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From the Referee's website

Written by Matt Eason, Sacramento rugby referee

The Game They Play In Heaven On Earth

Report by Matt Eason, February 12, 2004

Imagine the day when rugby is a popular enough sport, that two American high schools located only 3 blocks from one another could each field a team with over 75 players, and had over 200 combined players between the two of them. Imagine the day when the sidelines are packed three deep to watch 14-15 year olds play a pre-season weekday "friendly" during business hours. Imagine the day when a referee arrives at the pitch, and announces to the captains that he threw away his yellow and red cards this season, only to have the captains then return to the teams 'sua sponte' and tell them that since the referee doesn't have cards, the players will have the captain to deal with if they screw up. Imagine the day when a referee isn't called "ref," or "sir," but rather "coach" the entire time by 14-15 year olds playing their first game and learning on the fly. Imagine the day when a Sikh plays in a match for a catholic school wearing a Turban, and his headdress isn't messed with by adolescents.

That day was yesterday. Rio Americana H.S. and Jesuit H.S. played a match that was too much fun to even discuss irrelevant things such as who won, or the score.

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers to Coach K. He was certified in the Touch Judge Course I on Thursday 2/19 to go along with his Referee Level I certification.

Jeers to Mrs. Malim. She had to be taken kicking and screaming from the Vacaville outlet stores to get to the game on time.

Cheers to the entire A team. Playing 2 full tough games within 17 hours in addition to a 5 AM wake up for the drive to Walnut Creek for an 8 AM warmup; and everyone was on time!! Kudos to all, including all the parents that made the trek also!

Cheers to all the players that made it to the Cal-UBC game to watch 3 Jesuit alums start for Cal (we are counting Chris Guerke) and witness a very competitive high level collegiate game. That level of play is something to aspire towards.

Rugby looks like it has become a numbers game.

A look at a coach's score sheet and you would have seen this: - #24 (5-0), #160 (7-0), Champion (12-0), #166 (14-0), Watje (19-0) etc. All the coach has to do now is find out who #24, #160 and #166 are? Thank heavens for the numbering system.

Things happen fast in Jesuit Rugby.

In his first real game of Rugby, the flying winger who ran out of the in zone before placing the ball for a "try" in the Senior B game at Lamorinda hadn't left the field before coaches Barry and Tom had him in tow.

He was seen leaving Miramonte HS field with Jesuit rugby ball in hand. A player of the future? Should we keep an eye out for the name Jacob Scott in the near future?

Cheers to all the baseballers, unfortunate enough to be cut from that sport but welcome additions at Rugby practice last week. Hope you enjoy the season.

Word has it that our wrestlers/Rugby players will return to the Rugby field this week. The basketballers will follow them. What are a few more players among friends?

Cheers to our first banner purchasers. To provide funds for the team 2 banners have been purchased to adorn the field. Please congratulate Placer Title (Brian French's grandfather) and Aero Construction.

Cheers to Dr. David Miller who has become fanatic about refereeing rugby. He now is at 3-4 games per week blowing the whistle and trotting about the field. With his knee brace on, it keeps him from outrunning the quick wings.

Lamo Sinks Marauders

Jesuit Down In Cliff Hanger

2/21/04 Miramonte HS

It was all excitement over the final minutes of the now annual early season clash between Lamorinda and Jesuit, played again this season on the astro turf of Miramonte High in San Francisco.

The game, that hadn't risen to any great heights for much of the game, came to life in the closing minutes as both teams made efforts to either clinch the game or win it.

Lamorinda prevailed 15-14 in an impressive display by its well-prepared team. The team played with great passion and displayed considerable forward power.

Jesuit took an early lead 7-0 when, from a penalty close to the Lamorinda line, hooker Brian French powered over for the try that was converted by center Adam Mariani.

Both teams had nightmares early on trying to handle the wet ball on the artificial surface and the game became very much a stop-start affair for a period of time as knock on followed knock on.

After pounding the Jesuit line for several minutes, Lamorinda eventually went over for a deserved try that left them down by 7-5. In the 20th minute Lamorinda took the lead 8-7 after opting to take a penalty shot close to the Jesuit line.

