



RUCKING INTO THE 20'S

SEPTEMBER 23-26, 2021

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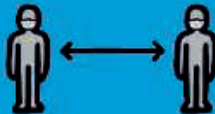


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Open air spaces safer than enclosed spaces

## PROXIMITY



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## TIME



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LESS SAFE



Shorter time periods with others are safer

REMEMBER, IT'S ALWAYS SAFER TO:



KNOW YOUR RISK.  
LOWER YOUR RISK.



World Health Organization

# RUGGERFEST 53 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

For the latest in scores and schedules please go to <https://aspen-ruggerfest.com/calendar/>

## SEPTEMBER 23-26, 2021

### THURSDAY

Men's 55s

"Live Like Jerry" Scholarship Fundraiser

*Eric's Bar*

### FRIDAY

Men's 40s and 50s

"Live Like Jerry" Golf Tournament

*Iron Bridge Golf Course*

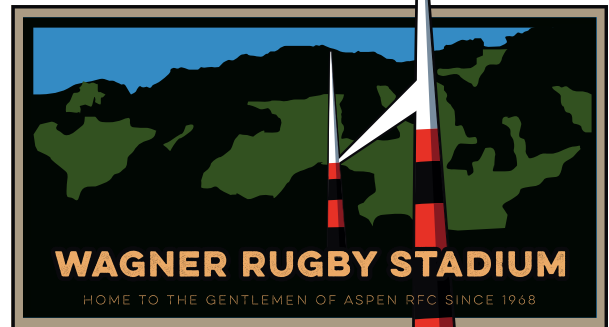
Aspen Rugby Hall of Fame Inductions @ Mountain Chalet

### SATURDAY

Men's and Women's Open Division

### SUNDAY

All Division Finals



ASPEN, COLORADO

### FUTURE RUGGERFEST DATES:

Always on the Third Weekend  
of September

**2022 September 15-18**

# THE GENTLEMEN OF ASPEN ~ PRESENT ~





Hurricane, UT - Tomasi Zundel Takau, age 52, died on July 29, 2021 in St. George, Utah surrounded by his family. His death was caused by complications due to COVID-19. He was born on October 15, 1968, in Neiafu, Vava'u Tonga to Viliami Elisapeta Lita Takau. He married Elizabeth Ann Zundel Takau in the Laie Temple on September 5, 1992.

Tomasi was raised on the island of Vava'u, Tonga, where he excelled in school and rugby. He was recruited to play rugby at BYU-Hawaii and later served a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New Zealand. He met and married his eternal companion in Hawaii and started his family.

Rugby continued to bless his life when he was recruited to play for the USA Eagles Rugby team.

He traveled the world playing at the highest level in his sport and rubbing shoulders with legends. Tomasi was also a proud and distinguished member of the Gentleman of Aspen Rugby Club. Most notably, he played on the 1997 – 2003 Aspen championship teams that won seven National Titles in that timeframe. Tomasi played thirty-two tests for the US Eagles many with ten of his Gents of Aspen teammates who were also on the Eagles squad.

He retired from his Rugby career to assume the position of full-time dad and all-knowing coach. His expertise covered everything in life, sports of every kind to politics and education. He was devoted to his kids and gave everything he had to help them succeed. When he became a Granddaddy, he was an even better grandfather and loved his grandbabies!

Tomasi was very talented with his hands and when he wasn't with his family, he was creating beautiful masonry work as a General Contractor. He loved to learn, and he loved his politics. He died a staunch, Trump loving, patriot who loved his country! Tomasi was an example of service, humility and Christ-like love to everyone he came in contact with.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth Takau; children: Kalistina, Joseph (Lexi Mae), Ammon (Allison), Enoch, Seth and Elizabeth Takau; grandsons: Valor Viliami, Villiami Tomasi, and Tomasi Takau III, who all reside in the greater St. George area; his mother Lita Takau of Portland, Oregon; his siblings: Valini Sanft, George Takau, Feao, Umu, and many in-laws, nieces and nephews.

Funeral Services were held Saturday, August 7, 2021, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Hurricane 6th Ward, 677 South 700 West, Hurricane, Utah. Interment was at the Hurricane Cemetery.

# NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN...



Ruggerfest 53 is finally here, after a two year wait, with much uncertainty and apprehension we're finally back together again!

Ruggerfest, means a lot different things to me, a long shot drop kick in 1995 to send Aspen through to the finals, a beer with old friends, a beer with new friends, and a long lasting tradition of Rugby at Wagner Rugby Stadium in mid-September. But, I think my favorite memories of Ruggerfest are the mornings at Wagner Rugby Stadium, when you run into a friend from across the world and have a conversation with them as if you just saw them yesterday.

We've lost some great friends in the past two years, since our last Ruggerfest.

