

As families and loved ones convened on College Hill to celebrate the class of 2024, the extended Brown Rugby community gathered at the Berylson Family Fields for our club's annual commencement activities. This year we honored 13 graduating seniors. Under ideal weather conditions, 75 degrees and sunny with occasional wind, and with more than 150 players, alumni, and supporters in attendance, the festivities kicked off with the alumni match. The alumni roster boasted graduates from 1980 through 2023. We were happy to be able to share the day with several of the women's rugby community as well.

The undergrads' team struck first and fastest during the match's opening minutes, and the alumni replied on the next possession, starting the action in an exciting fashion. The teams would trade blows through the remainder of the first half with the alumni holding a 20-14 lead at halftime. The undergrads cut into the lead to start the second half but could not convert their try so the alumni barely retained supremacy, 20-19. Sensing their lead shrinking, the more grizzled Bears were finally primed to finish off their younger counterparts and punched in back-to-back scores late in the match to bring the final score to 32-19 in favor of the alumni. In all, the undergrads scored 3 tries and 2 conversions while the alumni lit up the scoreboard with 6 tries and 1 conversion.

Following the match, everyone had a chance to socialize, sharing a meal and refreshments in a tent by the field, while many of the "cubs" kicked and passed rugby balls around, emulating their favorite players. Coach Laflamme then addressed the assemblage, recapping the tribulations and triumphs of the Class of 2024. Welcomed to Brown as freshmen in the wake of the COVID global pandemic, and having the 2020-2021 season canceled, this class certainly had an experience unlike any other in club history. Also remarkable, this class has won the Ivy League XV's championship every year during their time at Brown and has never lost a match at home. They compiled an overall record of 36-3 in 15's, scoring an astonishing 1673 points, giving up only 278 while finishing in the top 3 of the National Collegiate Rugby rankings every season. Ranking 3rd in 2021, winning the national title in 2022, and finishing 3rd this past season in 2023. They also captured 2 Ivy League 7s titles, in 2021 and 2023, and were runners-up in 2022. Several seniors were awarded special recognition as shown below.

Class of 1991 Award; Jake Ehrenkranz & Oliver Corbett

The class of 1991 established this award to promote the success of Brown Rugby for player integrity and teamwork. Each current club member votes for 2 recipients of the award, one from the first XV and one from the second XV, taking into consideration the qualities of dedication, contribution to leadership, and good humor

Martin Henry "Tinry" Dawson Memorial Trophy; Matthew Mitchell & Keigo Hachisuka

This award is presented to the senior who has contributed to the Brown Rugby Club through his intensity and enthusiasm on the field and his love of the game. This award was created in the spring of 1995 by family and friends to honor and celebrate the life of Martin Henry "Tinry" Dawson Class of 1994. While Tinry's love of athletics and competition fueled his success on the rugby field, it was his selflessness and humor that touched so many

Coaches Award: Oliver Corbett

Awarded annually to the player, through his desire, effort, and team play, who contributes the most to the rugby program, to the game of rugby, and exemplifies the true spirit of the game.

Then the 13 graduates each received an affectionately personalized award from the club and coaches:

Omar Al-Jendari
Oliver Corbett
Jake Ehrenkranz
Keigo Hachisuka
Jullian Hooten
Samuel Jana
Dylan Lewis
Ian Liu
Matthew Mitchell
Paul Muser
Eugene Oh
Chetan Shukla
William Sinfield, Master's

Special appreciation is deserved by the Brown rugby parent's group who were essential to the event's success. Parents Amy Mann (Garett, '26) and Diana and Pat Zeller (Will, '23) led this group and were on hand to help things run smoothly, and Shawley Zeller (sister of Will) served as the official photographer on the day.