

# Royal Rambler

October 2024

Issue

#2



## Mid-America RFU 2023/24 D3 Champions



### The Royal Rambler Newsletter

The Royal Rambler will be a quarterly(ish) newsletter that will focus on all things Royal Ramblers, including the Force middle and high school and our Youth and Rookie Rugby programs.

## Royal Rambler DIII 2023/24 Review & 24/25 Preview

### 2023/24 Review

The Royal Ramblers returned to post season play for the first time since 2018 when we won the Mid-America DIII championship last spring by soundly defeating the previous champions Springfield MO at their home turf and then following it up with a win against cross town rivals the Hornets in the DIII playoffs. That punched our ticket to play the Red River Ruffians out of Fargo North Dakota in the first round in Lemont IL at the Chicago Blaze Rugby Complex.

Your Royal Ramblers kept it a very close contest during the first 20 minutes, but the Ruffians began to show why they were eventually able to make it into the final four of the USA Club Rugby National Championship as they began to pull away. The score was not in our favor but allowed all those on the roster to get some playing time.

For the majority of players this was their first time experiencing the excitement and quality of the competition of the national series and this loss only whet the appetite to continue the progress of developing the club into a consistent contender on the national club rugby scene.

### 2024/25 Preview

Our season started with a trip down to Rolla, MO for a preseason fixture with Missouri S&T, achieving a 43-0 shutout victory. We followed that up with a tilt against the Memphis Blues, achieving a 43-28 victory to avenge our 1-point loss in Memphis this past March. Our 2nd XV then played a tight match with Springfield (IL) Celts, a side that plans to rejoin MARFU DIII next season, ultimately falling 19-35.

Coming up, we dive into MARFU matrix matches, with matches all four weekends of October against the Hornets, Sunday Morning, Rowdies, and Springfield (MO). We are aiming to go 4-0 and show that we are the team to beat in MARFU DIII. We close out the fall with some friendlies at the Russ Ellis 10's in Belleville, and a round robin with KC Blues and Benedictine College in Kansas City.

We also are starting to plan for an exciting spring. In addition to MARFU DIII matches with Mercenaries and Outlaws, save the date for our return to Nash Bash 3/21 – 3/23. Finally, the MARFU DIII Playoffs are on the schedule for mid-April, and we aim to return to the Northern Super Regional (hosted within Mid-America this season) in early May.

### Coaches

Sadly, we had to make a coaching change for the 2024/25 as Zach Thorum moved back home and we wish him all the best. Josh Macy, head coach of Lindenwood University, has been a great asset for us and set us up with two players to coach us.

#### Xavier Herbert

"I have been playing rugby for as long as I can remember, living in the land of the long white cloud Aotearoa/ New Zealand, started playing rugby in Christchurch then Hawkes bay and finished in Dunedin going to and playing for the great Otago Boys High school, I am currently a senior at Lindenwood university, I've been involved with the Royal Ramblers over summers throughout my journey as they have really been family and given me a home away from home as an international student in the great USA. Being able to coach

these great men who I've had the honour of sharing the pitch with over summer sevens is a great privilege and I am excited to see the great things this very talented group will be able to achieve this year"

#### Del Salinas

"I've been playing rugby for a little over a decade now, with my roots being in San Antonio, Texas. During my time I've had the privilege to represent numerous teams. High school club & academies, MLR u23, to men's club, and university; I've experienced playing at the highest level. More recently, I have begun giving back to my respective communities in youth, high school, and men's coaching roles. My next stop will be in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Can't wait for what's next!"



## 2024 ALUMNI GAME & AGM, Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>

Join us for our Alumni game and Annual General Meeting on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>. Game kicks off at 10am and the post game celebration and AGM will be at Five Star Saloon starting at 12:30pm. Come out and play/watch some rugby and then be part of your club at the AGM!



