

My name is Marie and I am the current interim women's representative for the TRU, as well as the captain of the Denton Honey Badgers, the ladies' side of Denton Rugby Club. I'm not great at self-hyping, so bear with me. I was lucky enough to be elected to this position in February 2020 when the previous rep moved out of state, but I was also unlucky in the timing – we went into Covid lockdown the next month, and have been working to get back to normal since. I think we're doing a pretty good job at it, too.

As far as my rugby resume, it's not the most extensive. I came into the sport later in life, joining my current club in 2015 at almost 41 – and it has been one of the best decisions of my adult life. I have played with not only Denton, but the DARC Dames for a season, and I've subbed for them and a few other teams for Summer 7s. The past three years have seen me work with several smaller clubs to start the Women's D3, which has helped teams launch by playing robin 7's tournaments throughout the season in hopes of expanding their numbers enough to move up to D2. Covid put a slight stopper in our process, but we're still chugging forward. I was also fortunate to work with the TRU All-Stars for the Mary Graham All Star tournament in 2021, as well as the U-23 Central South women's team.

Despite only playing for a few years, my love of this sport is unfaltering. I was missing the brotherhood I had when I was in the military, and I definitely found it in the rugby community. I gained a new sense of self when I started and I want to help other women experience that same elation – I am definitely not the same person I was in 2015 when I first laced up my boots, and the change has been for the better. I continually champion for women's rugby at all levels and help players find teams close to them so they can experience what I have through rugby, whether they are in Texas or not. Something said in the TRU that has stuck with me is "More people playing better rugby", and it is something I live by. To keep high level players coming up, you need to have solid support in the club community, and I will strive to continue that support if selected as the TRU women's representative.