

DC FURIES  
EST. 1978

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WASHINGTON, D.C.  
**FURIES**  
WOMEN'S RUGBY

45th  
Anniversary  
Celebration

2023

SAPPHIRE GALA

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# DC FURIES

The Washington Women's Rugby Football Club (WWRFC), more commonly known as the Furies, was founded in 1978 in Washington, D.C.

The team was originally formed from a nucleus of five skilled and hardworking rugby players, and quickly developed into a highly competitive club team. Over the years, other skilled and dedicated athletes have replaced the now-retired initial members. These new players share the same intensity and love for the game as the team's originators.

The Furies compete in the Mid-Atlantic Rugby Union and the Capital Geographic Union Division 1.

Today, we celebrate 45 years of history, friendship, and rugby excellence. Alumni from across the country and current players gather today to honor our shared legacy, love of the game, and commitment to a future for our beloved club.

# MESSAGE FROM OUR PLANNING COMMITTEE

We are so grateful you have chosen to celebrate with us as the Furies hit a 45 year milestone.

It's truly been an honor to plan this celebration, marking a huge milestone in our club's history. We are thrilled to share this special moment with Furies past and present. We hope guests will take the time to celebrate with friends and teammates, share in rugby memories together, and reflect on your time with and the history of the Furies.

PTBAF.

Brooke, Diane, Joanne, Jordan, Katy, Leni, Liz, and Power





# **A N N I V E R S A R Y S C H E D U L E**

## **Friday September 8th, 2023**

Join us for a Happy Hour at Tight Five Pub from 6-8 pm on Friday.

Join current and former Furies on the eve of the Furies' first home game of the season. Celebrate with delectable apps or the custom Anniversary cocktail - the Lightning Lemonade - available all weekend long.

## **Saturday September 9th, 2023**

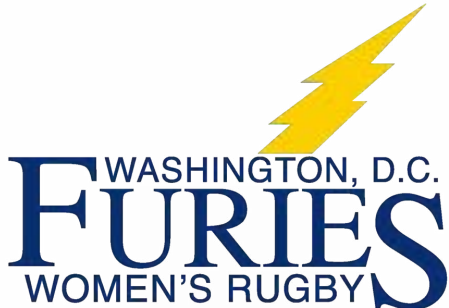
In the morning, come cheer current Furies on in our scrimmage located right in DC against the Norfolk Storm at 11am.

Later that same evening join us at the Sapphire Gala to enjoy dinner and speeches about the past 45 years of Furies legacy.

## **Sunday September 10th, 2023**

Don't want to say goodbye yet? Come join the Furies for Brunch at Tight Five Pub. Festivities start at 11AM.



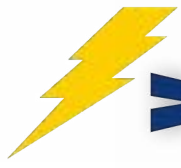


# CLUB HISTORY

The Washington Women's Rugby Football Club, better known as the DC Furries, were established in 1978, just six years after the passage of Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in education funding. Founding the DC Furries was a natural progression for the first generation of women with increased access to high school and college athletic opportunities, and provided an avenue to pursue competitive contact sports in a post-education setting. The ideals set forth in the DC Furries constitution include participation in the game of rugby, promoting respect and friendship, enjoying the camaraderie of the sport, and promoting high standards of play.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the leadership of the DC Furies broke through several rugby "glass ceilings", gaining positions on the boards of the Potomac Rugby Union (RFU) and the Eastern Rugby Union. The DC Furies were the first stand alone women's club in the PRU, successfully pushing their application through and forcing the PRU to strike down the requirement that women's clubs could only exist through affiliation with an established men's club.

Over the past 45 years, the DC Furies have lived up to their constitutional ideals and represented the city of Washington, DC on the national and international stage. The DC Furies consistently finished in the top 16 Division I teams in the country throughout the 1990s and 2000s.



# CLUB HISTORY



**CLUB HISTORY**

In 2009, the DC Furies were selected to join the newly created Women's Premier League (WPL). The WPL's stringent administrative, financial and competitive requirements spurred the DC Furies to an increasingly professional-level of administrative excellence and the Furies, still 100% volunteer run, rose to the challenge. The Furies played in the WPL throughout the 2010s and flourished at a high level of competition.

In 2019, the DC Furies experienced a period of turbulence that tested the club's resilience: relegation from the WPL after a disappointing season, player discontent that led to a number of players departing to play at a less competitive level, a stressful 7s season, and struggles rebuilding the Division 1 side created real fears about the longevity of the DC Furies. Held together by a cohort of determined veterans and enthusiastic recruits, the club was beginning to rebound when the world shut down in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.



