



OLD BOY QUARTERLY

The Old Boy Quarterly

is targeted to the alumni rugby players of the Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club, its current players, parents of players, prospective athletes considering us, and interested 3rd parties such as sponsors.

These issues chronicle both interesting parts of the club's **57 YEAR** history and inform the readers about the club's current status & future plans.

It is meant to supplement and not replace the information on the club's website

JayhawkRugby.com

Official Club Email:

KansasRugby@gmail.com

The club also has actively managed information on:

Facebook: (Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club)

Instagram:

[@jayhawkrugby](https://www.instagram.com/jayhawkrugby)

Charitable gifts can be made to:

The Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.

Go to
www.JayhawkRugby.com
Click on "DONATE".
(Services by PayPal)

OR

Mail a check to:

The Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1182
Lawrence, KS 66044

WINTER EDITION

National Playoffs!



An Undefeated Season

Because of the past 18 months of hard work

WHAT'S GOING ON

To Alumni:

This team is NOT about some good athletes who make things happen, although there are a lot of TERRIFIC athletes on this team. Its not about a bunch of jocks.

This team is about “DETERMINATION”. It's a better word than “tough” or “has heart”, because those words are diluted by frequent use.

These guys and the “org” that includes **YOU ALUMNI**, did so much over the Pandemic interruption. When the all-clear was given to restart the games, the Jayhawks had over 50 players and kept them through the entire season. The players as individuals had **made** themselves all they could be physically. **They work a terrific coached game plan.** The “club vibe” is that you want to belong in this club. Its fun. **You work hard.** The team is great guys. You win games with class.

This is a “life lesson”.

There is a lot to read here, but the Newsletter is easy. Get a coffee or whatever you like and give this edition a good look.

The Jayhawks are living the dream. - Our dream.

Getting Here

Where do you start a story?
(Part 2)

Order a Bound Photo Album
of this Year's Games - see ad

Season Recap

Introducing Social Memberships

Rugby's Pioneers

Jerry Rutherford & Reagan Malone were the original developers of the sport in this region. Rugby was “sand lot” 50 years ago and they generated much of what you see today.

We took them to lunch and they told us their stories.

On The Cover - First Score

After 18 months away from playing , the Jayhawks faced the KC Blues D3 team on a rainy day in Kansas City. The Jayhawks' big #8 **Trevor Lister** scored the team's first try on the way to a shutout of a very good Blues team. The cover's photo series catches the euphoria of that moment. Also pictured: prop **Tom Richards** and flanker **Dylan Hoye**.



All the photos in this Newsletter were made by **GTH Images**.
(See advertisement in this edition)

Jayhawks

Fall 2021 Results

Date	Opponent	Location	Result	Score
Sept 4	KC Blues D3	Kansas City	Win	23 - 0
Sept 11	Nebraska	Westwick	Win	34 - 0
Sept 18	Wichita Barbos	Westwick	Win	30 - 21
Sept 25	Missouri	Westwick	Win	23 - 12
Oct 2	Arkansas	Westwick	Win	16 - 10
Oct 9	Nodaway County	Westwick	Win	26 - 19
Oct 16	Oklahoma State	Stillwater, OK	Win	73 - 0
Oct 23	Kansas State	Westwick	Win	26 - 19
Oct 30	Kansas City RFC	Kansas City, KS	Loss*	15 - 67
Nov 6	Iowa State	Westwick	Win	27 - 24
Nov. 7	Minnesota	Westwick	Win	17 - 14

Games in **RED** are conference games that counted towards National Playoffs.

*As negotiated, Kansas City RFC played the Jayhawks' Club Side, as many of the probable Varsity players were rested for the following week's Conference Tournament.

Getting Here

Where do you start a story?

Part 2

This article is “Part 2” because it hooks onto the November 2019 edition #33 where we had the same article title and outlined all the things the club had done to generate that season’s excellent results.

The club’s management made the commitment during the 18 months of the Pandemic shut down to perpetuate all those good things we had done in the lead up to fall 2019 and then build on it.

There has always been a “**hunger**” for young men to belong in a group, especially when that group is **big, fun & successful**. This team has done a great job to tap into that. **The roster started with and has retained over 50 players.**

Mission of roster development:

- **Get Tall** (we can’t be out-sized in the playoffs)
- **Get Young** (need freshman and sophomores to grow the program)
- **Get Experienced** (players need to stay out several years and play together)
- **Get Deep** (need redundancy in players in all positions to travel well, this means an actively playing 2nd side)

As outlined in the June 2021 Newsletter titled “**Legacy**”, this fall’s players were shepherded by last year’s graduated seniors. The current players showed up **fit, muscular, and excited** to play.



