



***Rugby Ontario
Strategic Plan***

January 2009-November 2013

Background

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to

- Develop a long range plan for rugby in Ontario for 2009 through 2013 in conjunction with the Rugby Canada Long Term Rugby Development (LTRD) plan
- Develop a plan with a combined focus of growth and development strategies. All goals and strategies link to the Mission statement of Rugby Ontario

Setting the Stage for the Plan

“Growing the base of the game”



Executive Overview – the case for growth

For many years members of the Ontario rugby community have talked about “growing rugby bottom-up” without defining what this means or how to achieve a significant increase in the number of registered rugby players in the Province.

The notion of developing programs to increase the number of people playing rugby, and of growing the club structure as the basic building block of rugby in the Province of Ontario, presents many interesting and challenging issues, and yet the potential return for the clubs and for the Branch and Provincial organizations is huge.

Put simply, rugby in Ontario is at a cross roads – one road leads to growth and an increase in all categories of players. The second, (with little to recommend this alternative), would see registration at a constant level with minimal if any real growth, or in a worst case scenario, a decline in active participants at the club level.

Over the last six months, the Strategic Planning Group of Rugby Ontario has debated many different ideas for growing the game in the province over the next five years and beyond.

This plan has been developed to present a number of initiatives for continued growth and focuses on growing the game at the club level. While many of the ideas presented are not new, the focus on planned and systematic growth will provide a framework for development of new and ambitious plans, including options for building the critical linkages between clubs and schools.

There is a potential to significantly increase the number of registrants and build a viable and dynamic structure for clubs to play a key role in growing the game.

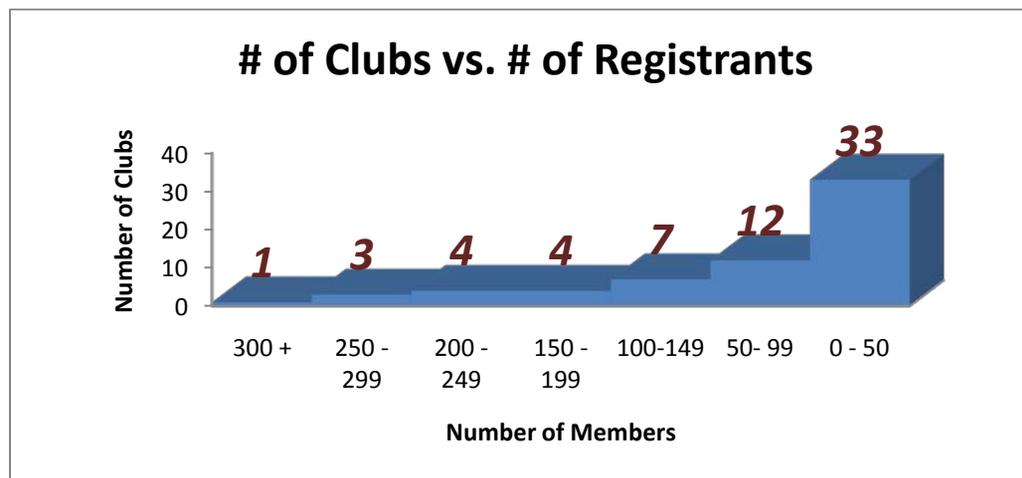
The Context for planning - a profile of Ontario Rugby

The following data provides a profile of rugby in Ontario – a number of different sources have been used and each is identified.

In 2007 there were 63 rugby clubs active in the Province of Ontario, and the following Table 1 shows the number of members by club, (source ORU).

It is worthy of note that this data shows that 33 clubs, (or 52%), have less than 50 members, and only 8, (or 12.5%), have more than 200 members. Table 1: - Number of Clubs by registered Members – 2007

Table 1 – Number of Clubs by registered members – 2007



(Source: ORU Registrations)

This data would suggest that rugby in Ontario is dominated by small organizations, closely identified with local communities. This issue of size of operation presents many problems for sustained growth.

Player registrations in Ontario continue to grow as shown in the following Table 2.

