

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023



 PACIFIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

2023

CHAMPIONS

INTERNATIONAL  
RUGBY  
LEAGUE 

## **MISSION**

Creating the environment, through a commercially successful international calendar of events, that fosters the global growth of the game, connecting people across all continents and cultures with our exciting sport.

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# FROM THE CHAIR



HON. TROY GRANT

On behalf of the Board of International Rugby League (IRL), I am pleased to present the annual report for 2023.

## FROM THE CHAIR HON. TROY GRANT

When rugby league historians look back on 2023, it will be considered the year in which the international game began on a path towards fulfilling the potential so many of us believed it could.

After the success of the World Cup in England in 2022, International Rugby League was faced with one of its greatest challenges following the decision of France 2025 to withdraw as hosts of the next tournament.

Despite the best efforts of the IRL and the France 2025 organising committee to ensure the nation which founded the second oldest sporting World Cup in 1954 again hosted the tournament, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis in Europe and a blow out in costs for the 2024 Olympic Games proved too much for the French Government.

Yet the international game is now in a stronger position because of the difficult - but necessary - decisions that were made at the Singapore meeting of the IRL Board in late July.

There were more sanctioned international matches in 2023 than any year outside of a World Cup year - and more nations playing.

Significantly, 53 of the 64 men's, women's and wheelchair fixtures were played after the decisions from the Singapore Board meeting were announced.

These were headlined by the inaugural Pacific Championships in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, and England's three match series against Tonga.

However, they also included fixtures across Europe, Africa and the Americas, as Albania and North Macedonia men, and Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria and Uganda women, made their international debuts.

The decision to shift the next World Cup in the Southern Hemisphere from 2025 to 2026 and reduce the number of teams in the men's finals to 10 was made with the aim of placing greater emphasis on regional fixtures and nations playing regularly.

South Africa and Kenya men's two-match series and Jamaica hosting USA men and a women's tri-series with Canada and USA were great examples of the type of activity we expect to see more of in coming years.



Above: Samoa and Tonga players come together after their match  
Below: Norway v Greece Action 2023



Below: Jamaica vs Canada Women during Americas Womens Tri Series





The introduction of a long-awaited international calendar is something I had believed was needed since becoming IRL Chair in 2020 and I am immensely pleased that it is now a reality.

As a result, the IRL and nations are finally able to plan and commercialise major events, such as the return of The Ashes in 2025, with England travelling to Australia, and the revival of Kiwi and Kangaroo tours in 2027 and 2028.

The decision to stage separate men's, women's and wheelchair World Cups after RWLC2026 was intended to make it more feasible for nations to host a tournament.

This has already been vindicated by the tender process for the women's World Cup in 2028, wheelchair World Cup in 2029 and men's World Cup in 2030, with the IRL receiving 22 EOIs from 11 nations interested in hosting one or more.

With the introduction of the World Series in 2025, every sanctioned international match now has added weight, and this will ensure more competitive fixtures.

The fact that all three World Cup champions, Australia's Kangaroos and Jillaroos and England Wheelchair team, were beaten during an eight-day period from 28 October to 5 November shows how evenly matched the top nations are.

Congratulations to the Kiwis, who won the inaugural Pacific Cup final, defeating the Kangaroos by a record 30-0 margin – Australia's biggest loss since their first international fixture in 1908 against New Zealand.

The Pacific Bowl final was won by the Papua New Guinea Kumuls, who defeated the Fiji Bati before a passionate

home crowd in Port Moresby, which hosted four consecutive weeks of international action.

In the women's Pacific Championship matches, the Kiwi Ferns and Jillaroos won one match apiece, while Samoa and Fiji returned to international action against each other after a hiatus of three and four years respectively.

PNG Orchids hosted Cook Islands and Tonga also played the Kiwi Ferns.

Meanwhile, history was created in the Northern Hemisphere when Tonga became the first Pacific nation to tour England for a series and while the home side ultimately won 3-0, each match was keenly contested.

History was also made when Kiwis captain James Fisher Harris, Kiwi Ferns co-captain Georgia Hale and French wheelchair star Jeremy Bourson were announced as Golden Boot winners. Fisher-Harris became the first front-rower to win the award since its introduction in 1984, Hale was the first forward to win the women's Golden Boot and Bourson is the first Frenchman crowned international player of the year in any discipline.



**Above:** IRL Chair Troy Grant and 2000 Golden Boot winner Brad Fittler with James Fisher-Harris  
**Left:** Jeremy Bourson receives the wheelchair Golden Boot from 2022 winner Seb Bechara  
**Right:** Georgia Hale is the first forward to win the women's IRL Golden Boot



Tamika Upton claims a Try for the Jillaroos against Kiwi Ferns

None of what has been achieved in 2023 would be possible without the volunteers who are responsible for much of the game's international content, and as my time as IRL Chair nears an end I pay tribute to these tireless rugby league foot soldiers.

In the past 12 months, Deputy Chair Luc Lacoste has been forced to stand down due to health related issues and I would like to thank Luc for his service and contribution to the international game.

The IRL Board has recently had to make some tough calls that have not been universally popular, but our job is to make the right decisions for the international game and we believe that we are doing that.

With consultation, the additional frameworks of what we build in relation to those decisions will, I believe, advantage all members of the international rugby league community.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their support and, in particular, Deputy Chair Simon Johnson, who is the RFL Chair, and ARLC Chair Peter V'landys.

International rugby league is still a long way from where it can be, but we are now back on the front foot and moving in the right direction to achieve the potential so many of us believe it possesses.





## MANAGEMENT REPORT

**DANNY KAZANDJIAN**

SECRETARY GENERAL

In the greatest of sporting traditions, 2023 was a game of two very different halves: the first, focusing on the preparations for and then cancellation of the French world cup; the second, a radical redesign of the organisation's short- and long-term future. The Chair has explained the reasons for the cancellation of France 2025, which had been launched by the French prime minister in Paris in 2022, but I would like to add my own acknowledgement of the tireless efforts of the then French Federation president Luc Lacoste. That Luc had to step down from all his duties due to ill health is stark testimony to how demanding the project had been. I hope it will lead to a French world cup in the future, with the full support of the state, and there is no reason to believe the France 2025 project has not made that a more likely possibility.

Having been dealing with risk management for a large portion of the time since I took over as secretary general in November 2020, May's France 2025 news was yet another challenge the organisation had to cope with; but the way IRL used a crisis as a means for sober reflection, then revitalisation, was welcome. The results of three days of meetings held in Singapore were, frankly, dramatic, headlined by the confirmation of a multi-year calendar and, significantly, a new approach to the exploitation – commercial and strategic – of IRL's principal asset, the suite of three flagship world cups.

It was a clear punctuation point in IRL's 75-year history, to consider what the organisation's purpose is, and how to achieve it. The international federation's fundamental role is to grow the sport globally, and to do that IRL needs revenue; so, creating revenue, by using international football as a means to the end, rather than being the end in and of itself, was our target. The result was the reformatted world cups, the hosting offer of multiple world cups until 2030 to provide certainty, and a change to the world cup business model. Whereas,

historically, local organising committees of world cups had kept all the commercial rights and paid IRL a fee, from now IRL will retain global broadcast and sponsorship rights, effectively tripling its revenue streams. I expect the results to be significant, and increased revenue will mean more direct and indirect investment in the membership, allowing them to grow and further IRL's fundamental mission. The caveat to that is the need to place the world cups until 2030 – a mark IRL is attempting to achieve in 2024.

The financial benefits of our new strategy will not materialise overnight, and until then management has been husbanding the organisation's finances. While budgetary expectations were exceeded, in that the business's expenses were less than the initial forecast, the prudence we have adopted must be maintained as we continue to navigate the fall out from France 2025 and an additional year's gap until the next world cup. Our members have been very understanding and supportive, and we maintain an open and transparent communication with them. It is worth noting that the 'high capacity members' (those five with a turnover of more than £1 million) once again forewent any grant, which is a sign of the pervasive solidarity.

Back on the pitch, the year saw another welcome benchmark in that, for the first time since 2019, all IRL members with championships were able to play them unimpeded by the pandemic. The general assembly grew again in 2023, with Slovakia and North Macedonia admitted as observer members, while the Kenyan federation continued its upward trajectory, with its elevation to affiliate membership just a year after being admitted into the federation. They successfully hosted the French national team and helped to strengthen rugby league's international relations with the French state as a result.

