



DOWNS RUGBY ROUND-UP

Hello Rugby Enthusiasts and welcome to the current installment of our regular newsletter which covers all the recent activity.

On a sad note, you may have seen the bit in the newspaper about the young helicopter pilot by the name of Marcus Case you died recently serving in Afghanistan. Marcus was trained at the Oakey Army Aviation Centre and whilst there played several seasons with the USQ club. By all reports he was a fine young man and his passing was deeply felt by his former team mates and the USQ club as whole. As a mark of respect the Goondiwindi Club arranged a minutes silence at the recent game with USQ which provided a special moment to the players and crowd – Lest we Forget.



In a recent article in the February edition of the NZ Rugby Resources Newsletter, the Editor was reflecting on the special role that rugby plays in the lives of players and supporters. This is some of what was written – *“Some may ask where rugby fits in this cycle of life and death and I do believe that rugby at its best is a celebration of life. It presents challenges, both physical and mental, it embraces team work almost like no other game and develops a sense of camaraderie that doesn't exist in many other walks of life or vocations. Through rugby I have developed friendships all over the world and have enjoyed battle on the field to enjoy comradeship with the opposition off the field”* I suppose this is why we keep coming back for more.

COMPETITION UPDATES

Juniors

- 🏈 We are half way through the Junior Competition – heading off on a three week break for the school holidays. Most clubs re-commence on the 16th July.
- 🏈 It is great to see all games being played in the true spirit of rugby.
- 🏈 Junior Committee recently met to discuss competition – separate memo will be issued to all junior clubs in relation to the outcome of the meeting.

Teenage

- 🏈 Wow what a finish to second term rugby! On Sunday, 19 June at Gold Park two finals were held. The under 13's game was between Dalby and Souths. There was drama a plenty as neither side could skip away. This was a replay of the Friday night competition final and the game proved once again that there is nothing between these two teams. The final result was Souths 12 Dalby 10. The game was played with all the intensity of a Grammar Downlands game which was remarkable for these young players. The game featured great skills and was played in the right spirit. There is certainly some rivalry building up between these two sides. The player of the match was Harry Hoopert who looks to have a bright future

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ahead following in the footsteps of big brother Brodie, one of the stars of the under 19's Queensland Country team ;

- 🏈 The under 15 final was between the skilful Dalby team and the never say die Goondiwindi side. Dalby under the guidance of coach Mark Bailey has been the form side of the competition and they continued on their winning way by 28-5. It wasn't one way traffic though with Mick Dillon's team putting up a brave show and placing the Dalby team under some pressure for the first time this season. Dalby were good enough to withstand all this and skipped away in the final stages of the game. The player of the match was Nick Nolan who was prominent in the rucks with some skilful turnovers and strong charges. The future of Downs rugby appears to be in good hands with these young under 13's and under 15's coming through the ranks;
- 🏈 Sunnybank brought up 26 under 17 players who provided much needed game time for the Goondiwindi under 17 team and a smattering of Barbarians who turned up to play. The Sunnybank boys were great. They demonstrated the joy of playing rugby and they had all the skills that were a marvel at times to watch. Our boys had their hands full and it was a great experience for all;

We now look towards the selection of the squads to attend selection trials for the under 13 through to under 17. This will culminate in selection of the respective Darling Downs teams to contest the State Championships which are being held at Downlands commencing 20 September, 2011

Seniors

- 🏈 The Risdon Cup is now getting interesting following the outcome of games in the latest Round 11 and wins to Dalby and Roma. The ladder now stands as:

2011 Darling Downs » A Grade

Team	P	W	L	D	F	A	Df	Opp Fft	BP 4t	BP <7p	Pts
USQ Saints	11	10	1	0	497	134	363	0	11	0	51
Roma	11	9	2	0	430	214	216	0	8	1	45
Rangers	11	7	3	0	334	207	127	61	6	1	40
Toowoomba Bears	11	8	3	0	323	208	115	0	7	1	40
UQ/Highfields	11	5	6	0	267	242	25	0	6	2	28
Goondiwindi	11	5	6	0	304	265	39	0	4	2	26
Dalby	11	5	6	0	189	331	-142	0	3	1	24
Condamine	11	3	8	0	200	286	-86	0	4	3	19
Warwick	11	2	8	0	182	390	-208	0	1	1	10
St George	11	0	11	0	145	594	-449	0	1	0	1