Following a lengthy hiatus in 2020-2021, the DC Furies were essentially resurrected from the grave by a small but mighty corps of dedicated players. Gussie Maguire, Michelle (Ploeg) Vanderploeg, and Sharifa Love functioned as player/coaches for a scaled down 2021 Summer 7s season, and the club reconstituted that Fall to play a Division 1 competitive 15's season with approximately 12 players regularly attending practices. Veterans, friends, family, and random passerbyers were often cajoled or coerced to put on boots and a mouthguard to make up a game day 15! Through the strength of our community and love for the game, we made it and were rewarded in turn with a bountiful crop of rookies in Spring of 2022.



**CLUB HISTORY**



**CLUB HISTORY**

Currently, the club is close to full strength and is now looking forward to rebuilding a second side. Fielding two sides enables the club to serve the needs of rugby athletes at varying levels and to comprise a mix of elite, developmental, and beginner athletes.

In addition to playing with their club, in the past few years a number of DC Furies players have been selected for the Capital Geographic Union select side.

Past Furies Women's National Team Players (Eagles) include Beth Pepper, Jen Renne, Nancy Fitz, Elizabeth Dilley, Andrea Khoury, Laura Miller, Amanda Street, and Samantha Pankey. Several of these players have captained the Eagles, and represented our country in the Women's Rugby World Cup.

In 2013, Rugby Magazine named Joanna Bader, DC Furies player (and current coach) as the Women's Rugby Club Player of the Year. The DC Furies have also represented the District on several international tours, including tours to France in 1997, Ireland in 1999, Australia in 2001, South Africa in 2004, Argentina in 2006, and England in 2010, and back to Ireland in 2017.

In addition to representing Washington, DC with high levels of integrity and athletic excellence, the DC Furies strive to give back to the surrounding area and to further the game of women's rugby. Several former DC Furies have gone on to become very active in the USA Rugby Referee Society, giving back to the game by transitioning into refereeing careers after retiring from active play.



**CLUB HISTORY**



# CLUB HISTORY

From 2009-2013 the DC Furies worked together with other local teams to sponsor the “Beltway Battle Against Breast Cancer”, a fundraising weekend of exhibition rugby with proceeds benefiting the American Cancer Foundation and local breast cancer foundations.

From 1980-present the DC Furies have held the annual Ruggerfest tournament, the largest women’s spring tournament in the country. This tournament creates a boon to local tourism by bringing over 400 players (plus parents, fans, and support staff) from teams from all over the USA and Canada to the Washington, DC area to participate in U19/High School, Collegiate, and adult Social and Competitive brackets. For many years in the 1980s, as well as 2001, 2014, 2019, and 2022 the DC Furies had the honor of not only hosting, but also winning their own tournament. Kudos to the club's dedicated Ruggerfest chairs for bringing the tournament back post-Covid, after a two year hiatus.

In 2014, the DC Furies partnered with USA Rugby and the Washington DC Youth Rugby Warriors, a Washington, DC free local club for city youth, to promote the “Try On Rugby!” initiative to encourage girls to participate in the sport of rugby. The DC Furies co-hosted a clinic for young rugby players and provided the Warriors with coaching and administrative support.

Many current and former DC Furies have coached local high school and college teams, including American University, Georgetown University, American University, the Landon School, Bell Multicultural High School, Gonzaga High School, Hyde High School, and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Many local high school and college players join the DC Furies following graduation, cementing ties to the area and the local economy.



**CLUB HISTORY**

# CLUB HISTORY

The DC Furies club is one of the oldest women's rugby clubs in the nation. In 2005 the DC Furies incorporated in the District of Columbia as a 501(c)(3) in order to ensure continued financial stability and pursue the goals of purchasing field space in the District, and fostering and supporting youth and high school rugby.

For 45 years, the DC Furies have personified excellence in the DC Capital Region. The club has weathered its ups and downs but has persevered through the dedicated efforts of hundreds of volunteers and thousands of players. The DC Furies are dedicated to the principles of diversity and inclusion and remain at the forefront of fighting for the rights of women and the LGBTQIA+ community. In addition to their on-field victories, DC Furies players have also gone on to excel professionally throughout the region in areas of medicine, law, finance, government, education, public policy, nonprofit management, military service, business, volunteer work, and myriad other professions, in many cases quite literally "saving the world". The skills, teamwork, and values that are honed on the pitch and through the administration of the non-profit club translate exceptionally well to many other personal and professional endeavors. It's an honor and a privilege to be associated with this club and that's why we are all PROUD TO BE A FURY!