IRL and the confederations continue to work closely with the membership to ensure good governance is applied. One key decision made in the year was the formal link between submission of the Annual Membership Audit and the retention of membership. Should an Observer Member fail to submit AMA for three consecutive years it will be recommended for expulsion from the organisation. This is intended to ensure that the membership is active and a true reflection of global rugby league. A number of members are facing important compliance deadlines in AMA 2023, which will be evaluated in February 2024 and may result in changes to the membership register next year.

As the sport grows, so does IRL's responsibility to protect players globally and we have been working closely with the professional leagues to monitor the impact of head injuries, creating a brain health advisory group towards the end of the year to ensure the topic has a joined up approach and global context.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to the many volunteers who sit on IRL's expert advisory groups and manage the independent judiciary. Both services enhance IRL's credentials as an international federation and without them we would be poorer, and less agile and effective. In addition, the IRL management team continues to perform well in its dual support of our hard-working Board and members, and I thank them for their support and professionalism throughout the year.

The next 12 months will be consequential ones for IRL. I look forward to reporting the first fruits of the strategy adopted in 2023 in a year's time.



## International Calendar

### 'AT A GLANCE'

- International Rugby League has agreed an International Calendar to 2030.
- The return of the Ashes, with England Men and Women to tour Australia in 2025.
- Kangaroo and Kiwi tours to resume.
- International tours for other nations are back on the agenda.
- Dedicated Northern Hemisphere and Southern Hemisphere Tri-Nations and Four Nations tournaments.
- Greater emphasis on Regional Championships and World Cup qualifying process, including a new World Series to help nations develop.
- Men's and Women's games to grow under new International Calendar.
- Change to World Cups cycle, with the next World Cup for Men's, Women's and Wheelchair teams to be staged in 2026.



Tonga's Junior Tupou offloads under pressure from England's Tom Johnstone - Huddersfield



# International Calendar

AN IRL BOARD MEETING IN SINGAPORE IN JULY 2023 AGREED TO A NEW CALENDAR FROM 2023 TO 2030 AIMED AT CAPITALISING ON THE GROWTH OF THE INTERNATIONAL GAME.

A historic three-match Tonga series against England and the inaugural Pacific Championships in the Southern Hemisphere, both in autumn 2023, signalled the start of an exciting new era. The Tonga series will mark the first ever international series between Tonga and England and the first time the two nations have met since 2017's memorable Rugby League World Cup Semi-Final in Auckland in which England closed out in slim fashion, 20-18. There will also be more future international tours, with the return of the Ashes in 2025 when England Men's and Women's teams travel to Australia. The Kiwis and Kangaroos will head north to play England in 2027 and 2028 respectively.

## IRL Rugby League World Cups

The next IRL Rugby League World Cup for Men's, Women's and Wheelchair teams has been moved to 2026 and will be staged in the Southern Hemisphere after France's withdrawal as hosts for the scheduled 2025 tournament. In addition, a stand-alone Women's World Cup will be staged in 2028, with the Wheelchair World Cup to be held in 2029 and the next Men's World Cup, after RLWC2026, to be held in 2030.

The IRL has received 22 expressions of interest from 11 nations interested in hosting one or more of the three tournaments, with the 2028 Women's World Cup proving the most popular.

## Rugby League World Cup Qualifications

The Regional Championships and World Cup qualifying tournaments for the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Middle East Africa will take on greater emphasis, while a new World Series format is also being developed. The inaugural men's World Series in 2025 will feature Cook Islands, as the sole Asia-Pacific nation yet to qualify for RLWC2026, and the winners of the 2024 European, Middle East Africa and Americas Championships. At stake will be the remaining two men's berths at the 2026 World Cup, which will feature 10 teams.

For the first time, there will be a qualifying process for the Women's World Cup, with regional tournaments to be held in 2024. The 2026 IRL Women's Rugby League World Cup, which will be played alongside the men's and wheelchair tournaments before it is staged as a standalone event in 2028, will feature eight teams comprising of:

- Four Pacific nations
- Three European nations
- Winner of inaugural IRL World Series in 2025.

With Australia, New Zealand, England and Papua New Guinea having already qualified as semi-finalists at last year's World Cup in England, four berths remain for RLWC2026.



**Right:** Totally Wicked Stadium, St Helens – venue for the first match of the 2023 England v Tonga autumn international



**Right:** England's Jack Welsby looks for support – England v Tonga, Leeds, November 2023  
**Below:** Tongan players perform the Sipi Tau prior to the third match against England at Headingley



**Above:** Cook Islands star playmaker Chantay Kiria-Ratu



IRL Chair Troy Grant said: "It is no secret that the Achilles heel for international rugby league for far too long has been the absence of an International Calendar.

"The ad hoc nature of tournaments and international matches, and the absence of any clarity for nations, players and fans to plan their seasons, is over.

"The International Calendar respects player workloads and importantly also reduces the impact on professional clubs.

"The standards have improved dramatically in recent years regarding player welfare and player workload issues, and they were key considerations in the calendar design.

"After we secure the future of international rugby league, our calendar will help rejuvenate and allow the game to grow globally, recognising the elite in our game and providing pathways for development of the game across all levels.

"I saw first-hand during RLWC2021 in England last year how much it means for players in each of our three disciplines to be able to represent their country of birth or heritage, put on that jersey and play with such pride for their family and nations.

"I couldn't be happier that we have finally arrived with our much-anticipated calendar. It's been frustrating and I've shared the frustrations of fans, our nations, our clubs and the game broadly that we have failed to realise the potential the international game offers.

"Our calendar will allow us firstly to secure the future of international rugby league, with quality and consistent matches that are competitive, build on traditional rivalries and showcase the greatest game on earth.



**Above:** England winger Tom Johnstone about to touch down against Tonga at St Helens, October 2023



**Left:** Samoa



**Left:** Cameron Murray scores Try for Australia in the 2023 Pacific Championships



**Left:** Tonga's Tyson Frizell celebrates his try against England at St Helens, October 2023



Kiwi Ferns celebrations

"The Ashes return, with England Men's and Women's teams to tour Australia in 2025, while international tours are back, with Tonga's series against England an historic start to the new era.

"We have had some well-known legacy issues and world impacting events that have disrupted and destabilised our best efforts but its onwards and upwards from here.

"I want to sincerely thank the Chairs of the Australian Rugby League Commission, England's Rugby Football League, the Asia-Pacific and European confederations, and the New Zealand Rugby League for their contributions and coming together for the good of the game to make our calendar a reality."



# IRL World Rankings

England has regained third place in the men's IRL World Rankings, while Netherlands and Ukraine were rewarded for successful international campaigns and the growth of the women's game has been highlighted by six new teams earning a ranking for the first time.

A year after their shock World Cup exit at the hands of Toa Samoa, Shaun Wane's England team has leapfrogged the Pacific nation following a 3-0 series defeat of Tonga to sit behind Australia and New Zealand. Samoa, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, France and Lebanon, who have swapped places, are next, with Cook Islands rounding out the top 10.

However, Netherlands are closing in after climbing six places from 18th to 12th in the December 2023 rankings on the back of five successive wins in September and October against Norway, Albania, Serbia, Germany and Czech Republic. Ukraine are among the biggest climbers, rising from 28th to 20th after back-to-back wins against Greece, who played at last year's World Cup, in October. Philippines have risen from 33rd to 23rd, while Malta (14th) and Poland (24th) each climbed five spots and USA are up from 37th to 33rd place.

In the women's IRL World Rankings, Tonga and the USA have made the most significant movement, while Papua New Guinea has leapfrogged France into fourth place. Tonga is in 13th position, up from 16th spot, which is now filled by the USA, who have risen two places. Netherlands are 18th after beating Greece in their recent international debut, while Kenya, Nigeria, Jamaica, Ghana and Uganda also feature in the women's rankings for the first time – taking the number of participating nations to 28. There has been almost as many sanctioned international matches involving women's teams in the past two years as there was in the previous seven years.

In the wheelchair IRL World Rankings, England retained No.1 spot from France after last year's World Cup finalists enjoyed a win apiece in their recent two match series. IRL Chair Troy Grant said the rankings reflected the volume of internationals activity in 2023, with 63 sanctioned international matches being an unprecedented number outside a World Cup year.