Table 2 – Number of players from 2002 to 2010

Registration Statistics	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Increase Over base Year 2002
Senior	2,899	3,815	3697	3580	3188	3520	3872	3903	4386	34%
Juniors	1,213	1,682	1917	2369	2088	2476	3307	3342	3328	64%
Minor/Mini's	214	337	591	713	984	1078	791	593	851	75%
Total	4,326	5,834	6,205	6,662	6,260	7,074	7,970	7,838	8,565	49%

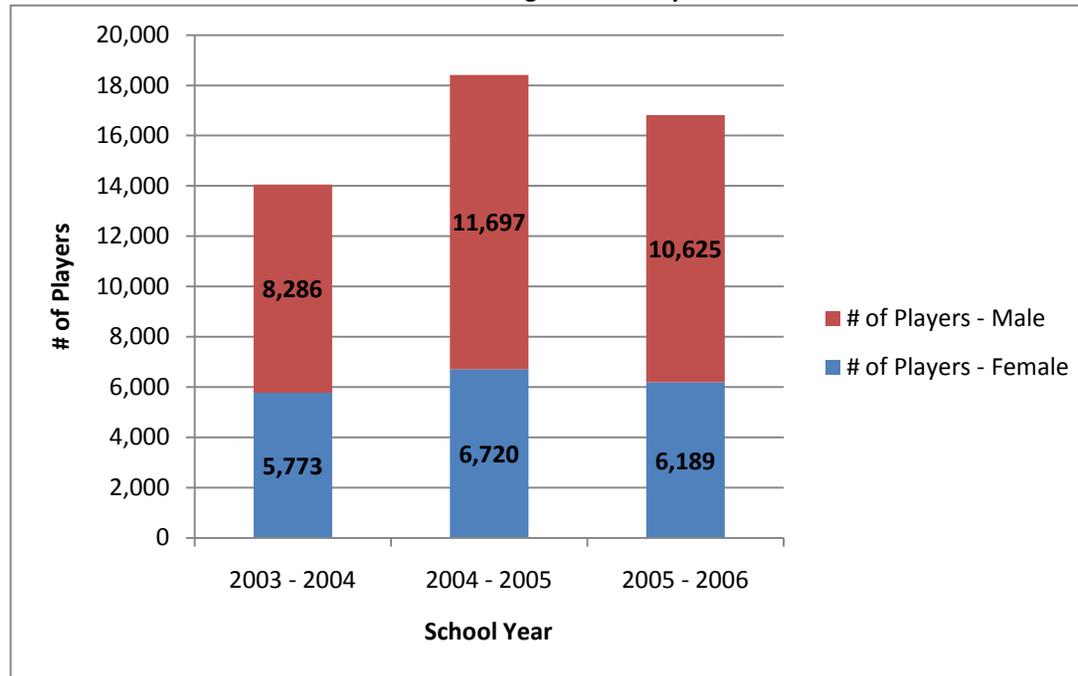
(Source: ORU)

Table 2 shows that significant growth has occurred in the Junior age group rugby and in Mini rugby programs as a result of the Provincial, Branch and Club initiatives. This is reflected in the overall increase, although it is encouraging to note that Senior registrations have increased by 32.4% over the base years on 2002, notwithstanding the increase in Insurance rates, (inclusive of Men and Women).

The Ontario Rugby Union is the largest Union in Canada – data provided by Rugby Canada shows that Ontario has 39% of the registered rugby players in Canada. This table also shows that 34% or the registered senior players in Canada play their rugby in Ontario.

Perhaps the most exciting and challenging factor facing Ontario rugby is the explosion of schools rugby at both the High School and grade school level. Data obtained from Rugby Ontario and from OFSSAA for the 2008 season indicates that there are approximately 220 High Schools playing rugby and that this involves 22,000 high school players across the province. Table 3 shows the number of high schools players for the years 2003 – 2006

Table 3 – Number of High School Players in Ontario



If we assume that the high school program is 4 years, then approximately 5,500 High school rugby players graduate each year, and if we establish a target of 10% of these graduating players continue their rugby careers by joining a club, that means that approximately 550 new players per season join the club game, (or based on 64 clubs, 9 new players per club).

