



Rugby Canada Fact Sheet – Men’s Centralized Program

Why has Rugby Canada moved to a centralized training system?

- The international rugby landscape for both 7s and 15s is getting more and more competitive and we must evolve to address the current realities of Canadian rugby and our ability to be competitive now and in the future.
- In evaluating our campaigns over the past two years, our Men’s coaching and performance staff identified the need for a larger pool of players. Rugby Canada determined that the best opportunity to become more successful in both our Men’s 7s and 15s program is to operate in a centralized training environment with a larger pool of players jointly focusing on core rugby physical and skill development. The players will have individual performance plans depending on which code they will play in. The teams, 7's and 15's will retain separate head coaches and spend the bulk of their time preparing separately for upcoming competitions. This system creates the ability to support a larger and more competitive pool of players, and to leverage the expertise and experience we have in our coaches and performance staff. The result is a strengthened program that will garner greater success for both development, and high performance competition for both programs.
- World Rugby’s General Manager of High Performance and the World Rugby High Performance advisor assigned to Canada are fully across the changes we have made to the Men’s Centralized Program. Both fully support the new direction and encouraged Rugby Canada to implement these changes.

What is the financial implication to the players?

- Equity in the financial training support Rugby Canada provides to our centralized players is paramount to strengthening the team culture in men’s rugby.
- Rugby Canada would like to provide more financial support to all our National Team players, however we must live within the financial resources available to the organization. The reality is that while a small group of players may receive less support than in the past to be in the daily training environment, others will be supported more than the previous model, to create a larger group of players and a deeper talent pool.

What is Rugby Canada’s position on accepting support for their programs?

- Rugby Canada is always open to new fundraising opportunities and offers. We currently accept donations from external groups and individuals who target their donations to programs or initiatives and we provide reports and confidence to those donors as to how their donations are spent.
- Rugby Canada continues to welcome new groups who are willing to work with Rugby Canada in funding any of our National Team programs, provided the funds are properly managed and accounted for with the program. Donors will not be able to affect player selection or program priorities that are not strategically aligned.

On qualification for the Olympic Summer Games...

- Qualification for the Olympic Summer Games is a priority. We have planned around the Olympic qualification process and will now be better placed to prioritize those competitions. Not only do we want to qualify for the Olympic Games, we want to be a medal contender.
- In an organization that is accountable to more than one discipline, the priorities will change in their order depending on the year. For the next 2 months, preparing for the 2019 Men’s RWC Repechage tournament and qualifying for the Men’s RWC is a high priority for Rugby Canada. After November 2018, the priorities for Rugby Canada, from the Men’s program perspective, are maintaining core team status on the World Rugby Sevens Series and qualifying for the Olympic Summer Games. Our entire Men’s program will look at every resource, player and tactic that we can take to assist qualification for the Olympic Games.



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Do players have to choose between 15s or 7s?

- No player will be forced to choose either 15s or 7s. Players will discuss with the coaching and performance staff what their career and rugby aspirations are. This will include access to professional 15’s rugby contracts in the immediate and the long-term. In conjunction with the player’s objectives and the needs of the programs, an individual plan will be developed with each player.
- Athletes who are on Sport Canada Athlete Assistance Program (AAP) cards will train and compete in 7s, however there is NO restriction on a player on a Sport Canada AAP card being able to play 15s as part of their development.

What was the consultation process about the changes with the players?

- Rugby Canada has two players representatives elected by players who are members of the Board of Directors.
- Rugby Canada and Program Staff have always communicated directly with players and have included other representatives when requested by individual players.
- Although some program staff were in planning discussions around some of the changes, out of respect for the players’ need to focus on the Rugby World Cup 7s, we waited until after the tournament was complete on July 22nd to formally announce the changes in approach.

Are the last year’s 7’s players currently on contract with Rugby Canada?

- Last year’s Men’s 7’s player agreements expired on August 31, 2018.
- New player agreements have been offered to a group of players as selected by the Coaching and Performance staff, with a group of last year’s 7’s players having elected not to sign their agreements.
- All players received several calls and memos from Rugby Canada. All players met with Program staff in one-on-one meetings prior to the start of training on September 4th to discuss the change in schedule and any other concerns.
- Rugby Canada requested a meeting with these players on Wednesday Sept. 12th and the players requested a delay until Friday morning, Sept. 14th. On Friday morning Rugby Canada was advised of the application for certification by the BC Labour Relations Board, and were advised by legal counsel to not meet with the filing party.

Details regarding Canada 7s appearance fee reduction from \$5,000 to \$500

- This change was necessitated by the continued need to fund the Men’s 7s program after the loss of \$850,000 in funding from Own The Podium (OTP) after the 2016/17 funding cycle. While some OTP funding was regained in 2017/18, this only accounted for approx. ¼ of the original OTP funding. A significant portion of the renewed OTP funding was also directed for Next-Gen (youth and developing players) programming.
- The Men’s 7s program budget over the past 4 years has grown substantially, even with the loss of OTP funding.
 - 2015: \$1,109,151
 - 2016: \$1,404,220
 - 2017: \$1,539,812
 - 2018: \$1,769,087
- Rugby Canada did increase the Appearance Fees for Men’s WRSS stops from \$400 to \$500 per stop for the 2018/19 series and introduced additional win bonus amounts.

How will the centralized training environment be supported?

- Each player will be managed with their own individual training program that will now be supported by a larger team of resources working together.
- The Men’s program will increase efficiencies of staff resources that include:



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- 4 full-time professional rugby coaches
- A series of resource coaches working with the players regularly
- 2 full-time rugby performance analysts
- 3 full-time therapists (2 physiotherapists & 1 athletic therapist)
- 3 full-time Strength & Conditioning Coaches
- Additional resources with a part-time nutritionist

Regarding the future of the Canada 7s tournament...

- Tickets will be on-sale for the 2019 tournament on October 3, 2018, while sponsorship and suite renewals have already taken place. The 2019 event is confirmed for March 9-10, 2019 at BC Place.
- Rugby Canada has bid on and has received positive feedback from World Rugby to continue to be a host for the Men’s WRSS for 2020-2023. The success of the tender is based on a Union’s previous operational performance and future ability to host.

World Rugby’s financial support to Rugby Canada

- In the 2012-2015 quadrennial, World Rugby’s total investment in Rugby Canada was \$11.5Million CAD (as listed in our Audited Financial Statements). In the 2016-2019 quadrennial, through the first three years (2016, 2017 & 2018), we have already experienced a \$1.1Million CAD reduction compared with the first three years of the previous quadrennial.
- World Rugby’s financial support to Rugby Canada is contingent on our qualification for the Men’s 15s Rugby World Cup.
- World Rugby’s General Manager of High Performance and the World Rugby High Performance advisor assigned to Canada are fully across the changes we have made to the Men’s Centralized Program. Both fully support the new direction and encouraged Rugby Canada to implement these changes.