

Clayton Rugby Football Club



Development Plan 2017 to 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clayton Rugby Football Club ("CRFC" or "the Club") is a young rugby club, being just over three years old, that provides sports and social activities to the wider community within Clayton, Johnston County, and the Triangle Region of North Carolina. While the Club has only been around for a few years, we are proud of the family friendly and inclusive nature of the club which has also led to a number of members, without prior experience, playing rugby.

Even as the Club begins to push our 1st side into a more competitive direction, we cannot lose sight of our purpose to provide rugby to players of all ages and skill levels. We will not sway from this path for short term success. CRFC has developed, through a dedicated volunteer base, a family friendly culture within the Club that attracts members, fans, and sponsors. Our sponsors help ensure a sustainable delivery of rugby to the wider community with positive cash flow.

The Board of Directors of CRFC have worked hard to create financial stability for the Club while at the same time keeping membership dues as some of the lowest in all of the USA. It is important to maintain the financial health of the Club well into the future thus enabling the Club to prosper and continue to grow the game of rugby, whilst providing an array of services to the wider community.

This five-year plan has been set in place to avoid complacency and the traps that many rugby clubs fall into. That being a constant focus on surviving from year to year that robs clubs of the opportunity to grow and prosper. With the exciting growth the Club has already experienced and major plans in motion, all indications are that the upcoming five-year period will provide a platform on which the Club can further its position in American Rugby.

This level of volunteer commitment which projects to increase significantly, requires careful monitoring such that future volunteers are not put off from stepping forward. The current Board of Directors will continue to examine options that will ensure such burdens do not prevent those willing and able to step forward.

The development plans laid out in the coming pages will provide a platform for growth, sustainability, and prosperity for the CRFC.

Introduction

1.0 Clayton Rugby Football Club, founded in 2013 and a full member of the United States Rugby Football Union and Carolinas Geographic Rugby Union, is based in Clayton, North Carolina.

1.1 The Club has three main objectives:

1.1.1 To encourage the participation in, development, appreciation and enjoyment of rugby union by all sectors of the community.

1.1.2 To develop players' individual and team skills and abilities to maximise their potential.

1.1.3 To strive to promote the Club and the Community, attract players, retain the players developed in-house, and retain the support of the Community, fans, and sponsors.

1.2 Through these principal objectives a range of benefits are achieved:

1.2.1 Increased physical activity for children and adults;

1.2.2 Improved health and fitness;

1.2.3 Community spirit, identity and enterprise;

1.2.4 Financially stable and robust Club business;

1.2.5 A profile as one of the United States emerging rugby clubs that develops and attracts players, volunteers, sponsors and spectators.

1.3 The Clayton Rugby Football Club has also been involved in the growth and development of the Clayton Copperheads youth rugby program. As such, the CRFC is one of the few men's clubs in all of North Carolina that actively supports youth rugby. The Club is also partnering with the Town of Wilson's Mills to launch a new youth program to target kids in Wilson's Mills, Smithfield, and Selma. Thus continuing our mission of growing the sport.

1.4 To achieve CRFC's objectives significant commitment is required from a wide range of people.

1.5 This five-year plan describes the Club's ambitions in more detail, giving strategic direction and providing a guide for members and supporters.

Background

2.1 Clayton Rugby Football Club 1st XV recently entered Division III of the Carolinas Geographic Union after one season in Division IV. The Club's 2nd XV is now participating in Division IV, making the Club one of three clubs in the Carolinas with teams in multiple divisions.

2.2 After establishing the club in the Fall of 2013, the CRFC played its first match in May of 2014. The Club played a social schedule in 2014 before joining Division IV in the Fall of 2015. CRFC finished in 4th place in D4. For 2016, the 1st XV went 10-6 with the majority of matches being played against Division III clubs.

2.3 The 2nd XV plays social matches as scheduled, but entered Division IV for the 2016/2017 competitive cycle. In 2015, the Club had grown enough numbers to schedule matches for the 2nds with the squad finishing 2015 with a 1-1 record in scheduled matches. The 2nd XV went 1-9 in 2016.

