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2025
Q3 REVIEW

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CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS










Whānau and friends of Rugby for Life,

Quarter three has been a season of commitment, connection and clarity with a very clear alignment in outcomes to our 3 key pillars - Education, Training & Employment, Youth Leadership Development and Club Sustainability. You will see a clear focus on these pillars in our new report format, with a profile piece for each pillar included from this month.

The Duke of Marlborough Hotel Golf Day was a highlight, raising $25,000 for the Employment, Education and Training programme. We thank Eric Rush for joining us as guest of honour and Mike King for standing with us again. Mike said it perfectly: "Rugby for Life is not the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff.

In our clubs, we've seen how rugby continues to bring people together and create meaningful change; running fundraisers, delivering cultural events and supporting their communites in new and powerful ways. Our Rugby for Life Coordinators continue to be the heart of this work. Their passion and dedication are helping clubs grow stronger every week. Their everyday mahi is creating lasting change.

In quarter three, we've supported 22 individuals into employment or training, raised more than $170,000 through club activity and boosted rugby participation by 8.5 percent. None of this happens without the local people putting in the work your support matters and it shows.

Thank you for being part of this kaupapa.

Ngā mihi nui



Ajit Balsingham
CHAIR OF THE BOARD
RUGBY FOR LIFE

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YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



A Journey Built on **Commitment, Culture, and Connection**

JUNIOR RUGBY - RUAWAI UNDER 11'S AUSSIE TOUR 2025

In July 2024 the Ruawai RFC welcomed the Beecroft Barbarians back to Ruawai for the first time since Covid paused a 40 year exchange. Their parting words were an invitation to visit them in Sydney. In November we began fundraising to take our 2025 U11 team across the ditch, aiming for around $80,000. A key rule was that the kids would do the mahi. They threw tyres on silage stacks, loaded firewood, prepped hangi packs and stacked hay. We wanted them to understand the effort behind opportunities like this.

Fundraising had its challenges, but with a committed group of parents we got there. By the end of August we had covered flights, accommodation, tour apparel, catering and activities. We were ready. The trip was filled with connection, rugby and shared experiences. From the family day and haka under the sprinklers, to game day and the Beecroft 7s tournament, our kids represented Ruawai with pride. They made friends, built confidence and learned the value of collective effort.

To everyone who supported our raffles, hangi, auctions or donated in any way, our Ruawai JMB whānau are sincerely grateful.

"Rugby connected us, but the lessons learned will carry them far beyond the field."

– Paddy Jackson Ruawai RFL Coordinator



THE EXPERIENCE

Beecroft hosted the Ruawai U11s for a week of games, activities, and cultural exchange, uniting players and families through rugby.

THE GAME

Beecroft took home the trophy, but Ruawai won in spirit, every player returned home proud and inspired.

THE IMPACT

The tour strengthened international ties, built confidence and teamwork among young players, and honoured the legacy of a 40-year partnership.

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EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING & EDUCATION SNAPSHOT

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Rugby for Life Employment, Education & Training (E, T&E) Programme empowers young people and individuals by creating pathways that expand opportunity and lift people out of long-term unemployment. By partnering with rugby clubs, local businesses, and supportive employers such as Northland Waste and T8 Traffic Management, the programme fosters skill development, confidence and long-term professional growth within Northland communities.



TESTIMONIAL

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for your help and mentorship thus far. Regardless of the outcome, I would have never put myself out there for this job, so I just want to say how appreciative I am."

Anon. Programme Participant

Keen to offer apprenticeships or work-experience?
Email matthew.d@rugbyforlife.org.nz

KEY OUTCOMES - Q3 2025



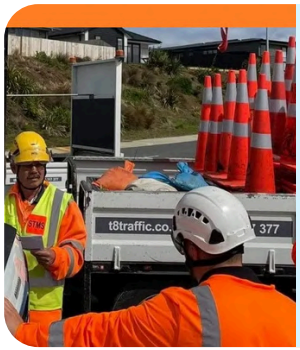
1. OVERALL PROGRAMME SUCCESS

Since launching in May, the E, T&E Programme has supported 22 participants, with 12 now in employment across diverse industries, and 2 others moving into full-time study to build the skills needed for long-term career opportunities.



2. PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHLAND WASTE

Northland Waste, a long-standing RFL partner, has employed 3 participants, offering stable employment and opportunities for upskilling. We have many more participants working through the process with Northland Waste.



3. PARTNERSHIP WITH T8 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

T8, a valued Rugby for Life supporter and Northland rugby sponsor, has provided employment opportunities for 3 participants, reinforcing the impact of local business partnership.



4. ONGOING SOCIAL IMPACT

Each placement represents more than a job; it's a life-changing step that builds confidence & strengthens families. It gives people the chance to stand tall, support their whānau, and contribute positively to their communities.

DOUG KOTUHI SURF FOUNDATION





Southern United Football Club, Tokoroa

The SURF Foundation was established in 2024 by the Southern United Rugby Football Club (SURF) committee, with support and coordination from Doug, our local Rugby for Life coordinator. Doug's dedication has given the club the capacity, time and focus to turn an idea into something that's already making a real difference.

The purpose of the foundation is simple to have funds set aside to support players, whānau and local causes when they need it most. Whether it's koha for tangi, financial help for injured players, or a response to wider community needs, the SURF Foundation has become a trusted shoulder for many to lean on. Thanks to generous jersey donations from Dynasty, a club auction raised close to $15,000. That money is already being put to work. Four players who experienced season-ending injuries received $500 each to help during their first week on ACC easing stress and showing that the club stands by them.

The club's fundraising has also supported organisations with strong connections to SURF such as:
· Women's Refuge, through donated clothing and essential items
· Tokoroa Community Foodbank, via food drop-offs at home games
· Tokoroa Hospice, raising $1,119 through a gold coin collection

For SURF, this is about building something bigger than rugby. The focus is on whānau, culture and connection. As the club looks to the future, it is clear that the SURF Foundation is not just about responding to need, it's about reshaping what a rugby club stands for in the heart of Tokoroa.
The foundation's story is just beginning, and already, its impact is being felt far beyond the sideline.

THE FOUNDATION'S STORY IS JUST BEGINNING AND ALREADY, ITS IMPACT IS BEING FELT FAR BEYOND THE SIDELINE

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CLUB IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS





HIKURANGI

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
- U10s fundraised trip to NZ Junior Rugby Festival
- Strong whānau and community support for tamariki
- 9 U16 wahine proudly represented Northland



OHAEAWAI

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION
- Hosted Black Ferns and All Blacks viewing night
- Launched first Social Club evening for wider whānau
- Community touch games planned with future events



EASTERN KAIWAKA

FUNDRAISING
Secured $30K Bunnings Grant for facility upgrades including BBQ area

COMMUNITY
Hosted successful Club Rally Day with 150+ tamariki





SOUTHERN

TEAM SUPPORT
10-seater van supports teams and prize giving as a courtesy car

COMMUNITY
- Shared van use with local school and rangatahi group
- Donated playground being rebuilt as new kids' area



KAEO

RUGBY FINALS
- Senior team won Bay Shield Rugby
- Whangaroa Marlins won TRL Championship

COMMUNITY
Club hosts Friday dementia support class - Matawarere Alzheimer's



8.5% overall increase in participation across RFL Clubs

Over $170,000 RAISED by Clubs over the past 3 months

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Thank You TO OUR SPONSORS, PARTNERS, FUNDERS, AND SUPPORTERS

Together, we keep building.

This quarter has shown the power of community-led action. From tamariki leading their own fundraising, to coordinators unlocking new opportunities, to clubs hosting cultural events and creating safe, inclusive spaces - every win has been earned through collective mahi led by our dedicated RFL coordinators.

Beyond the game, our communities are rallying. Club nights with shared meals, Pink Ribbon and other charity fundraisers, Matariki celebrations, and cultural wānanga are helping connect players back to their whenua.

From touch and netball to darts, Waka Ama, and annual pig and fish hunts - clubs are becoming true community hubs.To our funders, supporters and partners, thank you for your continued belief. Your contribution helps clubs do more than just play rugby. It helps develop confident young people, connected whānau and stronger communities. We're proud of what's been achieved so far, and excited for what's ahead.

Ngā mihi nui,
The Rugby for Life Team

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SCAN TO SUPPORT

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