"In a nine-day period alone we had 23 sanctioned international matches, which was wonderful to see," Grant said. "We have the Pacific Championships up and running in the Southern Hemisphere, with Papua New Guinea as winners of the Pacific Bowl and New Zealand as winners of the Pacific Cup. "We also had an historic tour by Tonga to England in the Northern Hemisphere, which was well won by England. "The Kiwi Ferns upset the Jillaroos for the first since 2016, as well, and in the women's game, we had 18 senior matches this year compared to 12 non-Rugby League World Cup matches in 2022.

"That is a 50 per cent increase, which demonstrates the growth of the women's game, with women's matches in all four IRL regions. "We had the first ever women's games in Africa, for which Nigeria and Ghana will be credited in our sports annals and is a wonderful step forward, and in the women's Americas Championships Canada enjoyed a convincing victory. "The on-field activity is what it is all about, ultimately and I have every confidence that the on-field content will only continue to grow, as will the competitiveness and status of international rugby league."

The IRL World Rankings are determined by the following criteria:

- Teams are awarded ranking points each time they play a sanctioned international fixture.
- Result and margin: The bigger the win, the more points the winning team receives and the fewer points are awarded to the loser.
- Strength of opponent: The higher the ranking of the opponent the greater the weighting of the result.
- Importance of the match: Games in official competition are weighted higher than bi-lateral arranged games. Rugby League World Cup games carry the greatest weighting.
- More recent games are weighted higher than older games and only games since the 2017 World Cup are considered.
- The rankings reward teams who are active and win games.

## Men

The Kangaroos have retained No.1 spot in the IRL World Rankings, despite suffering a record 30-0 loss to the Kiwis in the final of the Pacific Cup. Australia rose to the top spot after winning last year's World Cup and the Mal Meninga-coached Kangaroos beat Toa Samoa in Townsville and New Zealand in Melbourne but suffered the biggest loss in 115 years in the final in Hamilton.

The Kiwis remain second, ahead of England, who are now No.3 on the back of a 3-0 series win against Tonga and Samoa suffering a 50-0 loss to Michael Maguire's record-breaking New Zealand team and a 38-12 defeat by Australia in the Pacific Championships.

Cook Islands have climbed into the top 10 at the expense of Serbia, who rose from 15<sup>th</sup> mid-year but are now 11<sup>th</sup> after heavy losses to France and Netherlands.

The Dutch have risen from 18<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> spot after winning all five of their matches in September and October, while Serbia have climbed eight spots to 20<sup>th</sup> following a 2-0 series triumph against Greece, who played in last year's World Cup.

Ukrainian Federation of Rugby League president Artur Martyrosian hailed the feats of his players in continuing to keep their nation's World Cup hopes alive at a time when many of them are affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"It is now very hard times for Ukraine, but it makes us stronger," Martyrosian said. "We succeeded this year to organise, together with the European Rugby League and Greek Rugby League, a tournament in Athens and we won it. "For us, it's a big decision because we twice won against a Greece team which included seven Australian players with an experienced Australian coach, which participated in the last World Cup. "At that time our team was composed only from Ukrainian players, and we have not had a 13-a-side domestic competition for two years because of the war. "Our plans are ambitious and with the help of Ukrainian heritage players, and English coach Kevin Deighton and Australian coach Dan Beardshaw, we would like to win the European Under19s Championship in 2024 and win RLWCQ2026 for participating in the World Series and World Cup."



**Women**

The Jillaroos are again No.1 after splitting their two matches against the Kiwi Ferns, with one win apiece, while the Orchids rise to fourth spot completes a top four of the semi-finalists from last year's World Cup, who have qualified for RLWC2026.

Tonga has climbed three places to 13th spot after their 28-10 defeat by New Zealand – a respectable loss against a highly rated opponent. The United States are the next biggest movers, up to 16th place after playing Jamaica and Canada.

The USA, Canada, Jamaica and Brazil will play next year in Florida for a place in the 2025 World Series, with the seventh-ranked Ravens – as the highest ranked team – expected to meet Jamaica, the lowest ranked nation, and Brazil and the Hawks to play. The two winners will play in a final to determine the Americas team for the 2025 Series, which will decide the final World Cup spot.

USA Hawks women's coach Ady Cooney believes it is just the beginning of an upward trajectory for the game in the United States. "If we can get some funding into the women's game and we can see them playing on a more regular basis then naturally we should see improvements in scorelines and to close that gap with other nations," Cooney said.

"We are very ambitious, and our eyes are firmly set on the qualifying process for the next World Cup cycle and beyond that. I don't think we are too far behind the Canadians after our games in Jamaica. "I think, particularly in the game against Jamaica, we executed our game very well and showed glimpses of where we can be. "If we can get several Test matches in place to give them something to work to and get some funding behind us there is nothing stopping us knocking on that door and getting to the top 10 sooner rather than later."

**Wheelchair**

England have retained top spot for the first time in back-to-back years after winning last year's epic World Cup final at Manchester Arena and then overcoming a 43-34 loss to France in Leeds to triumph 34-18 in Marseilles. It was just the second time England have won in France, a feat only previously achieved in 2019.

England coach Tom Coyd said the No.1 ranking was the result of a commitment to sustained success after a 10-year project of talent development and domestic growth since 2013.

"A drawn series versus France exemplifies how competitive the two countries are, and it will require us to continue to perform at the highest level to retain the top spot," Coyd said. "To achieve the second ever victory on French soil with a comparatively much younger team versus France, we are well poised to grow towards the 2026 World Cup."

# Top 10 World Rankings

	<b>MENS</b>	<b>WOMENS</b>	<b>WHEELCHAIR</b>
1	 Australia	 Australia	 England
2	 New Zealand	 New Zealand	 France
3	 England	 England	 Wales
4	 Samoa	 Papua New Guinea	 Australia
5	 Tonga	 France	 Ireland
6	 Papua New Guinea	 Cook Islands	 Scotland
7	 Fiji	 Canada	 Spain
8	 France	 Wales	 USA
9	 Lebanon	 Ireland	 Italy
10	 Cook Islands	 Greece	

You can find the full rankings at [intrl.sport/world-rankings/](https://intrl.sport/world-rankings/)





# Complete World Rankings Overview

## MENS

1	AUSTRALIA	40	COLOMBIA
2	NEW ZEALAND	41	EL SALVADOR
3	ENGLAND	42	NORTH MACEDONIA
4	SAMOA	43	MOROCCO
5	TONGA	44	SWEDEN
6	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	45	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
7	FIJI	46	CANADA
8	FRANCE	47	NIUE
9	LEBANON	48	SOLOMON ISLANDS
10	COOK ISLANDS	49	BELGIUM
11	SERBIA	50	HUNGARY
12	NETHERLANDS	51	VANUATU
13	ITALY	52	ARGENTINA
14	MALTA	53	DENMARK
15	GREECE	54	LATVIA
16	IRELAND	55	ESTONIA
17	WALES		
18	JAMAICA		
19	SCOTLAND		
20	UKRAINE		
21	CZECHIA		
22	GERMANY		
23	PHILIPPINES		
24	POLAND		
25	SOUTH AFRICA		
26	CHILE		
27	KENYA		
28	NORWAY		
29	NIGERIA		
30	GHANA		
31	BRAZIL		
32	TURKEY		
33	USA		
34	BULGARIA		
35	CAMEROON		
36	MONTENEGRO		
37	SPAIN		
38	JAPAN		
39	ALBANIA		

## WOMEN

1	AUSTRALIA
2	NEW ZEALAND
3	ENGLAND
4	PAPUA NEW GUINEA
5	FRANCE
6	COOK ISLANDS
7	CANADA
8	WALES
9	IRELAND
10	GREECE
11	BRAZIL
12	SERBIA
13	TONGA
14	PHILIPPINES
15	ITALY
16	USA
17	TURKEY
18	NETHERLANDS
19	MALTA
20	SAMOA
21	FIJI
22	JAMAICA
23	NIGERIA
24	KENYA
25	GHANA
26	UGANDA
27	LEBANON
28	ARGENTINA

