

MEDIA RELEASE

Grassroots growth.

Ten clubs set to shine with Bunnings Rugby Assist win



A vital part of their community, Bunnings Rugby Assist 2025 recipient, Southbridge Rugby Football Club

“Southbridge Rugby Club is more than just a place to enjoy the game – it’s a vital part of our community,” says Southbridge Rugby Clubs’ proud spokesperson, Rachel Rolton, named one of 10 recipients of Bunnings Rugby Assist support in 2025.

Now in its fifth year, Bunnings Rugby Assist is a joint initiative between Bunnings Warehouse and New Zealand Rugby (NZR), created to help grassroots rugby clubs upgrade their facilities – vital spaces at the heart of many communities. Since launching, the program has supported 50 clubs across Aotearoa with \$30,000 worth of Bunnings products and materials and hands on support, with this year’s announcement upping the club impact to a combined \$1.5 million in funding and resources.

Today, Bunnings and NZR are thrilled to announce the 10 winning clubs for 2025.

Southbridge Rugby Club, one of the 10 winning clubs, plans to host a club working bee with the helping hands of Bunnings to build a new deck and refresh their clubrooms to make their space more inviting for supporters and community members.

“Our club upgrades will come to life through a combination of community spirit, volunteer effort, and partnership with Bunnings. This approach strengthens the bonds within our club, reflecting our values of unity, support, and collaboration”, says Junior Advisory Board Manager, Rachel Rolton, who applied for the grant.

“At Southbridge Rugby Club, we believe in the power of grassroots rugby to strengthen rural connections and foster a true sense of belonging. Our club is more than just a sports organisation – it’s a whānau, a place where kids, families, senior players, and even our senior citizens find support, friendship, and a sense of purpose”, Rolton adds.



MEDIA RELEASE

“Southbridge Rugby Club is more than just a place to play – it’s a vital part of our community, creating lifelong connections, building confidence in young players, and making a positive impact that reaches far beyond the sidelines.”

Steve Lancaster, NZR General Manager of Community Rugby, shares his views on the value of community clubs: “Grassroots rugby plays a vital role in the game we love. It’s where future All Blacks and Black Ferns take their first steps and communities come together around a shared love for the game. It’s great to have Bunnings in our corner again, providing some extra support to club rugby through Bunnings Rugby Assist. Judging is always hard because there are so many worthy applicants, and this year was no different.

“Congratulations to all the clubs receiving support this year. We look forward to seeing the positive difference this will make for your clubs and communities.”

Bunnings New Zealand General Manager, Melissa Haines added: “For our team, it’s a highlight to be involved with Bunnings Rugby Assist. Over the past four years, team members from stores right across the country have rolled up their sleeves to help clubs transform their facilities – from changing rooms to kitchen fit-outs, together we’ve tackled 50 projects that genuinely make a difference.”

The 2025 Bunnings Rugby Assist winning clubs are:

1. *Belfast Rugby Club (Canterbury RFU)*
2. *Eastern United JMB Kaiwaka (Northland RFU)*
3. *Greytown Rugby Football Club (Wairarapa Bush RFU)*
4. *Harbour Rugby Football Club (Otago RFU)*
5. *Kaikohe Rugby Football & Sports Club (Northland RFU)*
6. *Kurow Rugby Football Club (North Otago RFU)*
7. *Melville Rugby & Sports Club (Waikato RU)*
8. *Napier Tech Rugby Club (Hawkes Bay RFU)*
9. *Onewhero Rugby Football Club (Counties Manukau RFU)*
10. *Southbridge Rugby Football Club (Canterbury RFU)*

Each club will receive a share of \$300,000 worth of Bunnings products and materials to upgrade their facilities.

For more information, please visit: [Bunnings Rugby Assist - Bunnings New Zealand](#)

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MEDIA RELEASE

Notes to the editor

Bunnings knows the important role local rugby clubs play in bringing communities together. Since 2021, Bunnings Warehouse has been the primary partner and naming rights sponsor of the Bunnings Warehouse NPC, The Farah Palmer Cup (FPC) presented by Bunnings Warehouse, and the Bunnings Warehouse Heartland Championship. Bunnings Rugby Assist was created, in partnership with New Zealand Rugby, to help community rugby clubs upgrade facilities that are vital to their operation. Each year rugby clubs from across Aotearoa have been invited to apply for \$30,000 worth of Bunnings products and materials. Since its first year, Bunnings Rugby Assist has supported 50 clubs with a share of \$1.2 million to upgrade their facilities.

Achieving change requires commitment from many and as a proud partner of provincial rugby in New Zealand, it's just a small way that Bunnings can support the communities in which it operates.

