



DOWNS RUGBY ROUND-UP NOVEMBER 2011

Welcome Downs Rugby Enthusiasts to the latest installment of our regular newsletter which covers recent happenings of all things rugby on the Downs. Whilst the competitive side of things has wound down since the running of the QJRU State Championships in late September, there has still been much activity behind the scenes as we plan and prepare for bigger and brighter things in 2012. Our energetic and enthusiastic Development Officer, Tom Bower, continues to be out and about in the schools providing fun activities that promote our great game. The various sub committees have been involved in planning the junior, teenage and senior draws for next year. We are indebted to these dedicated souls. Lisa and Dimity have launched themselves into their new roles and are enjoying getting to know the inner workings of Clubs and their respective committees. They are excited by what they have encountered and the opportunities that lie ahead.

On a sad note our dedicated and long serving “Jack of all Trades”, Kerri Trost, has decided to follow her first passion, of special needs education, and will be moving on from the end of this month. Kerri has been true servant of the game and has worked tirelessly for the betterment of rugby on the Downs. To a lot of you Kerri has been the face of Downs Rugby, particularly at a junior and teenage level, which is no surprise as Kerri is passionate about providing for our young people (no doubt it comes about from her love for four busy children of her own!). Kerri has definitely made a mark and will leave a legacy that the rest of us at Downs Rugby will endeavour to uphold. We wish Kerri all the best in the future and we look forward to standing on the sidelines cheering together.

Please enjoy the read.

2012 Competitions:

Although it is early days, we have made some progress in conjunction with our respective sub committees and Draws are being released after they have been fine tuned:

Juniors:

A Draw has been prepared and will be circulated shortly. Sign on days are tentatively booked for early February.

Following our review meeting and with the change to state school holidays for the Easter period taking effect in 2012, we need to schedule as many games as we can around school holidays and public holidays.

Downs Rugby Round-up

At this stage we are having the opening carnival at Goondiwindi. We are endeavouring to hold a closing carnival with the venue to be confirmed. Taking into account these two carnivals it looks like we will have 13 rounds of rugby – finishing in line with the senior competition final series.

Teenage:

Next year we will be introducing a Sunday competition starting on 9 February, 2012. The school based rugby competition in the traditional rugby schools, Toowoomba Grammar School and Downlands, has been moved to Term 3 and hence we are proposing to run our Sunday competition over Terms 1 and 2.

At this stage, and being positive that we will have the required commitment, we will have all grades competing from under 13 to under 17. The length of the competition for each age group will depend on the number of teams and the concept is a home and away series played at the various club grounds. **It is absolutely vital that the respective clubs (and club coaches and managers) embrace this new concept as a strong teenage competition is pivotal in establishing the foundation for a strong game on the Downs.** Teenage rugby provides the pathway from juniors, where our young experience the first love for the game, to under 19 and ultimately, Grade rugby.

We are presently calling for nominations for teams and once these are to hand, then we can prepare the Draw.

If you have a child playing and have often thought about getting involved with them, then there is no better time than now as Clubs are always crying out for coaches and managers. Downs Rugby will be running lots of training so we can assist if this has been the only factor holding you back.

We need players so this means good club people to get them in to so that they can experience the fun that is rugby. Get in contact with your local Club and take the step!

Seniors

A Draw has been circulated to the Clubs with Round 1 starting on 31 March, 2012. It will be an 18 Round competition culminating in Grand Finals on 8 September, 2012. There will be breaks during the year with Easter, the Queens Birthday long weekend and 2 byes (due to uneven numbers in the A grade competition). This year saw some entertaining running rugby combined with the power and the passion that is Downs Rugby. We are expecting things to be even better next year as there has been a changing of the guard in some coaching circles and new players progress to the senior ranks which will provide new playing styles and variety as Clubs strive to lift the bar. After watching USQ Saints and Rangers in action during the Grand Final this year, other clubs are seeking their time in the sun.

Downs Rugby Committee Positions

The AGM is presently set down for Saturday, 11 February. The required Notices will be issued in due course. In the meantime you may wish to think about possibly putting your hand up to join one of the following committees: Senior Committee, Teenage Committee or Junior Committee. As allowed for under the Structure of Downs Rugby, there



will be up to two positions vacant on each of these five person committees as the two longest serving committee members look to stand down. An outline of what these committees do and nomination forms will be placed on the Downs Rugby website under – Documents; Forms (left menu selection).

Club Volunteers

These are the life blood of any Club and success or failure is down to their efforts, commitment and dedication. As a new feature of this newsletter, we propose to recognize a different volunteer each month.

Rugby Development Officer

Tom has been out and about in lots of schools and clubs lately. He has been actively involved with the co-ordination of the Southern Downs Schools 7's comp – taking in Warwick; Assumption College and Stanthorpe State High. Schoolboys 7's – including Pittsworth State HS, Lockyer Valley SHS and Christian Outreach College.

Accross our region this week we have a lot of schools participating in an initiative of Qld Rugby – "Try Sevens". A QRU Media Release was issued recently:

National Rugby Sevens coach applauds Try Sevens participation

National Rugby Sevens coach Michael O'Connor has commended Queensland Rugby's pilot Try Sevens juniors program and has sent his best wishes to the 12,000-plus students who will participate in schools across his home state from Monday. The dual international, who has been at the helm of the national team since 2008, is currently on the Gold Coast preparing his new-look side for the first of nine World Series events of 2011/12 with the season kicking off at the inaugural Gold Coast Sevens at Skilled Park on November 25-26.

