

## Alberta Wins Canada Women's Title

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Vancouver, BC - For the first time in the history of the Rugby Canada National Women's League (NWL) Finals, Alberta are Tier One champions after an impressive 27-17 win over Ontario.

In their first year of entering the NWL tournament, British Columbia's Under-23 provincial team are Tier Two champions after wrapping up their 2011 campaign with an 84-0 victory over New Brunswick.

Ontario clinched the Under-20 division with a narrow 17-15 victory over tournament hosts British Columbia on the final day of competition.

Tier One - Senior Women's Final  
Alberta 27, Ontario 17

After dispatching the defending champs British Columbia in the semifinals by a score of 17-16, Alberta carried their momentum into the championship game and are now the first team other than BC or Ontario to be crowned national champs.

Alberta came out firing in Sunday's gold medal final and led 12-0 at the half through a pair of tries from Maria Jaworski and Danielle Rowlands. Their captain Ashley Patzer tacked on the conversion.

In the second frame, Ontario found their footing and replied with a try through centre Brittany Benn.

The tenacious Albertan offense could not be silenced however, with Jaworski and Ashley MacDonald going over for further tries and a conversion coming courtesy of Patzer.

Ontario didn't go down without a fight, and replied with two tries of their own. Benn again managed to solve the Albertan defense to narrow the lead. Minutes later, a grubber kick found its way bouncing into Alberta's try zone, and Ontario's Misha Maric won a footrace against two defenders to touch down for the score. Cheryl Philips converted for Ontario to narrow the gap 24-17.

With the final minutes winding down, Ontario conceded a penalty in front of the sticks and Patzer stepped up to convert for the 27-17 win.

The victory was a long time coming for Patzer, a player that has been part of Alberta's struggle to qualify for the national championship in recent years. Alberta's success can be attributed to their preparations and development over the last few seasons, Patzer said after the win.

"A lot of it came from team cohesion," Patzer said before adding, "We haven't come together as a team like this before."

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When asked about any standouts on the squad, Patzer immediately mentioned the strong ball running and defense of national team back rower Jen Kish. "Kish is phenomenal," Patzer said. "She's playing well. She just really led the way with her steps and getting past the line and we really looked towards her a lot."

The National Women's League Tier One Final is an annual competition featuring the highest level of domestic women's rugby in Canada. From 2007-2010, only BC and Ontario had made the finals with BC winning three of the four past championships.

Consolation Final: British Columbia 41, Quebec 20

NWL tournament hosts BC wrapped up third place in the Tier One competition with a solid 41-20 victory over Quebec in the consolation final on Sunday.

BC centre Andrea Burk led the squad in offence, kicking four conversions and a penalty for a total of 11 points. Kimberly Donaldson recorded a brace of tries and other BC scores were tallied by Jessica Dovanne, Marlene Donaldson, Captain Brittany Waters and Corinne Jacobsen.

Elissa Alaïre led Quebec offensively, notching two tries. Justine Brassard crossed over to touch down with full back Magali Harvey notching a penalty and conversion.

Tier Two - Round Robin

British Columbia-U23 87, New Brunswick 0

The British Columbia Under-23 provincial team captured the Tier Two National Women's League championship after a convincing 87-0 victory over New Brunswick on Sunday morning. BC went 3-0 during the competition having previously defeated Ontario's U23 team 49-12 and Saskatchewan by a score of 34-10.

BC's kicking prop Randi Hunter was again at the forefront of their attack producing a game-high 22 points against New Brunswick through two tries and six conversions. Kayla Moleschi recorded her second hat trick of tries, having notched three in BC's opener against Ontario. Tries were also recorded by BC Captain Jesse Olynyk, Abby Goodwin, Christie Auzins, Erin Grant, Sara Byers, Melanie Le Blanc and Megan Banford.

"We're strong in the forward pack and in our backs. We hit the gaps and did a lot of off-loading and it worked to our advantage," said Hunter after the game. "We worked really hard throughout the last few months to get here and we've just proved that we are the better team and we played our hearts out," she added.

"We knew going into [the tournament] that this was the year that we could get some of the best players at this age group together. It was quite a dream team for BC," said BC captain Olynyk. "We knew going in that our forwards were going to dominate. What I was really impressed with was how our backs came together. Some girls out there, this was their first time playing representative rugby and they really came and showed us what they had"

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Saskatchewan 41, Ontario-U23 10

Saskatchewan's senior women's provincial team produced a 41-10 victory in their final match of the NWL tournament to down Ontario's U23 team. The six try performance saw Saskatchewan finish second in the tier two championship.

Laruen Whyte did the bulk of the damage for Saskatchewan, recording a trio of tries with singles coming from Carey Wallace, Julie Paetsch and Gillian Allen. Jenn Skilnick notched four tries and a penalty to wrap up the day with 11 points.

Ontario's tries were scored by Tiera Thomas-Reynolds and Louise Chen.

Under-20 - Round Robin

Ontario 17, British Columbia 15

The Ontario Junior Storm captured the National Women's League Under-20 title on Sunday with a narrow 17-15 victory over hosts British Columbia. After fending off a series of BC attacks in the final minutes, Ontario's Claragh Pegg crossed over in the 75th minute to touch down for the game winning try.

BC had led at the half with tries from Paniz Phalavanlu, Demi Stamatakis and Cassy Stevens but were unable to capitalize on their momentum in the second half. Ontario's two other tries were scored by Maggie Cogger-Orr and Zoe Smith. Smith's conversion proved to be the difference with Ontario edging their arch rivals by a devastating two points.

Ontario had gone 3-0 in the tournament having previously defeated Alberta 23-17 and downing Manitoba 54-0 earlier in the week. Ontario finished on top of the round-robin competition with 14 points, with Alberta close behind with 10. The hosts BC finished in third place with seven points, while Manitoba finished in fourth having registered no points during the 2011 competition.

Alberta 75, Manitoba 0

An impressive 13-try performance saw Alberta's U20 team wrap up their 2011 campaign with a 75-0 win over Manitoba and a 2-1 record overall placing them second in their pool.

Cassandra Orr and Rebecca Fairbairn each crossed over four times combining for 40 points. Jillian Ankutowicz and Brittany Jones each recorded two tries and Logan Kennedy crossed over once. Fairbairn converted five tries to finish the day with 30 points to her credit.

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