



2016 Women's Olympic Team

Selected to this year's Hall of Fame inductee list is the 2016 Women's Olympic Team, winners of the Rio 2016 Olympic Bronze medal in Women's Rugby Sevens competition. With the Bronze medal the Women's Sevens team joined the Canada's women's soccer team as the only team sport medalists for Canada since 1936. Twelve women were nominated to the first ever Canadian Olympic women's rugby sevens team, set to compete in the inaugural event at Rio. The 2016 Olympic Games marked the debut of women's rugby to the Olympics and the return of rugby to the Olympic Games, which last featured as an Olympic sport in 1924 under a men's 15-a-side format.

Led by captain Jen Kish, the roster featured a wealth of experience in the form of Bianca Farella, Ghislaine Landry, Kayla Moleschi, Karen Paquin, Kelly Russell, and Ashley Steacy. Britt Benn, Hannah Darling, Megan Lukan, Natasha Watcham-Roy, and Charity Williams infused the roster with a strong mix of explosive young talent and experience—a formula that would lead Canada's rugby program to new heights.

Canada found itself on the podium in Rio following a dominant, 33-10 performance over Great Britain to capture the Bronze Medal. The statement win showcased the team's skillset, heart and resilience on the world stage and the team, its players and staff are an inspiring example of what future rugby players in Canada and across the globe can reference when seeking inspiration or evidence related to the value of hard work and dedication.

Rugby in the country saw significant growth in youth participation immediately following the Olympic Games, as well as a significant growth in attendance at events such as the Women's Seven Series tournament in Langford and the Men's Sevens stop in Vancouver. In 2017 alone, Canada saw an increase in minor registration in all but one province. The following year saw membership registration across all age groups in Canada continue to grow at a staggering increase of 14.5 percent.

Rugby Canada's High Performance programs also received a boost from the success of the women's Bronze medal finish that included funding from partners to develop the women's Sevens development academies in Ontario and British Columbia, as well as acting as a springboard to a successful fundraising campaign to build the Al Charron National Training Centre in Langford, BC.

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