



DOWNS RUGBY ROUND-UP

Welcome Downs Rugby followers to the current installment of our regular newsletter which covers all the recent activity.

It has been a busy time since the last Roundup. Senior representative footy, finals of the Teenage and Round 1 of both Senior and Junior draws under our belt. All this and more for your information below. Please enjoy the read.

COMPETITION UPDATES

Juniors

Junior rugby started with a fantastic rugby carnival at Dalby we had 50+ teams participating, with players from Under 6 – Under 12 playing games from 9.00am – 2.30pm. Given the wet weather of Friday night there were a few nervous parents, however Saturday dawned bright and clear. It was a great carnival in a great location and all kids got plenty of rugby. Thanks Coaches for having a grasp on the new Pathways Laws and having all the players ready for season 2011. It was exciting to see the tackling in Under 8s, the larger field being utilized for Under 10s and the contested scrums all being played out with vigor and enthusiasm on the field.



Toowoomba Bears players keen to take the field – Under 8s .



Toowoomba Prep and Goondiwindi form a line out – Under 9s .

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Teenage

The Friday night competition has come and gone with the finals completing the competition last Friday, 1 April. It was a tremendous evening of teenage rugby as all those who attended will attest. The grandstand was full and the crowd was in full voice. Something that you don't see every round. Not to mention the standard of rugby which was of the highest order at this level, and all things considered. The winners were:

Under 13 -- Souths versus Dalby -- Souths won 12-5
Man of the match – Rohan Gale

This was a hard fought tussle with much of the game deadlocked at 5 apiece. This was no surprise as both teams had been eyeing each other off for the weeks leading up. The result could have gone either way. Congratulations to both teams, and in particular to the respective coaches, for the skill and spirit on show.



Victorious Souths Under 13s following a wet Grand Final win.

Under 14/15 - Highfields versus Dalby - Dalby won 26 – 12
Man of the Match: Henry Finlay

Again another hard fought affair. It was pleasing to see the large squads participating and the respective coaches managing players to ensure everyone had an opportunity to have a run. Dalby were just too strong with their physical game and determined style. Highfields tried to rally but Dalby thwarted any attacking raids that came their way.

Under 16/17 - Dalby versus Highfields - Dalby won 17 - 5
Man of the Match – Blake Darby

Dalby came ready to play and began very strongly with some of their key forwards having stirring performances. Through sustained pressure, Dalby were able to get regular points on the board which proved beyond Highfields reach. There were some terrific players on both sides with will have the respective rep. coaches eagerly looking forward to the rep. season ahead.

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Teenage continued ...

TERM 2 TEENAGE RUGBY -- Games have been scheduled to be played on the following dates –

Please note:- It had been published that 5th June was long weekend, but it is in fact 12th June – the dates have been changed accordingly. .

DATE	LOCATION	EVENT
8 May	Various	Round 1
15 May	Various	Round 2
22 May	Various	Round 3
29 May	Various	Round 4
5 June	Various	Round 5
12 June (long weekend)	ROMA (To be confirm)	Round 6
18 June	Gold Park for final	FINALS – Award Shield

PLEASE NOTE -- In order for a draw to be created **we need clubs to confirm their team nominations** in Under 13, 15 and 17 age groups. It is proposed we have some “Barbarian” style teams from the Toowoomba Clubs and we need to have input from all clubs on player numbers available for Term 2. We will need to get coaches appointed to these teams as well. I thank you in advance for your assistance in this regard. This will be another example of the depth of talent on the Downs and I am sure Mick Dillon and his Goondi charges will be keen to re-enter the fray to get amongst the action. It is also exciting that Toowoomba Prep will have an Under 13 team nominated and we will also see the return of Roma in the Under 13 and Under 15 age groups.

Seniors

- 🕒 Round 1 kicked off last Saturday with some interesting results following games played at Gatton, St George, Warwick, Heritage Oval and Gold Park. All games results are posted on www.downsrugby.com. There is also a link on our Home page to the ladders.
- 🕒 Great work to all teams who forwarded results following games on the weekend. We need to get information to the various media on time so please keep up the good work in the coming weeks. The Competition Rules outline all other Results Entry requirements. There were some other housekeeping matters which have been addressed in an e-mail to all clubs. If you need to see these, please speak to your respective Presidents who can share this information with you;
- 🕒 The Draw and Competition Rules are all on the website – www.downsrugby.com;
- 🕒 The Risdon Cup competition will continue to play through the season with only one break weekend – Easter.

MUDGEES CARNIVAL – Excerpts from Match Report Submitted by Team manager – Gary Reis

Some of you are aware that Toowoomba South's U13 Rugby side had the privilege to attend the 2011 Mudgee Grassroots rugby festival over the weekend(19 March 2011) thanks to the generosity of the Mudgee Rugby Community. During the weekend the boys had the opportunity to mingle and be coached by Richard Harry, Scott Gourley, Owen Finnegan and a hoard of other superstars.

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Meeting Robbie Deans in person was a highlight for the boys (and some parents). Robbie took time out to talk to the boys, get photos, autographs and even a pre match talk before they had the honour of playing the Main Game curtain raiser against a well drilled Mudgee Wombat side, coming out the victors. On Sunday we played NSW Central West Rep side. Again the boys were able to walk away with a win.

A special thanks to Jason Little who made extra time to coach, talk and be a real mentor to our boys who enjoyed every moment with their local hero. When someone like that remembers the boys names and talks the boys up you can see a real change in attitude.

So in all – parents and boys had an absolute wonderful time. One we won't forget.

A special thanks to Mark Dalton and committee for organising and funding our trip. The hospitality, generosity and sportsman ship by the Mudgee Committee was exceptional and we hope at some stage to be able to return the favour.

