

Royal Rambler

April 2024

Issue

#1



The Royal Rambler Newsletter

The Royal Ramble will be a quarterly(ish) newsletter that will focus on all things Royal Ramblers, Western Counties Force middle and high school, Eureka high school and our Warriors Youth and Rookie Rugby Club!

Mid-America RFU DIII Standings

	P	W	D	L	-/+	PTS
1 STL Hornets RFC	6	5	1	0	+226	27
2 Springfield Rugby	6	5	1	0	+183	27
3 Royal Ramblers	6	4	0	2	+187	21
4 Sunday Morning RFC	6	3	0	3	+79	15
5 Belleville Rowdies	6	2	0	4	+59	11
6 Columbia Outlaws	6	1	0	5	-140	6
7 Mercenaries RFC	6	0	0	6	-594	-1

Royal Rambler DIII 2023/24 Update and Review

We want to briefly share some of our men's highlights from the current season, starting with coaching. Recent Lindenwood alumni Cian Darling and Sam Buckley coached the men's team last fall before joining MLR club NOLA Gold in January. Best of luck to both of them. This spring, Zach Thorum, assistant coach at Lindenwood University and mainstay in our youth program the past couple of years, began coaching the men's team. Zach consistently sets a plan for training and keeps all sessions organized and productive.

Our players are making considerable improvements in skills, both physically and mentally, with every session. The most encouraging aspect of training this year continues to be the attitude of our players. Whether someone has played rugby for 2 weeks or 20 years, everyone is having a positive experience at training, matches, and socials, and always enjoys the company of their teammates. This spring, our practice attendance has improved, with an average of 25 players/session, up from 19 in winter and 23 last fall. In addition, 55% of active players have attended over half the sessions this spring, up from 49% in winter and 50% last fall. Our numbers overall are the best they've been since 2019, prior to Covid.

Speaking of numbers, 52 players have worn the Royal Ramblers jersey this year, and 43 players have played in a MARFU D3 match, with potentially a few more in our upcoming playoff run. The number of players that have seen meaningful minutes is very encouraging for our future growth. We are well on our way to our goal of fielding two competitive sides.

Our overall 15's record this season, 4-4, is reflected in our on-field stats. At times, we have been lethal in attack, averaging 6.5 tries and 41 points per match, for a total point differential of +181. One major improvement this year compared to previous seasons is our ball possession - we are retaining 92% of our offensive rucks. That being said, there is room for improvement, especially defensively, as our tackling success rate is only about 78%. Similarly, we are winning just 80% of our attacking set pieces. No team is perfect, but we need to be aiming for 90% success in all 3 of those key categories to compile more wins and ultimately make a Nationals run. Whether our playoff run ends this week or with us lifting the trophy in Austin on May 19th, the leadership group is incredibly proud of the team this season and look forward to many more years with the Royal Ramblers!

UPCOMING SCHEDULES

- 4/13 RRRRC @ Springfield RC DIII Semi Final Playoff
- 4/13 WCF HS vs St Louis Jets
- 4/13 EUR vs SLUH
- 4/14 WCF MS & Warriors vs St Louis Sharks and West County Rhinos
- 4/18 EUR vs CBC
- 4/20 RRRRC DIII Final Playoff
- 4/21 WCF MS & Warriors vs St Louis Sharks and West County Rhinos
- 4/27 WCF HS vs Eureka HS
- 4/28 WCF MS & Warriors vs St Louis Sharks and West County Rhinos
- 4/28 WCF & EUR HS Sunday 7s
- 5/4 RRRRC USA North Regional Finals
- 5/5 WCF MS & Warriors vs St Louis Sharks and West County Rhinos
- 5/11 WCF HS State Championships
- 6/1 Club Appreciation Day and Banquet

2024 CLUB APPRECIATION DAY, June 1st

Join us for our club appreciation day on June 1st. This will be held at our fields at the St Charles Soccer Park from 11am to 3pm. There will be food and drinks provided and rugby games featuring all our age groups.

Later that evening we will have our end of season banquet that all our welcome to attend! Follow our socials and website for details!



PLAYER PROFILE: Joe Hunter III

Joe has been playing for the Royal Ramblers since 2017. He played college football at Randolph Macon before being introduced to rugby by his wife, Julia, who plays for the St. Louis Sabres. He is level 200 certified and formerly coached rugby at Chaminade. Currently playing 10 and our vice captain and coaching Western Counties Force.



Royal Ramblers Sevens Program Starts Soon. Here's the preliminary info!

As we come to the end of the Spring 15's season, we look forward to the work our 7s program is going to put in this summer. Practice for the Summer Sevens Program will start 6:30pm Tuesday, May 21st at our home pitch. The team will be competing in three local weekend tournaments, entering a team into the competitive bracket of Lakefront 7s, and the St. Louis Summer 7s series that is played Thursday nights during June and July. We are looking forward to seeing the growth of our program this summer, with the great combination of players from our 15s season as well as the college players coming home for the summer. Sevens is a great way to improve your rugby skills no matter if you have been playing for one year or twenty years, so we look forward to seeing all the Royal Ramblers this summer!

