

COMMUNITY RUGBY

In 2006, the Community Rugby division continued to benefit from the programs established as part of the 2003 Rugby World Cup legacy.

Participation numbers for the year grew to just under 194,000 players, a 9.5% increase on 2005. This was well supported by TryRugby programs that saw 39 centres rolled out across the country.

The EdRugby program in conjunction with State initiatives continued to make inroads into the national school system. During 2006, EdRugby has grown to a membership base of 1,950 schools, representing 19.5% of all Australian schools and a growth of over 33% in the last 12 months. The development and marketing of the EdRugby Walla Challenge participation program to schools throughout the year has helped EdRugby achieve one of its longer term objectives of growing participation in Rugby Union.

The Coach and Match Official education programs have provided State Unions with access to updated courses, particularly the Foundation Course, which are underpinned by accompanying resources. This was also backed up by projects which provided Certificate IV Workplace Assessment training. SmartRugby, a national ARU initiative, become mandatory in 2006 with a number of resources, including a comprehensive CD, freely available to course attendees.

The Volunteers in Rugby Research Project, completed in 2006, was a collaborative effort involving the Australian Rugby Union, Griffith University, UTS and La Trobe University to study volunteer management practices in Australian Club Rugby. The threeyear research project was funded by the Australian Research Council and the findings will be utilised in developing future modules for volunteer management. More information on the Volunteers in Rugby Research Project outcomes can be found in the community rugby section of our website.

MyRugbyAdmin has generated increased value in the database management of club membership and administration. Online learning, upgraded Coaches and Match Official accreditation structure and customisable fields have provided members of Community Rugby with increased resources to enable them to manage the game.

Community rugby is the "heart and soul" of the game and the ARU is forever indebted to the vast numbers of participants and volunteers across Australia who devote enormous hours and unwavering commitment to the grass roots of the game.

COACH AND MATCH OFFICIAL EDUCATION

The 2006 year was one of change where a number of initiatives were implemented with further earmarked for 2007. Topping the list was the mandatory positioning of SmartRugby, our occupational health and safety course for all coaches and referees involved in tackle variants of the game.

SmartRugby has been an overwhelming success, mainly due to the excellent involvement from the State Union members. Together with the updated CD resource and booklet, the course was well attended and the feedback was positive. Time will tell whether this initiative is responsible for the lowering of major injuries, however, the early signs have been encouraging.

Essentially, it's every coach's responsibility to provide as safe a playing environment as possible for the players. It's the player's responsibility to respect the welfare of their opponents and it's the referee's responsibility to manage the game with safety as their priority. During the year, over 7,500 coaches and referees attended SmartRugby, which is a wonderful result. Some overseas Unions have also



Geoff Shaw, General Manager Community Rugby

shown interest in SmartRugby and we will be demonstrating to the iRB its importance as a minimum qualification for Rugby.

The Foundation Course, which incorporates both coaching and refereeing aspects of the game, also broke new ground. By including SmartRugby content, it provided a more flexible delivery platform for the volunteer coaches and referees. We also developed a new coaching DVD, "Coaching Essentials", which demonstrated the basic components of the game with State Union fulltime staff acting as facilitators.

The Level 3 coaching course was re-registered with the Australian Sports Commission until 2010 and the Foundation Course, which is a pre-requisite to the Level 1 accreditation, was also registered until 2010. This means that all of our coaching courses are registered with the ASC up to and including 2008. Our coaching consultant, Terry Wheeler, has been a vital part of this process.

The ARU also organised Assessor Training seminars for those State Union members who required them. Mike McLaughlin directed these with good interaction from the participants.

Other education seminars took the form of Coach/Referee nights, Advanced Seminars, in-servicing through the National Schools, Women's and Under 16s championships along with in-servicing the State Union fulltime coach education staff. The Australian Rugby Shield was built around a different structure in 2006 with the Canberra Vikings defeating the Melbourne Axemen in the final. The inclusion of Tasmania made this a truly national competition for the non-professional players in each state.