2.4 CRFC 7s team finished the Summer of 2016 with a record of 17-9 in five tournaments and won the Blackbeard 7s tournament for the 2nd consecutive season. Our forwards team also won the Social Division at the CottonTown 7s.

2.5 The Old Boys are a developing side within the Club.

2.6 The youth division includes the Clayton Copperheads and soon to be Wilson's Mills program. The Copperheads are operated separately from the CRFC, with a separate leadership group, but receive coaching support from the CRFC. The new program in Wilson's Mills will be operated under the guidance of the CRFC, but through the town's new recreation department.

2.7 The Club currently rents practice and playing facilities from the Town of Clayton Parks and Recreation Department. Adjunct practice locations include Deep River Brewing Company (warehouse and yard) and Crossfit Clayton (indoor).

2.8 The Club's expected 2017 budget is around \$20,000, having grown from around \$3800 in 2014, \$6400 in 2015, and \$13,000 in 2016. CRFC funding is through a variety of sources. Primary sources of funding include:

2.8.1 Membership Dues

2.8.2 Sponsors

2.8.3 Fundraising Activities

2.8.4 Event Hosting

2.8.5 Merchandise

2.9 As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, all funds generated by the CRFC are reinvested into the development of the Club and growth of rugby in Clayton and Johnston County.

2.10 The current major sponsors of the CRFC includes Deep River Brewing Company, Clayton Chiropractic, Clayton Beverage, Crossfit Clayton, World Rugby Shop, Sheetz, and Orthopaedic Specialists of North Carolina.

2.11 Club Paid Membership stands as follows:

Paid Membership	2014	2015	2016
Honorary	0	0	0
Lifetime	0	0	0
Playing	11	30	43
Non-Playing/Social	1	1	2
Total Paid Club Members	12	31	45

2.11 USA Rugby Registration

2.11.1 A total of 48 players were "CIPPed" with the CRFC at the end of the 2015/2016 playing cycle.

2.11.2 At the end of the Fall of 2016, there were 51 registered players for the 2016/2017 playing cycle.

Goals

3.1 Membership & Participation

The Club infrastructure currently supports a paid membership of roughly 45-55 adult male members. The 45 paid members in 2016 is a significant increase from 12 paid members in 2014, the Club's first year collecting dues.

2017-2021 Membership & Participation Goals:

- 3.1.1 Increase Club Membership to 100 paid members by 2021
- 3.1.2 Field multiple teams to cover the full spectrum of players from competitive to developmental to Social/Old Boys
- 3.1.3 Grow the Club without losing our family friendly, community focused Club culture

3.2 Performance

Clayton Rugby Football Club currently fields three teams:

1st XV (D3), 2nd XV (D4), Old Boys (Developing/Social)

2017-2021 Performance Goals:

- 3.2.1 Continued improvement in performance by the 1st XV
- 3.2.2 Promotion of the 1st XV to Division III (Completed ahead of schedule)
- 3.2.3 Promotion of Social/Developmental side to Division IV (Completed)
- 3.2.4 1st XV reaching Division III Playoffs by 2018/2019 playing cycle
- 3.2.5 Pushing for promotion to Division II by 2021

3.3 Facilities

The Club currently uses a public park for practices and games. Issues have risen in regards to increased usage by other sports, the lack of lighting, and lack of storage for equipment.

2017-2021 Facilities Goals:

- 3.3.1 Work with Parks & Rec to lessen the load on the surface at East Clayton
- 3.3.2 Establish a facility fund with consistent revenue feeding the fund.
- 3.3.3 Discuss, plan, and execute an agreement with local public entity in order to develop a rugby facility in the Clayton area. (Completed)

3.4 Finances

The Clayton Rugby Football Club currently sits in a sound financial position having finished in a positive financial position in each year of operation. The Club's budget is expected to increase significantly in the coming years as we add players, teams, and help support the planned Clayton Rugby Facility.