DARLING DOWNS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

March is always a busy time in the rugby calendar with the start of Junior and Senior competitions and the completion of the Friday night teenage competition. Here is a quick review of my month of March.

Being the new development officer I felt my first objective was to introduce myself to the surrounding schools and clubs. So over the past 7 weeks I have conducted clinics for approximately 2300 students through 18 school visits, 8 junior sign-on's, 3 sports expos and the Toowoomba show. This will continue throughout the year as we promote and develop the game across the Darling Downs.



Queensland Schools participated in Super Rugby Week from the 21st March until the 26th. This week promotes the Super Rugby competition by schools registering for free equipment provided by the ARU to conduct rugby sessions in school hours. Darling Downs had over a 1000 participating students, with Queensland registering as the highest participating state in the Australia. Thank you to all who participated.

Coach Education sessions were a focus in March with everyone trying to complete the mandatory smart rugby coaching accreditation before the season starts. The QRU and I were pleased with the numbers we had to those courses but want to remind everyone to make sure they must have acquired at least a smart rugby accreditation before undertaking any coaching role. To assist with coach's accreditation, I have release a further two smart rugby courses to compliment the level 1 coaching course within the next four weeks. The dates of these are as follows:

- Level 1 (Foundation) Coaching and Refereeing - 17th April -
 - (to be held at Toowoomba Grammar School)
- Smart Rugby Coaching Course (Downs Rugby Office) - 18th April
- Smart Rugby Coaching Course (Downs Rugby Office)- 9nd May

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FOR ALL EDUCATION SESSIONS, PLACES MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE. PLEASE CONTACT ME TO CONFIRM YOUR PLACE AT ANY OF THESE SESSIONS.

Finally I want to say two big congratulations. The first is to Toowoomba Grammar School (TGS). TGS represented the Darling Downs in the Queensland 7's on the 16th March. Jason Gilmore's boys competed against the top 24 schools in the state and qualified through to the semi-finals, before bowing out against a strong performance from Brisbane State High School. Awesome effort lads.

The second congratulations is for and South Toowoomba U/13's. South Toowoomba U/13's were invited by the Mudgee Rugby Club in New South Wales to compete in their grassroots carnival after the devastation of the floods. The team had a pre-match and half-time pep talk by the Robbie Deans and ran out winners against both Mudgee Wombats U/13's and a combined team from Central West, New South Wales. Congratulations to everyone involved.

Yours in Rugby - Tom Bower

DOWN'S RUGBY – SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE TEAMS



Downs players keeping the ball alive in game against Brisbane North

Opens

Games concluded on 19 March against Gold Coast at Nerang. Under appalling wet and slippery conditions, the Gold Coast team triumphed 41-15. Coach, Evan Willis, was proud of his team who, at times, showed what they are capable of. As Evan commented “We had been under the pump. The guts and determination at the end of the game to keep Gold Coast out and then score really proved a point” that we have some quality players on the Downs.

The season ended on a high with James McUthcheon, Will Campbell, Leighton Saal and Matt Howse all being selected in the first Queensland Country squad for the year. In May a South Queensland team will be selected for inter regional games against Central Queensland and North Queensland. One of these games will be held in Toowoomba on 28 May. Evan Willis was appointed as the Coach of the South Queensland team. A second Queensland Country team will then be selected based on the inter regional games.

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Under 19

The team also went down to a strong Gold Coast team 24- 0. Whilst this was a disappointing end to our competition, the second half was a closely contested affair which Gold Coast won by a single try. Rugby can sometimes be about getting on the front foot which Gold Coast managed to do. Under the difficult playing conditions, Downs just couldn't get the same power game going which had stood them in good stead in the lead up games. Based on earlier results, Downs came second on the table and look forward to a good representation in the South Queensland squad to be announced later in the month. Again we did well with our Coach, Hamish Proctor, being appointed as head Coach of this team.

Darling Downs Referees Association.

Well the season is finally here. It was feeling like it would never arrive and we would be playing trials for ever. It is always good to get that first game under your belt both for both players and referees to see how good or bad your preseason training was. The answer is nearly always not hard enough when you get to the 70 minute mark of the first game. Now we can all pray that some match fitness will start to kick in.



Just a gentle reminder that there is a Referee Foundation/ Level 1 course on the 17th of April at Toowoomba Grammar. For anyone that is interested contact the Downs Rugby Office. Downs Referees are more than happy to work with you to get you to the level you wish to achieve. We train Tuesday and Thursday evenings at Heritage oval. On Thursday we do some fitness and a session on law, theory and application.

Application of the law is something that can cause a lot of angst on the sideline for the untrained eye as to what the referee is actually doing. If we were to referee the game to the letter of the law as written in the law book the game would be a constant stream of penalties which would lead to frustration on the field and from the sideline. One of the most important skills that you have to learn as a referee is how to manage the game within the boundaries of the law and still have a free flowing game that is good for the players and great for the spectator. It may appear that we have missed something but if it has no material effect on the game then it is play on.

A lot of the management skills that are required to referee a game of rugby can then be taken into real life situations in business and the work place. These skills are not hard to learn and apply. They can also be very useful if you have kids.

Next news letter we will look at the "Advantage" law and its application to assist in a free flowing game.

Best of luck for the next round.

Yours in Rugby -- Peter Buchanan President DDRRA -- 0412 854 211

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES – There are many opportunities to become sponsors of Downs Rugby. The Board are currently putting together package details. If you would like to know more about exciting opportunities that exist, please don't hesitate to contact Cameron Donaldson in relation to same.

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