**Tomasi Takau**, a great Gentleman of Aspen, who passed away in late August, was a great rugby player and a greater Gentleman, in every sense of the word. Unfortunately, we've lost many others in the past two years and we owe it to them to enjoy this weekend with the vigor and gusto of the very first Ruggerfest and all of those that have come since. I'm certain that's the way they'd like it.

So, when you look at the Big Goal Posts of Wagner Rugby Stadium, take a moment to think about those who are no longer with us and give them "three cheers!"

Our rugby family reunion is finally here. We should be thankful that we're all together this weekend enjoying each other's company and the competition of Rugby Football.

Kind regards,  
John Staub, Chairman  
Ruggerfest 53



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# RUGGERFEST CHAMPIONS & THE PAST WINNERS OF RUGGERFEST

THE HISTORY OF THE ASPEN RUGGERFEST IS WRITTEN IN THE NAMES OF THE MANY FAMOUS CLUBS THAT HAVE COMPETED FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP. WE PROUDLY PRESERVE THEIR NAMES HERE.

PAST WINNERS		RUNNERS UP		PAST WINNERS		RUNNERS UP	
1968	Kansas City Blues RFC	Denver Barbarians		1982	Old Blues, Berkeley	Santa Monica	
1969	San Francisco RFC	Colorado Springs		1983	Denver Barbarians	Old Blues, Berkeley	
1970	Denver Highlanders tie	Denver Barbarians		1984	Denver Barbarians	Vail RFC	
1971	Gentlemen of Aspen	Denver Highlanders		1985	Gentlemen of Aspen	Denver Highlanders	
1972	Air Force Academy RFC	Denver Barbarians		1986	Denver Barbarians	Gentlemen of Aspen	
1973	B.A.T.S.	Denver Barbarians		1987	Gentlemen of Aspen	Los Angeles RFC	
1974	B.A.T.S.	Denver Harlequins		1988	Sacramento RFC	Kansas City Blues RFC	
1975	Pumpkins RFC	Newport Beach RFC		1989	Gentlemen of Aspen	Old Blues, Berkeley	
1976	B.A.T.S.	Pumpkins RFC		1990	Gentlemen of Aspen	Old Blues, Berkeley	
1976	B.A.T.S.	Denver Harlequins		1991	Denver Barbarians	Gentlemen of Aspen	
1978	Minneapolis RFC	Des Moines RFC		1992	Gentlemen of Aspen	Old Blues, Berkeley	
1979	Occidental O.B.	Kansas City Blues RFC		1993	Life Chiropractic RFC	Old Puget Sound Beach	
1980	Old Blues, Berkeley	Denver Highlanders		1994	Gentlemen of Aspen	Kansas City Blues RFC	
1981	B.A.T.S.	Gentlemen of Aspen		1995	O.M.B.A.C.	Gentlemen of Aspen	



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**PAST WINNERS**

1996 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 1997 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 1998 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 1999 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2000 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2001 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2002 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2003 Denver Barbarians  
 2004 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2005 Denver Barbarians  
 2006 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2007 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2008 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2009 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2010 Pro Leisure Tour All Stars  
 2011 Denver Barbarians  
 2012 Denver Barbarians  
 2013 Denver Harlequins  
 2014 Glendale Raptors  
 2015 Gentlemen of Aspen

**RUNNERS UP**

O.M.B.A.C.  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Kansas City Blues RFC  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Chicago Lions  
 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 Denver Barbarians  
 ERFUL Select  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Denver Barbarians  
 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 Willing-UK  
 Glendale Raptors  
 Glendale Raptors  
 The Willing  
 Dark'n Stormy

**PAST WINNERS**

2016 Dark'n Stormy  
 2017 Dark'n Stormy  
 2018 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 2019 Dark'n Stormy

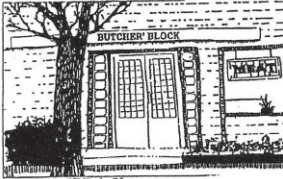
**RUNNERS UP**

Gentlemen of Aspen  
 Gentlemen of Aspen  
 Dark'n Stormy  
 No. Amer. Rugby Academy

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# ASPEN RUGGERFEST TOURNAMENT RULES

The format of tournament and the length of games will be determined by the number of teams in each bracket. In principle, all teams are guaranteed at least three games not including the finals competition.

IRB rules as interpreted by the referees will be in effect for all games. All scrums will be contested unless at the referee's discretion or the team captains, they are deemed unsafe, at which time uncontested scrums will be adopted. All decisions by the referees are final.

All teams are expected to be on the pitch and ready to play at the time of their match. Any team that is not ready within 5 minutes of the scheduled time of their match will forfeit that match by a score of 7-0.