This level of retention is provided as a minimum target and it is estimated that currently the actual rate of High school players continuing in the game in Ontario is 2% - 3%. Clearly this retention rate represents a huge opportunity for clubs and for the growth of registrants in Ontario and indicates the need for Under 21 and Under 19 programs at club level to smooth the difficult transition of young players to the senior game.

The Growth of Club Rugby – the Community Model

This strategic plan for the next five years is built around two basic concepts:

- The emergence of “Community based” clubs closely aligned with the High School system
- The development of the Volunteer based model.

The significant growth in the clubs in the “non Toronto” areas has been a major factor in the increase in registrants in Ontario rugby over the last 10 years. Clubs in the 905, 613 and central Ontario areas have shown that true geographic communities are the backbone of the club structure. Analysis of the number of members by club shows that this trend to large community based clubs is an outstanding achievement of Ontario rugby.

The strategic plan builds on the need for a close identification between geographic base, (defined as a town or region) and the local rugby club. The strategic plan addresses the “formalization” of the relationships between the local rugby club and the high schools in the club catchment area.

If Ontario rugby is to achieve the targeted growth premised in the 2009 – 2013 Strategic plan of 3.5% to 5% growth in registrations per annum over this period, the focus will fall directly on all clubs to continue to grow but at an accelerated rate. This will force new club models and building new resources.

The Ontario Rugby Union plans to introduce a formal Club Accreditation Program in Ontario and to divide clubs into groupings based on the club interests, Competitive or Social rugby.

Summary – The Challenge to grow the grass roots

This Strategic Plan for 2009 – 2013 is ambitious, in that it presents an opportunity to strengthen Ontario rugby and grow the player base by a renewed Club structure. For many years we, as a community, have talked about the need to plan bottom-up and to build the base of the Game, the Clubs.

Now is the time to put these plans into place – we face the unique challenge of finding a place for the talented athletes that are graduating from the High School Rugby programs and from the Flag Rugby initiatives across the Province. The Role in this strategic plan for the Ontario Rugby Union will be to support the different Club initiatives - this will be achieved by the close co-operation between the Provincial Union and the Branches and most importantly the Clubs.

Mission

To ***promote, develop*** and ***administer*** the ***playing*** of Rugby Football under safe conditions throughout Ontario

Focus or Key Result Areas

- Promotion
- Development
- Administration
- Playing the game

Stakeholders

- Coaches, Referees, Volunteers, Clubs and Schools,
- Recreational players
- Elite players
- Administrators and Staff
- Parents



Rugby Ontario Strategic Planning Team

The plan was developed by a core planning team:

- Glenn Tarver
- Bob McGeein
- Simon Allen
- John Platts
- Mark Winokur
- Gordon Sneddon
- Allen Piggott
- Pat Daniels



Focus Areas

Rugby Ontario will continue to deliver programs and services in four focus (key result) areas:

Key Areas			
<p>'Promotion'</p> <p>1. Activities that encourage interest in the sport of rugby and deliver players, support personnel and resources to the sport.</p>	<p>Development</p> <p>2. The process by which opportunities for the community to enjoy rugby are provided at a level determined only by each individuals interest and ability.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <p>3. The manner in which all participants, leagues and the game is managed.</p>	<p>Playing</p> <p>4. The game structure, opportunity and support including season, leagues, championships. Opportunities for all to make playing the game in Ontario as safe and as rewarding an experience as possible.</p>
Focus Areas			
Website, media coverage	Referees, coaches, players and clubs	Strengthening clubs, roles and responsibilities of branch unions, referees society and Rugby Ontario	U-20 rugby, recreational rugby

