



FAQ's

LAWRENCE PARK COLLEGIATE SPORTS FIELD UPGRADE

The Toronto Scottish Rugby Football Club recently signed a long-term license agreement for redevelopment of a Toronto District School Board sports field in mid-town Toronto, at Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute. The agreement's major terms include the Club's funding of a safer and more durable synthetic field for daily use by the School and the community. In return, the Club is guaranteed times for training and competition. Under the terms of this agreement, the TDSB avoids repaying the Club's capital contribution and pays no interest. This innovative deal structure may raise questions among the School's community stakeholders. Here are some answers to some frequently asked questions:

Will the new field be less available, or more available, for community use now?

Due to its durability and weather resistance, the field will be more available to the school and other community users than ever before. The superior surface and drainage will sustain more intensive use over longer hours, and at times of the year when dirt fields are off limits. This increase in availability far exceeds the 17 weekly hours used by the rugby club during its 6-month season (Tuesday and Thursday evenings for senior men and women, Wednesday evenings for youth and juniors, and Saturdays for games, from April through October).

The School will have it 12 hours per day, five days of the week, year round. The School Board will be able to rent the field for other community users all the rest of the time: roughly 20 hours per week during the rugby season and 37 hours per week over the remaining six months of the year. This far exceeds current levels of user demand, meaning the rugby club's investment will result in a net gain for the School and the community.

Will the new field be good for sports other than rugby?

The field dimensions and surface are safe, suitable, and will be marked for soccer, field hockey, and other turf sports, as well as rugby.

How does the new field license agreement affect the track layout?

Terms of the field license agreement make no reference to the track nor to any other school ground improvements; it is entirely the TDSB's prerogative to reconfigure a running track around the agreed field dimensions.

How did the TDSB select a rugby club over other community users?

The TDSB subjected the rugby club's offer of interest free capital to a long and rigorous process. Toronto Lands Corporation conducted a public request for proposals, followed by two years of negotiation, legal review, and approvals by the Boards of the TLC, TDSB, and the rugby club.

How much is the rugby club paying for its use of the field?

To help TDSB finance the field upgrade, the rugby club provided TDSB with \$1.5 million in capital, in return for guarantee of its practice and game schedule (17 hours per week, six months of the year, over the term of the license agreement. In addition to this, the Club is foregoing at least \$50,00 - \$75,000 per year that it would otherwise earn as income from the capital invested in the field redevelopment, which offsets the rent it would otherwise pay for field permits. As long as terms of the agreement are satisfied, the rugby club never recovers its capital contribution.

Who is behind this rugby club and where did it get its money?

The Toronto Scottish Rugby Football Club is a community non-profit organization, governed by a volunteer board of directors, that was formed 72 years ago in 1953 predominately by ex-patriot Scottish players and supporters. In 1966 it raised funds and joined with five other rugby organizations to secure fields in Elgin Mills, which was then a brief drive from mid-town Toronto. That property was operated jointly until sold in 2021 to the City of Markham. Proceeds from that sale provided the funds necessary for TDSB to improve the field at Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute.

Who does the rugby club serve today and how is it funded?

In addition to training and competition for hundreds of children and youth, men and women annually, the Club serves the community by providing coaches to a number of local high schools, by subsidizing players who cannot afford membership dues, or who have earned provincial or national selections, and by providing volunteers to support other charities and causes. Most of the Club's annual revenue comes from the players whose annual dues cover field rentals, referees, uniforms,

transportation, physiotherapists, coaches, and equipment. Shortfalls are offset by corporate sponsors (such as Imago Restaurants and the Globe and Mail), and by personal donations from alumni and the community at large.

Why is this happening at LPCI, not at a different school?

GPS mapping of the Club's membership showed concentration in the midtown neighbourhoods close to LPCI, which is consistent with a long history of the School's graduates coming to play rugby for the Club. These have included international calibre women players like Ghislaine Landry, the first 3x Canadian rugby Olympian, and long-time LPCI teacher and Toronto Scottish player-coach, Cecil Moody. Between 1980 and 2000, LPCI won 32 senior, junior and bantam rugby titles under his leadership, while he also played regularly for the Toronto Scottish RFC into his 50's. Another notable LPCI rugby alumnus is David Phillips who, since passing away in 2002, is still celebrated by the school's annual award of the 'David Phillips Carpe Diem Award' and by the Club's friendly fall intersquad match (the victors taking home David Phillips' old skateboard). So as a practical and sentimental matter, the Toronto Scottish RFC made LPCI it's first choice.

Why is the community only learning about this now, and who knew what was being negotiated by TDSB?

This project was on the public agendas of the TDSB and TLC Boards and in a public RFP process in 2023. It has also been the subject of a number of public statements from the Trustee and on the TLC website over the past six months. On Sept 24, 2024, Toronto Scottish RFC engaged the community with an interactive community presentation and information session held at LPCI, which detailed the history of the project, the proposed field, and the details of the license agreement, and allowed for those in attendance to ask questions and receive further information. This presentation was recorded, and is provided here via YouTube (<https://youtu.be/heddT81s6tU?si=8NU-XahWSp7ZuBNF>).

Where should we go if we want to learn more about the license agreement, the rugby Club, or the TDSB's process?

Please direct enquiries to Toronto Scottish RFC's Communications Director, Martin Blake (alumni@torontoscottish.ca), who will respond to general inquiries, and refer relevant requests to the principals, as needed, including inquiries from the media.

For more information regarding the Toronto Scottish R.F.C. please visit www.torontoscottish.ca