P=Played W=Wins L=Losses D=Draws F=Points For A=Points Against Df=Points Difference
Opp Fft=Opposition Forfeits BP 4t=Four Tries BP <7p=Close Losses Pts=Ladder Points

- 🏈 The Draw and Competition Rules are all on the website – www.downsrugby.com;

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DARLING DOWNS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Congratulations to the Darling Downs U18 Schoolboy squad who reached the Queensland Schoolboy Regional State Championships at the start of the month. Darling Downs defeated teams from Metropolitan North, South Coast, Capricornia and Metropolitan East on their way to the final against Northern. The DD boys put up a good fight but fell just short to Northern, going down 20-14.

From the tournament a Combined State School (CSS) team was selected and will contest the Queensland State Championships against representative squads from GPS, TAS and AIC schools on the 23rd, 24th and 26th of June. Congratulations to the Darling Downs team who had 8 initial players selected in the CSS squad. They are: Jack Cook, Charles Hose, Ben Hyne, Jared Lee, Lachlan Penberthy, Marelly Tane, Marcus Tanzer and William Thompson. Following the squad selection I have been told that more Darling Downs boys have been called into the squad, congratulations also to those players.

Darling Downs Schoolboy Squad preparing for their semi final with Metropolitan East



In term 3, nine Darling Downs schools will take part in Queensland's largest school boy rugby competition, the Ballymore Cup. Established in 1999 for open school boy teams within the greater Brisbane region, the Ballymore Cup has quickly grown to become a state wide rugby competition. In 2011, for the first time there will be two age groups for schools to contest the Ballymore Cup, they are the Under 15's and Under 18's. To start this competition, the Darling Downs teams will compete in a region knockout gala day to decide who will represent the region in the State Finals. The regional knockout gala day is to be held on the 21st July at Downlands College, Toowoomba. The winner of the Ballymore Cup knockout gala day will progress to the state quarter finals where they will play the winner from the Gold Coast region. I wish all the schools the best of luck and look forward to seeing some free flowing school-boy rugby.

Term 3 will also see the Darling Downs Under 12 gala day be held at Toowoomba Grammar on the 27th July. This is expected to be a tightly contested affair with the competition open to all schools in the Darling Downs region. From this gala day a representative team will be selected to compete in the Queensland U12 Invitational in Brisbane later this year. I have been told exciting news about the U12 Invitational Carnival with the carnival turning into a State Championships for 2012 if six regions from Queensland are represented at the 2011 event. Good luck to all who enter.

Yours in rugby -- Tom Bower

SCRUMMAGING WORKSHOP

On 30 May at the USQ ground we were fortunate to have a scrummaging workshop run by the very experienced Level 3 coach, Don Parry. Don targeted the session at under 13 to under 19 levels with the aim of providing information and drills to assist coaches in preparing players for playing in the tight 5. This was in response to the desire by Downs Rugby to deal with the prevalence of uncontested scrums in the teenage age groups. This session was attended by 20 coaches and players. Well done in particular to the Highfields Club who demonstrated their commitment to this worthy cause with a number of their senior coaches and players present. Thanks to Don for giving up his time and we look forward to a follow up session aimed at Seniors coaches.



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DARLING DOWNS SENIORS REPRESENTATIVE RUGBY

The Queensland Country Championships have now concluded with South Queensland (comprising players from Darling Downs, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast) winning the opens and under 19 against Central Queensland and North Queensland. The South Queensland opens team included Matt Howse (see photo), Sonny Power, Brett Bidstrup, Will Campbell, Dan Lucas, Tyson Cuskelly, Benny Raralevu and James McUtchen who were all part of the winning team coached by our own Evan Willis.



The under 19 South Queensland team was coached by Hamish Proctor and included Brodie Hoopert, Fergus Frith, Matt Dunstone, James Gough, Sam Hogarth, Paul Macquire, Ash Warren, Kale Pomare and Fraser Donaldson.