The Community Rugby department was also responsible for the 2006 Women's Rugby World Cup campaign. Whilst the match results were not what everyone had hoped for, the team management and players selected in both the National Talent Squad and ultimately the final 26-woman squad are to be congratulated on their work ethic, skill level and friendships that were forged during the campaign. The future of our national Women's game is in good hands with the current group of players wonderful ambassadors for the game.

Match Official Education

The up skilling and development of referee coaches in relation to current game and refereeing practices continued in 2006 and has ensured that coaching provided to referees across the board is up-to-date. In 2005, an ARU Assessor Training program was conducted to train individuals in all states for their role as assessors for the purpose of granting accreditations. This program continued into 2006.

The Level 3 Referee and Referee Coach programs continued in 2006 with two referees and three referee coaches completing the program. A staff member from NSWRU also completed the program as part of their professional development. The 2007 programs commenced in October 2006 with four referees and two referee coaches. Under the accord between the ARU and the Japan Rugby Union, a referee from the JRU has been accepted into the 2007 Level 3 Referee program.

Updated Referees and Referee Coaches training programs were rolled out as drafts in early 2006 and used on a pilot basis during the year. The programs were reviewed and finalised in late 2006. The programs will be submitted to the Australian Sports Commission for approval under the National Officiating Accreditation Program arrangements in early 2007 and will remain in place for a further four years.

A national DVD resource was developed to assist State Unions in their referee recruitment programs. This resource was used extensively at Super 14 and Test matches and proved to be a valuable resource for the states.

Overall there were approximately 4000 accredited referees, touch judges and referee coaches servicing games at the Community Rugby level across Australia.

Volunteer Recognition Program
The Volunteer Recognition
Program was developed in 2003
to raise the profile of Community
Rugby volunteers and to reward
those volunteers who have
contributed to the development,
promotion and/or advancement of
Rugby Union within Australia. The
program continued in 2006 with
35 volunteers across Australia
recognised for their outstanding
service and commitment to
Rugby Union in the community.

All successful nominees were hosted at the Australian Rugby Union Official VIP Function room at a Wallaby Test match.

2006 Volunteer Recognition Program recipients:

- Australian Capital Territory: Carl Clarke, Damien Davies, Russell Ingram, Peter Ryan, Ryan Seaman, Paul Thomas.
- New South Wales: Michael Carse, Matt de Dassel, Andrew Ellem, Tony Hale, Bruce Herdegen, Ken Holland*, Michelle Pinson, Graham Roberts, Aaron Taggart, Peter Watson*.
- Northern Territory: Lyn Green*, Julie Torres*.
- Queensland: John Faithful, Christina Machray*, Brian Stenner*, Richard Incledon, Geraldine Barlow, Paul Heath.
- South Australia: Arthur Mallison, Anthony Owen.
- · Tasmania: Anthony Casboult.

- Victoria: Pam Burton, Bob Butt*, Charlie Grieve*, Denis Muller, Ema Yandall.
- Western Australia:
 Stephen Carrick, Debbie
 Hodgkinson, Ray Mills, Julie
 Skiba, Des Thornton.
- *Recipients who could not attend the Test Match

EDRUGBY

EdRugby, with the support of State Unions, continues to provide opportunities for schools, irrespective of their Rugby background, to engage in a range of learning activities on and off the field based on the Rugby values of pride, teamwork and tradition.

EdRugby schools membership

Total number	1,950
(December 2006)	
Proportion of all	19.5%
Australian School	
New Schools in 2006	476
Growth in school	33%
registration in 2006	

Content Development
During 2006, a number of
new resources for schools
were developed.

Senior Physical Education Resources

A range of Rugby-themed resources were designed for senior physical education students including topics such as game analysis, fitness components and testing, training methods and principles.

Spirit of Rugby

The Spirit of Rugby program is an opportunity to teach life values to young Australians through rugby. The program complements existing EdRugby resources and includes the following content areas:

Stimulus material: a range of Rugby-themed stimulus material including videos, presentations and songs, to help students understand and apply values at school, in sport and life.