**THE DC FURRIES**  
**Through**  
**the**  
**Ages**

**1978-2023**

# THROUGH THE AGES

# 1980s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 1980s



# THROUGH THE AGES 1980s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 1990s



# THROUGH THE AGES 1990s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2000s



# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2000s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2010s









# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2020s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2020s





# THROUGH THE AGES

# 2020s





DIRECTED BY LIZ LINSTROM

IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS A MEN'S GAME.  
THEY'RE MAKING SPACE FOR EVERYONE.

# FURIOUS



A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE DC FURIES WOMXN'S RUGBY TEAM

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY LIZ LINSTROM  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DIANE POOLE & LAURA FRAHER & RENA SELLNER  
MUSIC BY JACOB WESTON | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY LIZ LINSTROM  
POSTER PHOTO BY TRAVIS PRIOR | SUPPORTED BY ARLINGTON ARTS

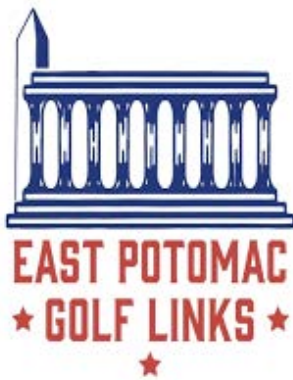
[WWW.FURIOUSTHEFILM.COM](http://WWW.FURIOUSTHEFILM.COM)

# THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS

We are grateful to our event sponsors for their support in commemorating 45 years of rugby excellence in the DC region.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SILENT AUCTION DONORS





# FRIENDS OF THE FURIES

Thank you to the friends and families of the Furies who shared their support for individual players and alumni, as well as for the club!





**Player. Leader. Coach.**

**Congratulations to Lifetime Member Joanna Bader for embodying what it means to be Proud to be a Fury since 1995!**





Furies Strong! Congratulations on 45 years of great rugby and beautiful friendships!

**#PTBAF!**

**Diane "Di Poo" Poole  
&  
JC Browder**





# **S U S T A I N I N G S U P P O R T I N G**

## **Interested in reoccurring giving?**

**You can now schedule monthly and yearly giving via our Paypal in addition to one-time donations! You do not need a PayPal account to use this payment method, but you will need a credit/debit card if you don't have a PayPal account.**

**The Washington DC Furies are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible.**

**To donate directly on our website  
<https://www.dcfuries.com/donate>**

**Your support directly impacts the club's ability to develop rugby in the nation's capital for years to come. As always, PTBAF**



# L I F E T I M E F U R I E S

## Once a Fury, Always a Fury

Over the years, a select number of Furies have been nominated and welcomed into the Furies Hall of Fame - given the ultimate status of Lifetime Furies! These Furies have demonstrated an active commitment to the team; first as players, then as coaches, mentors and fans.

Joan Ahlberg

Jo Bader

Lois Boland

Joanne Correia

Roni Epstein

Nancy Fitz

Jana Froeling

Candace Gingrich

Linda Keeler

Leni Dworkis

Rosie Kelly

Dre Khoury

Kati Kovacs

Kathleen McHugh

Diane Poole

Jennifer Renne

M. A. Sheehan

Pat Brownell Sterner

Judy Tixier





# DC FURIES FALL 2023

## SCHEDULE

**09**  
SEP

**HOME**  
*VS. NORFOLK*

**16**  
SEPT

**HOME**  
*VS. NOVA*

**21**  
OCT

**AWAY**  
*VS. RALEIGH*

**30**  
SEPT

**HOME**  
*VS. ATLANTA*

**11**  
NOV

**HOME**  
*VS. PHILLY*

**14**  
OCT

**AWAY**  
*VS. PHILLY*

**18**  
NOV

**AWAY**  
*VS. ATLANTA*





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you again to our Furies friends and families who have supported this event. It's been a privilege to celebrate with you, and we look forward to our next big milestone.

Thank you again to our sponsors:

- Tight Five Pub
- Nellie's
- Shaw's Tavern
- NoVa House & Home

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*We thank you for your past, present, and future support of the Furies.*

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## CONTINUED SUPPORT

The club accepts donations year-round. Please consider additional support to the current team.

<https://www.dcfuries.com/donate>