2017-2021 Finances Goal:

- 3.4.1 Post positive cash flow returns in each year
- 3.4.2 Increase overall Club revenue by 20% each year from 2017-2021
- 3.4.3 Increase the number of revenue streams for the Club
- 3.4.4 Save 5% of overall yearly club revenue for placement in an emergency

fund

3.5 Volunteer Development

The Club is indebted to a healthy and growing group of volunteers who assist with the running of the Club be it as members of the Executive Committee, General Committee, team coaches, assisting with the preparation for and clearing up after functions and events, marketing, fundraising and other essential activities.

2017-2021 Volunteer Development Goal:

- 3.5.1 Increase the number of active volunteers within the Club to more than 25 by 2021.
- 3.5.2 Identify new roles within our structure to improve operation of the Club and take pressure off of our most active volunteers
- 3.5.3 Define and outline clear roles and responsibilities for volunteers

3.6 Coaching Development

The Club currently has one unpaid coach on staff to guide our teams as well as multiple experienced senior players that serve as assistant and/or adjunct coaches. Our Head Coach is also involved in coaching at the youth level and shares time between the clubs.

2017-2021 Coach Development Goal:

- 3.6.1 Increase the overall number of coaches working with our men's sides
- 3.6.2 At least one coach dedicated primarily to the men's club by the end of 2017
- 3.6.3 At least two coaches dedicated primarily to men's club by the end of 2019
- 3.6.4 Provide some level of stipend (travel, registration, etc.) for coaches by 2020

3.6.5 Increase professional development opportunities for coaching staff

3.7 Player Development

The Club currently has about 40-50 players training twice a week throughout the year. Training sessions currently average about 20-25 players.

2017-2021 Player Development Goal:

3.7.1 Increase opportunities for players to be exposed to higher level coaching

3.7.2 Provide appropriate training for players throughout the playing spectrum

3.7.3 Increase opportunities for representative play

3.7.4 Increase training opportunities to include supplemental sessions

3.7.5 Offer wellness/fitness education and training for players

3.8 Referee Development

The CRFC does not currently have a Club Referee and only one active player with a referee certification.

2017-2021 Referee Development Goal:

3.8.1 Recruit at least one ref to serve as the Club Referee

3.8.2 Increase the number of certified referees to more than ten by 2021

3.8.3 Host one Referee Certification course per year

Action Plan

In order to meet the outlined goals in Section 3.0, it is necessary to have a clear and concise plan of action to accomplish our goals. With the ensuing plans, the Club strives to lay out a clear pathway to reach each goal within the planned time frame.

4.1 Membership & Participation

Goals:

Increase Club Membership to 100 paid members by 2021

Field multiple teams to cover the spectrum of players from youth to adult as well as competitive to developmental to Social/Old Boys

Grow the Club without losing our family friendly and community focused Club culture

Action:

Growing the paid Club Membership to 100 by 2021 means an increase in membership of 55 members in the next five years. Broken down by year, that means an increase of about 12 paid members per year. The Club's growth from 2015 to 2016 is just ahead of this pace.

Reaching that goal involves a multi-pronged approach that focuses on recruitment and retention:

1. Creation of multiple playing levels within the club that each cater to a different demographic. Competitive, developmental, social, and Old Boys teams must be established and active in order to reach the entire spectrum of players.
2. Look into the addition of a Women's program.
3. Build a coaching staff that can coach to each level of player within our Club
4. Launch an aggressive recruiting platform to make us an attractive option for post-high school and post-college players
5. Use Club Captain to maintain close relations with the playing members, their wants, and needs.
6. Create and promote ambassadors within our Club that take new players under their wing, make them feel welcome, and pass along our Club Culture.
7. Promote our Club in a positive way within our community.
8. Retain our affordable dues structure.
9. Create and promote a Supporters/Social Club for non-playing members
10. Provide continued benefit to our members and a positive rugby experience.
11. Foster and grow our relationships with local High School and Collegiate teams

4.2 Performance

Goals:

Continued improvement in performance by the 1st XV

Promotion of the 1st XV to Division III (Completed ahead of schedule)

Promotion of Social/ Developmental side to Division IV (Completed)

1st XV reaching Division III Playoffs by 2018

Pushing for promotion to Division II by 2021

Action:

With recent recruiting efforts, the Club has jumped ahead of schedule in regards to performance, therefore requiring some adjustment in goals. This season, the Club promoted our 1st XV to DIII and promoted our 2nd XV to DIV, both very big steps in our Club development. It was also at least one year ahead of schedule. The focus for the upcoming development cycle now turns to making each of our teams competitive within their prospective competitions. Thus beginning to push towards further promotion by 2021.

