Dear Rugby Ontario member clubs,

It's been another eight weeks since I sent my last President's Newsletter to you all, and since then, it's been another very busy two months for Ontario's rugby community. Just like earlier this summer, there have been many highlights since the last Newsletter came out: the 2013 rugby season is drawing to a close, our junior provincial teams put forth outstanding performances during August's National Championships, and our province hosted the match that ensured Canada's qualification for the 2015 Rugby World Cup, just to name a few.

**Proposed Change in Rugby Ontario’s Governance Structure**

As Rugby Ontario continues to move forward by seeking to improve as an organization, we are proposing that Rugby Ontario’s Board to move to a Policy-Governed Board from an Operational-Governed Board, with the changes to be approved at the December 8, 2013 AGM for immediate implementation.

With the new Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act coming January 1, 2014, Rugby Ontario will be required to make significant changes to by-laws and Board structure. This proposal incorporates those changes.

Under the proposal, the new 2014 Board of Directors will consist of eight members only, which means there will no longer be Delegate Directors on the Board. Four of the eight Directors will hold officer positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer).

With the assumption that the proposed changes are approved at the AGM, via approved by-laws, at the time of the election at the December 2013 AGM, all current Board member terms (even those on a current two-year term that does not come up for election until December 2014) will expire. An election will take place for all eight positions on the new Board.

More information on this proposed change in Rugby Ontario’s governance structure will be sent to our member clubs in the coming weeks.

**Rugby Ontario/Rugby Canada Meeting**

On August 24th, Bob McGeein, Mark Pinguet and I met with Rugby Canada Chairman Pat Aldous, and two of his Directors, Tim Powers and Gordon Sneddon. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways that we could improve the relationship between the National Sports Organization (NSO) with the Provincial Sports Organization (PSO). Overall, I would suggest the meeting was constructive from the point of view that several obstacles were
identified that were impeding effective relations from occurring. Some of the issues tackled included improved communications between our two organizations, the introduction of changes to the NSO by-laws that will address concerns from the April AGM, and how Rugby Canada will support the sustainability of the CRC competition next year and beyond. A template based on Rugby Canada’s Strategic Direction will form the basis of our next meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for November 2nd.

**Ontario Blues**

The Ontario Blues, our high performance representative program for male rugby players in Ontario, are well on their way to earning a third straight MacTier Cup, as our provincial team seeks to win the 2013 Canadian Rugby Championship.

The squad is currently 3-0, recently defeating British Columbia 11-7 in Langford, BC, and toppling the Prairie Wolf Pack 53-23 in Calgary.

I would like to invite you all to the Blues’ final home match of the season, on Saturday, Sept. 14th in Lindsay, ON. Support your Blues, as they look to clinch the MacTier Cup with a victory over their longtime British Columbia rivals!

**Conduct, On and Off the Pitch**

In late August, I sent a letter to all of Ontario’s rugby community, discussing the core values of rugby in our province, and conduct, both on and off the pitch.

The letter specifically addressed the rise in incidents surrounding foul language and referee abuse, and contained my opinion on how we can instill some added respect into the sport we love.

Since sending this letter, I have been extremely pleased to see its open support from numerous players and clubs alike. I appreciate the time everyone took to read its words, and I look forward to ushering in a more respectful chapter in Ontario’s rugby history.

**Women’s Club Champions**

August 24th was a very busy day for Ontario’s women’s club teams.

I had the great pleasure of watching the OWL Cup Finals between Aurora Barbarians and Toronto Saracens, and the match did not disappoint! Spectators at Fletcher’s Fields were left at the edge of their seats as the match went into overtime, with the Saracens emerging as 27-22 victors.
Earlier in the day, Waterloo County defeated Aurora Barbarians 59-10 to win the OWL 2 Cup, and the Oakville Crusaders secured their spot in the 2014 OWL by winning the Women's Intermediate Cup.

**Junior Cup Day**

I would like to extend my congratulations to the 2013 Ontario Junior Club Champions: Aurora Barbarians (U18 Boys), Peterborough Pagans (U18 Girls), Brantford Harlequins (U16 Boys), and Belleville Bulldogs (U15 Girls).

All four teams took home the provincial titles on August 25th.

**Canada Advance to 2015 RWC at Toronto’s BMO Field**

After hosting a number of Canada’s Pacific Nations Cup matches earlier this year, as well as a friendly against Ireland, Ontario was once again the host of a high-profile international rugby match – one that proved to be the biggest match of the year for Canada.

On Aug. 25th, Canada punched their ticket to the 2015 IRB Rugby World Cup after defeating the United States Eagles by a score of 13-11 at BMO Field in Toronto.