In what we call ourselves, the players representing the school in official conference matches are referred to as the “**Varsity Side**”. The other players in the following match that day are not the “B-Team”; they are more accurately named the “**Club Side**”. Any Jayhawk match not representing the school in a conference match is also called the Club Side. Within the Club Side are players who are not eligible to officially appear in a conference match.

Off field, the Jayhawks developed a **Steering Committee** as detailed in the June 2021 Newsletter. The purpose is to offer directional challenges to the **Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club**, the **Kansas Rugby Foundation**, and to the owners of **Westwick**. Its sort of an “idea farm”.

Some of our results:

Hiring a professional **social media manager**. - We have better visual product, on a frequent and consistent basis, on more media platforms, and are reaching a much bigger following audience. - This is one of the drivers of attracting and retaining our big roster of players.

Cultivating the “**Westwick game experience**”. No other regional rugby club is devoting a consistent effort to make their sidelines fun. We have examined the “best in class” college game experience of “**The Grove**” at Ole Miss to break down its fundamentals. Our scale is totally different, but we are trying a number of ideas. The sidelines crowd size is responding. **We are getting 400 spectators... and we will grow.**

We realize that **Parents are a key demographic of the club**. They financially support their sons at the university and we want them to be enthusiastic about their sons on the rugby team. We have Parents of three of our players (**Reid & Wyatt Parsons, and Luke Connor**) organizing the other Parents and helping with sidelines festivities. The club is providing refreshments to make the sidelines a tailgate party.

We **explain the game** to novice visitors. **Rick Renfro** has stood near the new attendees and narrated the opening minutes of a match, so the crowd understands some basics of what is going on in the game.

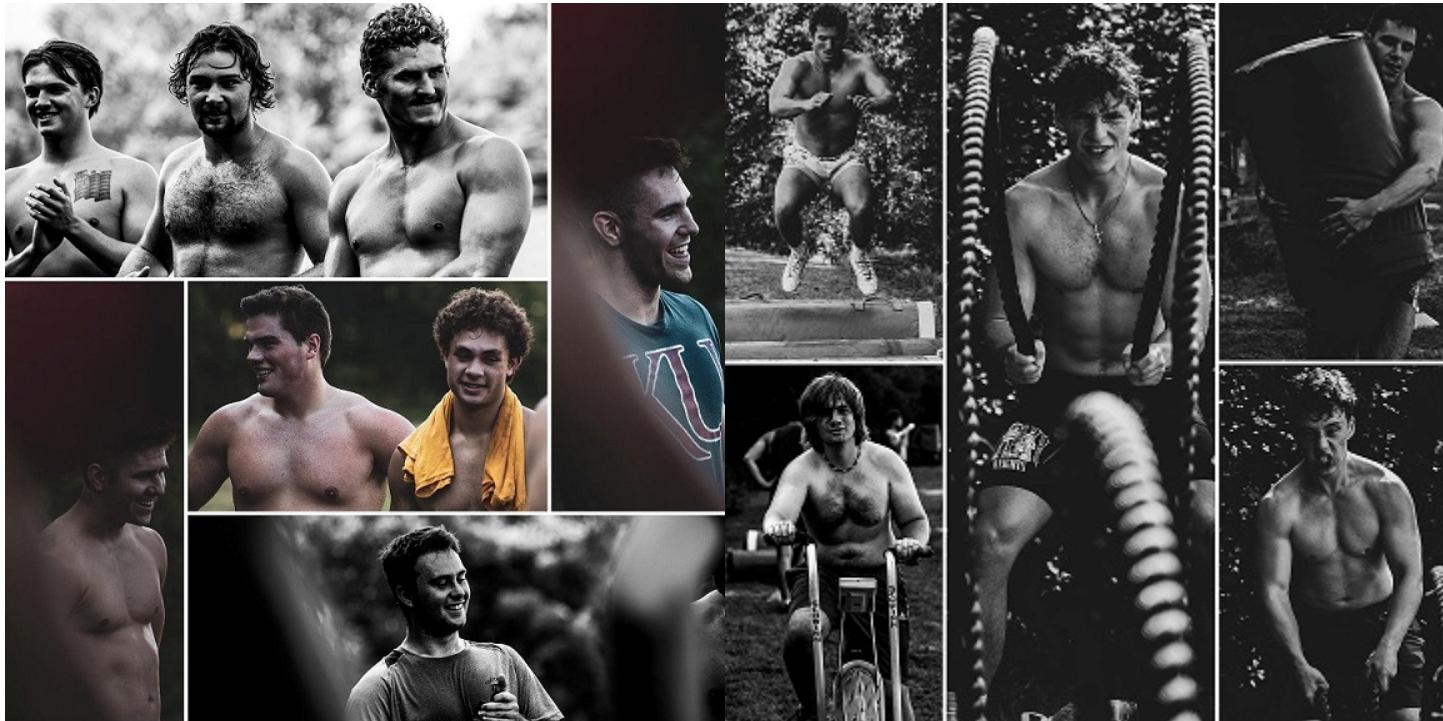
Westwick improvements are underway as we outlined in the August 2021 Newsletter. These will include flush toilets for fans and changing rooms for the players. We also have the players parking at the north end of the pitch to relieve the fan parking capacity. - **We want Westwick to be the best venue for a match in the region.**