Awards: students and teachers can set standards and recognise positive behaviours on and off the rugby field through the Spirit of Rugby awards for all levels of school rugby players

Forums

City	School	Wallabies
Melbourne	Trinity Grammar	Phil Waugh and
	School - Kew	Chris Latham
Perth	Trinity Catholic College	Phil Waugh and
	- East Perth	Chris Latham
Brisbane	Church of England	Al Baxter and
	Grammar School	Clyde Rathbone
Sydney	St Ignatius College	Al Baxter and
	- Riverview	Clyde Rathbone
Canberra	Canberra Grammar	Stirling Mortlock, Guy
	School - Red Hill	Shepherdson & Al Baxter

Forums: Staged throughout the Wallaby Test season, over 1,000 students and teachers from 160 different schools attended the EdRugby Promoting Values in Sports Forums in 2006.

Participation

In its second year, the EdRugby Walla Challenge continues to introduce young Australians to the game by challenging students to organise, stage and participate in their own tournament. It uses:

- Walla Rugby the modified, non-tackling version of the game
- SEPEP a well-respected educational curriculum model focusing on studentcentred learning
- Support resources for schools, including rugby equipment and lesson plans on tournament organisation and Walla Rugby.

EdRugby Walla Challenge Results

Students participants	7,604
Schools	90
Primary schools	70%
Secondary schools	30%
Schools with no/irregular	85%
rugby experience prior	
to the Challenge	

Professional development

The ongoing professional development of the Education and Rugby communities remains an important goal of the EdRugby program. In collaboration with State Unions, the aim of this strategy is to grow the numbers of teachers who can confidently teach rugby across the curriculum and therefore grow overall youth participation.

EdRugby PD Workshops

Participants	1,077
Recipients of coaching	80%
qualification (JPP	
or Smart Rugby)	

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Events Trailer

The ARU events trailer was utilised in a series of promotions throughout the country including;

- Suncorp 2006 Bledisloe Cup Roadshow
- Vodafone Skills Clinic at Chatswood Oval
- Qantas Staff Day
- Triple M contest winners promotion at Rushcutters Bay

Research

The ARU, in conjunction with Australian Catholic University PHD student Tim Hartwig, conducted a series of field trials looking at training volumes and efficiencies in adolescent rugby players with the following teams:

- Scots College,
- Westfield Sports High,
- Sydney Juniors Under 16 team.

Wallaby Way

In 2006 the ARU conducted a series of education seminars and coaching clinics in conjunction with the ARU High Performance Unit.

The sessions were for players and coaches who provide onfield coaching sessions for talented 14-16 year old players. Coach Education seminars for junior and senior coaches covering skill and physical development of players were held in Adelaide, Perth and Hobart.

On-line Coaching Centre

The Online Coaching Centre using activities filmed at the Wallabies' Coffs Harbour training base has been successfully trialled with a pilot group of coaches and is expected to be launched in the 2007 season.

PARTICIPATION

TryRugby

Once again, the TryRugby program continued to evolve during the year with the highlight being another 39 centres across the country hosting programs.

There are three levels, being:

- 1. TryRugby 5-8 years
- 2. TryRugby Plus 9-16 years
- 3. TryRugby Play 5-16 years

These three programs provide greater flexibility in the age bracket, day, time and date of program, but most significantly, it introduced the older participants (9 years and older) to the contact nature of the game and a greater emphasis of playing and game application over skills and drills.

The greater flexibility of the program level was extended to the placement of centres, as apart from those funded through the State Unions' RWC strategic programs grant, we also had clubs run as franchised centres. TryRugby programs were also run by clubs under licence with the ARU and respective State Union. In 2007, a new funding structure will be in place.

The developments for 2007 will see the introduction of an increased online environment allowing potential TryRugby centre hosts to apply to run a TryRugby program by submitting an application through an online form. In addition to a streamlined application process, the approved host can create their programs online allowing even higher degrees of self management. These processes can include publishing the date when the program goes live on the web to accept registrations, a notice board to communicate special appearances and events as well as customised equipment orders.

Potential host clubs should visit the ARU website or contact their respective State Union to find out more details on hosting a TryRugby program.

