



SIX NATIONS RUGBY CEO BEN MOREL TO STEP DOWN AT THE END OF THE RUGBY SEASON AFTER FIVE YEARS AT THE HELM



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Six Nations Rugby today announced that its Chief Executive Officer, Ben Morel, has decided to step down at the end of the current 2022/23 rugby season.

Morel has successfully led the organisation since 2018, during which time it has experienced unprecedented transformational change; particularly centered around its six member unions collaborating as strongly off the pitch as they compete on it and exemplified by the centralisation of key media and commercial rights, as well as a strategic partnership with private investment fund CVC Capital Partners.

New innovative partnerships have been secured within Morel's tenure including that with TikTok focused on a revamped Women's Six Nations Championship in its own dedicated

window in the Rugby calendar; and with Amazon Prime Video in UK & Ireland to broadcast a re-branded Autumn Nations Series. Six Nations Rugby has also successfully extended its media partnerships around the Men's and Women's Six Nations Championships with its free-to-air partners in all domestic markets.

In that context, Ben Morel informed the Six Nations Board that the end of the 2022/23 season would be the right time for him to step down after having ensured a best-in-class transition with his successor.

"It is an unbelievable privilege to be leading such an organisation as Six Nations Rugby and in particular such a talented group of people. I am immensely proud of the many accomplishments over the last five seasons ranging from successfully completing our Championships during the pandemic, centralising our rights to offer a better experience for our fans around the world, and bringing state-of-the-art partnerships to place rugby on a significant growth trajectory", said Morel.

"I am at the stage in my life when I want to tackle other personal and professional projects and a Rugby World Cup year is the perfect time to ensure a smooth transition to keep the pace of our rapid transformation. There are several key projects I am focused on delivering before I depart and look forward to the next months ahead".

Ronan Dunne, Chair of the Board of Six Nations Rugby said "We have been privileged to have Ben's wise counsel and steadfast leadership during these past five seasons. He has delivered outstanding performance, whilst establishing a strong and effective organisation and executive leadership team, leaving us well placed to deliver on the next phase of our vision for Six Nations Rugby."

The Six Nations Rugby Board are grateful that they have been given a long notice period to ensure a successful transition. The process to find a successor is underway with an announcement expected in the New Year.

Six Nations Milestones in the last five years

- Signed multi-year title sponsorship with Guinness for the Men's Six Nations
- Centralised media rights by aggregating Men's, Women's and U20 Six Nations as well as Autumn Internationals and other international matches
- Established an Executive team including a first Director of Rugby at Six Nations in Julie Paterson, a first CMO in Sarah Beattie, Craig Maxwell as CCO, Ed Hepworth as CFO, and James Stebbing as General Counsel
- Secured private equity investment through a strategic partnership with CVC Capital Partners
- Completed all Six Nations Championships during the Covid-19 Pandemic providing a critically needed source of income to members Unions
- Launched innovative Autumn Nations Cup during the 2020 pandemic supported by all broadcasters, including a new partnership with Amazon Prime Video, leading to a newly branded Autumn Nations Series in 2021 & 2022
- Successful broadcast rights renewals for Six Nations domestically and internationally, expanding relationship with key free-to-air partners such as BBC/ITV and France

Television as well as RTE/Virgin Media and Sky Italia

- Established a new window for the Women's Six Nations and secured first Title Partner of the Women's Six Nations with TikTok alongside unprecedented broadcast support
- New partnerships with Breitling and Sage secured bringing innovation to Rugby including Smart Ball technology introduced at the 2022 Autumn Nations Series
- Bringing more alignment to Rugby working closer with the club game as well as other international rugby stakeholders to address historical fragmentation challenges including acting as a key driver of current Global Calendar discussions
- Helped develop appropriate sporting pathways to the senior rugby competitions by strengthening Six Nations Under 20s Championship as well as relaunching the men's Under 18 competition and introducing a Women's equivalent, for the first time

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About Six Nations Rugby

Six Nations Rugby is the official organising body of the annual Six Nations Championships and Autumn Nations Series.

Working in partnership with its member unions and federations in England (RFU), France (FFR), Ireland (IRFU), Italy (FIR), Scotland (SRU) and Wales (WRU), Six Nations Rugby has responsibility for the promotion and operation of the renowned Six Nations Championships and Autumn International Series, as well as the negotiation and management of their centralised commercial rights.

The Six Nations Championship is the oldest international rugby tournament in the world, dating back to its original incarnation in 1883 and expanding to its current format of six teams in 2000. It consists of three highly competitive annual tournaments across men's, women's and U20s rugby.

In its day-to-day operations, Six Nations Rugby is guided by the core values of courage, solidarity, inclusion, integrity, and creativity. Together with its unions and federations, Six Nations Rugby is committed to the development of rugby at all levels, as well as working with other governing and representative bodies around the world to ensure the best possible future for the game, its players and its fans