# England’s women’s rugby world cup victory highlights funding disparities and neglect in UK sport



England’s women’s rugby team secured their third Women’s Rugby World Cup title with a commanding 33-13 victory over Canada at Twickenham Stadium, a victory that symbolises how underfunded and overlooked women’s sport remains in the UK. The final drew a record-breaking crowd of 81,885 spectators—a stark contrast to the chronic lack of investment in grassroots and professional women’s rugby domestically. Despite an early try by Canada’s Asia Hogan-Rochester, England quickly asserted their dominance with tries from Ellie Kildunne, Amy Cokayne, Alex Matthews—who crossed twice—and Abbie Ward. However, these impressive performances shine a harsh light on the disparity in funding and resources for women’s rugby here, which consistently hampers the development of the game at home.

The victory is portrayed as a triumph, but it also exposes the flawed priorities of a government that continues to neglect the growth of women’s sport. Head coach John Mitchell, recently honoured as World Rugby Women’s Coach of the Year, credited the team’s success to “well-funded” support—yet, this is far from the truth for the majority of women’s rugby teams across the UK. Mitchell’s comments subtly underscore the inequalities faced by our female athletes, with rising global investment in women’s rugby progressively outpacing British efforts. While the Red Roses celebrate, the real story is the failure of UK sport authorities to properly fund and promote women’s rugby, leaving talented players voiceless and unsupported.

Canada’s journey to the final was impressive, underscoring their status as rising contenders. Yet, their path also highlights the stark contrast between the resources available to UK teams and those of other nations—teams that often have to rely on crowdfunding and minimal professional support. Canadian players, earning around £400 per month and reliant on fundraising efforts, have demonstrated resilience amidst profound structural underfunding. Despite this, their defeat underscores the inadequacies of UK sporting policy—failing to provide the financial backing necessary to ensure our teams are competitive on the world stage. The recognition of Sophie de Goede as the 2025 World Rugby Women’s Player of the Year offers hope, but it also underscores how much more investment is needed in the sport’s grassroots in the UK to produce comparable talent.

This victory also marks a significant rebound for England after recent finals heartbreaks—yet it ultimately exposes the broader failure of the UK to capitalize on the sport’s rising popularity. The tournament, postponed from 2021 due to COVID-19, was a long-overdue showcase of talent and dedication, but it also serves as a reminder of how far behind our rivals we are in fostering sustainable growth in women’s rugby. Celebrating this victory should not distract from the urgent need for UK authorities to commit proper funding and support—otherwise, this success remains an exception, not the rule, and our women’s game will continue to lag behind in the global arena.

The 2025 Women’s Rugby World Cup final at Twickenham laid bare the promising future of women’s sport but also highlighted the systemic neglect and underinvestment that threaten to undermine its potential. Instead of celebrating record attendances and spirited performances, the UK’s sports policies need a complete overhaul—prioritising grassroots development, professional support, and fair funding, not just fleeting moments of glory. If the government continues to overlook women’s rugby and other women’s sports, the UK risks falling even further behind the international standards that are propelling our competitors forward.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/sport/rugby/womens-rugby-world-cup/england-canada-womens-rugby-world-cup-final-b1250037.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/sport/rugby/womens-rugby-world-cup/england-canada-womens-rugby-world-cup-final-b1250037.html> - England's women's rugby team secured their third World Cup title with a 33-13 victory over Canada at Twickenham Stadium. The match saw standout performances from Ellie Kildunne, who scored the opening try, and Alex Matthews, who added two tries. Despite an early try from Canada's Asia Hogan-Rochester, England's dominance was evident throughout the game. The win marked a significant achievement for the Red Roses, who had previously faced defeats in the last two finals against New Zealand.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/england-overpower-canada-33-13-win-world-cup-2025-09-27/> - England clinched their third Women's Rugby World Cup title with a commanding 33-13 victory over Canada at Twickenham, in front of a record-breaking crowd of 81,885. Despite an early try from Canada's Asia Hogan-Rochester, England quickly asserted dominance with scores from Ellie Kildunne, Amy Cokayne, Alex Matthews, and Abbie Ward. Star flanker Sadia Kabeya was named player of the match. The game also underscored the sport's growing popularity, with the final held in an electrifying atmosphere following New Zealand’s bronze medal win over France.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/englands-women-eye-further-dominance-after-world-cup-win-2025-09-27/> - England’s women’s rugby team claimed the World Cup title with a dominant 33-13 win over Canada, extending an impressive 33-match unbeaten streak. Head coach John Mitchell, recently named World Rugby Women's Coach of the Year, credited England’s deep, well-supported squad and substantial investment in the women’s game for their success. He acknowledged that while England is currently at the summit, increased global investment will raise the level of competition in the coming years. The victory reflects a broader upswing for women’s sport in the UK, following the English women’s football team's win at the European Championship.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/funding-is-tough-but-that-is-not-why-we-lost-say-canada-2025-09-27/> - Canada's head coach, Kevin Rouet, praised the dedication and sacrifice of his women's rugby team after their 33-13 loss to England in the Rugby World Cup final at Twickenham. Acknowledging the struggle of underfunding, Rouet emphasized that although his players lacked full professional support—earning only about £400 ($536) monthly and relying on crowdfunding to cover travel and training—the loss was not due to finances. Captain Alex Tessier echoed this sentiment, stating the team had adequate preparation and could have won regardless. Despite financial constraints, Canada excelled in the tournament, going undefeated in the group stage, defeating Australia in the quarter-finals and ousting reigning champions New Zealand in the semi-finals. The final saw a strong early try from Asia Hogan-Rochester, but England responded swiftly and controlled the game. Hogan-Rochester later scored a second try, and teammate Sophie de Goede was named 2025 World Rugby Women’s Player of the Year. Rouet lamented that Canada simply did not deliver their best performance in the final.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/list-womens-world-cup-winners-2025-09-27/> - The article provides a list of Women's Rugby World Cup winners, updated after England's victory over Canada with a score of 33-13 in the 2025 final. It mentions that this particular tournament was originally scheduled for 2021 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The piece serves as a historical reference of champions of the Women’s Rugby World Cup over the years, highlighting England's recent triumph in the competition.
7. <https://www.reuters.com/sports/england-overcomes-france-to-face-canada-in-womens-rugby-world-cup-final-2025-09-20/> - England will face Canada in the final of the Women’s Rugby World Cup after beating a spirited France 35-17 in Bristol on Saturday. Brilliant defense, breakdown work and set-pieces by England compensated for a misfiring attack that didn't click until an hour into the sold-out semifinal at Ashton Gate. England eventually scored five tries, all of them converted by Zoe Harrison, but they were severely tested by a patched up France that has been the only team to get within seven points of England — twice — in the last three years. In 10 World Cups, the Red Roses have missed the final only once, in 1998, but also won only twice. However, its World Cup final bogey team, six-time champion New Zealand, was knocked out on Friday, stunned by Canada 34-19. Canada eliminated the Black Ferns to reach its second ever final and first since 2014, when it lost to England in Paris.