All teams will submit their rosters either before arriving in Aspen or at least one hour before they take the pitch for their first match at the registration tent located on the Wagner Park pitch. The registration tent is open on Wednesday evening, 9am to 5pm on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Rosters will contain the following information: The names of all the players along with some proof of their ages in all brackets except in the open divisions.

No player may play for more than one team in any given bracket. Violation of this rule will result in the disqualification of the additional team for which that player competes. Teams who use players, not on their submitted rosters or players whose age does not qualify them to play in the age group of their bracket, will be disqualified from the competition.

A player qualifies to play in an age bracket if he is within one year of the age of that bracket. Someone 34 or over does qualify for the Masters competition. Someone 44 or over qualifies for the 45s, etc.

ROSTER sizes are as follows:

- Open Division teams are limited to 35 players. For any match 23 may suit up and be available for play. Substitutions are limited to 8 per game
- Masters Division teams are limited to 40 players. For any game 32 may be suited up. All suited players are available as substitutions.
- 55s, 50s, 55s are limited to 40 man rosters. All may suit up and be available to play

GAME PROTESTS regarding rosters must be made and presented to the referee before the kick off so that the accused team, if guilty, has a chance to rectify any roster issue. Other protests must be made before to the referee before he or she leaves the field of play. The referee will consult with the Tournament Committee (the Tournament Director and the Referee Coordinator) and a decision will be made. All decisions made by the Tournament Committee are final and binding. Teams failing to heed to these decisions face automatic disqualification from the tournament effective immediately.

YELLOW CARD violations will be determined by the referee and the length of banishment will depend on the length of the game in which it occurs and communicate to the captains by the referee before the match starts. RED CARD violations where a player is sent off the field for game misconduct may mean disqualification of that player from the rest of the tournament. The Tournament Committee along with the match referee will make the final decision as to the player's availability to compete in subsequent matches.

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** In the open Divisions, any player substituted for may not return to the game unless he has been removed for blood injury. He or she may however play in any subsequent games. Any player suspected of having a concussion will be evaluated by the attending professional medical staff who will determine whether that player can return to that match or play in any other subsequent ones. *Concussion protocols will be enforced for all matches.*

In the Old Boy Divisions, players substituted for may return to play; the frequency and timing of substitutions will be determined by the referee and captains before the match starts.

SCORING AND STANDINGS:

1. Final standings will be determined within a Pool Play before standings are finalized within a Division.
2. Final standings are based on a team's record within a pool and division. If this results in a tie between teams, then the following calculations will determine the placement in the standing
  - a) Point differential in all matches played
  - b) Total tries scored in all matches
  - c) Total converted tries in all matches
  - d) Head to head scores between common opponents
  - e) Coin Toss

For all matches in the advanced elimination rounds, the same tiebreaker system will be employed except for the Finals where two sudden death overtime periods will be played before moving on to a field goal competition starting at the 10-meter line and moving successively away from the posts in five yard increments. Each team may nominate one player, that had participated in the game to do the placekicking. ON AND OFF THE FIELD sportsman like conduct is expected from all participants and fans. Any behavior that contaminates the congenial atmosphere of the event will not be tolerated.

September 2021



Dear Ruggerfest Athletes and Supporters,

On behalf of the City of Aspen, I want to welcome you to our beautiful downtown and pristine playing fields. Our aspen leaves are just starting to turn golden, and we hope the cool mornings and warm days will continue throughout Ruggerfest.

It's hard to believe that it has been 53 years since the first tournament took place in what was then an unkempt field. A lot has changed since then. Our fields are manicured, more teams are competing for the championship, and the variety of food, drink, trails, and nightlife has increased.

As you know, our world is also going through many changes, and our small town is not immune from the challenges of Covid. We kindly ask you to social distance when possible and respect businesses and restaurants that ask you to wear a mask. As a small town we have limited medical facilities and intensive care beds, and we hope that neither injury nor Covid would bring you into our top-notch Aspen Valley Hospital. If you need a Covid test, there are several options around town, including free testing right behind Aspen City Hall.

We are so excited to have you here and our community looks forward to your arrival and friendly competitive spirits every year. Your tournament is part of the fabric of Aspen's history and is a celebrated fall tradition.

Have a great time on and off the field. And please enjoy our restaurants, stores, trails, entertainment, art, and warm, friendly locals.

Much luck to each and every one of you. Let the games begin!

Best wishes,

Torre, Aspen Mayor



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# SOME HISTORY OF RUGGERFEST

The first Aspen Ruggerfest in October of 1968 was billed as a “rugby festival”. When did the term ‘Ruggerfest’ emerge? If you search with Google the ‘etymology of Ruggerfest’, only 288 results show up, far less than the 477,000 results you get if you search ‘etymology of rugby’. None of those 288 results actually pinpoint when and where the term was first used. Ruggerfest is not in the Oxford dictionary.