Junior Player Pathway
Participation numbers in the Junior
Player Pathway games of Walla,
Mini and Midi and the modified
Under 19 game increased in both
juniors (clubs) and schools in
2006. We saw very good growth
across the country and must
thank all those volunteers who
dedicated their time to the future
rugby players of Australia.

The impact of coordinated programs within the schools and clubs, aligned to the guidance and assistance of the State Union development staff, has accounted for the increase in recruits to our great game.

Plans are underway to pilot an updated Junior Player Pathway Course for 2007 which will see the SmartRugby modules included in the certificate course. This allows not only an update of recent research into Long Term Player Development to be included, but also allows the delivery of the ARU's occupational health and safety program for rugby in a Junior Education course.

The challenge for 2007 will be to maintain the momentum of 2006.

MYRUGBYADMIN

The registration of players, volunteers and accreditation of coaches and match officials through MyRugbyAdmin in 2006 was again a seamless process. The developments that were implemented at the beginning of the year helped clubs and State Union administrators streamline their work processes. This was proven by a reduction in enquiries to the helpdesk.

Peripheral programs like Macromedia Breeze have seen 612 law exams completed online. Breeze is also being utilised by TryRugby and the Online Coaching Centre for SmartRugby in 2007.

The major development to MyRugbyAdmin was made outside the registration period at the end of 2006. This saw the

merge of MyRugbyAdmin into the ARU's Customer Relationship Management system. The benefits of the merge will be seen in the near future.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

2006 National U16 Championship
The annual National Under 16
Championship was again hosted
at St Ignatius' College Riverview,
Sydney for the sixth consecutive
year. The Championship bring
together the cream of young rugby
talent from around Australia for five
days of everything rugby. Teams
arrived on Sunday 1 October;
played matches on Monday,
Wednesday and Friday, and then
departed after the Presentation
Luncheon on Friday 6 October.

Twelve teams participated in the Championship's two divisions playing a total of 18 matches. The Division 1 knock-out competition comprised eight teams – three from NSW, two from Queensland, and one team each from ACT, Western Australia and Victoria. The Division 2 round-robin competition each comprised of four teams – one from South Australia, Northern Territory, Tasmania and the National Indigenous XV (Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team).

The ARU subsidised the cost of travel, meals and accommodation for players, coaches, physiotherapists and team management from their State's capital city, thus ensuring that all participants have an equal opportunity to participate and that the best players can attend.

The Championship also provided an excellent opportunity for professional development education for all players, coaches, managers and physiotherapists through a series of practical and theory-based workshops with ARU, State Union and external professionals. Topics included drugs in sport (ASADA), nutrition/ hydration, player pathways, position-specific and alike. The Championship also provided a valuable opportunity to collect age specific data, conduct much needed research into elite adolescent athletes, and to identify and develop young

talent through the ARU's High Performance Unit involvement.

The ARU this year named a 15-man merit team at the conclusion of the National Under 16 Championship. The team was selected by ARU Elite Player Development Staff including Wallabies selector Michael O'Connor and recognises the depth of talent that was displayed during the three-day tournament. Candidates were selected in each position and to be considered, players had to have performed at a high level throughout the tournament and contributed most to their team's performance.

2006 AWARDS:

Merit Team:

1. Mac Rutledge (NSW Schools), 2. Josh Poplawski (Qld Red), 3. Cruze Ah-Nau (Western Australia), 4. Mark Johnson (NSW Schools), 5. James Beaufils (National Indigenous), 6. Aaron Chapman (Qld Red), 7. David Karamanis (NSW Schools), 8. Lachlan McCafferey (NSW Schools), 9. Mark Swanepoel (Qld Red), 10. Matt Toomua (Qld Red), 11. James Swan (NSW Schools), 12. James O'Connor (Qld Red), 13. Cameron Mitchell (NSW Schools), 14. Stephen Millar (South Australia) 15. Aidan Toua (Qld Red).