Seven Ontarians were part of Canada’s team that defeated the United States – Ray Barkwill, Tyler Ardron, Aaron Carpenter (team captain), John Moonlight, Tom Dolezel, Doug Wooldridge, and Phil Mackenzie.

Congratulations to these fine Ontarians, and the entire Canadian national team, for their enormous accomplishment!

Don’t forget to purchase your tickets for another marquee international showdown that Toronto will be hosting – Canada vs. New Zealand Maori All Blacks, Nov. 3rd at BMO Field.

**Ottawa to Host 2014 NWL Rugby Championships**

In late July, Rugby Ontario was pleased to announce that our province has been selected to host the 2014 National Women’s League Rugby Championships.

Ottawa has been confirmed as the hosts of the tournament, which will be held in the summer of 2014 at Twin Elm Rugby Park, Eastern Ontario’s premier rugby facility. Rugby Ontario will be working directly with the Eastern Ontario Rugby Union to work out all of the logistics surrounding the 2014 NWL Championship, and to deliver these games.
Blues Win Bronze at CRC U19

Congratulations to the Under-19 Ontario Blues, who won Bronze at this year’s CRC U19. After heartbreaking losses to British Columbia and the Prairie Wolf Pack to open the tournament, the Blues followed up with two emphatic victories over the Voyageurs to secure a podium finish.

Nations Cup Supremacy

A strong sign that Canada’s national women’s rugby is on the rise is the fact that both the Senior National Team and the U20 National Team won their respective Nations Cup tournaments this summer.

In these tournaments that pitted Canada against England, South Africa, and USA, the Senior National Team defeated England 27-13 in their final, while the U20 National Team went undefeated in the tournament, taking down USA 27-3 in their final.

Both National Teams were boosted by a wealth of Ontario talent: the Senior National Team featured 12 Ontarians, and was Captained by Toronto’s Kelly Russell, while the U20 National Team showcased a whopping 19 Ontarians.

Congratulations to these 31 outstanding Ontarians, and both Canadian national teams, for their fantastic accomplishments on the world stage!

Junior Provincial Successes

The past two months have seen hundreds of junior rugby players represent Ontario.

Most notably, the National Championship Festival, held in Vancouver from Aug 7th to 11th, was single largest junior rugby championship in Canadian history, and Ontario’s teams put forth an absolutely incredible performance!

Two teams – the U18 Jr. Blues and the U18 Jr. Storm – were crowned National Champions. The U16 Jr. Storm earned National Silver medals. Two teams – the U18 and U16 East Jr. Blues – won National Plates in their first year participating in the tournament. The U17 Jr. Blues and the U15 Jr. Blues came in fourth place in their respective men’s divisions, with both teams largely playing against men a year older than themselves.

Congratulations to all of our players, coaches, and team staff of the nine teams that represented Ontario at the National Festival.
As well, in mid-July, the U18 Jr. Blues 7s team won the silver medal at the 2013 Victoria International Youth Sevens Tournament under head coach Dan Kunanec. Since then, Darrell Devine has been named the head coach of our Jr. Blues 7s program, and Brooke Hilditch has been named the head coach of the brand new Jr. Storm 7s program.

The Return of the Rugby Ontario Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony

In mid-July, the Rugby Ontario Board of Directors was pleased to announce that we will be reinstating our annual Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony this year, with the festivities to be held on December 7, 2013.

The Board of Directors has appointed a Chair to the Hall of Fame Committee, and with his leadership, Mark Winokur and Rugby Ontario's staff are working hard to put plans in place to ensure the event is a success.

Rugby Ontario Legacy Fund

I would like to remind our club's members of the recently-announced Rugby Ontario Legacy Fund – an avenue for members of Ontario’s rugby community to invest in the province’s high-performance rugby programs like the Blues and Storm, while connecting members with a trusted and proven investment advisor.

If members of Ontario’s rugby community choose to have National Bank Financial manage their wealth, National Bank Financial is pledging to donate a portion of its proceeds back to the Rugby Ontario representative program of the account holder’s choice.

For more details, check out the Rugby Ontario Legacy Fund’s information page.

McCormick Cup Television Coverage

Just a reminder that Rogers TV is broadcasting matches in each round of the 2013 McCormick Cup, including the Championship!

The coverage will continue on Rogers TV, cable 10/63, and new to the 2013 season, digital cable across Ontario on channels 368 (SD) and 369 (HD).

For more details, check out the complete broadcast schedule.
Finally, I would like to wish all of our clubs the best of luck as your seasons draw to a close.

Yours in rugby,

Domenic Scuglia
President
Rugby Ontario