To achieve these goals we need:

1. To grow our membership as outlined above, recruiting all types of players across the playing spectrum.
2. Maintain involvement in the Carolinas Geographic Rugby Union High Performance Program so as to promote the Club as a gateway to higher playing opportunities.
3. Continue to cultivate our information sharing and developmental relationship with Nathan Bombrys, the Glasgow Warriors, and Ayr RFC to include coaching and player exchange/placement programs.
4. Look into creating a similar development relationship with a top level domestic program.
5. Improve the coaching provided to our players.
6. Increase select side opportunities for our players
7. Increase the number of challenging friendly matches

4.3 Facilities

Goals:

Work with Parks & Rec to lessen the load on the surface at East Clayton

Establish a facility fund with consistent revenue feeding the fund.

Discuss, plan, and execute an agreement with a local public entity in order to develop a rugby facility in the Clayton area. (completed)

Action:

This is the most pressing issue that our Club faces in regards to our ability to grow and provide the best possible rugby experience to our players and fans. Our current facility does not provide us the ability to host major events or increase hospitality efforts. Nor does it provide a safe playing surface for our members. Our ability to have a premium home facility also has a direct impact on our recruiting efforts.

To reach our facilities goals we need to:

1. Actively work with Park & Rec to improve the playing surface at East Clayton Community Park.
2. Mind our usage of East Clayton Community Park when the field conditions are questionable.
3. Rotate practice areas so as not to wear out high traffic areas of the field.
4. See through our agreement with the Town of Wilson's Mills to develop a rugby facility.
5. Take a business-minded approach to the facility project and how it is financed and managed.
6. Engage our membership to take an active role and personal interest in seeing the Clayton Rugby Facility brought to life.

(Note: The Clayton RFC has secured an agreement with the Town of Wilson's Mills that will provide the Club land to develop into a permanent rugby facility. Plans are in motion to break ground on the facility by Summer with a proposed opening of Spring of 2018 for the facility.)

4.4 Finance

Goals:

Post positive cash flow returns in each year

Increase overall Club revenue by 20% each year from 2017-2021

Increase the number of revenue streams for the Club

Save 5% of overall club revenue for placement in an emergency fund

Action:

Increasing membership levels along with increasing expectations and demands on the program inevitably leads to the Club's budget increasing significantly in the coming years. Projections for the next five years suggest that our budget could increase to well over \$50,000 per year before the end of this development cycle.

These increases precipitate the need for the CRFC to improve our funding and increase the number of revenue streams for the Club as opposed to letting the financial burden fall on members through increased dues. It is also important to establish sustainable revenue streams to allow the Club to grow well into the future.

To reach these goals, the Club needs to take the following steps:

1. Bring a business minded approach and execution to all Club operations
2. Establish a Club business committee to research, explore, identify and develop a business plan for our new facility
3. Increase Club merchandising efforts to appeal to not only players, but to fans
4. Continue to foster relationships with existing sponsors, thus increasing our value to them as well as their investment in the Club
5. Explore new sponsorship/partnership opportunities
6. Grow CottonTown 7s into a marquee tournament event that is well attended by both teams and fans.
7. Seek to develop new tournaments and events (rugby and non-rugby) to make use of our facilities and generate revenue for our Club

4.5 Volunteer Development

Goals:

Increase the number of active volunteers within the Club to more than 25 by 2021.

Identify new roles within our structure to improve operation of the Club

Define and outline clear roles and responsibilities for volunteers

Action:

Our volunteer base is the most important component in the success of the Club. For the Clayton Rugby Football Club to continue to operate smoothly and avoid any lapses with change of leadership, it is important to develop a strong and active group of volunteers within the Club.