## WHEELCHAIR

1	ENGLAND
2	FRANCE
3	WALES
4	AUSTRALIA
5	IRELAND
6	SCOTLAND
7	SPAIN
8	USA
9	ITALY

**Below:**  
England remain the No.1 wheelchair team after a dramatic series against France.



**Right:** USA women have ambitions of qualifying for the 2026 World Cup



**Right:** Tonga are the biggest mover in the 2023 women's rankings (NRL Photos)



## INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE (IRL) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board has 11 Directors comprising:

- Three independent Directors nominated by the Board;
- One Director nominated by the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) and one Director nominated by the Rugby Football league (RFL), as the National Federations which operate the Major Professional Leagues;
- Three Directors nominated by the European Rugby League (ERL), with one nominated by the RFL, this person being the RFL nominee to the ERL board;
- Three Directors nominated by the Asia Pacific Rugby League Confederation (APRL), with one representing the ARLC and one nominated by New Zealand Rugby League (NZRL), these persons being the ARLC and the NZRL nominees respectively to the APRLC Board;



**HON. TROY GRANT**  
Chair  
(Independent)



**SIMON JOHNSON**  
Deputy Chair  
(RFL)



**ANDREW ABDO**  
Director  
(APRL)



**DEAN ANDREW**  
Director  
(ERL)



**GREG BARCLAY**  
Independent Director



**REON EDWARDS**  
Nominated Board Observer  
(NZRL)



**RHODRI JONES**  
Director  
(ERL)



**BRIAN JULIFF**  
Director  
(ERL)



**GREG PETERS**  
Director  
(NZRL)



**SANDIS TSAKA**  
Director  
(APRL)



**PETER V'LANDYS AM**  
Director  
(ARLC)



**EMMA YOUNG**  
Independent Director



## INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE (IRL) SUBCOMMITTEES

**Effective governance and policy making is augmented by an appropriate subcommittee structure, with delegated responsibility to competent bodies, all of which are regulated by unique terms of reference and ultimately answerable to the Board of Directors, to whom they make recommendations and advise.**

IRL committees include and are led by members of the IRL Board. Advisory groups are populated by a diverse blend of independent experts, IRL staff and membership personnel.

### AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Chair: Reon Edwards (IRL)  
Emma Young (IRL)  
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)  
Mark Martin (IRL)  
Charlotte Monkman (IRL)

The Audit and Risk Committee, formed in late 2020, has been responsible for overseeing management's reorganisation of the IRL's financial discipline and practices. Chaired by former NZRL Chair Reon Edwards, ARC introduced robust short- and long-term reforecasting discipline that has been pivotal to the organisation's stability in a challenging environment. The committee's work enabled the Board to receive clear and precise financial information throughout the year, allowing it to fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities and make well informed executive decisions.

### STRATEGY & GOVERNANCE

Chair: Peter V'landys (ARLC)  
Greg Peters (NZRL)  
Reon Edwards (NZRL)  
Sandis Tsaka (APRLC)  
Andrew Hill (IRL)  
Simon Johnson (RFL)  
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)

The Strategy & Governance Committee replaced the Strategy Committee in 2023. Tasked with advising the Board on long-term strategy, governance structure and income generation, the committee swiftly made recommendations on the building blocks of the multi-year calendar and initiated a review of the international game's governance that will continue into 2024.

### LAWS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Dave Rotheram (RFL)  
Michael Maguire (APRLC)  
Graham Annesley (ARLC)  
Ruan Sims (ARLC)  
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)  
Lyndsey Anfield (RFL)  
Laurent Frayssinous (ERL)  
Charlotte Monkman (IRL)

The Laws Advisory Group (LAG) meets twice per year. These meetings coincide with IRL Board meetings so that any law amendments can be proposed to Board in a timely manner. Throughout the two meetings in 2023, suggested law amendments from Member Nations and Women's and Wheelchair sub-groups have been discussed. A key feature of both meetings in 2023 has been the on-going dialogue regarding Brain Health.

LAG has received detailed presentations from the work conducted by the RFL and the collaboration between RFL and NRL in this important area which will continue into 2024.

### HISTORY & HERITAGE ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Niel Wood (Independent)  
Tas (Independent)  
Tony Collins (Independent)  
Andrew Ferguson (Independent)  
Neil Ormston (Independent)  
Tas Baitieri (Independent)  
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)

The History and Heritage Advisory Group has examined every international match played in the women's game and has created a final list of approved games which have been sent to members for their comments. The final list will be published in early 2024.

The men's list of recognised senior international matches has been published on the International Rugby League website. The group has started the process for the formal recognition of the list of approved wheelchair senior international matches.

### WOMEN AND GIRLS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Julia Lee (IRL)  
Charlotte Monkman (IRL)  
Peggy Matapo (APRLC)  
Fiona Cerboneschi (ARLC)  
Nadine Conlon (NZRL)  
Stuart Barrow (RFL)  
Jovan Vujosevic (ERL)  
Rebecca Stevens (MEA)  
Katie Grudzinski (Americas)  
Joanna Lester (APRLC)

Since the RLWC2021, we've witnessed remarkable growth in the interest and development of the women's game. With this progress in mind, we've expanded our membership to encompass all playing regions. Our members have actively contributed to several international initiatives, including:

- Spearheading a working group comprised of leading experts in sports science and performance. This group is actively recommending changes to enhance international playing conditions.
- Crafting a comprehensive toolkit designed to bolster the growth and development of women's and girls' games worldwide.

### WHEELCHAIR ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Niel Wood  
Ollie Cruickshank (ERL)  
Martin Meredith (ARLC)  
Robert Fassollette (FFRXIII)  
John McMullen (RFL)  
Jeremy Edwards (APRLC)  
David Butler (ERL and Secretary)

The group addressed three major issues in 2023. Following a review and recommendations, WHAG has supported the proposals for amendments to the Laws which have been sent to IRL Board for approval and adoption from January 2024.

In addition, WHAG has created a plan to ensure the continued growth and development of the sport over the next two World Cup cycles. This includes the development of new playing members, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere and the creation of a new championship to be played in between World Cups. It is designed to improve performance and to be commercially attractive, which will support the further development of the sport.

### CLASSIFICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Victoria Myers (Independent)  
Penny Broomhead (independent)  
Jaime Blair (Independent)  
Dinesh Palipana (independent)  
Sandra Michele-Hickey (NZRL)  
Keith Povah (ARLC)  
Chris Godfrey (RFL)  
Scott Simon (ERL)  
Charlotte Monkman (IRL)

"The Classification Advisory Group (CAG) has dedicated the past year to a comprehensive review of the 2021 PDRL World Cup. Acknowledging efforts of the classification team (lead by Penny Broomhead), significant strides have been made in refining the classification system to ensure equity and competitiveness. Strategic recruitment initiatives have expanded player participation in PDRL across the world fostering a more inclusive environment. Furthermore, CAG's recent restructuring reflects a commitment to specialisation, incorporating classification experts and a player representative. This realignment emphasises the group's ongoing dedication to maintaining international standards and promoting inclusivity in disability sport".

### MEDICAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Chair: Mick Molloy (Independent)  
Nathan Gibbs (APRLC)  
David Heslop (ARLC)  
Chris Brookes (RFL)  
Richard Lawrance (ERL)  
Ed Middleton (ERL)  
Richard Egan (RFL)

Set up to advise on a case-by-case basis (hence the subcommittee appellation), Medsco's initial task was to create, for the first time in the game's history, a minimum medical standard for application across all international matches. Inherent in this standard is the identification and codification of basic and mandatory pitch-side care and sport trauma competencies and skills. The MMS was approved in November 2023.

### PHYSICAL DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Colin Moore (Independent)  
Niel Wood (IRL and Secretary)  
Chris Godfrey (RFL)  
Neil Lynch (ERL)  
Sandra Hickey (NZRL)  
Paul Tubridy (APRLC)  
Keith Povah (ARLC and Match Officials)

PDAG are currently working towards developing a strategy for Physical Disability Rugby League that will provide a focus for the group. The aim of the strategy is to strengthen the game where it is currently played and provide support to nations to develop new participation opportunities. Other focus areas will include a review of the current laws and identify opportunities for future PDRL World Cups.