SWOT Analysis

Administration

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A critical mass of administrative capacity (in the form of 4 full time staff including an experienced and knowledgeable Executive Director) • Updated and comprehensive By-Laws. • Robust Game and Discipline Regulations. • A full complement of Elected Directors working co-operatively. • 8 functioning Standing Committees plus Executive Committee. • A website that is designed to efficiently communicate administrative procedures and items of interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RO has no jurisdiction over nor formal agreement with the ORRS whose services are the (?) major expenditure item in RO's budget • Role and responsibilities of Branch Unions in pursuing the objectives of RO have never been formalized. • RO AGMs and Board meetings are generally ineffectual forums for identifying and addressing regional issues or regional contributions to provincial initiatives and priorities. • RO has limited ability to monitor the 'pulse' of the Union. • Inconsistent strength of administration at the Branch Union and club level. • RO's reliance on Delegate Directors as a conduit for accurately informing the voting membership of Board business and relaying the views of the voting membership on Board initiatives (leading to negative perceptions of the Board's performance). • Lack of sustained planning and priority setting at the RO level (the 'short term urgent' tends to continually trump the 'long term important'). • Role of RO Office in providing administrative services to its membership has never been formalized (leading to unrealistic expectations). • RO has not been 'punching its weight' at the national level in recent years, possibly due to its pre-occupation with internal issues. • Communications on administrative procedures have sometimes been slow and/or incomplete.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the authorities in the By-Laws to formalize the appropriate role and responsibilities of the Branch Unions; and establish and publish Terms of Reference for each Standing Committee. • Negotiate a MOU with the ORRS covering service expectations. • Make the RO website the primary means of communication on administrative matters with member clubs and associations and ensure that it is kept current. • Communicate the services provided either directly to the membership or indirectly to other organizations on behalf of the membership by the RO Office. • Develop a Guide for Effective Club Administration and publish on the RO website. • Consider raising the profile of planning by appointing the Chair of the Planning Committee to the Executive Committee. • Develop pathways for administrators (move this item for referees and coaches to the Development section?). • Develop strategies to increase the face-to-face interaction between RO (both the Board and the Office) with its voting membership, particularly those located in the hinterlands (i.e. beyond a 50 mile radius). • Develop and actively promote a clear vision as to where rugby in Ontario should be going and strategies for getting there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to get buy-in from stakeholders (voting members and associations) on the vision and strategies (i.e. overcoming lethargy, self-interest, parochialism and resistance to change). • Inability to attract a new generation of administrative volunteers, particularly those in the 35 – 50 age range, at the Branch Union and club level. • Inability to work cooperatively with the ORRS and the Branch Unions. • Inability of Board to continue strengthening the governance structure. <p>Unwillingness of Board to meet in the hinterlands</p>

Promotion

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand (sportsmanship, respect for others, fitness and skill) • Growing numbers • Flag rugby program huge gains • University and College Rugby high quality rugby • Appeal of rugby at high school level • Contact sport after high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website hard to navigate, too few updates • Marketing at multi level from club-community, Branch-region, RO corporate sponsorship for major programs • Involving prominent people from the community • Poor television coverage • Promoting elite athletes
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion role within the board • Website • High school rugby • Marketing materials • Branding • Subsidizing cost of rugby on T.V. • Involving prominent community members • Releasing information on youtube • Tapping into business people with rugby backgrounds • Promote elite athletes • National Championships for men's university rugby • Connecting with other countries all jurisdictions, including BC and Alberta • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other sports growing fast - soccer and lacrosse and ultimate fighting • Lack of donating funds • Fundraising • Commitment to changing image culture disconnect between players and administrators • Lack of leadership from RC-disconnect in strategies and priorities • Cost of elite level rugby for juniors-pay to play

Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Manager on staff • Flag rugby program-Drew • RO committed and leading the way • Strong leadership at RO (president and executive director) • Strength of high schools • Junior rep programs • Minor rugby growth • Academy • Increased number of high school tournaments • Junior programs at the clubs • Barbarian cup • High school 7's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with the high schools poor transition of HS players to clubs • Branch union development not sure what this means • Senior rep program • U20 competition needs improvement • Coaches and referees too few numbers and certification lacking • Geography of the province • High school coaches lack certification
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20000 kids playing high school rugby with 3,500 – 5,000 graduates from High School rugby per year available to clubs, assume target of 25% = potential pool of 1,00 – 1,500 new players for 60 clubs or approx 20 – 25 new players per club!!! • growing minor rugby • bottom up approach in this plan • rugby in the community • Targeting high schools • RO to link with school boards -boards aren't really interested in this • Differing development needs in different areas of the province • Introduction of rugby as 7-a-side to get rugby started in developing areas • Changing demographics and ethnicities (non-traditional rugby cultures) • RO support to branches and clubs for development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People walking away from the game earlier • Insurance/lawsuits • Referees- insufficient quantity and quality • Changing mindset from club base to community base this implies different structures and club formats from the “evolved club model” from last 50 plus years • Competition from other sports • Bias in national team selection for players and coaches - discouragement

Playing

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High standard of rugby in the province • Solid league structure to build on with new clubs models in the community, (Brenders, Lindsay, Simcoe county) • New McCormick Cup format • Younger, fitter, better skilled players • Large population in Ontario including largest number of players • Junior rep programs • Increasing numbers at the junior level at the clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnificent 7's • Some weak teams in Marshall • Gap in caliber from lower leagues • U-20 rugby insufficient competitive opportunities • Lack of true province wide competition • Player pathway unclear RCSL shaky • No senior provincial rugby • RCSL
	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U-20 rugby • Non-contact rugby for adults as a social activity • Re-tooling club structure new paradigms, new models • Elite player development • Renewed focus on building Ontario team status and prestige as the leader on field and off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Insurance-rising costs • People leaving the sport • Players leaving the province • Disconnect with RC • Non-common season (B.C.) • Geography of country

Goal 1: Promotion		
Objectives	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators (Quarterly)
1.1. Design and implement a website that is the number one vehicle for rugby news and content in Ontario by the end of 2009	Rugby Ontario to develop new website to communicate and inform to members of the rugby community and other interest groups. Develop contemporary content that meets the needs the different interest groups	Number of website hits, movement on website, survey results
1.2. Within one year have weekly scores and standings available in mass media	Identify all available media outlets (electronic and print)	Number of media sources identified
1.3 Within one year have an increased distribution and viewing of Ontario rugby games through marketing and sales with other media platforms	Build and develop a working relationship with Rogers to retain their sponsorship and market the game	Increased community TV coverage throughout Ontario. Number of Markets where Ontario rugby is covered.

Goal 2: Development		
Objectives	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators (Quarterly)
2.1 Increase the number of certified referees by 30% annually for the next three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employ the part-time referee development officers (2) for the life of the plan (Currently only in place until December 2008) with their plans for retention etc. b. Create a pathway for refereeing in Ontario c. Schedule of all referee courses for the life of the plan 	<i>Number of registered referees with a referee's society</i> <i>% of referees who increase their grade</i>
2.2 By November 2010 all clubs will certify and register 1 coach per team entered into any competition/tournament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Highest priority of the Technical Development Manager b. Schedule and administer all coaching courses for the life of the plan c. Create a Pathway for coaching rugby in Ontario 	1 certified and registered coach per team in Ontario (approximately 350)
2.3 By 2011, Rugby Ontario will have 25 active learning facilitators and 40 active coaching evaluators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. By December 2009, Identification of coaching evaluators b. Schedule of courses for the life of the plan 	Number of active LF's and number of evaluators
2.4 Increase the number registered players under the age of 18 by 20% annually for the next three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continued efforts of Community development manager b. Adopt a high school program-catchments c. "Seal of Approval Program" 	Registration numbers for U-18
2.5 . In 2009, develop and enforce a business model/checklist that all clubs in Ontario must meet (i.e. certified coaching, insurance, junior development etc.) by 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seal of Approval Program How to build a successful club document 	Number of A, AA and AAA clubs Number of compliant clubs from checklist