With a dominant scrum, Lamo looked likely to run over Jesuit particularly after it scored a driving converted try in the eighth minute to lead 15-7.

Jesuit continued to find ball retention difficult and could not mount any consistent pressure on the Lamo defense until well into the second half.

Suddenly, almost out of nowhere, Jesuit retained the ball for seven phases and worked the Lamo defense from side to side for the first time in the game in the process. The result was a try to #8 Paul Jesseman. With Adam Mariani's conversion there was now only one point in the game.

Try as both teams might, neither could score again and the final whistle went with Lamorinda worthy winners at 15-14.

After the sparkling performance by Jesuit against Vacaville the previous day, the Marauders had several problem areas exposed by Lamo. These will certainly be the centers of attention at practice before the Burbank game a week Friday.

It was difficult to find a stand out player for Jesuit though Eric Fry and Steve Lewis tried manfully in the forwards while Eric Forner and Tyler Collins looked dangerous when the ball finally made its way out to them in the second half.

Jesuit 1-15 Anthony Estrella, Brian French, Justin Sweeney/ Eric Fry, Andrew Booth/Alex Kallergis, Eric Fry/Paul Jesseman, Steve Lewis/Andy Lewellyn, Zac Reed, Paul Jesseman/Steve Lewis Billy Bittner, Chris Sardon, Mike Renda/Tyler Siegel, Sean McNamara, Adam Mariani, Eric Forner, Tyler Collins

Jesuit 14

Tries French, Jesseman

Conversions Mariani 2

Lamorinda 15

Tries 2

Conversions 1

Penalties 1

'B' Team Sinks Lamorinda

2/21/04 Miramonte HS

The B's avenged the close loss by the A team with an outstanding performance Saturday. There were many strong performances, but standouts had to include Mike Morrison for his control of the game, Christian Lundholm for his steady fill in at scrum half, Alex Murchison for the aerial display in the lineouts, and Tyler Siegel for his strategic running.

It was exciting to play on the all weather surface at Miramonte HS in Orinda, CA and it gave some extra spring into the players' legs. Both games were blessed with top notch officiating and the intensity of the games resulted in exciting rugby for fans to watch.

Anthony Vitto opened the scoring for Jesuit with an early try from a penalty play. This was followed by Craig McCoy crashing over from 10 meters out for our second try. In the meantime, the Alex Murchison and Co. high wire act controlled the lineouts through a joint effort of lifters

Andrew Booth and Joey Malim and laser throws from hooker David Read. Standoff Mike Morrison got his backline moving with Winger Mike Bier making deep inroads into Lamorinda territory. There were some deep strikes, but many were blunted by the tenacious Lamorinda defense.

In the second half, Tyler "the Silent" Siegel made a lot of noise with cutbacks through the green and black defense, finally leading to a try to make it 15-0. Craig McCoy put the game away with a heady pick and drive at the end for the final score and a 20-0 win.

At the post game presentations, Lamorinda chose Mike Morrison as Best Back and Matt Nickerson as Best Forward. There was much appreciation for the very generous food and drink provided by our hosts following the game and thanks for 2 exciting and competitive games.

Jesuit 1-15 Nickerson, Read, Colombero, Booth, Llewellyn, Malim, McCoy, Murchison, Lundholm, Demichei, Bier, Siegel, Vitto, Burky

Trys Vitto, Siegel, McCoy (2)

Conversions Siegel 0/3, Scott 0/1

Reserves seeing action Markham, Frandrup, Thomas, Scott, Blamey, Llanera, Hendricks, Bonner, Jue

Referee John Cullom

The Collegiate and Alumni Report

By Doug Hamilton

Cole Valadez wrote a long and welcome note from sunny Santa Barbara where he is seeing action as a jack-of-all-trades utility back for the Gaucho's A-Side. He played his first varsity game in a match for local bragging rights as UCSB hosted cross town rival Westmont College. Cole would love to talk rugby and UCSB to anyone and everyone. He can be reached by e-mail at zerocatch23@yahoo.com, or by phone at (916) 718-0360. Santa Barbara is an up and coming team in the Southern California RFU Collegiate First Division. Last year they upset league

favorite Cal Poly SLO and finished second overall in their league earning a spot in the national Sweet 16.