We are re-establishing something that we had when the club was founded almost 60 years ago. We are bringing back "**Social Memberships**". The outline of that is presented in a full page ad in this Newsletter edition.

Westwick and our **active alumni base** are the biggest assets of the Jayhawks. We are working to enhance both. ****



The players showed up **fit, muscular, and excited** to play. The pre-season workouts were hard. They **earned** their match wins.



We reflect on our use of TIME.

Do we achieve things and then forget everything, forcing a start-over, and thus run in place? Or do we work to build on what is accomplished to propel our achievements ever further? - The Jayhawks' rugby organization has been focused on stacking their achievements.

The last article in this Newsletter, "**Pioneers**" is about 2 guys who shaped the sport of rugby in the region 50 years ago and made it what is today. They created things from their imagination. **As you read that article, please consider how many of their dreams have been achieved by the Jayhawks, such as a "rugby stadium".**

This edition concludes exactly ten (10) years of publishing the Old Boy Quarterly. That's a consistent 4 editions a year. Enough pages to make a thick novel about a rugby club in a small college town.

Back in 2011, we located and interviewed club founder **George Bunting** in Midland, TX for the 1st Newsletter. That interview was recorded and the audio posted on our Facebook page on August 10, 2020. (Its still there.) - If Bunting were alive today, he would be very pleased. The Jayhawks hit his dream right on the button.



Now accepting orders for our
‘21-‘22 season photo book!

**Team photographer Griff Hastings is
offering a photo book highlighting
the 2021-2022 season!**

**12x12 hardcover
team book
\$70**

Books will be ordered at the
conclusion of the 2022
spring season. Order by
April 1st, 2022
Venmo, cash or check.



GTH Images



gth_images

Rockchalk53@gmail.com



Season Recap

September 4, 2021

Bloomington Boondoggle

After months of preparation and fund raising, the Jayhawks were set to load two full teams onto a 55 passenger bus to Indiana on Friday morning, September 3. They had \$4,000 sunk in the bus and reservations for another \$4,000 in hotel rooms in Bloomington. 24 hours prior to departure, the Jayhawks were notified that the Hoosiers were canceling the match. The reason sited was that the school would not give them access to a university field and all other possible field locations were considered a lost cause. The Hoosiers didn't have the required ambulance and medical trainer for the match.

The Jayhawks contacted Indiana University and learned that there were other field locations in Bloomington and nearby Indianapolis that had less restrictive requirements. The Jayhawks lined up a field in Indianapolis that had uprights and had agreement from the city that the field could be lined for rugby. The Jayhawks were willing to load all their field equipment, like goal post pads and bring a striping machine and set up a field for the match. The Jayhawks were also willing to line up the ambulance etc. The Hoosiers balked at playing and forfeited the match.

The Jayhawks learned that behind the scene, the Hoosiers had a special meeting the night before on Wednesday September 1 and the team sacked their coach of 3 years who had previously been the assistant coach at powerhouse Dart-

mouth. How that may have folded into the cancellation decision is unknown, but when the given reasons for not playing the match were overcome, the Hoosiers decided to forfeit.