Goal 3: Administration		
Objectives	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators (Quarterly)
3.1 Liaise and cooperate with other rugby organizations and sport governing bodies [By-Law 2.01(8)].	Negotiate MOU with the ORRS on services to be provided to the RO and its member associations.	% of RO-sanctioned games assigned a suitably qualified IRB-certified referee. % of Send-off Reports submitted in accordance with Discipline Regulations.
3.2 Supervise the activities of Associations which organize the Game within Rugby Ontario's jurisdiction [By-Law 2.01 (6)].	Identify and publish services to be provided to each client group (Board, clubs, Branch Unions etc.) in 2009 by the RO Office based on evaluating 2008 activities	% high priority services delivered in accordance with agreed performance targets. # of complaints received from client groups. % substantiated complaints.
3.3 same as above	Negotiate and publish responsibilities of Branch Unions	# of complaints received from member clubs. % substantiated complaints.
3.4 same as above	Design a Guide for Effective Club Administration	Feedback received from member clubs on evaluation form.
3.5 Do all things necessary or desirable in the interests of the Game [By-Law 2.01(9)].	Establishing an Effective Planning Framework	Approval of framework at 2008 AGM. Ability to be adjusted in dynamic planning environment.

Goal 4: Playing		
Objectives	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators (Quarterly)
4.1 By January 2010, develop a non-contact, winter rugby league played indoors.	Post a position for league convener Look into locations	Registration numbers
4.2 For the 2009 season, Have a U-20 "Junior A" rugby program	Create a commissioner job description Create a description of how the league functions	Creation of league
4.3 For the 2010 season, have a clear division between recreational and competitive rugby	Seal of Approval Program Competition model	Number of competitive clubs vs. recreational clubs



Seal of Approval Program

- An accreditation program as a method of examining, maintaining and improving the provision of rugby in Ontario.
- It is designed to encourage the clubs to develop an infrastructure to provide safe and enjoyable rugby in the community
- As a quality control process to build upon current good practice, the accreditation aims to recognize the effort and achievement of those clubs that reach, maintain and improve on the required standard of a club committed to the provision of a quality rugby experience
- To be rolled out over the life of the strategic plan in stages with compliance for all Ontario clubs wishing to participate in competitive leagues by 2013
- To be administered by the branch unions



RUGBY ONTARIO SEAL OF APPROVAL PROGRAM

AAA

AA

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RECREATIONAL

ADMINISTRATION

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
Emergency Action Plan	Mandatory	5
Risk Management Plan	Mandatory	5
Child Protection Officer	Mandatory	5
Child protection Policy	Mandatory	10
Constitution	Mandatory	5
Incorporated	Mandatory	10
Volunteer Coordinator	Optional	5
Active strategic plan		10
Succession Plan		5
Attendance at RO AGM		5
Active website		5
High school liaison officer		10
Total Possible Points		80

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
Emergency Action Plan	Mandatory	5
Risk Management Plan	Mandatory	5
Child Protection Officer	Mandatory	5
Child protection Policy	Mandatory	10
Constitution	Mandatory	5
Incorporated	Mandatory	10
Volunteer Coordinator	Optional	5
Active strategic plan	Optional	10
Succession Plan	Optional	5
Attendance at RO AGM	Optional	5
Active website	Optional	5
High school liaison officer	Optional	10
Total Possible Points		80

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
Emergency Action Plan	Mandatory	5
Risk Management Plan	Mandatory	5
Child Protection Officer	Mandatory	5
Child protection Policy	Mandatory	10
Constitution	Mandatory	5
Incorporated	Mandatory	10
Attendance at RO AGM	Optional	5
Active website	Optional	5
Total Possible Points		50

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
Emergency Action Plan	Mandatory	5
Risk Management Plan	Mandatory	5
Child Protection Officer*	Mandatory	5
Child protection Policy*	Mandatory	10
Constitution	Mandatory	5
Incorporated	Optional	10
Total Possible Points		40