D Russell, Papua New Guinea

## ANTI-DOPING

This year was the first time the IF had in-person representation at the world cup, through the presence of its anti-doping manager, Professor Nenad Dikic, in England. IRL used the opportunity to consider how to adjust its anti-doping activity in the future, especially around world cups.

IRL's anti-doping activity followed WADA guidelines with the majority of doping controls out of competition. Although there were no positive doping cases in 2022, there were three adverse analytical findings, none of which were processed due to proper use of seven therapeutic use exemptions (TUE) in total. One recommendation of the world cup report is that players require more education about TUE and the right to be medically treated.

Prior to the world cup, IRL was active in workshopping key areas of anti-doping, including rules and regulations, the list of prohibited substances and TUE. Online education was updated in 2022 with new facts, rules, and regulations. Another post-RLWC recommendation is to ensure the online education module is used by more players.



Above: Nenad Dikic, IRL Anti Doping Officer



# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

This was the first year since 2019 that all IRL members were able to play domestic competitions unimpeded by local covid restrictions. Jamaica and the Cook Islands were both limited by return-to-play rules in 2022 but, thankfully, both countries were able to run full seasons in 2023.

Participation among the highest capacity IRL nations saw an encouraging upswing, with Australia (217,757 registered players/205,387 in 2022), England (97,317/92,386), New Zealand (30,628/22,057) and PNG (9,540/2,956) all recording healthy increases in registered players. Although France's overall participation dropped slightly (8,767/9,593), that was mainly as a result of the recategorisation of the 'leisure' licence, while the core women and men categories both increased - with the number of women players more than doubling to 517 (201 in 2022). In Wales, the previous year's record participation number of 2,426 was smashed, with 3,303 registered players in 2023, the most significant increase being in youth rugby league as Welsh clubs continue to deepen their community roots.

In North America, USARL continued its structural reformation amidst the busiest domestic rugby league calendar the country has ever seen, with affiliated competitions in three states that saw participation nearly triple to 707 players. A nascent youth competition means that USARL, which will add new member clubs next year, is well positioned to apply for full membership in 2024 should it choose to do so. Both it and neighbouring Canada oversaw strong developments in the women's game, which has been a theme in 2023 throughout the rugby league world as members continue to offer quality competition to women and girls attracted to the life-enhancing properties of the sport.

Steady growth in the affiliate membership category saw several countries break through or continue edging toward the 500 registered player threshold, which is double the minimum required for full membership. Kenya and Nigeria, both with youth, women's and men's leagues in two regions, led the way with 850 and 502 players respectively, while the Netherlands and Norway both recorded player corps just below the 500 mark.

Along with Greece - whose men's and women's championships saw over fifty 13-a-side matches played in 2023 - and Ghana, this group of affiliate members represent a crop of well governed, ambitious organisations that will be the full members of tomorrow. It is important they grow organically and do not rush to an application that destabilises them.

In addition to governance, administration and competition support, IRL's most important obligation in 2024 and beyond is ensuring member nations receive quality technical education so that an authentic rugby league is being disseminated locally. There was a budget for this in 2023 - the first one in IRL history - but the withdrawal of France 2025 described above in this report meant a pause to this critical strategic expansion project. Stability in 2024 will allow IRL to launch technical delivery programmes in all four regions.

The general assembly expanded to include North Macedonia and Slovakia, while Kenya became the fifth African affiliate member.

## FULL MEMBERS

JAMAICA	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	ITALY	WALES
AUSTRALIA	SAMOA	RUSSIA	LEBANON
COOK ISLANDS	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	SOUTH AFRICA
FIJI	FRANCE	SERBIA	
NEW ZEALAND	IRELAND	UKRAINE	

## AFFILIATE

BRAZIL	CZECH REPUBLIC	NETHERLANDS	CAMEROON
CANADA	GERMANY	NORWAY	GHANA
CHILE	GREECE	SPAIN	KENYA
USA	MALTA	TURKEY	MOROCCO
			NIGERIA

## OBSERVER

COLOMBIA	ALBANIA	MONTENEGRO	ETHIOPIA
EL SALVADOR	BELGIUM	NORTH MACEDONIA	IVORY COAST
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	POLAND	LIBYA
JAPAN	DENMARK	SLOVAKIA	PALESTINE
PHILIPPINES	GEORGIA	SWEDEN	UGANDA
SOLOMON ISLANDS	HUNGARY	BURUNDI	
VANUATU	LATVIA	DR CONGO	

REGIONAL KEY

AMERICAS	ASIA PACIFIC	EUROPE	MIDDLE EAST AFRICA
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# AMERICAS RUGBY LEAGUE



Canada's victory in the Americas Women's North Championships, Jamaica v Canada

In 2023, members continued a steady march towards full normality of operations post Covid. There were robust domestic championships and several representative and international games.

Canadian Provincial domestic championships were executed in both British Columbia and Ontario. The return of the Ontario Championship with three club teams marked a major milestone as the Championship had not been played for several years. Canada also executed a Women's Competition featuring Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

In the United States, club Championships were staged on the East and West Coasts. Four men's club took part in the USARL Championship whilst Under the Pacific Coast Rugby League banner there were 8 clubs in action between California and Utah. The winners from each conference clashed for the National Championship, with Dead Pelicans from California emerging winners over Jacksonville. There were several women 13s games played across the country as well.

In the Caribbean, Jamaica once again delivered a full calendar of competitions across U14, U16, U19, Intercollegiate and community club National Championships.

The women's domestic game continued to grow with playing of the nation's first domestic 13s Championship.

In Central America, there was no reported domestic activity from El Salvador.

Several international matches took place in the region. Canada, USA, and Jamaica played for the Americas North Women's Championship in Kingston, with Canada emerging inaugural champions. In men's action, USA defeated Jamaica 30-26 in the only ranking men's game.

The USA governance reform is still ongoing with several clubs and League applying to join the reform process and elect a new governing body in early 2024.

Below: United States victory in the Americas Women's North Championships



Above: USA v Jamaica Mens in bilateral international

Left: US celebrates after Jamaica win



# ASIA PACIFIC RUGBY LEAGUE



Cook Islands women with their gold medals

2023 has been an exciting and enjoyable year for rugby league in the Asia Pacific region. We have seen all nations return to domestic and international competitions and have also seen the continual growth of the women's game. All of which are very positive signs for the game of rugby league.

We have seen this year the following exciting tournaments played:

1. Pacific Championships,
2. Tonga men touring England
3. The Pacific Games which were held in the Solomon Islands.
4. Tongan U16 boys' tour of Australia.

This was the first year that the new international window came into place following COVID. The new international window starts 1 week after the NRL grand final. This now allows 6 weeks where international rugby league can be played.

## On the field international activity

The Pacific Championships were also launched in 2023. This new tournament will be played each year and has replaced the mid-year

Pacific Tests. This is a very exciting competition allowing nations to play each other in a two-pool competition. The following nations played in the below pools.

**Pool A:** Australia, New Zealand and Samoa  
**Pool B:** Fiji, PNG and The Cook Islands

This tournament included both men and women and was played across Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Eight men's matches and five women's matches were played, although the women's event will become a championship in later years.

The expectation is that matches will, in the future, be played in other Pacific nations, allowing players to play in front of their families and local fans.

Another first for the Asia Pacific was the Tongan men's tour to England. A 3-match tour was played between October and November.

This was the first time that a Pacific nation has toured England as a bilateral tour. This tour now paves the way for more Pacific nations to tour the northern hemisphere in coming years as set-out in the international calendar. A big congratulations to Kristian Woolfe, Scott Clark and Tavake Fangupo and all the Tongan players on this tour.

The 2023 Pacific Games, officially known as the XVII Pacific Games, is a continental multi-sport event for Oceania countries and territories that was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands from the 19th November to the 2nd December 2023.

Rugby league 9s was played at the Pacific Games with both men and women

## Women's Results

- Cook Islands - Gold
- Tonga - Silver
- Fiji - Bronze
- Samoa - 4th
- Vanuatu - 5th
- Solomon Islands 6th

## Men's Result

- Samoa - Gold
- Fiji - Silver
- Cook Islands - Bronze
- Tonga - 4th
- Solomon Islands 5th

This competition was a great show case of Pacific rugby league. It was disappointing that Papua New Guinea did not send a men and women's team.