In the lead up to the new event, 12,322 kids (873 on the Darling Downs) from 112 schools across Queensland will participate in Try Sevens and stage games of the sport throughout the week.

"It's great to hear that over 12,000 kids across Queensland are going to be trying out Rugby Sevens in the lead up to the inaugural Gold Coast Sevens event," O'Connor said.

"Our next generation of Sevens athletes could very well come out of this group of kids, who will all likely be trying the sport for the first time. "Congratulations to all involved - and best of luck to all the boys and girls during Try Sevens week. "On the back of its success in Queensland, hopefully this time next year the Try Sevens program will be rolled out nationally."

The Try Sevens program is designed to introduce Rugby Sevens as an inclusive, fun sport for both boys and girls, while encouraging the ambitious to set their sights on representing Australia at the 2016 Olympics, or going for gold in their own backyard at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018.

Junior Gold

The Junior Gold program is off and running which provides specialist skills and game based training to a fortunate group of 30 or so up and coming talented rugby players between 15 and 17 years of age. The program is being coordinated by experienced coach, Marty Leggat, who will be working with a team of similarly qualified coaches to provide a marvelous opportunity for some of our brightest young players to have access to specialist training methods as devised by the ARU. The Junior Gold is a long term development program coordinated by the ARU High Performance Unit. 37 Teenagers in the Darling Downs area have been talent identified to commence this program. Coaches from the area will be invited to these training sessions to help their development as well.

Representative Rugby

A squad will be formulated over the next month. The Country Championships program (Senior Rugby Representative Program) for 2012 has been put in place and the Darling Downs senior coach, Andrew Skipper, has started formulating his training plans. The Championships will involve games against Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast with one or two pre-season trial games.



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We are very excited to welcome Ergon Energy aboard as one of our Gold Sponsors in 2012. Ergon Energy is committed to contributing to the lifestyles of the communities where it operates and where its staff live and work. Downs Rugby is thrilled to be able to have the support of Ergon.



everything in our power

There are some great opportunities to lend your support to Downs Rugby in 2012. In addition, individual clubs are always looking to cement relationships at their level as well.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please see our website – www.downsrugby.com.au and choose the Sponsors section from the left hand menu selection.



An Australian player went to the doctor and said: *"I've just been playing rugby and when I got back I found that when I touched my legs, arms, head, tummy - everywhere - it really hurt."*

The doctor replied: *"you've broken your finger."*

AT THE OFFICE:- RECENT HAPPENINGS:-

When you pop in to see us at the office, please take note how nice it is now. We are fortunate to have had some blinds installed by D-Blinds – thanks very much to Brett and Vicki Nielson who helped us out with these. They have made a huge difference to our workspaces and we no longer feel like we are working in a fish bowl. If you need window furnishings, please don't hesitate to contact d-blinds -- www.dblinds.com.au.



When you ring up you will also note that the echo has been considerably reduced. We now have carpet downstairs. We are noticing how much cooler it is with the floor covering and it has made a huge difference to noise levels.

We have also started tidying up out in the warehouse. If you had popped in during preparations for the State Championships, the warehouse looked like this:-



Now we are putting our sorting our skills to use and stocktaking. Keep a look out for specials on all our existing merchandise. We will be having a clearance on gear that has been held for a couple of years. We will be looking at selling out old junior jerseys; "Ugly" Rugby jerseys; excess rep gear etc.

Downs Rugby Round-up

DOWNNS RUGBY – OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEES

Board – Pat Brown (Chairman), Mat Strahorn, Brendan Ryan, Mike Horan, Justin Garvie.

Senior Committee – Mat Edwards (Chair), Craig Coetzee, 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, Gavin Pontin.

High Performance Rugby Committee – Martin Leggat, Russell Jackson, Evan Willis, Hamish Procter, Tom Bower.

Judicial Committee – Dave Power, Rob Brealey, Grant Gleeson, Peter Buchanan.

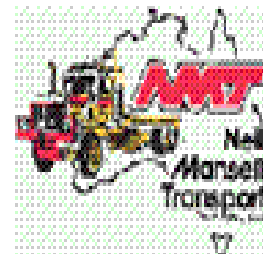
LIFE MEMBERS – Don Trennery; Bill Flamstead; Geoff Makim; David Thompson.

We are proudly Sponsored by:-



**FK GARDNER & SONS
GROUP**

SOLUTIONS. VISION.



OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:-

Unit 5, Anzac Central, 189 Anzac Avenue, Toowoomba Q 4350

Phone/Fax – 4633 7733

Website: www.downsrugby.com.au

POSTAL ADDRESS:- PO Box 1070, Toowoomba, QLD, 4350



*Cameron Donaldson --
General Manager
Ph: 0488 677 760
Email: cameron.donaldson@downsrugby.com.au*



*Tom Bower -- Development Officer
Ph: 0409 902 116
Email: tom.bower@gru.com.au*



*Dimity Sullivan -- Club Development
Officer (Eastern Clubs)
Ph: 0409 258 966
Email: dimity.sullivan@downsrugby.com.au*



*Lisa Goodman -- Club Development
Officer (Western Clubs)
Ph: 0409 328 783
Email:
lisa.goodman@downsrugby.com.au*

**THIS IS
RUGBY:**

**Teamwork
Respect
Enjoyment
Discipline
Sportsmanship**

**WE LOVE
RUGBY**