said yes, they will stay with RO, no discussion to date of changing that.

Those nominated for open positions on the TRU board:

Shelley Ince for President: Brian Crothers nominated, Ian Royer 2nd

Donnie Maillet for High Performance Director: John Pryce nominated, Mike Kahn 2nd

Peter Ratcliff for Treasurer: Mike Kahn nominated, Ian Royer 2nd

Mike Kahn for Director of Discipline: Shelley Ince nominated, Brian Crothers 2nd

Chris Warren for Secretary Pat Daniels nominated, Brian Crothers 2nd

Mark Walsh for Director at Large Brian Crothers nominated, Pat Daniels 2nd.

Ian Royer for Director at Large Brian Crothers nominated, Mark Walsh 2nd

Lesley Swan Director at Large Brian Crothers nominated, Mike Crothers 2nd

All those put forth for nomination are supported by the membership. No objections and all support. The above-mentioned names are the newly appointed Executive Board for the Toronto Rugby Union

Motion to adjourn Mike Kahn, Don Maillet 2nd meeting ended at 11:06 am Sunday February 6, 2022.