For many when they hear the word ‘Ruggerfest’ for the first time, the word Oktoberfest pops into mind due to the phonetic resemblance. The first recorded ‘Ruggerfest’, according to Google was played Easter week in 1948 in Saint Louis. Hosted by the Missouri RFU (MRFU), that ‘Ruggerfest’ was held 71 consecutive Springs until this year when the MRFU wrote a letter to teams stating they had to postpone the tourney “due to multiple complications .”

It was Terry Fleener, president of the Eastern Rockies RFU (ERFU) that decided Aspen would make a great place for a ‘fall rugby festival’. He pitched the idea to Steve Sherlock (an Englishman first, ski instructor second, a gentleman always) at an après-ski session in the Red Onion.

Sherlock took on the task of organizing the tournament and pitched the idea to the city council. The council was receptive to the idea of having an event at a time of year when not much was going on in the sleepy little mining town. City council even pitched in a few coins to help Sherlock put the ‘special event’ together.

He proposed the tournament be played on the abandoned field in the middle of town, now known as Wagner Park. Steve organized a posse of volunteers to clean up the field, erect make-shift goal posts and plant some trees along its sides (a grove of which occupies the southwest corner). Previous to the field becoming a rugby pitch, it had been the site of a hotel that burned down and before that it was occupied by cramped miners’ cabins.

For the inaugural event Steve invited his friend, the Lord Mayor of London, to come to Aspen to reign over the proceedings. The Lord Mayor accepted the invitation and brought a chamber pot to award the winners. The champion

KC Blues quickly turned it into a beer trough.

With two weeks to go before the tournament and all the preparations finalized, Sherlock decided that Aspen should enter a team, even though no one in town knew much about the game except him. He impressed most of his players late night from pubs.

They only had time for a few trainings. Before their first game he huddled-up his new team to give them their final instructions “above all else whenever I have the ball, make sure you protect me!”

The tournament caught the fancy of the locals who closed up their shops to have a look to try to understand the violence and mayhem of this new sport. Though Sherlock’s men were beaten badly in their games, they gained the respect of the crowd for their valiant efforts and the Gentlemen of Aspen were born.

Why the Gentlemen? The name stuck after Sherlock explained in a radio interview the difference between soccer and rugby. “Soccer is a gentlemen’s game played by hooligans, but rugby is a hooligan’s game played by gentlemen.”



FIRST RUGGERFEST CHAMPIONSHIPS: KANSAS CITY BLUES

The Aspen Times recorded the first tournament this way:

*“A new athletic endeavor was invented here last weekend. It’s called Rugby, because it’s rugged by the conventional standards of mayhem. The purpose of the game is finding a use for outdated footballs and to put vacant playing fields to constructive use, healthful use. However, the game itself is not necessarily healthful for participants. Aspen player Terry*

*Bowman received a broken rib Saturday but was forced to finish the contest **because the referee swallowed the time-out whistle.**”*

Now more than five decades later, Ruggerfest is a fall fixture. The Gentlemen are proud to host it and many locals are excited to watch it (even if many of them still do not understand the game!).

But about the relationship between Ruggerfest and Oktoberfest.

The first Oktoberfest was held on October 10, 1810 in Munich. More than 150 years later the first Aspen ‘rugby festival’ coincidentally started on the same weekend. Sometime between now and then the name change to ‘Ruggerfest’ happened.

Sometime also the Munich Oktoberfest and the Aspen Ruggerfest moved out of October to the third weekend of September. Aspen’s Ruggerfest move had nothing to do with the change in date for the famous beer fest. It was to increase the chances for good weather.

But maybe this lockstep realignment between the two “fests” is more than chance. After all the record shows that beer and rugby are a good match!



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## GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE PLAYED FOR NATIONAL SIDES

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Richard Scotts

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Bob Howe, Chris Butcher, Crispin Reed, Dave Rollit, David Cooke,  
Lorrie Cokell, Mick Skinner, Paul Jackson

### IRELAND

Jack Clark

### NEW ZEALAND

David Holwell, Warren Johnston

### SCOTLAND

Hugh Hamilton, Hugh McCardy, Richard Cramb

### UNITED STATES

Alec Parker, Bill LeClerc, Bo Buck, Bob LeClerc, Brian Corcoran,  
Brian Geraghty, Brian Hightower, Carlin Isles (U.S. Olympian 2016),  
Chris Morrow, Dan Lyle, Dougald Gilles, Ed Schram, George Conahey,  
Jason Walker, Mark Williams, Mike De Jong, Mike Pekafau,  
Mike Siano, Rob Lumkong, Sam Gonzales, Steve Brinson, Tom Smith,  
Tomas Takau, William Jefferson

### ZIMBABWE

Isaac Mbereko

# ASPEN RUGBY FOUNDATION

The Aspen Rugby Foundation (ARF) was formed in 1995 to support and foster youth development through rugby in the region. The idea came from the Boston Rugby Foundation through Bryan McShane and was guided to fruition in Aspen by Bob Maraziti and Tim Francis; the ARF is positioned to support the various rugby constituencies in the area.

