



Media Release

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BAY OF PLENTY RUGBY INCREASE PLAYER NUMBERS

In an age where a large number of sports are fighting for participants, Bay of Plenty Rugby numbers have again shown an increase from the previous season.

Figures just released by the New Zealand Rugby Union, have shown a three percent growth in total players numbers, registered with the Bay of Plenty Rugby Union.

There has been a big jump in teenage rugby numbers, with nearly three hundred new players taking to the fields in the Bay of Plenty this season. A revamp of the secondary schools competitions, which has introduced a finals day for the first time, has rekindled real interest in schools rugby.

The Union has worked hard to support the parents and teachers who volunteer their time to support rugby in Schools. Along with this, a number of new initiatives are in place such as rippa rugby and a secondary school sevens series. These are aimed at trying to encourage youth to participate.

Bay of Plenty Rugby Operations Manager Mike Rogers said “We are very pleased to see the hard work being done by our BOPRU staff, Club and School volunteers paying dividends by an increase in people playing our sport. In 2005 we had 7185 total player numbers, so over the last 5 years we have been able to achieve some very positive results in terms of participation. It is especially pleasing to see the increase in students participating at the Secondary School level, which is a challenging age group for all sports.”

Rogers continued “We believe there is a significant amount of work still to be done, to encourage greater participation from our community across all age groups. Our challenge is to find more resources, so we can continue to grow involvement in rugby, and ensure all those who do participate have a great experience.”

Hand in hand with the teenage players increase, has been solid growth in the registered coach’s ranks. In recent times the Bay of Plenty Union has taken a serious approach to coach education. The appointment of a Community Rugby Coaching Coordinator, has paid real dividends with a better than ten per cent increase in the coaching numbers.

Bay of Plenty Rugby Operations Manager Mike Rogers said “Without volunteers involved as coaches, managers, referees and administrators we would not be able to cater for the level of participation we have in rugby. We do our best with limited resource to try and support those volunteers, through up skilling and education programmes. We are very thankful for all those who give up their time to ensure others are able to enjoy playing our sport.”

However the Bay of Plenty Union faces two specific challenges to continue to grow the game in the region. There has been a decrease in the senior ranks of some seventy-six club players. With leisure time often in short supply, especially in the Eastern Bay of Plenty where many engage in shift work, the Bay of Plenty Union will be taking steps to promote the senior game.

www.boprugby.co.nz





Another real challenge is to attract new referees to volunteer their time in the middle. Again the constraints of lack of leisure time, have made an impact on the number of officials available this season. One initiative put in place this season was to provide a pathway for teenage referees. There is now a small group of young recruits in the region who have chosen to officiate instead of playing the great game.

BOPRU 2010 Registrations

	2010	2009
Players 0-12	4361	4364
Players 13-20	2517	2227
Players 21+	<u>1626</u>	<u>1700</u>
Total	8504	8291
Coaches	459	400
Referees	73	83

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