Asia Pacific Rugby League continues to work closely with the Pacific Games Council to have rugby league 9s as a permanent sport within the Pacific Games. Currently rugby league is only by invitation and unfortunately rugby league will not be staged at the next Pacific Games.

In 2023, a Tongan U16 boys rugby league team toured Australia (Sydney). Three matches were played and along with these matches the Tongan boys were hosted by Manly Warringah Rugby League Club and the Penrith Panthers Rugby League Club. This was a wonderful opportunity for these young men to experience the culture and facilities of these two great rugby league clubs. It's also worth mentioning that two of these Tongan boys have now signed contracts with the North Queensland Cowboys and they will join their development program in 2024. This program will see these boys attend a boarding school in Queensland as well as being part of the Cowboys high performance program.

## Development initiatives

Rugby League Samoa (RLS) is undergoing significant changes, heralding a new era under the leadership of a freshly appointed President and Executive Board. The shift comes after the annual general meeting held on the 5th July 2023.

The Executive Committee for Rugby League Samoa, elected at the AGM, to lead RLS through to the next Rugby League World Cup in 2025 is:

**President:** Fiu Faaolatane Ponifasio Vasa  
**Vice President:** Toilolo Klaus Stunzner  
**Secretary:** Laulu Lafao Leauanae Tuugatiti Leo Leuanae  
**Treasurer:** Tavui Mike Lemisio

Asia Pacific Rugby League would like to thank and acknowledge the outgoing RLS board for all their commitment to rugby league in the Pacific and wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

The Philippines Rugby League continues to be a standout organisation within Asia. Currently some very positive discussions are being held between Philippines Rugby League, APRL and the Philippines government of the prospect of the development of an Asian Rugby League Cup to be held in the Philippines. An Asian Cup would give a wonderful opportunity for our Asian members to compete on a regular basis and develop the game within the Asia region.

## Off field

Asia Pacific Rugby League continues to work closely with all its members on a number of off field matters. The training of referees and coaches continues to be our members' main priority.

2023 saw the APRL included with the NRL and the Australian Defence Force on a tour to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Both these tours were designed to give these nations referee, coaching and first aid training. As well as the training the ADF provided some much-needed sporting and medical equipment. These programs are vital to the development of the game in the Pacific. It gives a number of people the opportunity to participate in the rugby league on a number of different levels as well improving standards of all aspects of the game.

The IRL's new online membership portal now up and running which will allow all members to submit their annual membership audits online. This will take a lot less time to complete and therefore create a much better platform for all members.

## Thank-You

- The National Rugby League (NRL)
- New Zealand Rugby League
- Cook Islands Rugby League Association
- Fiji National Rugby League
- Papua New Guinea Rugby Football League
- All affiliate and observer members of Asia Pacific Rugby League
- The Rugby League Players Associations (RLPA)



# EUROPEAN RUGBY LEAGUE

2023 saw European Rugby League celebrate its 20th birthday, having been established in 2003, as across the continent records fell for the number of international games played.

In total, 42 Senior International Matches were played involving European teams during 2023, continuing to demonstrate the appetite for the international game in the continent. In addition to the 27 men's, 9 women's and 5 wheelchair games played, there were 23 youth and student internationals and 2 PDRL international games played, making a record 67 international exchanges!

The vast majority of these games took place as bilateral exchanges, demonstrating the robustness of the national federations to bounce back from the disappointment of the cancellation of the RLWC25 qualification competitions, which included debuts for Netherlands women's and Albania and North Macedonia's men's teams.

2023 also made history as Tonga men became the first tier two nation to meet England in a three match series, France also broke new ground with a two match series away in Kenya. Elsewhere, Netherlands and Serbia showed their continued commitment to rugby league playing 5 men's games each, with Serbia also playing 3 women's games to boot and Germany recorded a record attendance for the annual Griffin Cup match.

Wheelchair Rugby League continued its upward rise in popularity, with Wales being made to work hard for the 7th Celtic Cup, being held to a draw by Ireland for the first time, whilst England and France wowed the masses with 2,300 in attendance at the Leeds Arena in England, before a packed house at the Palais Des Sport in Marseilles watched the rematch on French soil.

At junior level, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, in partnership with European Rugby League, added an U16s and U18s Men's "Four Nations" tournament to complement the Student version which has been in place for over 20 years. Wales lifted the U16s trophy after a clean sweep in all three games, whilst England were victorious in the U18s event despite a loss at home to Ireland. England lifted the Student trophy after three wins including inflicting a record defeat on Wales.

Off the field, the footprint of the game in Europe expanded as both North Macedonia and Slovakia joined as Observer members, with domestic activity taking place in Skopje and Bratislava respectively.

Domestic competitive activity put the global pandemic firmly behind it, with men's competitions recommencing in Scotland and Poland whilst both Scotland and Wales launched their own domestic wheelchair competitions. Greece's men's and women's competitions notably went from strength to strength, supported by the delivery of a Match Officials course by European Rugby League Educator Andrew Pilkington and rugby league in Italy also showed a new lease of life.

Wheelchair Rugby League activity took place in its most northerly location, just 500km south of the Arctic Circle in the fjords town of Sogndal in Norway, delighting the locals who took part.

Whilst much of the planned activity technical development activity was put on hold owing to financial uncertainty in 2023, a robust plan to resume the development of a network of Coaching and Match Official Educators throughout Europe has been presented to the IRL for support in 2024, with European Rugby League set to launch fully translated versions of its Level 1 match officials course in French and Spanish to accompany the already translated Level 1 coaching course, with the Level 2 courses for both subjects set for review in 2024.

Looking ahead to 2026, Europe will see record levels of women's international activity as 7 teams take part in the RLWC26 qualification programme to accompany further increases in the men's and wheelchair categories which will no doubt yield further record numbers to celebrate.



**Left:** Wales Wheelchair win a 7th successive Celtic Cup competition in Edinburgh



**Left:** Netherlands Women make a winning debut against Greece in Athens  
**Left:** Netherlands Women make a winning debut against Greece in Athens



Wales raced away to the first Four Nations U16s title beating England, Ireland and Scotland



## MIDDLE EAST AFRICA RUGBY LEAGUE

The MEA Region has shown further growth in all categories with the increase in women's participation particularly encouraging. The first ever bilateral international fixtures were played (ones outside the MEA Championship) with South Africa playing Kenya in two men's senior internationals, and Nigeria playing Ghana and Kenya against Uganda in women's rugby league.

Local championships were completed by Lebanon (men), Ghana (women, men and youth), Nigeria (women, men, youth), Cameroon (women, men), Kenya (women, men, youth) and South Africa's seasons concluding in 2024.

MEA nations are expressing a growing desire for more input in the future of the game which demonstrates their growing capacity and confidence. The region welcomed its newest member, the Kenyan Rugby League Federation, as an affiliate member, showing further growth: within 12 months KRLF hosted Uganda women's national team and France men in late 2023, in what was a diplomatic success for the sport. Kenya's men also played two away games against South Africa.

The MEA Steering Committee appointed its new extended committee for the next 12 months with representatives from the two full members, Dr Frans Erasmus (South Africa) and Nayef Abi Said (Lebanon), plus elected affiliate member representative Andy Gilvary (Ghana) and observer member representative Fortnuate Irankunda (Uganda). Three independent members have also been added to the committee with Vuyolwethu Bokwe (Chair), Bolu Fagborun and Saad Boujmal. Remond Safi has been appointed as secretary of the steering committee. A subcommittee has been established to develop the region's first strategy

Elsewhere, Ghana completed a technical L1 coaching and match official education, while English club York Knights visited Uganda with 13 tourists to deliver on ground support, helping to set up the local championship and academy.

Finally, the region continued to embrace the innovation initiated by Rugby League Federation Ghana's partnership with Salford, as London Broncos paired with South Africa, Hull KR with Nigeria, and Leeds with Kenya. The collective plan is to develop player pathways to the clubs and establishing academies to be led by local coaches. Amongst various knowledge transfer activities between the pro clubs and their African partners, the Red Devils produced a set of branded apparel that the club sold out of, with the funds raised invested in the Ghana rugby league academy project.