Currently the ARF has a general fund to which all donations are most welcome. A short term goal for the ARF is to establish an endowment fund that supports rugby in the region in perpetuity. The endowment will provide affiliated members and Old Boys of the Aspen Rugby community the opportunity to consider the ARF in their legacy, tax and estate planning. The ARF has 501 C3 status allowing up to fifty per cent of any donation to be tax deductible.

Additionally, the ARF is seeking new Board and National Council Members to assist in the vitally important role of fundraising. Please contact any of the current ARF board members if this type of participation appeals to you as a worthwhile way to give back to the game.

The Aspen Rugby Foundation salutes the GOARFC, the current and former officers, volunteers, coaches, players, sponsors and supporters who have selflessly kept Ruggerfest and the Club at the forefront of local, regional and national rugby competitions over the past half century. Kudos on an amazing achievement. Here's to the next fifty and beyond.

Best regards,

John Silich, Chairman  
Aspen Rugby Foundation - (501 C3)

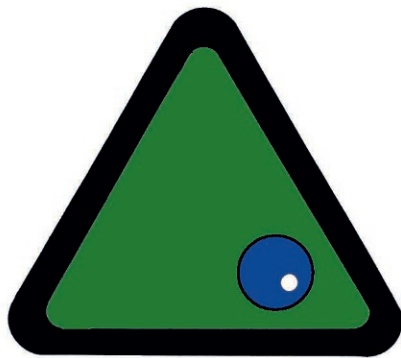
Current Board members: Tim Francis and Tony Grant.

Donations gratefully accepted  
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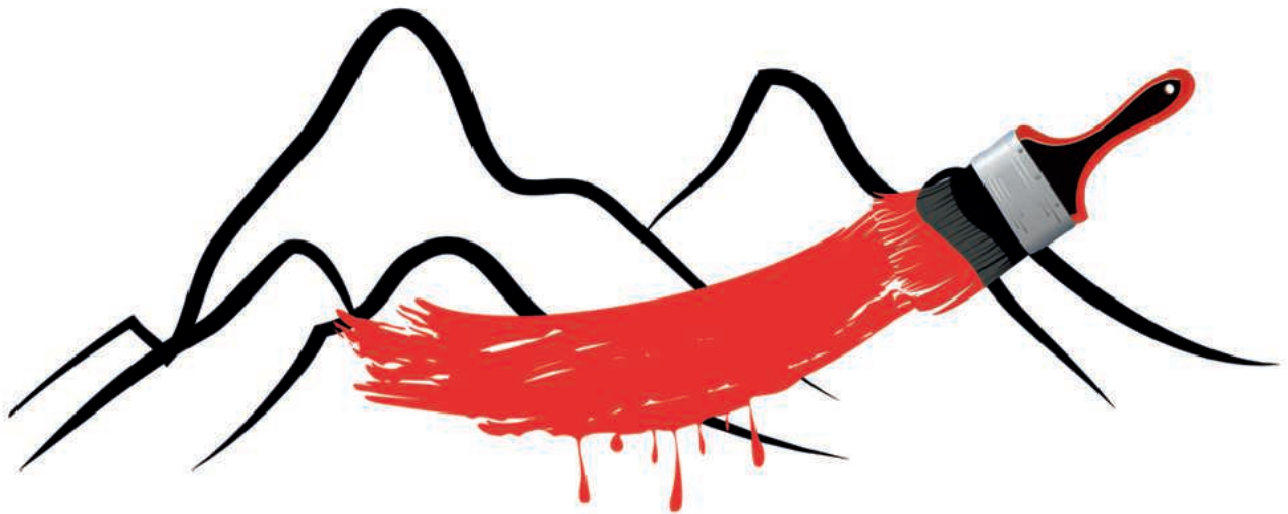


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# RUGBY TERMS FOR DUMMIES

**PITCH:** playing field. In rugby, the pitch is 100yds by 75 yards.

**RUGBY TEAM:** A rugby team is made up of 15 players. There are 8 forwards, who concentrate on winning possession, and 7 backs, whose chief job it is to advance the ball. All players, though, get involved in offense and defense.

**ADVANCING THE BALL:** Players advance the ball by running with it or kicking it. Forward passes are illegal. All players on a rugby team have the opportunity to run or kick the ball.

