



1991 Men's Rugby World Cup Team

Between 1989 and 1996, Canada's Men's Rugby Team won numerous international games, but it was at the 1991 Rugby World Cup in France that global recognition of and respect for Canada as a rugby nation was garnered. Canada was a relatively unknown, but emerging commodity on the world rugby scene in the last 1980s and 1990s. Ian Birtwell and Rod Holloway took over the coaching reins leading up to the 1991 Rugby World Cup, during which time there were wins over the USA and Scotland, as well as home and away victories over Argentina.

With a 13-3 win over Fiji to open the 1991 World Cup, followed by a 19-11 win over Romania and a 19-13 loss to France, Canada met New Zealand in the quarter final, which felt like two matches in one. New Zealand led after the first half, but Canada outscored the All Blacks in the second half, driving relentlessly to earn a couple of well-deserved tries. Despite a final loss of 29-13, the team had proven that Canada had become competitive within the uppermost level of international competition, and the players did a lap of honour to a standing ovation.

This exceptional group of players put Canada on the rugby map, with strong and skillful forwards and speedy and determined backs. They were expertly coached and well looked after from a sports medicine perspective, but perhaps the most impressive characteristic of this team was the intense brotherhood they shared. The team had a special bond off the field which directly transferred onto the field and was the difference maker on many occasions. The team, who had a clear sense of being on a mission and having a common purpose, was inducted into the BC Sports Hall of Fame in 2018.

Players: Bruce Breen, Al Charron, Gary Dukelow, Glenn Ennis, Eddie Evans, John Graf, Steve Gray, Norm Hadley, Danny Jackart, Jeff Knauer, John Lecky, Dave Lougheed, Gord Mackinnon, Pat Palmer, Roy Radu, Gareth Rees, John Robertsen, David Speirs, Christian Stewart, Scott Stewart, Karl Svoboda, Paul Szabo, Chris Tynan, Ron Vanden Brink, Tom Woods, Mark Wyatt

Team Staff: Mike Luke (Manager and Assistant Coach), Ian Birtwell (Coach), Rod Holloway (Assistant Coach), Michael Bassett (Physician), Bill Treloar (Physiotherapist), Peter McMullan (Hon. Media Manager, Canadian Rugby Union)

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