



SUOMEN RUGBYLIITTO

FINNISH RUGBY FEDERATION

ACTION PLAN 2021

This action plan focuses on six main objectives, designed as a platform on which to base future developments. These objectives are addressed individually in this Action Plan, and for each one, clear strategies are presented to enable real goals to be achieved (Part 1).

In addition to these main goals, the federation will continue to work within the framework of the organization's vision, mission, values, and strategic goals to achieve the set goals. These are presented in bullet points, as they relate to ongoing activities rather than significant or unique objectives (Part 2).

Vision

To be a self-sufficient association with the necessary and required structures and with authorized, trained, qualified and dedicated staff that promote Finnish rugby locally and globally in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant governing bodies, in order to secure rugby growth in Finland.

Mission

Promote, develop, and maintains the sport among all stakeholders in Finland, including players, administrators, coaches, sponsors, supporters, and governing bodies.

Set of values

The values follow the values of World Rugby: Integrity, Respect, Solidarity, Passion, Discipline

Strategic objectives (SRL's strategic plan 2021 - 2024)

- Promotes the values, ethos, and spiritual atmosphere of rugby in Finland
- Enable and support the long-term and continuous participation of all stakeholders in the sport, encouraging collaboration between different stakeholders
- Increases the number of players registered in a sustainable way in each category each year
- Identify, acquire, and retain long-term sponsors and ensure that they achieve benefit through their own investment



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PART 1: Main objectives

a) JUNIORIRUGBY

Challenge

Finnish clubs target their activities to different age groups (from 6 to 10 years old to 15 to 17 year olds). Because there are so few success stories, Finnish rugby is unlikely to reach critical mass, so that several clubs would have enough junior players of the same age group at the same time to start competition between clubs. A nationwide strategy meeting was held in April 2019, which resulted in the compilation of the club-driven strategy for 2020 outlined below. However, making a junior strategy has not helped clubs start junior rugby, so there is a need for a different approach.

Strategy

Start the junior games in the season 2021.

1. Recruit a junior coordinator
2. Use schools as the primary route for recruitment
3. Target recruitment to 15 – 17-year old players who can train with seniors from local clubs, in which case clubs may not be required to provide additional resources for junior coaching
4. Aim to motivate young people to join teams by providing instant games and a credible competition calendar
5. SRL supports the junior work of the clubs by organizing start-up and follow-up meetings between the clubs, providing equipment and know-how and organizing joint training camps
6. Actively monitor the progress of the issue together with the clubs in the follow-up meetings and decide together in spring 2021 what kind of series will be played in summer 2021

Timeline and milestones

- A junior start meeting will be held in October 2020
- SRL will organize a junior camp or camps between clubs later in the spring if the situation allows
- Aim to play the first junior matches in the summer of 2021 (also show matches and / or tournaments possible)

Additional notes

This proposal does not mean that any ongoing junior programs will be stopped, but that there will be a focus on a specific age group to bring about games.





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b) MARKETING

Challenge

Rugby is one of the world's best-known and most popular ball sports, but it is among the marginal sports in Finland and poorly known. We want to increase people's awareness of rugby, make it more attractive and easier to follow.

Strategy

A marketing plan will be drawn up ([attached](#)) to take concrete steps to increase marketing activity, especially digitally, and to make marketing regular and consistent. We will also introduce the Clubee service, which will allow us to automate and harmonize our operations.

Timeline and milestones

- Approve the marketing plan as part of the new strategic plan from 2021 onwards
- Produce more content about international and national matches, junior rugby, club activities, etc. The aim is to make the activities even more regular.
- Aim to increase the number of followers on all available social media platforms by 5-10%
- Introduce Clubee at the federal level during 2021 and allow it to be used by clubs as well to facilitate activities.

Additional notes: Clubee

Clubee is a multi-platform tool that includes a website, data collection, social media and aims to facilitate the creation of digital content to be shared on social media. Clubee can be activated for multiple users with different permissions. Using the full range of tools in Clubee, we hope to reach a wider audience through our channels, which are followed by potential future players in our target audience. By using this partially automated set of tools, we enable the SRL and its member clubs to share information more easily and better market future games, gaming events and their outcomes. This is a multi-year project that will be launched in early 2021.



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c) REGISTERED PLAYERS

Challenge

It is especially important that the number of registered players increases. This is one of the key metrics used by many of the organizations we depend on (e.g. World Rugby and the Finnish Olympic Committee). Grants and resources from the Olympic Committee will increase significantly as we achieve more than 1,000 annual licenses (Note! Total number of licenses, not just player licenses) and the number of clubs increases to 30.