**TOUCH:** out of bounds

**MARK:** place of infringement

**CALL FOR THE MARK:** Similar to calling for a fair catch in American football. Can only be done behind your own 22 meter line and you must catch the ball and yell "Mark" at the same time.

**LINEOUT:** method to resume play after ball has gone into touch

**SCRUM:** method to restart play after a minor penalty or infraction has occurred

**DROP OUT:** method to restart play after ball has been grounded by defense in their own goal area

**OFF SIDE:** being in front of the ball when your team is the attacking team

**ON SIDE:** being behind the ball when your team is the attacking team

**PENALTY KICK:** method to restart play after a major penalty has occurred. Team awarded the penalty has the option to kick a field goal, kick into touch (and given subsequent throw-in) or decline kick and opt for a scrum. A field goal is worth 3 points.

**KICK FOR TOUCH:** To kick the ball directly out of bounds. During normal play, if the kicking team kicks the ball from behind their own 22 meter line. The opposing team gets the lineout awarded where the ball crossed into touch. If the kicking team is IN FRONT of the 22 meter line, the opposing team is awarded the kick from where the player actually kicked the ball.

**TACKLE:** ball carrier is taken to the deck while being wrapped up by the tackler. Tackler must then immediately roll away and tacklee must immediately play the ball.

**RUCK:** After a tackle, with the ball on the deck, two opposing players meet over the ball. A ruck is then considered formed and players are not allowed to use their hands to push ball back to their side. The off side line becomes the last foot of the last man on each side of the ruck. If the ball does not come out in a timely fashion, the referee will award a scrum to the team that took the ball into the tackle.

**MAUL:** A ball carrier is held up in the tackle (does not go to ground) by an opposing player and one more player from either team joins the fray. A maul is then considered formed and the off side line becomes the last foot of the last man on each side of the maul. Hands are allowed to be used in the maul. If the ball does not come out in a timely fashion, the referee will award a scrum to the team that did not take the ball into the maul.

**GAME LENGTH:** There are two 40 minute halves separated by a 10 minute half time. The referee is the sole timekeeper.

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** 7 substitutions per team. Once substituted, a player cannot retake the field.

**BLOOD BIN:** If a player has a bleeding wound (nose, cut on head, etc) that player may be temporarily substituted until the bleeding stops and that player can retake the field. This is the only exemption to the substitution rule mentioned above.

**YELLOW CARD/RED CARD:** A yellow card is awarded for repeated infractions to the rules. The offending player is sent to the "Sin Bin" for 10 minutes while his team must play a man short. Red Cards are usually awarded for very Foul Play and result in the player being ejected from the game. Red Carded players are also suspended from league play for two or more weeks.

**TRY:** A try is scored by touching the ball down, with pressure and under control, in the opposition goal area. Tries are worth 5 points.

**DROP KICK:** A kick for goal taking during open play by allowing the ball to drop to the deck and then kicking it through the goal posts. Drop kicks are rare and are worth 3 points.

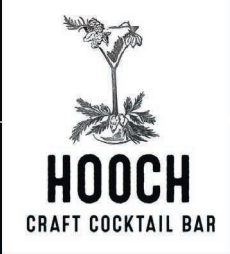

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# RUGBY POSITIONS

One should not confuse the various rugby positions with those on an American football team, though there is a rough similarity in set play (scrums, penalties, line-outs), the flowing nature of rugby and the many variables involved during play, there is a minimum of programmed play-calling like in gridiron football. Players must think and react for themselves. Rugby forwards handle the ball on a regular basis and must be adept at passing and catching, while backs must be prepared to tackle like linebackers and to occasionally ruck and maul to maintain possession. In some respects, a rugby match is like a dynamic chess game with bruises and constant attacking and counter-attacking moves.

## FORWARDS or PACK:

**Front Row:** consists of two props, numbers 1 and 3, and the hooker, number 2. These are the three pillars of the scrum. They are often short and squat. The methods they use to gain control of the opposition in the scrum are kept secret.

The hooker's job is to gain possession of the ball on the put-in with his striking foot, while the props support him.

He will often be the one who throws the ball in at line-outs.

**Second Row:** Numbered 4 and 5, the lock forwards steady the scrummage platform on their own put-in and supply the power when the ball comes in. Usually they are jumpers in line-outs, so they tend to be the tallest and biggest men on the team. Since their heads are wedged in between the thighs of the front row, they will often wear wraps or scrumcaps.

**Back Row:** Flankers, wing forwards or breakaways, 6 and 7, and the number 8 are typically the most active positions on the pitch. Defensively they are always after the ball to cause the opposition to break down, so speed, stamina, and tackling ability are prerequisites. Offensively, they initiate the attacks from the base of the scrums and the end of the line-outs, acting as link support with the back line.