What is a club membership and why is it important for growth of your club and the youth programs?

The monthly membership program is designed to provide steady funding for all our programs. The funds are used to cover costs and expenses associated with Coaching Staff, Training Equipment & Facilities, Medical Supplies, Travel Costs and Recruitment Funds. A large portion of the funds raised are used for our youth programs to keep the costs of playing rugby at a minimum and attract more youth to the sports.

The Plan: The goal is to sign up people comprised of former players, family, friends, parents and supporters of Royal Ramblers, Western Counties Force and Warriors.

The Vehicle: A PayPal subscription plan for former players, family, friends, parents and supporters. You can sign up now by visiting <https://royalramblerrugby.com/membership/> or scanning the QR code. You will be an alumni/supporting member of the Royal Ramblers, Western Counties Force and Warriors.

Rather than asking for a big check yearly to support the team, usually with a moment's notice, we are asking participants to sign up for the monthly membership program. Simply commit to a small monthly sum, supply your credit card, and that's it. The credit card is charged monthly and no longer will you be asked to contribute one large donation each year.

What we're asking of you: First, sign up at a starting commitment of \$25.00 or more per month. Second, contact your old teammates you played with not currently on this program, and help us sign up at least two of them. Third, ask these friends to do the same.



OUR RUGBY STORE

Don't forget to check out our store for all your fan gear and more!
<https://royalramblerrugby.com/shop/>



CAPTAIN'S CORNER



For those that don't know me, my name is Nathan Miller. This is my 3rd year as Captain of the Royal Ramblers and 9th year playing rugby. My first introduction to rugby was at Northwestern University. I quickly fell in love with the sport and played all four years and served as Match Secretary my junior year and President my senior year. After graduating with my Mechanical Engineering degree, I briefly moved back home and played my first adult club rugby with the Quad City Irish, before I moved to St Louis in the winter of 2020. I joined the Royal Ramblers and unfortunately only played in one match prior to Covid shutting down the season. Although we all missed over a year of rugby due to the pandemic, I have thoroughly enjoyed the past three competitive seasons with the Royal Ramblers. I also play summer 7's, previously with the Eureka Kings and now with Royal Rambler 7's.

During my four years with the club, we have experienced many highs and lows, both on and off the pitch. This season especially, I am extremely proud of our practice attendance, recruitment efforts, and team camaraderie. I am so grateful for the opportunity to lead this team, as we aim to continue growing rugby in St Louis and St Charles, and eventually make the Royal Ramblers a nationally-renowned club.

Nathan Miller (C)



Join us on our historic trip to Washington, DC this July to watch the USA Eagles play Scotland, currently #6 in the world!

\$750/person (approx) includes:

- Non-stop round trip flights from STL (7/12-7/14)
 - 2 nights stay at historic Mayflower hotel (4 per room or add \$75 per person for 2 per room)
 - USA vs Scotland match on 7/12
 - Dinner at the 2024 US Rugby Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony presented by MLR on 7/13
- RSVP by May 1 to Paul Kaler at 636-284-5999 or pkalerafs@gmail.com

WESTERN COUNTIES FORCE

Our goal has always and continues to be the growth of youth rugby and this is evident with the introduction of the Western Counties Force teams and the success of our middle school team in the fall of 2022. We want rugby to be accessible to all, both girls and boys, as rugby is one of the few true team sports that allows kids to play an exhilarating sport that builds lifelong friendships and respect.

The Western Counties Force Program is our Middle and High School Program that is focused on the St Charles and surrounding counties. We offer one of the only middle school programs in the State with this program beginning in the Fall of 2022 and involved traveling to surrounding states for games.

The high school program was formally Francis Howell, however the name change reflects our desire to welcome all high school players from the St Charles and surrounding areas who do not have their own school team. The head coach is Rambler Alumni Colin Heath and he's assisted by St Louis Sabres Alexis Mild and Royal Rambler Joe Hunter.

The plan is to continue to grow the program with a larger middle school presence, Varsity and JV sides for high school and add an all girls high school program. Please spread the word to friends, family, high school athletic directors, coaches and more!

Spring 2024 Season Review

The Western Counties Force High School team started the season with 19 registered players made up of mostly freshmen, definitely the new kids on the block. The team features players from Washington, Liberty, Orchard Farm, Francis Howell, Zumwalt and more, so definitely a good mix of schools.

The team started the season with a friendly game against a well drilled and established Eureka side losing 0-59, this was followed up with our first league game against the newly reformed CBC team and saw us capture our first win 21-17. Their most recent game was against SLUH, a very established program with over 60 players and we lost this one 7-59.

