



# THE WASHINGTON IRISH

## RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

### PRESS RELEASE

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#### Washington Irish Name Darryl Cross New Head Coach

The Washington Irish Rugby Football Club President Packy Griffin announced that Darryl Cross has been hired as the next head coach of the Washington Irish.

After a deliberate and thorough process where the search committee was looking for the right individual to match the club's upward trajectory on the pitch and the unparalleled culture of comradery, support and values off it, it became clear Darryl was the right person for the job.

"I'm beyond excited to work with Darryl as our head coach," says Club Captain James Bragan. "His demonstrated commitment to high performance, strong leadership, and producing quality Irish players on and off the pitch will benefit the club for years to come."

Since 2018, Coach Cross has served as an assistant coach for the Irish, focusing his efforts on the defensive side of the ball. Most recently, he led the Washington Irish during a successful tour to London and Cardiff in early 2020, including a victory in the tour finale over Cheshunt RFC. Cross's coaching experience spans over three decades at the high school, university, and men's senior club level, with stops at Virginia RFC, James Madison University, and the University of Virginia, among others. He is a Master Personal Trainer and Performance Enhancement Specialist as certified by the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM). Additionally, Cross is a corporate, Certified Team Performance Coach and author of the book, *Cultivating Excellence: the Art, Science and Grit of High Performance in Business*.

In his own words, Coach Cross expressed excitement about his selection as Washington Irish Head Coach:

*"When I started playing rugby in 1985, I never imagined that I would one day be the head coach of one of the premier clubs in the country. It is an honor to serve these players, supporters, fans, and alumni. Coaching is the discipline of making high performers better tomorrow than they were yesterday. It takes art, science, and grit to do so. I believe great teams make great people, and we will constantly cultivate greatness with WIRFC."*

Coach Cross assumes Head Coach responsibilities just in time for pre-season training leading into the Fall 2021 season and the first Mid-Atlantic rugby union competition since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic nearly 18 months. Combined with a strong roster of returning veterans and talented new players, the Irish are eager to return to an exciting, winning brand of rugby under Coach Cross's leadership.

The Washington Irish will kick off their 41<sup>st</sup> year as a club with a pre-season test match against Coach Cross's old club, Virginia RFC, on 4 September. The D1 squad will travel to Potomac Exiles Rugby Club to kick off its Capital Rugby Union matrix on 18 September; D3 will kick off the season at NOVA on 25 September as looks to build off its undefeated streak from before the pandemic in MAC D3.

Stay up to date on all Washington Irish Rugby Football Club updates on and off the pitch via the club's [website](http://www.washingtonirishrfc.org) and social media accounts.