The Jayhawks (incredibly) were able to dodge the sizable charges for bus and hotel cancellation. The KC Blues stepped up at the last minute to give the Jayhawks a match with their Division 3 team, to be played in Swope Park in Kansas City. That match was followed by a 3rd half allowing all the players on the sidelines some game time.

September 4, 2021

23-0 Over KC Blues D3 at Swope Park, Kansas City

This was a terrific showing. - It's a team that had not played together, really ever. The Blues had a big set of forwards. The Jayhawks stood with them all day. It was a stalemate the first 20 minutes, then KU's #10 **Chandler Owens** went for the posts on a penalty kick and made it, getting KU the first points. A few minutes later he went for another attempt and was just wide. #8 **Trevor Lister** scored on a 25 meter run on the left side. Owens converted it. The half ended 10-0. In the 2nd half Owens made another field goal, then substituted



himself off the field. **Luke Connor** at #9 made the next field goal. Wing **Wyatt Parsons** was the last man in a 4 player passing movement and scored in the left corner, which was converted by Connor. Final was 23-0.

Perhaps the biggest story was just an observation about the size and commitment of the Jayhawks' roster. There was a light rain all morning. Yet the Jayhawks had about 45 players who had paid dues and showed up at 11:00 AM in uniform to play this match in Kansas City. They played a full game with the Blues and then a rushed "3rd half"

game before the Blues Division 1 team were scheduled to play the 1:00 game with the St. Louis Bombers. All this was done to try to get this entire, big group of Jayhawks into a game. After the game, the coaches congratulated the side for the win and explained that they had tried to get everyone some playing time. The players should not be discouraged if they only had a few minutes in a game.

September 11, 2021

34-0 Jayhawks win over the Nebraska Cornhuskers at Westwick

This was our first home match since the fall 2019 season. It was also the 20 year anniversary of the

September 11 terror attack that killed 3,000 Americans and kicked off the long war in Afghanistan. That war had a sudden withdrawal of American troops in the preceding weeks and had generated some heated news about the withdrawal logistics. – So it was an emotionally charged day for very different reasons.

In the lead up to the match, the Parents of **Reid & Wyatt Parsons** and **Luke Connor** were asked to coordinate a BYO Parents tailgate party at home games. A mass email was sent to Parents. The sidelines had tents and tables for the crowd that was bolstered by the Parents.

It was sunny, in the high 80's, with south wind blowing down the pitch. The Jayhawks were warming up on the east field and concealed from view by the central berm. Just before game time, a cheer could be heard from the far field. The Jayhawks came over the ridge of the berm, past the Jayhawk statue, and formed 2 lines down its near side and did a slow clap. The uniformed players came over the ridge and down between the rows of other players. Both teams then lined up on the sidelines facing the spectators and together with the crowd, shared a minute of silence for September 11.

For the first 5 minutes of the match, **Rick Renfro** stood in front of the Parents' part of the crowd and explained some of the basics of rugby and what they were seeing. He asked if they wanted him to continue; they did, so he narrated the next 5 minutes of play.

In the game, **Reid Parsons** at wing got 2 tries and his younger brother **Wyatt** got one at outside center. The Jayhawks play included



having scrum half **Luke Connor** and the team's flyhalf Captain **Chandler Owens** kick soft punts ahead of their wings to advance and score.

Jayhawks fielded teams for 2 games and also won the second match. This was a "friendly", because Nebraska is in the north division of the Heart of America Conference. It was a good tune up, as the Jayhawks explore their rosters at different positions.

September 18, 2021

30-21 Jayhawks win over Wichita Barbarians at Westwick

This match highlighted the Jayhawks' off-season improvement of retaining former Jayhawk CEO, **Griff Hastings** to manage the club's social media across a number of platforms. Hastings is now a professional photographer and video maker. He not only posted scoring updates during this Wichita match; within 24 hours he posted short videos of some of the match's best Jayhawk scoring plays. Between weekly matches he posts "Man of the Match" awards and teasers about upcoming games. — Griff's work helps the club build player enthusiasm, keeps out of town fans informed, and helps increase our fan attendance.

This home game was a chance to play against a men's club of big, physical players. We had a good crowd for the noon match. The Renfros again set up a hosting tent to help entertain the fans.