## PLAYER PROFILE: Kevin McAllister

33 yrs old from Affton, MO. I first started playing right back in summer of '08/'09 playing 7s with the Ramblers, since my high school team didn't have a rugby team. I continued playing with the Ramblers through high school and into college with both 15's and 7's. I then went to Southeast Missouri State University where I played for the university club team and the local men's team Kohlfeld Scorpions,

where I played for 3 years. After college I moved back to St. Louis and started playing with the Ramblers again. I have been playing with the Royal Ramblers ever since! I mostly play 9 now, but when I first started playing I dabbled in wing, 15, and then got into the 9 position. My cousin from AZ was the one that got me into rugby. We went down to AZ to watch him play for NAU (Northern Arizona University's) Rugby Team and ever since then I got hooked!! Also, playing EASports Rugby 2005 helped me learn the rules and basic game play. My favorite memory/memories were my first ever away rugby trip to the Elvis 7s tournament when I was 17 years old getting the first real game experience and after party craziness. The multiple trips to NOLA are also good ones. And playing a D3 playoff game in college and us not having a kicking tee and still nailing every conversion.

# 7s

## Royal Ramblers 7s Review

The second season of the Royal Ramblers 7s season was an overall success, as we started to make a name for ourselves in the 7s game. We had a great mix of Royal Ramblers 15s players and college players that were home or staying in St. Louis for the summer. We averaged around 25-30 players at both practices and Thursday night games, allowing for great flow and player development. We want to thank those college players for the dedication they showed to the program this summer, and we wish you luck as your college teams compete in your 15s seasons.

This summer we competed in three out of town tournaments, Bellevegas, Lakefront 7s, and Show Me Games, as well as in the St. Louis Summer sevens tournament. We started off with Bellevegas, where we were able to enter two teams into the tournament and came out as tournament champions! This was the first tournament win for our program, and was a great experience for all players that participated. Next was Lakefront, which was the first competitive bracket we participated in in our program's history. Even though we did not get the result we wanted, we played some competitive games and were able to see what we needed to improve on in the future. The final tournament was Show Me State Games in Columbia, MO, where we went out and competed against some of the best teams in the state of Missouri. Boys played their hearts out and gave everything they had to end the summer season.

The greatest achievement of the summer was our teams' participation in the Summer 7s Series. This year we fielded two teams, the Blue side and Green side, and were able to compete for the tournament championship as well as develop other talent. Every Thursday we would have 20-30 players ready to play, and every player took advantage of the time they were given on the field. The Blue side lost only two games the entire series, both to the Bombers A side, and took 2nd overall losing a close game to the Bombers 24-19 in the final.

The future of our program looks bright, and we look to build on the success of this summer in the future. Next year we are looking to expand the number of tournaments we compete in, as well as create our first official 7s kit and gear for players and fans. Thank you to all the players and supporters that made this summer a success. Once again, good luck to all as you compete in your fall/spring seasons, and we look forward to seeing you all next summer.

Jason Ralph, Royal Ramblers 7s Coach

## 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 men and youth programs.

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. The higher the membership the greater the rewards!

What we're asking of you: First, sign up at a starting commitment of \$30.00 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.



## CAPTAIN'S CORNER

I am so proud of the teammates, coaches, families, and fans that supported us last season. With your help, we were able to achieve a number of firsts for the club since the Royals-Ramblers merger: first win over Springfield Mudpuppies, first MARFU DIII title, first appearance at the Northern Super Regional. This year, we are aiming high – repeat as MARFU DIII champions, and go 2-0 to advance through Super Regionals and qualify for the National Final Four. We are returning the majority of our 1st XV from the playoff run last spring, and have a number of key newcomers and returning players all competing for roster spots. To reach our goals, it takes more than the 23 that fill out a match day roster. To establish quality roster depth, we have established a 2nd XV this season, to provide additional opportunities for competitive minutes to all players. This is my 4th year as Captain of the Royal Ramblers, and I have never been more excited about this club. Our youth pathway is growing every year, and we continue to grow our recruitment base from college teams. I believe we are on the path for long-term success, and cannot wait to see what the future holds!

