

General

Men's Division 2 rugby is pretty much the same again this year. However, three Ohio teams will face relegation playoffs in the spring. Overall, I believe most teams have enjoyed their year.

Business

In general, D2 teams appear to be financially sound. The teams currently boast reasonably sized rosters – with several showing benefit from youth programs. While there are small sponsorships popping up here and there, teams are still funded primarily through the players themselves. D2 teams contribute a lot of money to the ORU but are very reasonable of their requests from it - general support (admin, website, officers, growth) and Men's Selects (which now helps a several D2 guys) are where we benefit the most.

League / Competitive

Midwest continues to tell all of the teams what to do. They set the majority of the fall schedule and about half of the spring schedule. They should be at their “ideal” 24 D2 teams this fall. Overall, the 2004 fall league was sort of topsy-turvy with several teams having uncharacteristically bad seasons and others getting lots of wins. Every game certainly had to be played because there was no way of telling who would win many of the games.

Queen City had a good fall season benefiting from several guys coming out of the Cincinnati high school programs and a pretty nice scheduling draw. They finished 7th overall in the Midwest. Louisville struggled for numbers at times but are still a very strong team. When they managed to beat then-front-runner Indianapolis at season's end, they garnered enough league points to come in 9th. Lexington and the Kelts tied for third in their conference with Michiana but actually placed 4th and 5th as a result of head-to-head matches. The good news is that with 9 league points they will each get to host the first relegation match. Dayton again struggled to win games. Tough, competitive and fun but they just can't buy a win sometimes. They will have to travel to Pittsburgh for their first relegation match.

Relegation playoffs could see another Ohio D2 team moved down to D3 by the end of the spring. While there certainly are good teams at D3 that should be playing up at D2, each of the three Ohio teams that might move down would not benefit from the competition there. They are solid teams whose fall seasons were just a bit unlucky. Relegation would likely not help their recruiting efforts and would definitely mean more traveling. Hopefully, all three will shake off the cobwebs of the fall and win their key matches this spring.

There has been an increased representation by D2 members on the Ohio Select Side and the development squad.

Development

As noted in the youth report, Cincinnati has started high school rugby this spring with heavy involvement from the Kelts, Queen City and the Wolfhounds. Dayton, Louisville and Lexington have also added teams to the high school level.

Referee development is still languishing but we have seen a few new bodies. All league games are mandated to be worked by “Midwest” referees – at a cost of \$150 per game. This money is NOT going to the advancement of our referees. There are few rewards in place for wanting to get into this line of work and many players retire from D2 only when they are physically finished. Hopefully, with improved communication and better numbers the referee pool will continue to see new blood.