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## **Toronto Rugby – Position Paper – U20 National Championship**

Toronto Rugby considers as part of our mandate a responsibility to provide opportunities to our membership to develop their rugby abilities and to expand their game by playing at as high a level as possible. As such, we are fully committed to regional competition among the Ontario branches and will be working with them to develop inter-branch representative competitions at all age groups for both genders.

Toronto Rugby also supports national competitions if they provide a viable, definitive pathway for our athletes to compete for positions on a national team and if the authority in charge bears the costs associated with participation.

Toronto Rugby has been asked to participate in the 2010 National U20 championship. This competition will consist of a set of regional Ontario inter-branch games with the winner of that round advancing to the playoffs where a maximum of two games will be played. We do not believe that as currently configured this competition meets the goals that Toronto Rugby has established for participation in this type of activity and therefore will not be participating for the following reasons:

- **National Selection.** The competition is not a pathway to the national team program. There is no relationship between this U20 tournament and selection to the national program. There is no commitment from RC to have selectors at the regional games or semi-finals. The 2010 U20 team has already been selected, and the senior national team uses the ARC tournament to identify up and coming players. The Ontario Blues our regional entry in that tournament does not use the U20 tournament as a selection pathway.
- **Purpose.** This competition is an arbitrary one, set up to meet 3<sup>rd</sup> party requirements to hold a “national” competition to meet funding guidelines, and not a true national championship.
- **Funding.** RC does not support this competition financially. The entire cost is covered by the branches for the regional games and through cost sharing (funded by the branches) for the semi & final games.
- **Co-ordination.** The notice for a discussion about this competition was sent out Feb 4 by a representative of RO to determine the structure of the Ontario regional competition. A decision was required by Feb 15. RC did not discuss this competition with Toronto Rugby, or any of the other branches who are paying for it. These arrangements and discussion need to take place in the late fall so the scheduling can fit in with the branches requirements and the funding requirements can be presented to the membership at the AGM.
- **Redundancy.** There is enough competition with the U20 age group available locally through the U20 league and with regional interbranch competitions that additional out of province games (at very high costs) are not needed to develop the athletes, again unless this allows them to compete for a place on a national team.

Toronto Rugby wants our players to get the most opportunities for development and exposure to raise the game for all participants, and therefore for the reasons cited above does not believe that paying to participate in the current version of the U20 championship is serving all our members properly.