Hopefully some of our players will now be selected for the Queensland Country team which is to be chosen this week.

FROM THE MIDDLE

The referees continue to spread themselves over teenage and seniors rugby as there are games a plenty to cover. It is great to see some new up and comers with the likes of Nick Leggat, Tony Sleba and Gavin Pontin all displaying some talent for the centre stage. I hear that Mel Volker had a great game refereeing her first A Grade game last weekend.

Due to a great response from USQ and the Bears, special touch judge courses and a referees foundation course are being planned by Tom Bower. Please contact Tom if you wish to inquire about this.

DOWNS RUGBY CORPORATE CLUB

Downs Rugby is pleased to announce the first two members of the newly formed Downs Rugby Corporate Club. They are:

Neil Mansell Transport Pty Ltd and Incitec Pivot Group.



The Corporate Club is intended for leading business organizations who share in the goals of supporting and developing rugby on the Downs. In return, these organizations will have the opportunity to obtain some tangible value for their investment through association with fellow members, networking and exposure through the wider rugby community.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Smart Rugby Course will be held - 13th July -- Heritage Oval, Toowoomba

This course is free to register - with presentations going for two hours. The Smart Rugby accreditation is a mandatory requirement for all club and school rugby coaches. For further information, please email: tom.bower@qru.com.au. Any member can attend either workshop. For anyone interested in taking on a role with any of our representative teams, this is a pre-requisite.

We have requested QRU to conduct a Level 1 Referee Workshop as well as Touch Judge course. We are able to provide courses but **must have a minimum number** of attendees.

Please book your place by advising Tom Bower (email above).

2011 QJRU STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS:-

Preparations are now well underway for 50th Anniversary of the Queensland Junior Rugby State Championships. The competition will be held at Downslands commencing 20 September, 2011. Invitations have gone out to regional teams with potentially 1,000 under 13 to under 17 year olds all coming together for three days of competition for the right to claim State dominance in their respective age groups. Over the years our Downs teams have come close with some third and fourth placings but the top position has eluded us. Maybe this year with the home ground advantage??



At the end of competition on Thursday, 22 September, Country and City teams will be selected for the under 15, 16 and 17 age groups. These teams will play each other on Saturday, 24 September with State teams then selected. Hence there is much to play for which will provide some great entertainment.

A full programme of the State Championships will be available as we get closer to the event.

There will be plenty of opportunities for sponsorship opportunities attached to this great event. If you know anyone interested in assisting in this regard, please have them contact our office.

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DOWNNS RUGBY – OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEES

Board – Pat Brown (*Chairman*), Mat Strahorn (*Secretary*), Brendan Ryan (*Director of Finance*), Mike Horan, Paul Tindall, Justin Garvie

Senior Committee – Mat Edwards (*Chair*), Mark Brownlie, Pat Hillier, Doug McDougall, Paul Weidman

Teenage Committee – Graham Strong (*Chair*), Lyndal Symonds, Mike Dillon, Peter Blades, Rod Spalding,

Junior Committee – Owen Kleidon (*Chair*), Grant Gleeson, Anton Kowalenko, Anthony Ahern, John Fuelling,

High Performance Rugby Committee – Martin Leggat, Russell Jackson, Evan Willis, Hamish Proctor,

Judicial Committee – Dave Power, Rob Breaaly, Grant Gleeson, Peter Buchanan

LIFE MEMBERS – Don Trennery; Bill Flamstead; Geoff Makim; David Thompson

RUGBY MUSINGS:

Smartest man on the team ??.

The club president, coach, a prop and a wing are taking a charter flight to the National Rugby Finals when the engines cut out. The pilot enters the passenger compartment and says, "We're going down. There's only four parachutes! Since I'm the pilot I'm taking one," and then jumps from the plane. The coach says, "Without me the team won't have a chance, so I'm taking one," and he jumps out. The winger says, "I'm the fastest and smartest man on the pitch and without me the team can't win a game, so I'm taking one," and he jumps out of the plane. The club president looks at the prop and says, "You take the last parachute. The team needs you more than it needs me". The prop responds, "We both can take a parachute. The smartest man on the pitch just jumped out of the plane with my kit bag on his back."



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