**Below:**  
Nigeria v Ghana  
in Women's  
International



**Above:**  
Kenya v South Africa in  
Mens International



**Right:** Kenya v Uganda  
in Women's International



# FINANCE

The international federation's business operations were historically conducted through Rugby League International Federation Limited, an Australian-based company. However, today the vast majority of financial transactions are processed and accounted for in the UK-based company, International Rugby League Limited.

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

This finance report contains the full sets of accounts for both the UK and Australian companies.

In the case of International Rugby League Limited (UK Company) these are the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022. These have been independently reviewed by our professional advisers, Haysmacintyre.

In the case of Rugby League International Federation Ltd (Australian Company) these are the accounts for the year ended 31st October 2022. These have been prepared by our independent professional advisers, Newmerical.

Both sets of figures were presented and approved by members at the 2023 Annual General Meeting.

### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED – UK COMPANY

The overwhelming majority of income over any four-year financial cycle is generated from the hosting of the Rugby League World Cup. The 2022 accounts include the first staging of the World Cup since the UK Company scaled up its operations, having historically had modest income levels compared to its operating costs. In 2022, the company received £4.81m of income, most of this being from the World Cup.

In the financial year ended 31st December 2022, the company had £1.04m of operating costs. This produced an operating profit of £3.76m. This compared to an operating loss of £489k in the previous financial year.

The principal categories of administrative expenditure are a bad debt provision, the costs of the IRL management team and the costs of third-party professional advisers. The bad debt provision relates to monies outstanding from the World Cup at the time of signing the accounts. The company is still vigorously

committed to the recovery of this money and the provision has been made for tax mitigation purposes on the advice of professional advisers. Notwithstanding this provision, savings in total operating costs were achieved for a second successive year. Grants payable to full members and confederations continue to be administered through the Australian Company rather than the UK Company.

Interest of £136k was paid during the year at a commercial rate on the loan from the Australian Company. This means that overall the UK company made a trading profit of £3.63m, on which it paid corporation tax of £160k..

The company's balance sheet shows that the surplus in the year has enabled it for the first time to have a healthy, positive balance sheet going forward.

### RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED – AUSTRALIAN COMPANY

In the financial year ended 31st October 2022, the company had A\$245k of income and A\$730k of operating costs. This produced a pre-tax deficit of A\$485k, which after tax adjustments was reduced to A\$351k. The pre-tax deficit for the previous year was A\$211k.

The income for the year came principally from interest receivable on the loan to the UK Company. The reason for the creation of deficits is the decision to account for the grants in this company.

The company's balance sheet shows that it has A\$2.84million of net assets. Approximately A\$2.19million of this it has been advanced as financial support to the UK Company.

## RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

**ACN 091 594 777**

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED

**31 October 2022**



**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**For the year ended 31 October 2022**

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**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**

**Directors' Declaration**

**For the year ended 31 October 2022**

The directors have determined that the company is not a reporting entity. The directors have determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors declare that:

- 1 the financial statements and notes present fairly the company's financial position as at 31 October 2022 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements;
- 2 in the director's opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Troy Grant  
27 April 2023



Emma Young  
27 April 2023



**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**  
**Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income**  
**For the year ended 31 October 2022**

	Note	2022	2021
		\$	\$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Interest - External		-	17
Interest - Related		245,467	276,772
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>245,467</b>	<b>276,789</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Development Grants		(720,690)	(473,410)
Accountancy		(10,062)	(10,373)
Insurance		148	-
Other Expenses		675	-
Bank Charges		(270)	(2,663)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>(730,198)</b>	<b>(486,446)</b>
<b>OPERATING (LOSS)</b>		<b>(484,731)</b>	<b>(209,657)</b>
Interest		-	(890)
<b>OPERATING (LOSS) BEFORE TAX</b>		<b>(484,731)</b>	<b>(210,547)</b>
Income Tax	2	133,301	16,935
<b>OPERATING (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(351,430)</b>	<b>(193,612)</b>
Retained Profits at 31 October		3,195,935	3,389,547
<b>PROFIT AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATION</b>		<b>2,844,505</b>	<b>3,195,935</b>
<b>RETAINED PROFIT</b>		<b>2,844,505</b>	<b>3,195,935</b>

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**  
**Statement of financial position**  
**For the year ended 31 October 2022**

	Note	2022	2021
		\$	\$
<b>PAID UP CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>			
<b>Reserves</b>			
Accumulated Profit		2,844,505	3,195,935
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash		427,709	457,253
Loan to International Rugby League Ltd		2,194,259	2,660,550
Prepayments		12,500	31,250
Other Assets		2,043	1,037
Tax Receivable		6,776	-
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Deferred Tax Asset	2	201,218	67,917
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>2,844,505</b>	<b>3,218,007</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Tax Payable	2	-	(22,072)
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>(22,072)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>2,844,505</b>	<b>3,195,935</b>

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.



**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED****Compilation Report****For the year ended 31 October 2022**

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Rugby League International Federation Limited, which comprise the Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2022, the Profit and Loss Statement for the period ended 31 October 2022 and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in the Notes.

**The Responsibility of the Directors**

The directors of Rugby League International Federation Limited are solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that the financial statements were prepared.

**Our Responsibility**

On the basis of information provided by the directors, we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting as described in the Notes to the financial statements and APES 315 Compilation of Financial Information.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting described in the Notes to the financial statements. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.

**Assurance Disclaimer**

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the directors who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.



Newmerical Pty Ltd

27 April 2023

**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED****Notes to the Financial Statements****For the year ended 31 October 2022****1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The directors of the company have prepared the financial statements of the company on the basis that the company is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependant on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements are therefore special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet the needs of the directors and members.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of these statements are as follows:

**2 TAXATION**

The company adopts the liability method of tax-effect accounting whereby the income tax expense shown in the profit and loss account is based on the operating profit before income tax adjusted for any permanent differences.

Timing differences which arise due to the different accounting periods in which items of revenue and expense are included in the determination of operating profit before income tax and taxable income are brought to account as either a provision for deferred income tax or an asset described as future income tax benefit at the rate of income tax applicable to the period in which the benefit will be received or the liability will become payable.

Future income tax benefits are brought to account where the realisation of the asset is probable. Future income tax benefits in relation to tax losses are brought to account unless where it is probable this benefit will be realised in the future.

The amount of benefits brought to account or which may be realised in the future is based on the assumption that no adverse change will occur in income taxation legislation and the anticipation that the company will derive sufficient future assessable income to enable the benefit to be realised and comply with the conditions of deductibility imposed by the law.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.



Registered number: 10274920

**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

UNAUDITED

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**COMPANY INFORMATION**

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<b>Directors</b>	T W Grant (Chair) A S Abdo (appointed 14 October 2022) B J Juliff (appointed 16 September 2022) E J Young G J Barclay G Peters D R Andrew (appointed 6 July 2023) P N V'Landys (appointed 14 October 2022) R W Jones (appointed 7 February 2023) S D Tsaka S Johnson
<b>Company secretary</b>	M R Martin
<b>Registered number</b>	10274920
<b>Registered office</b>	10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1AG



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**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**DIRECTORS' REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

**Directors' responsibilities statement**

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the profit or loss of the Company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Directors**

The directors who served during the year were:

T W Grant (Chair)  
 A S Abdo (appointed 14 October 2022)  
 B J Juliff (appointed 16 September 2022)  
 E J Young  
 G J Barclay  
 G N Thompson (resigned 16 October 2022)  
 G Peters  
 L Lacoste (resigned 6 July 2023)  
 P D Beattie (resigned 12 October 2022)  
 P N V'Landys (appointed 14 October 2022)  
 R Edwards (resigned 31 March 2022)  
 R W J Rimmer (resigned 15 December 2022)  
 S D Tsaka  
 S Johnson  
 W J Pearce (resigned 12 October 2022)

**Future strategic plans**

The Directors continue planning to restructure the business, to lessen reliance on the Rugby League World Cup which, to date, represents the only significant source of income for the company, and to further reduce operating costs, continuing the economising measures introduced in 2020. Concluding work on a settled multi-year international calendar and an underpinning commercial strategy are central to this plan.

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**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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**Small companies note**

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board on 23 November 2023 and signed on its behalf.