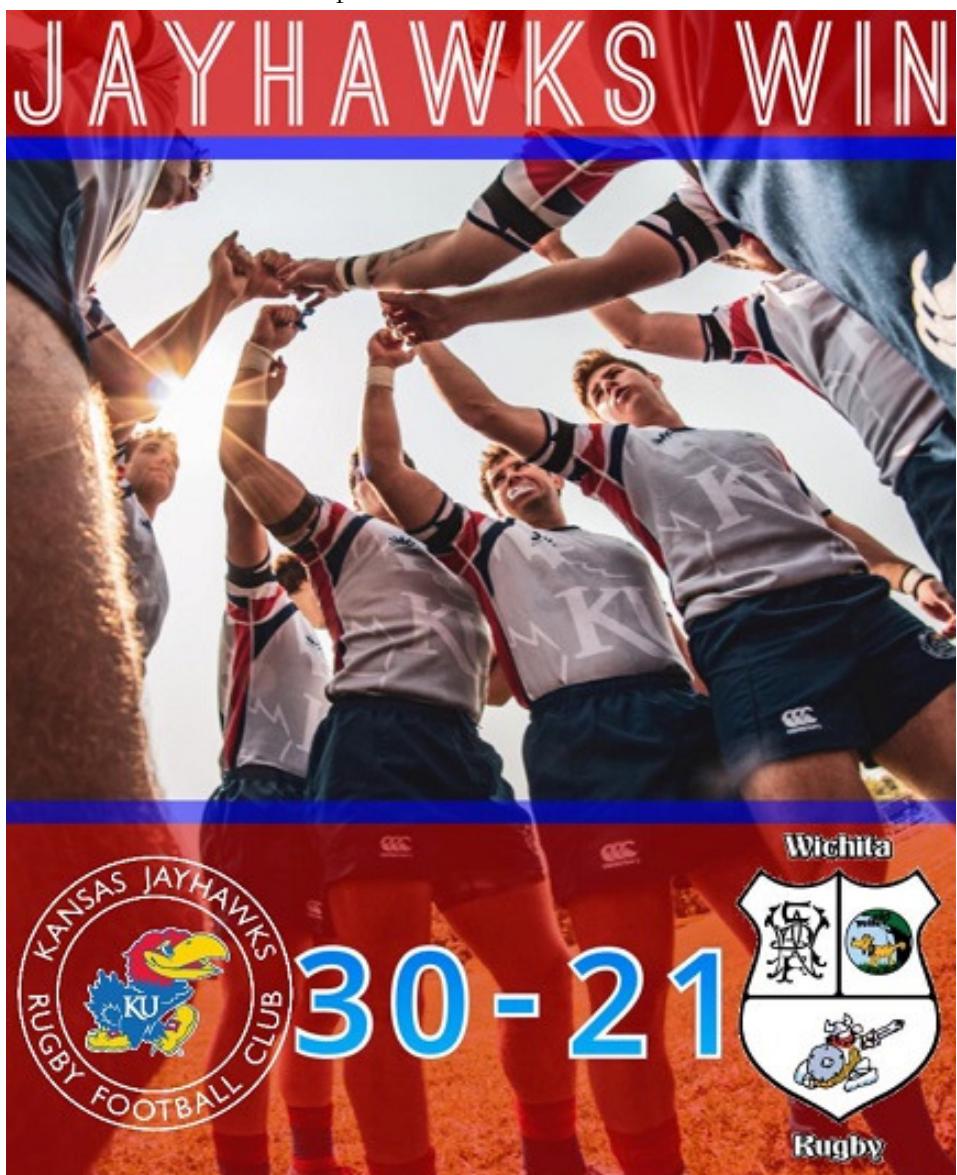
Wichita showed up with only 18 players. Wichita's roster is struggling in the restart after being shut down for Covid. They had a number of players who were on the verge of retiring pre-Covid and the

shutdown removed any incentive to continue. During the preceding week, the Barbarians elevated one of their players as new head coach and elected recent Jayhawks grad **Ian O'Loughlin** to be their Captain. Part of the Barbarians' challenge this seasons will be to rebuild their roster.

The Jayhawks had 45 players who were dressed to play; so a compromise was made to play four, 20 minute periods with substitutions at the breaks. Some Jayhawks would volunteer to fill in for the Wichita side. After the opening 2 periods, the Jayhawks led the game 27-0. In the 3rd and 4th period the

Wichita side began to establish good field position and got the score to 27-21. Late in the match the Jayhawks kicked a field goal to make the score 30-21 and ran out the clock.

An intrasquad scrimmage was played as a 2nd match to give the Jay hawk's deep roster more playing time. Retaining a deep roster is the situation the Jayhawks have to address this year. It's a "good problem", but its successful handling will directly impact the Jayhawks this year and in the future.



