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the MacDonald
Commission Report**

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Rugby — more than meets the eye

by Mark Spector

Have you ever seen the bumper-sticker that reads "Give blood... play rugby"?

When I saw it on a Datsun in the west end one day I thought that it was one of the most appropriate bumper-stickers that I had ever seen.

I mean, isn't that what rugby is all about? A bunch of blood thirsty behemoths running around with no apparent plan except for to try to maim each other as brutally as possible, right?

Wrong. Actually, as six members of the U of A rugby club informed me on Tuesday afternoon, this is one sport where there are virtually no size restrictions.

And as for strategies involved — "People don't realize it but there are probably just as many set plays in rugby as in any other sport," relates Jerome Marburg, a native of South Africa and current member of the local Druids Rugby club.

The plays are called using everything from voiced signals, like a quarterback in football, to hand signals ala backcatchers in baseball.

Surprised? Well I bet you didn't know that rugby is this planet's sixth most popular sport. It is played everywhere from Australia to Tonga to the U.S.S.R.

"I started playing rugby when I was six years old," said 57" Irishman Paddy Lamb, "in a league that used less players (then the regular

15) and had less rules so that the youngsters could learn the game a little easier."

And one of the first things that you learn when you play rugby is that when the final whistle blows, you shake hands and leave any personal ill feelings on the field.

"Rugby is a totally apolitical sport," remarked Lamb. "It is the only sporting body in Ireland that acts as one national team — North and South together." This brotherhood is a major factor in what looks like an everyone-for-themselves type of activity.

"I took a trip to Wales a couple of years ago, and once I met up with a few guys that were rugby players there, I don't think that I paid for another beer," admitted Druid Kevin Swanson. "Just being a rugby player will guarantee you lodgings with someone in most parts of the world," said Lamb, a member of the Edmonton Pirates.

Like any other volunteer organization, the 11 rugby clubs in and around the city raise their funds by running bingo, hall parties, and the like. But not all their work goes towards their own pockets.

Last year the Edmonton Rugby Union sponsored *Beers Are Not Enough*, whereby busses ran from a local hotel to the blood bank with free glasses of draught awaiting the donors' return at the hotel.

And if you've ever been to the annual summer event called Rugbyfest, I don't have to tell you that it

is Edmonton's most multicultural event next to the Heritage Festival. It annually attracts around 60 teams from all over the world and showplaces all levels of rugby — from touring national teams to a women's division.

And Rugbyfest is one heck of a party.

In a game where the object is to tackle your opponent, yet no equipment is worn, the ladies display the finesse side of the game almost as efficiently as the gents.

The U of A rugby club is composed of players from every club team in the city as well as from Calgary, B.C., and Saskatchewan. In two weeks they'll travel to Victoria to battle against sides from Berkeley, California, the U of Michigan, and four more clubs from B.C. and Alberta, in what will be only their second action of the year and first since October.

If you're like myself and never really gave this game an honest chance, drive out to the Ellerslie Rugby Center some time this summer and take in a game or two. It's one of the top rugby facilities in North America with five rugby pitches. If nothing else you can enjoy a cool drink in the \$800,000 recreation building there.

This summer I'm going to give rugby a fair shot, it deserves one. (The U of A rugby club is holding a social on Friday the 28th from 3-7 pm in rm. 142 SLB to raise funds for Victoria. Beer's a buck.)



It's rough going on the rugby pitch, but afterwards it's glug, glug, glug!

Law leads in Campus Rec standings

by Barry Willing

The latest Men's Intramural Unit standings have just been released by the Campus Recreation office. Law holds the lead in 'A' Conference with 1781 points, followed closely by Engineering with 1662 and Wrecking Crew with 1568 points.

In 'B' Conference, Forestry (577 points) has a narrow lead over Pink Flamingo Repair at 465 points. Delta Kappa Epsilon is in third place with 412 points.

The 'C' Conference sees Fiji in the lead with 469 points. The Chinese Students' Association (382 points) and Kelsey Hall (359 points) are in a tight struggle for second place.

With four events yet to take place, it should be an exciting race to see who comes out on top of each division.

On Friday, February 28th, Campus Recreation Staff Fitness and Lifestyle program will present a Fit-

ness Forum entitled Family Fitness. The panel will feature Dr. J. Bishop, Dr. Ted Wall, and Dr. Tim Burgon. The panelists, all experts in the area of play, will discuss how a family can play actively together.

The panel will give ideas for fun activities with the family and answer any questions about family fitness. The Fitness Forum will be held at 1200-1250 in Room W-01, Van Vliet Physical Education & Recreation Centre. All staff and students are welcome to attend.

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