Troy Grant  
Director

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**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

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	2022 £	2021 £
Turnover	4,805,077	3,346
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>4,805,077</b>	<b>3,346</b>
Administrative expenses	(1,041,457)	(492,649)
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	<b>3,763,620</b>	<b>(489,303)</b>
Interest payable and similar expenses	(135,752)	(152,225)
<b>Profit/(loss) before tax</b>	<b>3,627,868</b>	<b>(641,528)</b>
Tax on profit/(loss)	(160,166)	-
<b>Profit/(loss) for the financial year</b>	<b>3,467,702</b>	<b>(641,528)</b>

There was no other comprehensive income for 2022 (2021:£NIL).

The notes on pages 6 to 11 form part of these financial statements.



**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)  
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10274920

**BALANCE SHEET**  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	3	1,334	705
Investments	4	17	17
		<u>1,351</u>	<u>722</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	5	2,171,327	513,488
Cash at bank and in hand	6	60,755	697,912
		<u>2,232,082</u>	<u>1,211,400</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	(1,778,936)	(4,225,327)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>		<u>453,146</u>	<u>(3,013,927)</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>454,497</u>	<u>(3,013,205)</u>
<b>Net assets/(liabilities)</b>		<u>454,497</u>	<u>(3,013,205)</u>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Profit and loss account		454,497	(3,013,205)
		<u>454,497</u>	<u>(3,013,205)</u>

**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)  
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10274920

**BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)**  
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

The directors consider that the Company is entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 and members have not required the Company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A - small entities.

The company has opted not to file the statement of comprehensive income in accordance with provision applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf on 23 November 2023.



Troy Grant  
Director

The notes on pages 6 to 11 form part of these financial statements.



**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

**1. General information**

International Rugby League Limited is a private company incorporated in England and Wales (registration number 10274920) under the Companies Act. It is a company limited by guarantee. The address of the registered office is 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG.

**2. Accounting policies**

**2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention unless otherwise specified within these accounting policies and in accordance with Section 1A of Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and the Companies Act 2006.

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

**2.2 Going concern**

At the time of signing these accounts, having considered the economic climate, the Directors expectations and intentions for the next twelve months, and the availability of working capital, the Directors are of the opinion that the Company will remain viable for the foreseeable future and therefore these Financial Statements have been prepared on the Going Concern basis.

**2.3 Foreign currency translation**

**Functional and presentation currency**

The Company's functional and presentational currency is GBP.

**Transactions and balances**

Foreign currency transactions are translated into the functional currency using the spot exchange rates at the dates of the transactions.

At each period end foreign currency monetary items are translated using the closing rate. Non-monetary items measured at historical cost are translated using the exchange rate at the date of the transaction and non-monetary items measured at fair value are measured using the exchange rate when fair value was determined.

Foreign exchange gains and losses resulting from the settlement of transactions and from the translation at period-end exchange rates of monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are recognised in profit or loss except when deferred in other comprehensive income as qualifying cash flow hedges.

All other foreign exchange gains and losses are presented in the Statement of Comprehensive Income within administrative expenses.

**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.4 Revenue**

Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Company and the revenue can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured as the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes. The following criteria must also be met before revenue is recognised:

**Rendering of services**

Revenue from a contract to provide services is recognised in the period in which the services are provided in accordance with the stage of completion of the contract when all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- the amount of revenue can be measured reliably;
- it is probable that the Company will receive the consideration due under the contract;
- the stage of completion of the contract at the end of the reporting period can be measured reliably; and
- the costs incurred and the costs to complete the contract can be measured reliably.

**2.5 Finance costs**

Finance costs are charged to profit or loss over the term of the debt using the effective interest method so that the amount charged is at a constant rate on the carrying amount. Issue costs are initially recognised as a reduction in the proceeds of the associated capital instrument.

**2.6 Taxation**

Tax is recognised in profit or loss except that a charge attributable to an item of income and expense recognised as other comprehensive income or to an item recognised directly in equity is also recognised in other comprehensive income or directly in equity respectively.

The current income tax charge is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date in the countries where the Company operates and generates income.

**2.7 Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets under the cost model are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.



**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.7 Tangible fixed assets (continued)**

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20%
Computer equipment	-	33%

The assets' residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted prospectively if appropriate, or if there is an indication of a significant change since the last reporting date.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised in profit or loss.

**2.8 Valuation of investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less accumulated impairment.

Investments in unlisted Company shares, whose market value can be reliably determined, are remeasured to market value at each balance sheet date. Gains and losses on remeasurement are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period. Where market value cannot be reliably determined, such investments are stated at historic cost less impairment.

Investments in listed company shares are remeasured to market value at each balance sheet date. Gains and losses on remeasurement are recognised in profit or loss for the period.

**2.9 Debtors**

Short-term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. Loans receivable are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

**2.10 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

**2.11 Creditors**

Short-term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

**3. Tangible fixed assets**

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 January 2022	591	2,129	2,720
Additions	-	1,493	1,493
Disposals	-	(919)	(919)
	<u>591</u>	<u>2,703</u>	<u>3,294</u>
At 31 December 2022			
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2022	275	1,740	2,015
Charge for the year on owned assets	118	745	863
Disposals	-	(918)	(918)
	<u>393</u>	<u>1,567</u>	<u>1,960</u>
At 31 December 2022			
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31 December 2022	<u>198</u>	<u>1,136</u>	<u>1,334</u>
At 31 December 2021	<u>316</u>	<u>389</u>	<u>705</u>

**4. Fixed asset investments**

	Investments in subsidiary companies £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>	
At 1 January 2022	17
At 31 December 2022	<u>17</u>

Investments in associates comprise one third of the share capital of GB Oceania Ltd, a company limited by shares and registered in New Zealand.



**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

**5. Debtors**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	251,288	249,854
Amounts owed by joint ventures and associated undertakings	193,285	208,820
Other debtors	1,397	1,975
Prepayments and accrued income	1,725,357	52,839
	<u>2,171,327</u>	<u>513,488</u>

**6. Cash and cash equivalents**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	60,755	697,912
	<u>60,755</u>	<u>697,912</u>

**7. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Corporation tax	160,166	-
Other taxation and social security	2,021	379
Other creditors	1,445,484	1,635,262
Accruals and deferred income	171,265	2,589,686
	<u>1,778,936</u>	<u>4,225,327</u>

**8. Company status**

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.

**INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

**9. Related party transactions**

The Company entered into the following related party transactions in the year:

**RLIF Australia**

At the year-end, International Rugby League Limited owed RLIF Australia £1,198,628 consisting of £1,444,514 shown in 'Other creditors' in note 7 less £245,886 shown in 'Trade debtors' in note 5 (2021: £1,388,393, consisting of £1,634,279 shown in 'Other creditors' less £245,886 included in 'Trade debtors'). RLIF Australia and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

**Australian Rugby League Commission**

International Rugby League Limited made sales of £8,331 (2021: £nil) in the year to Australian Rugby League Commission, which owed £nil (2021: £nil) to International Rugby League Limited at the year end. Australian Rugby League Commission and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

**GB Oceania**

As at 31 December 2022 International Rugby League was owed £193,285 (2021: £208,630) by GB Oceania Limited. International Rugby League Limited owns a one-third investment in GB Oceania Limited, a company incorporated in New Zealand.

**New Zealand Rugby League**

During the year ended 31 December 2022 the international Rugby League Limited made sales to New Zealand Rugby League amounting to £41,451 which has common directors. New Zealand Rugby League and International Rugby League share common directors.

**The Rugby Football League Limited**

During the year ended 31 December 2022 the international Rugby League Limited made sales to The Rugby Football League (RFL) amounting to £3,715 and purchases from RFL amounting to £900, which has common directors. The Rugby Football League Limited and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

**10. Post balance sheet events**

In May 2023 the French Local Organising Committee withdrew its candidacy for the 2025 world cup, citing economic factors in France that had affected its ability to achieve financial milestones set by the French state. The company is actively seeking a replacement host for the event.

**11. Controlling party**

The Directors consider that there is no ultimate controlling party.



**INTERNATIONAL**  
**RUGBY**  
**LEAGUE**

A blue graphic element consisting of two right-angled triangles pointing towards each other, forming a larger right-angled triangle.

**INTERNATIONAL**  
**RUGBY LEAGUE LTD.**

10 Queen Street Place  
London  
EC4R 1AG

**INTRL.SPORT**