## BACKS:

**Half backs:** The player wearing number 9, must have perfect timing with three other players to have a successful team.

He must work with the hooker when putting the ball in the scrum, the number 8 when taking the ball from the scrum, and finally with the fly-half to whom he passes the ball. Scrum-halves come in all shapes and sizes, but are quick and tenacious. Along with the fly-half he directs the offense.

The other half back is the fly-half or stand-off, number 10. This player must have sure hands, a quick mind, and

keen understanding of the game. This player makes the back-line tick with a mixture of passing, kicking and running.

**Centers:** Numbered 12 and 13, these two players must tackle like linebackers and run like tailbacks. They must be able to take punishment by the defense when tackled, in order to keep the ball available to the back row, (numbers 6,7,8) who come in

support to create second phase possession. Centers must have a high work rate, often charging down field to cover kicks and pressure the opposition.

**Wings:** Numbers 11 and 14. Generally, they are the speed merchants of a team. The objective of moving the ball through the back-line is to shift the ball to them with room to maneuver. Like the centers, they must often field the opposition's kicks with sure hands and be prepared to counter-attack.

**Fullback:** Number 15 is a man who may appear to do little but has one of the most difficult positions on the field. Defensively, he must be a sure tackler for he is the last line of defense. He must also field kicks without error and either boot the ball back or link with the wings to counter attack. Offensively, he will note the weaknesses in the opposition's line and burst into the line to exploit those weaknesses and create an overlap.



# COACH'S REPORT

## 2021

Rugby in Aspen finally got back under way this summer after a 20 month hiatus. Restrictions prevented us from getting started until July but nonetheless we managed to get some quality rugby in. It was an unusually short summer season, consisting of 2 matches against Vail, Cowpie and an u23s 7s tournament in Utah.

The season begun in Steamboat Springs where we were looking to win our first Cowpie trophy since 2017. We won our two pool games against the host side and Waterdogs B. A semi final against Waterdogs A awaited us. We took the Waterdogs to sudden death overtime but the Dogs scored first and we were knocked out of the tournament. It was a solid first outing for us, but ultimately the lack of running in the legs over the previous 20 months told true.

The second to last weekend in July saw us field an under 23s team in Utah and a senior team at home against Vail on the same day, which was a pretty impressive feat from the club. In Utah our under 23s put in some valiant performances against strong competition. It was a big learning experience for our younger lads and one that we will look to improve from. Back home in Aspen, former Aspen High School star running back Nick Ufkes played in his first ever rugby match. We ran out comfortable winners on the day by a 49-14 margin against rivals Vail. Kiwi Conor Rice, also on his Gents debut, had a particularly tidy game in the number 10 jersey. An excellent platform was given to him by our pack. Rex Christensen and Cliff Kindred stood out on an uncomfortably hot day on Wagner Park. The score of the game came in the 70th minute when Remy charged over from a 60 meter line break. This resulted in him hilariously subbing himself off the field due to exhaustion and too many John Daly's on the golf course. Thankfully, he's got much fitter since.

Two weeks later we travelled to Vail to face a much stronger side than the one we previously faced on Wagner. Led by Kyle Fulton's outstanding running lines, we started fast and we were 19-0 up in no time. Vail clawed their way back into the game, aided by some unintelligent play by us, Vail led the match going into the final quarter. In the last play of the game, with the score at 41-40 to Vail, we ran the ball into the Vail

half and won a penalty on the their 10 meter line. Chris Campbell stepped up and knocked over the penalty in dramatic fashion, in front of a taunting Vail crowd, to win the match 43-41. It was a cracking game of rugby union, where a herculean 80 minute effort from our legendary front row of Darren "Barna" Barth, Zach Hendrix and Jeff Barnhall was the difference on that day.

To continue on from our summer season, for the first time in quite a few years the Gents have entered a team in the Rocky Mountain Rugby Division 3 fall season. We play 6 games from the 11th of September through the end of October with the end goal of qualifying for the Division 3 National Championship series. We are really looking forward to testing ourselves against some different opposition. If anyone is looking to watch some fall rugby, we play the Denver Harlequins on the 9th of October on Wagner Park.

Ruggerfest is always the pinnacle of the year for everyone involved in the club. We have been training hard on the ground here in Aspen over the last few weeks and we can't wait for things to kick off on the 23rd. We will be welcoming back some familiar faces to our Ruggerfest team again this year. Look out for MLR star Rod Waters, who returns to us for his third Ruggerfest campaign. Local legend Matt Williams also returns and will be looking to end his horrific run of yellow cards at the prestigious tournament. Rumors are circling around the country about USA Eagle and former Jr Gent Chris Baumann putting on the red and black again this weekend, so watch out for that too. Of course Ruggerfest wouldn't be the same without our boisterous Irish scrum half Danny Hide. Let's hope Danny can bring the form he brought to Ruggerfest 52, both on and off the field.