Coach Dan Hattrup of Regis University wrote with an update on Dan Prophet's career on Regis' front row. Dan earned Man of the Match honors in a recent match against the University of Colorado. Coach Hattrup will be in California in a few weeks where he plans to attend the Jesuit match against the Los Angeles Cougars at Stanford. He would love to talk to Jesuit players about continuing their playing experience at Regis.

College Report:

Cal's traditional rival in rugby is not Stanford, in fact it's not even an American college. For years Cal and the University of British Columbia have held a home and away competition for the modestly named "World Cup," named after a now defunct Vancouver newspaper. UBC plays its regular schedule against British Columbia's top level clubs, something akin to a US college playing football or basketball in the NFL or NBA. Last Saturday marked the home encounter for the Bears, who came up short against the visiting Thunderbirds by an 18-14 score. Cal was without the services of injured fly-half Kyle Khasigian, but James Sehr, Louie Stanfill, and Andrew Lindsay all started for the Bears. The series will continue over spring break when Cal travels to Vancouver hoping to gain a victory, preferably by at least five points, and keep the cup. Cal returns to league play this weekend in Reno as they take on the Nevada Wolfpack. Davis will travel to St. Mary's, though the weather and the condition of St. Mary's soggy Pat Vincent Pitch might force a change in the time or location of the match. Stanford hosts Chico, and Sacramento has a bye.

The key college match in California this weekend will occur down south where undefeated league leaders Cal Poly SLO and UC Santa Barbara meet.

Keep the Jesuit readership updated on your post high school rugby. Write to dragon1137@aol.com, and be sure to mention Jesuit rugby in the subject line.

Ripley's Would You Believe?

Did you know that horror actor Boris Karloff was a Rugby star in his native Hungary? He played Rugby when he moved to Hollywood. In 1935 Karloff founded the Southern California Rugby

Football Union. And did you also know that Pope John Paul was good enough as a flanker to be selected at national level for his native Poland?

Just a few other Rugby notables include Ted Kennedy, actors David Niven and Richard Harris as well as Bill Clinton.

Rugby Around The World

Sacramento Valley HS Conference – Round 1

Jesuit 58 Vacaville 12

Del Campo 51 Davis 10

Ponderosa 10 Oak Ridge 9

Burbank 16 Grant 14

Six Nations – Round 2

England 35 Scotland 13

France 25 Italy 0

Ireland 36 Wales 15

Points table

England, France 4

Ireland, Wales 2

Scotland, Italy 0

Super 12 – Round 1

ACT Brumbies(Aust) 44 Auckland Blues(NZ) 27

Otago Highlanders(NZ) 39 Queensland Reds(Aust) 8

NSW Waratahs(Aust) 43 Canterbury Crusaders(NZ) 19

Coastal Sharks(S Afr) 23 Blue Bulls(S Afr) 13

Western Stormers(S Afr) 28 28 Cats(S Afr) 23

Waikato Chiefs(NZ) 19 Wellington Hurricanes(NZ) 7

Points table

Brumbies, Waratahs, Highlanders 5

Sharks, Stormers, Chiefs 4

Cats, Blue Bulls 1

Reds, Blues, Crusaders, Hurricanes

Monday Talent Time Quest

Our Rugby practice numbers are so large at Jesuit this season that the coaches feel they may be letting some real Rugby talent slip through the talent identification net. Last Thursday more than 120 keen, enthusiastic Marauders were at practice. This borders on being a logistic nightmare.

With so many new players still coming out from baseball, wrestling and basketball, together with new faces just wanting to play the game “they play in heaven”, coaches Barry and Carl will be holding Monday afternoon coaching sessions.

Boys who are new to Rugby or have played little Rugby should try to be at these Monday sessions from next Monday, 1 March.

The session will last from 3.15pm to 5.00pm and will continue until coaches feel that we have some reasonable idea of the abilities of the “Marauder Multitude”.