Throughout every game and every practice this team has continued to grow and come together and the scores do not reflect the growth of this program. Here's a couple of quotes from opposing coaches. Eureka HS: "You've got some great talent and really not looking forward to playing you in future years!"; Lindenwood University: "For a brand new team of freshmen, I'm amazed. They actually are playing real rugby. A team to watch!"



Western Counties Force High School Huddle

EUREKA HIGH SCHOOL

The Eureka High School Rugby Club rose to prominence from humble beginnings. It all started in the fall of 2004 with a junior in Mr. Strickland's Physics class inquiring about the great game of Rugby. After some discussions and word being spread around the school, Dustin and Mr. Strickland were able to get enough interest to get about 20 young men out to practices at Eureka Elementary that spring. With the help of Royal Alumni Roger Tucker and Chuck Waddell, the 3 coaches were able to start the foundation for what we have now, a strong high school rugby program in the St. Louis, Missouri area.



The club has always had strong ties with the Royal Rambler rugby club. Royal Alumni Roger Tucker being one of the first coaches and today as the head coach has the support of current Royal Ramblers Jason Ralph, Blake Becker and Josh Sanders. Together they, with support from past coaches, have grown the Eureka team to be one of the strongest in our area.

2024 has got off to a very strong start for Eureka with 4 wins out of 5. Friendlies against Western Counties Force (59-0), Moeller RFC 2nd XV(17-19 L), Liberty (33-24) and Park Hill/Columbia (40-12) was followed by their league win against St Louis Jets (26-12).

Recruiting

Need info to share with others to recruit more youth players, then reach out to RRC.Coach@gmail.com. Also, come visit us at the Scottish Games, Schroeder Park, May 11 or the Irish Fest, St Charles, May 25.



WARRIORS YOUTH & ROOKIE RUGBY

Now entering our 9th year as a Rookie Rugby and Youth rugby club. Our mission remains the development of the game of rugby in the Saint Charles County area by building a love for the game in our youth. We offer the sport of rugby to boys and girls from K through to 5th grade. Middle and high school players will "graduate" to the Western Counties Force for contact rugby!

To aid the growth of our program we have partnered with St Charles Parks and Recreation to offer three camps throughout the year, a Spring, Summer and Fall camp.

We've seen the camps and the number of players to continue to grow and the long term future of our clubs looks great! In a recent high school game a parent of a SLUH player came over and said "I don't think you remember me but my son, the SLUH center, started his rugby days with the Warriors!". Great praise for our program!



WARRIORS
YOUTH & ROOKIE RUGBY CLUB



CLUB FUNDRAISERS & SPONSORS

GOLF TOURNAMENT Aug 4th St Peters Golf Course

The Royal Rambler Golf Tournament has a new location for 2024 as we are moving to the St Peters Golf Course, 200 Salt Lick Rd, Saint Peters, MO 63376. The day will feature a 4-ball Texas Scramble with a Shotgun start at 7:30am. The entry fee is \$500 per foursome and this will include alcoholic beverages and lunch. Scan the QR code to register your team.



Hole Sponsorships.

We are also looking for hole sponsorships! \$125/hole and we will share info on all our socials and in this newsletter. Scan the QR Code to sign teams up and sponsor a hole.

CLUB SPONSORS

Thank you to our club sponsors as without them we could not do what we do today. The club is always looking for new sponsors, particularly for our youth programs as we'd love to be able to give every youth player a ball and a uniform.

HealthMarkets

A health and life insurance agency that specializes in assisting clients with all their health and life insurance needs to protect both their health and wealth. For our rugby players, ask them about their accident plans!



Tubeco, Inc.

Your leader in Corten Steel products. Since 1993, Tubeco, Inc. has been specializing in supplying companies with corten square, rectangular and round tube.



Five Star Saloon

One of the best neighborhood bars around, friendly staff, rugby on TVs and now featuring the club's team photos dating back over nine decades. New deli opening soon! 2317 McKelvey Rd, Maryland Heights, MO 63043



US Men's Medical Center

Missouri's premier Testosterone Replacement Therapy Center. Low testosterone can affect all areas of your life including muscle loss, weight gain, hair loss, low sex drive, and decrease in memory. TRT helps to restore the impact that low testosterone has on your life.



StCharlesRugby.com | RRC.Coach@gmail.com

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Spring Players of The Match

- Koa Anakalea vs Columbia
- Josh Sander vs Columbia
- Dustin Camberos vs Mercenaries
- Victor Gomez-Ballester vs Mercenaries
- Jason Ralph vs Memphis
- Austin Lyons vs Memphis
- Jonah Kaler vs CBC
- Isaiah Beem vs CBC
- Ian Kobza vs Eureka HS & SLUH
- Camron Smith vs Eureka & SLUH
- Mike O'Brien @ Round Robin Tourney
- Blake Becker @ Round Robin Tourney

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