Before I finish I'd like to give a big shoutout to Jason at the Aspen Sports Bistro who has become the official sponsor of the Gentlemen of Aspen. If you're looking for somewhere to grab food or drinks this weekend head in to the Sports Bistro where you will receive a very warm welcome (the crab cakes and shrimp appetizer are particularly good). Keep an eye out for the new stylish Gents Hawaiian shirts that Jason has just given us this weekend too.

I hope everyone enjoys the weekend and there is some great rugby played.

*Ben Mitchell*

Head Coach - Gentlemen of Aspen R.F.C





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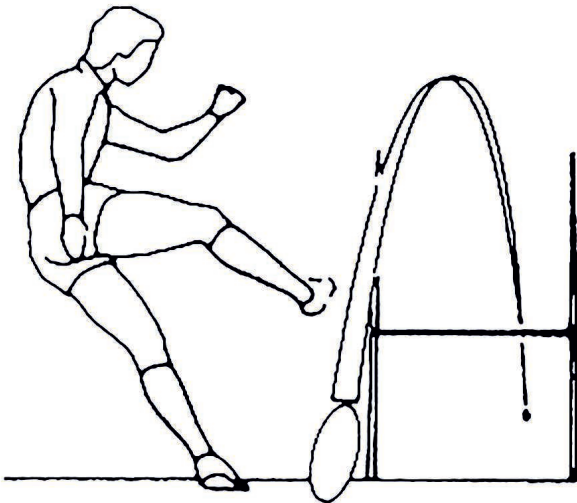
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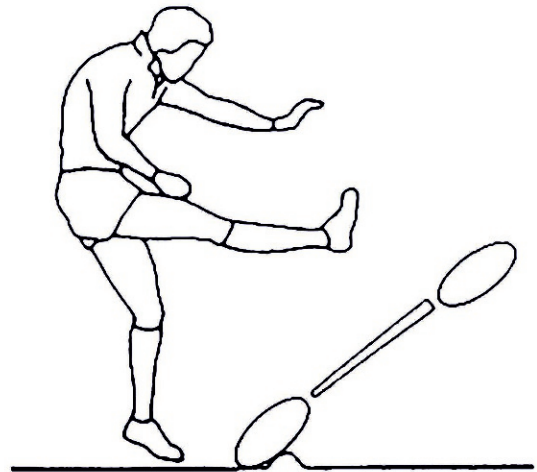
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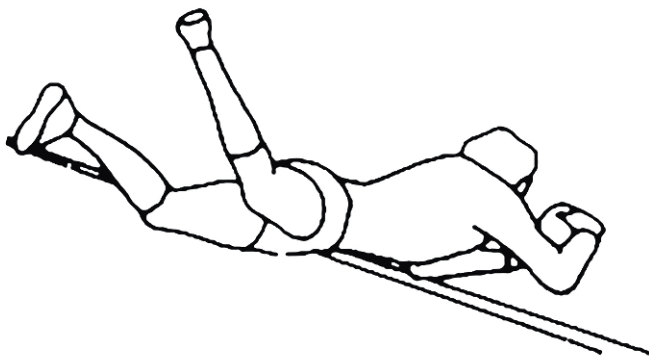
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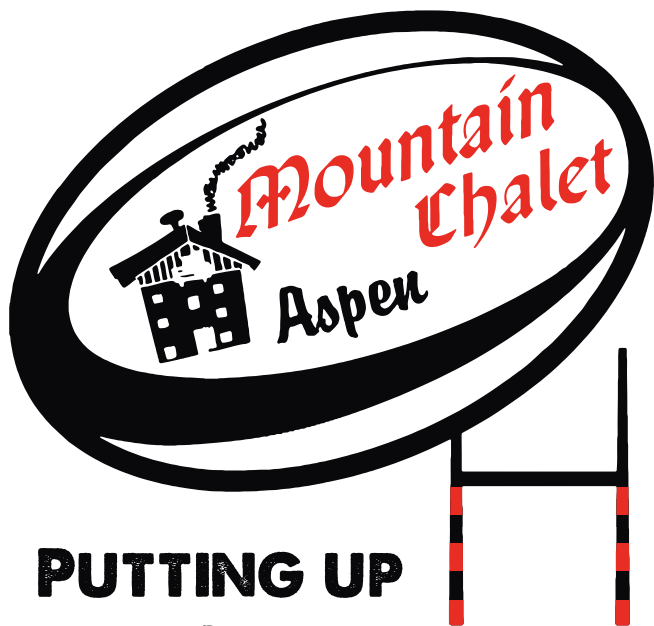
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