* The club must meet these criteria if it has Junior/Minor programs

AAA**AA****A****RECREATIONAL****DEVELOPMENT**

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
3 certified and registered coaches	Mandatory	5
8 registered Referees	Mandatory	10
Actively involved with all feeder high schools	Optional	5
Actively involved with elementary schools in your area	Optional	10
Total Possible Points		30

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
2 certified and registered coaches	Mandatory	5
5 registered referees	Mandatory	10
Actively involved with all feeder high schools	Optional	5
Actively involved with elementary schools in your area	Optional	10
Total Possible Points		30

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
1 certified and registered coach	Mandatory	5
3 registered referees	Mandatory	10
Actively involved with all feeder high schools	Optional	5
Total Possible Points		20

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
1 certified and registered coach	Mandatory	5
1 Registered referee	Optional	10
Total Possible Points		15

AAA**AA****A****RECREATIONAL****PLAYING**

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
4 senior teams	Mandatory	5
U-20 Junior A team	Optional	5
U-18 program boys or girls	Mandatory	5
U-16 program boys or girls	Optional	5
U-14 program	Optional	5
U-12 program	Optional	5
U-8/U10 co-ed program	Optional	10

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
4 senior teams	Mandatory	5
U-20 Junior A team	Optional	5
U-18 program boys or girls	Mandatory	5
U-16 program boys or girls	Optional	5
U-14 program	Optional	5
U-12 program	Optional	5
U-8/U10 co-ed program	Optional	10

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
3 senior teams*	Optional	5
U-20 program men's	Optional	5
U-18 program boys/girls	Mandatory	5
U-16 program boys/girls**	Optional	5
U-14 program**	Optional	5
U-12 program**	Optional	5
U-8/U10 co-ed program	Optional	10

Item	Mandatory Or Optional	Pts
1 team (men's or women's)	Mandatory	5

*/**Must have one of Senior or Junior Programs

Total Possible Points	40
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Total Possible	40
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Total Possible	40
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Total Possible	5
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Total point available	150
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Total point available	150
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Total point available	110
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Total point available	60
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Total Required for Certification	125
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Total Required for Certification	120
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Total Required for Certification	90
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Total Required for Certification	50
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SEAL OF APPROVAL PROGRAM TIMELINES

August 2011:

- All Marshall clubs must comply with the core components of the Administration component of the AA Club to participate
- All OWL clubs must comply with the core components of the Administration component of the A Club to participate
- All Branch Premiere league clubs must comply with the core components of the Recreational Club administration component to participate

Penalty – A 6 (six) point penalty in the standings will be taken against the most senior team in the club (i.e. A Marshall club's first team). A \$500 financial sanction

January 2012:

- All Marshall clubs must comply with the Administration and Development components of the AA Club to participate
- All OWL clubs must comply with the Administration and Development components of the A Club to participate
- All Branch Premiere league clubs must comply with the Administration and Development components of a Recreational Club to participate

Penalty – club will not be invited to participate in the 2012 league and be relegated to the Branch Premier League and when able to meet the required standards can play for promotion

January 2013:

- All Marshall clubs must comply with all components of a AA Club to participate
- All OWL clubs must comply with all components of a A Club to participate
- All Branch Premiere league clubs must comply with all components of a Recreational Club to participate

Penalty – club will not be invited to participate in the 2013 league and be relegated to the Branch Premier League and when able to meet the required standards can play for promotion

January 2014:

- To participate in the Marshall League, clubs must meet all AAA criteria

Penalty – club will not be invited to participate in the 2014 league and be relegated to the Branch Premier League and when able to meet the required standards can play for promotion

Recertification

- All clubs must recertify every 3 years by January 31 of the upcoming season

Audit Process

- Clubs must submit the documentation to the Branch Union for review before January 31 of the upcoming season.
- The Seal of Approval Application will be reviewed by the Branch Union according to the Seal of Approval check sheet
- In the event that a Club does not meet the requirements outlined in the Seal of Approval program, the club will have 30 days to make the necessary changes to resubmit. Failure to comply will result in not being awarded a Seal of Approval and possibly affecting which league the club is able to participate in