Best Team Man (Bob Dwyer Plaques):

Sean Connichie (ACT & SNSW), Rex Johnson (National Indigenous), Tu Lesuma (Tasmania), Lachlan Hall (Qld White), Damian Stower (Qld Red), David Karamanis (NSW Schools), Mitchell Gibson (NSW Country), Alec Brown (Sydney Juniors), Mark Kidson (Western Australia), Jeremy Tait (Victoria), Elijah Vodo-Rasova (Northern Territory) & Christopher Seutini (South Australia).

Team Manager's Award (Nigel Stiffe Memorial Shield): John Guy (NSW Schools)

Best Referee (Tony Lacaze Memorial Shield): Grant MacNeill

Full results can be found in the Year in Detail section of the Annual Report.

PARTICIPATION FIGURES

ACT & SNSWRU						
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005 ^	2006	
Seniors	1,778	1,745	1,858	2,986	2,912	
Juniors	3,510	3,077	3,692	4,690	4,969	
Schools (1) *	2,211	2,037	950	1,161	1,041	
Schools (2) **		600	1,945	5,052	5,460	
Women	100	115	162	156	191	
Totals	7,599	7,574	8,607	14,045	14,573	

NSWRU					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005 ^	2006
Seniors	20,172	20,456	21,622	18,871	18,949
Juniors	15,299	15,461	17,784	17,312	18,246
Schools (1) *	19,738	20,150	22,731	14,303	15,332
Schools (2) **	13,190	13,500	12,999	22,838	24,778
Women	575	715	1,019	950	783
Totals	68,974	70,282	76,155	74,274	78,088

QRU					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	8,714	8,169	9,047	8,608	8,633
Juniors	10,228	10,285	12,363	13,482	14,233
Schools (1) *	18,530	20,489	22,034	22,731	23,288
Schools (2) **	812	640	809	4,137	4,161
Women	240	200	188	531	490
Totals	38,524	39,783	44,441	49,489	50,805

RWA					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	2,427	2,433	2,127	2,112	2,412
Juniors	1,925	1,904	2,529	2,830	3,273
Schools (1)*	2,031	1,990	2,180	2,240	2,485
Schools (2) **	367	239	0	1,220	6,152
Women	145	104	100	116	149
Totals	6,895	6,670	6,936	8,518	14,471

VRU					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	1,850	1,981	2,062	2,157	2,378
Juniors	1,046	992	1,519	1,625	1,761
Schools (1) *	878	1,149	1,140	1,160	1,360
Schools (2) **	610	480	1,591	2,830	3,052
Women	80	88	69	104	134
Totals	4,464	4,690	6,381	7,876	8,685

NTRU						
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Seniors	953	846	744	625	645	
Juniors	449	345	487	476	528	
Schools (1) *	100	50	203	260	251	
Schools (2) **		344	280	471	833	
Women	80	60	26	0	0	
Totals	1,582	1,645	1,740	1,832	2,257	

TRU					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	551	358	411	340	478
Juniors	273	251	331	314	364
Schools (1) *				330	0
Schools (2) **		163	321	0	2,480
Women	57	47	49	43	61
Totals	881	819	1,112	1,027	3,383

SARU					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	1,096	958	1,048	875	871
Juniors	495	502	701	804	853
Schools (1) *	224	214	268	369	524
Schools (2) **	25	0	433	335	1,753
Women	101	98	141	96	107
Totals	1,941	1,772	2,591	2,479	4,108

NATIONAL					
Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Seniors	37,541	36,946	38,919	36,574	37,278
Juniors	33,225	32,817	39,406	41,533	44,227
Schools (1)*	43,769	46,079	49,506	42,554	44,281
Schools (2)**	15,004	15,966	18,378	36,883	48,669
Women	1,321	1,427	1,754	1,996	1,915
Golden Oldies	17,890	17,000	17,255	17,115	17,012
Totals	148,750	150,235	165,218	176,655	193,382

Schools figures are based on sign off by school principals or convenor (Secondary and Primary):

- * Schools 1 (Regular Rugby) schools playing in a weekly competition that entails 5 (five) games or more.
- ** Schools 2 (Irregular Rugby) schools who competed in one off gala days, knock out competitions or the like.

Note: ^ In 2005, Southern Inland & Far South Coast Unions moved affiliation from NSWRU to ACT & SNSWRU.