Nathan Miller (C)





## ROYAL RAMBLER FORCE

We have a new name! The Western Counties Force is becoming the Royal Rambler Force to align with the club identity.

This summer we saw several players play at the elite level with the USA Rugby South Panther Academy. The academy is a non-profit, high performance, elite rugby training program. Through a robust calendar of training camps, competitive events and international tours, their coaches and educators identify, develop and mentor athletes in line with the USA Rugby National Development Program.

Jonah Kaler and Samuel Heath were selected for the Panther team and represented then at the Tropical 7s, Tampa, FL and again at the North American Invitational 7s (NAI7s) in Salt Lake City, UT.

U16

Two of our U12 players joined Jonah and Sam at the NAI7s, again playing for the Panthers. Landon Ebner and Olivia Heath played in the U12 coed bracket and were coached by our own Colin Heath. As we continue to work closely with Panthers we are now hosting a USA Rugby South Panther camp on November 10th at our fields. Camp is open to boys and girls U12-U18.

The Fall Season is a tough one for rugby as many players have Fall and Winter sport commitments, particularly football, however Coaches Colin Heath, Alexis Mosele and Joe Hunter III offered rugby for all those willing. We were able to link up with the Raptors Rugby club in Hendersonville, TN and get playing time for several of our players at sevens tournaments in Tennessee.



## ROYAL RAMBLER FORCE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

A new addition to the Royal Rambler fold is a girls high school team. Very early days but we have several committed girls attending practices and some of our more experienced players have had the opportunity to train and play with the St Louis Sabres. If you know of any high school girls interested in rugby then please share our info with them.

## ROYAL RAMBLER FORCE YOUTH RUGBY

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 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. The Fall camp is currently underway and we have seen Jevon Berry take over the lead for this program.

### Recruiting

Need info to share with others to recruit more youth players, then reach out to [RRC.Coach@gmail.com](mailto:RRC.Coach@gmail.com). We offer rugby for boys and girls ages 5 and up.

# 1-DAY CAMP

## for Boys & Girls U12-U18

**ROYAL RAMBLER  
RUGBY PITCH**

**3801 MUELLER RD  
ST. CHARLES, MO**

**9 am - 12 pm**

**Sunday, November 10th**

**Register Fee is \$35**




- USA RUGBY NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTING
- SKILL SESSIONS

7 SEPT	MISSOURI S&T	ROLLA, MO	FRIENDLY
21 SEPT	MEMPHIS RC	RRRC PITCH	D3 FRIENDLY
21 SEPT	SPRINGFIELD CELTS	RRRC PITCH	D4 FRIENDLY
5 OCT	STL HORNETS	FOREST PARK	D3 LEAGUE
5 OCT	STL HORNETS	FOREST PARK	D4 FRIENDLY
12 OCT	SUNDAY MORNING	FOREST PARK	D3 LEAGUE
12 OCT	SUNDAY MORNING/ SPRINGFIELD CELTS	FOREST PARK	D4 FRIENDLY
19 OCT	BELLEVILLE ROWDIES	RRRC PITCH	D3 LEAGUE
26 OCT	SPRINGFIELD RFC	RRRC PITCH	D3 LEAGUE
26 OCT	SPRINGFIELD RFC	RRRC PITCH	D4 FRIENDLY
2 NOV	RUSS ELLIS 105	BELLEVILLE, IL	FRIENDLY
9 NOV	KC BLUES	KANSAS CITY	D3 FRIENDLY
9 NOV	BENEDICTINE UNI	KANSAS CITY	D4 FRIENDLY

# CLUB FUNDRAISERS & SPONSORS

## 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.

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### 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.



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## WATCH ALL OUR LEAGUE GAMES LIVE



1. Download the Veo Live App from Apple Store or Google Play.
2. Search for Royal Rambler Rugby Club and follow the club.
3. You'll receive notifications when games go live or rewatch at a later date.



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