Strategy

Ensure that all active members of the rugby community have a valid and appropriate license each season. This is achieved by:

1. Continuing the active recruitment of players and other staff
2. Players that play a game without a valid license receive disciplinary action
3. Ensuring that on the day of play, the staff involved in the team have a valid managers / coach license so that they are covered by the association's insurance
4. Working closely with the FRRA to ensure that all referee's have a valid license
5. Exploring the possibility of introducing a nominal license for active rugby juniors in the junior part of this action plan
6. Facilitating the reporting of participants' license numbers to reduce the administrative burden on clubs and to ensure that club members comply with the rules

Timeline and milestones

- All strategic points will be implemented by the beginning of the 2021 period

Additional notes

The purpose is not to artificially increase the number of participants, but to better identify the actual number of participants and to help our license numbers grow per critical 1,000 licensees. By no means is this plan intended to replace active recruitment and a real increase in the number of participants.



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d) FOCUS ON RECRUITMENT

Challenge

There is a real need to recruit new players to the sport and keep those committed to the sport. This is important for long-term sustainability and growth in terms of domestic competition series, player development, competitive national team's, and financial sustainability. The association must play an active role in supporting and encouraging clubs' recruitment efforts, but the desire to recruit new players, active planning, and the implementation of local recruitment must be club-driven.

Strategy

The aim is to motivate, inspire and promote local recruitment campaigns by coordinating a national recruitment week, during which the SRL promotes the national event, and the clubs organize their own beginner courses and recruitment events, in which the target audience is instructed to participate. This approach:

1. Help motivate clubs to ensure they are part of this initiative and take responsibility for overall recruitment
2. Activate funding channels (Get Into Rugby)
3. Ensure that a wider audience is reached than what the clubs individually could reach

Timeline and milestones

- Preliminary dates for these events will be decided at the November 2020 Autumn meeting in collaboration with clubs, but the campaign is most likely to be most effective in Spring 2021, which is a typical time for recruitment campaigns



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e) Development of WOMEN XV rugby series

Challenge

The Women's Championship Series has now established itself as a six-team competitive series. Division 1 was established in 2016 as a two-team development series that grew in 2017 and the number was set to grow again for 2018 before more clubs had to withdraw their teams from the series. Currently, the threshold for women's participation in the Finnish Championships is high for new and evolving teams, so it is important for the development of women's races to reassess whether Division 1 is re-established so that it can be used as a possible springboard to the Championship.

Strategy

The competition manager will lead a related discussion with all teams and stakeholders and try to reach a majority consensus on whether change is needed and, if so, what kind of change would be involved. We have contacted Pori, Vaasa, Linna, Saimaa, Joensuu and Kalev and the reception has been positive. Key issues to consider:

1. Estimated number of players and forecast from all clubs whether they will compete in the women's team's competition series for 2021
2. A clear route for the teams, through which you can enter the Finnish Championships if the team earns a place
3. Providing development opportunities for new emerging teams without compromising the integrity of the SM series by including teams that are not able to compete at that level

Timeline and milestones

- Decision to be made and announced by 31 December 2020 so that the 2021 timetable can be published in January.



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(f) ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT RUGBY FACILITIES

Challenge

Rugby is a small sport in Finland, so in field reservations we are often on the bottom of the list of priorities for sports reservations. Under our federation, four successful national teams compete, and the metropolitan area also has several clubs that would greatly benefit from the facilities dedicated to rugby.

Strategy

The City of Helsinki has earmarked land on which to build Finland's first artificial turf field in accordance with World Rugby Act No. 22, which would operate on the terms of SRL. The construction of the field is part of a multi-year plan and part of the 2021-2024 strategic plan.

1. Make a statement to the City of Helsinki whether we will join the project
2. Establishment of a Limited Company operating under the SRL, which is responsible for running the field
3. Obtaining and securing funding

Timeline and milestones

- Based on the notification of the City of Helsinki's Sports Department, the project has been suspended for the time being due to the current situation [Corona] and the resulting financial problems
- Continue the project as soon as possible



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PART 2: Ongoing activities and proposals to support wider goals

1. Monitor the sustainable development of domestic competitive series

- a. Support all clubs in recruiting, developing, and retaining player numbers by either participating or providing information as needed
- b. Ensure an appropriate balance between 7's and 15's for both sexes
- c. Re-evaluate the current player loan provisions for both men and women (end-of-term assessment) to ensure that future emphasis is placed on internal recruitment and development
- d. Maintain an active relationship with both men's and women's rugby coordinators to ensure a smooth flow of information and the opportunity to be proactive in identifying and addressing potential issues

2. Continue to support all four national teams

- a. To develop and promote the existing partnership with Eerikkilä to increase its importance as a national rugby training centre
- b. Provide ongoing support and guidance in acquiring sponsors
- c. Continue to work closely with team management to facilitate proactive communication

3. Improve the coordination of education and teaching

- a. Giving organizing clubs / associations more decision-making power over how courses are organized and managed
- b. Work with local World Rugby trainers to ensure that courses from all groups are held as often and as needed (coordination with the Technical Director)

4. Continue to represent Finland's interests in co-operation organizations and administrative bodies

- a. Ensure continuity of funding
- b. Drive access to international competitions (especially the newer national teams)
- c. Aim for better collaboration when it comes to accessing information and resources

5. Improve the visibility of rugby nationwide and increase its attractiveness for business cooperation