To achieve these goals the CRFC needs to look at multiple approaches:

1. Identify and research whether additional positions need to be added to the current CRFC Board Structure or if an entirely new structure is needed
2. Task a group to come up with job descriptions and a set of Standard Operating Guidelines for each position within the Club. Outlining clear objectives and procedures for staffing the positions
3. Establish succession plans for expected changes in leadership
4. Groom and prepare volunteers for increased roles within the Club by promoting them to General Committee positions
5. Research the development of a reward system for members who volunteer (club merchandise, paid certifications, subsidized development opportunities, etc.)
6. Provide education and personal development opportunities for our volunteers
7. Obtain regular feedback from volunteers

4.6 Coaching Development

Goals:

Increase the overall number of coaches working with our men's sides

Have at least one coach dedicated primarily to the men's club by the end of 2017

Have at least two coaches dedicated primarily to the men's club by the end of 2019

Provide some level of stipend (travel, registration, etc.) for coaches by 2020

Increase professional development opportunities for coaching staff

Action:

Coach development is seen as one of the key actions on this Club Development Plan as the experience and quality of coaching provided to our playing members is directly proportionate to their satisfaction levels. It is also key in the development of our players and ultimately the success of our teams on the pitch. Providing benefits to our coaching staff will make the CRFC an attractive option for potential coaches and provide incentive for players that are interested in making the transition from playing to coaching.

In order to further our coaching ranks the Club needs to:

1. Become active in the promotion of USA Rugby Level 100, Level 200, and Level 300 coaching courses. Providing at least one opportunity per year in Clayton.
2. Encourage active players to assist in coaching youth rugby as a gateway into coaching.
3. Identify players capable of making transition into coaching at the men's level and provide mentorship and development.
4. Determine and allocate a yearly budget for coaching development opportunities
5. Foster our development relationship with Nathan Bombrys, the Glasgow Warriors, and Ayr RFC to include regular coaching development sessions and coaching exchanges
6. Determine and allocate a yearly budget for coaching stipend to assist with registration costs, education, and/or travel reimbursement for 1-2 coaches that are dedicated to primarily working with the men's teams.

4.7 Player Development

Goals:

Increase opportunities for players to be exposed to higher level coaching

Provide appropriate training for players throughout the playing spectrum

Increase opportunities for representative play

Increase training opportunities to include supplemental sessions

Wellness/fitness education and training for players

Action:

Player satisfaction and growth is at the heart of CRFC operations. If we are unable to provide services to engage and satisfy our players, we will not be able to effectively retain our current members or recruit new players. With an expanding number of players coming to the Club, with various ability levels, it is important that we address the needs of the entire group, not just cater to our competitive players or by that same token coach to the level of our most inexperienced players.

1. Identify coaches to work with each team under the Club structure.
2. Encourage social interaction among players at each level. A "One Club" concept. No player at any level is more important than others.
3. Develop information sharing partnerships with other rugby clubs (domestic and international) to improve coaching.
4. Foster our development relationship with Nathan Bombrys, the Glasgow Warriors, and Ayr RFC to include player development, exchange, and placement opportunities.
5. Work in unison with local clubs and the Carolinas GU to create representative play opportunities for players.
6. Increase the number of optional training sessions with focus on skill development
7. Engage fitness and nutrition professionals to aid in creating a player welfare program.
8. Appoint a Player Welfare Representative to the Club General Committee to oversee the overall welfare of players. (Completed)
9. Remember that no matter how competitive our teams become that first and foremost our players are here to have fun.

4.8 Referee Development

Goals:

Recruit at least one ref to serve as the Club Referee

Increase the number of certified referees to more than ten by 2021

Host one Referee Certification course per year

Action:

As the Club continues to grow, so will the need to be able to provide our own referee support. Not only as a way to save money on referee expenses, but as a way to help continue to grow the game. As youth participation increases across North Carolina and the USA, so does the demand for quality officials.

1. Offer yearly referee clinics
2. Encourage players to obtain their referee certification
3. Educate our active members as to the benefits of becoming a referee, both as a way to give back to the game as well as a way to make money.
4. Work with local referee development specialists to create a continuing education opportunities for our Club referees
5. Aim for the addition of two new referees each year
6. Club to subsidize the fees for two new referees to go through the certification process each year