**September 24 & 25, 2021
Alumni Weekend and a 23-12
downing of Missouri in our first
conference game**

KRF

It all started off with a quarterly meeting of the Kansas Rugby Foundation on Friday morning in the club house of The Jayhawk in west Lawrence. The state of the rugby club “org” was noted as strong top to bottom. Over 50 student players registered, paying their dues, coming to practice and games. The results on the field show it. The KRF is getting good cash flow and is on its way to the funding of various Westwick im-

provements such as changing rooms, flush toilets for fans, improved field drainage, and player parking.

Golf

We then had 9-hole scramble golf match at The Jayhawks on Friday afternoon. We had 36 alumni join in for some fun and catching up. The group then retired to Johnny's North where they were joined by the existing student-players. Allowing “the present to meet the past” who support them.

Missouri Match

The Missouri match on Saturday showed the Jayhawks fielding 50

players and a count of spectators was just short of 400. The players now park on the north end of the pitch, the fans in the original parking lot. The parking lot was so full that the late cars had to park on the side of the entry driveway. Westwick set up an entertainment tent for food and drink. The Jayhawks warmed up out of sight on the far field and entered the pitch by coming single file over the berm, past the Jayhawk statue, with the sideline crowd cheering their arrival.

The opening minutes of the match looked grim for the Jayhawks. In one of their opening phases, a long pass was attempted from #10 to #14. The ball was in the air too long and a Missouri player intercepted it. The ball ended up on the Jayhawks' goal line. The Jayhawks were able to retrieve possession and get the ball back up field and started a series of scores. They were up 23-0 at half. In the second half, the Tigers were able to score 2 tries and the game ended 23-12. The second game had a 10-5 Jayhawk win. It allowed a fresh squad of starters and reserves to get a match.

Alumni Banquet

Cocktails at 6:00 at the Lawrence Country Club. Great venue. The alumni with spouses and most of the players with dates were there in coat & tie. The players were primed to break the ice and talk with the alumni and we all had a great time.

Coach [Andy Stewart](#) opened the speaking portion of the evening with a toast to the ladies in the room who have supported the men. He went over the club's player numbers and how they have high 70% practice attendance. That is excellent late in the season. He had researched the club before he decided to locate in Lawrence and



saw the club's rich history and tradition. He said that the almost 60 years of alumni and their support was the prime reason for the club being so strong.

Grant Lechtenberg was the next speaker and did a brief overview of Westwick's coming improvements. It was noted that this could not be done without a lot of donated work and funds provided by the alumni. He then recognized **Mike Forth** as the "**Alumni of the Year**" for the work he has tirelessly provide in both labor and volunteering the use of his farm's tools and equipment. Forth's comments were about always feeling a close part of the club, even though no longer a player.

Lechtenberg then talked about the "**Red Jacket Society**". It's an in-

ternal group within the club membership that is run by that group and not the club. You have to be nominated by the group to get into the group. - It started as a small group who had been Kernow Cup winners and/or also went on several international tours. In 2018 and 2019 they relaxed their criteria of entry to add a number of loyal alumni who over the years have been conspicuously active participants in the club in a number of ways. Going forward for 2021, **only 3 new members will be added a year**. It is meant to be an exclusive organization, but inclusive of all, including individuals that may have never played the game. The R.J.S. is to serve as standard that all club members should strive to be.

Those selected this year are: **Larry Smith** (former wing), **Larry Clarke** (former #8), and **Derek**

Mannell (former 2nd row). They were announced separately and each allowed to make remarks before the next person announced. All were caught off guard and the reaction exhibited the emotion of their involvement with the club.

Rick Renfro then took the microphone and provided a short summary of the development of the club. Each passing generation of the club have built on what was created before. Tours that began in 1977 exposed what can happen when a club owns its own pitch and clubhouse. Around 1990, they found a farm near Lawrence to buy, but didn't have the funds. Alum **Steve Merdinger** advanced the funds for the original buyer group as a loan and has remained one of the owners. Steve has remained active with the club and its alumni. He even had his talented son come to Kansas to play and serve as an effective officer. For his decades of service, he is this year's "**Life Member**". Merdinger said he was honored to be included on the list with the 13 other Life Members and his main philosophy about the club and life in general has been to leave things better than you find them.

The club's Captain **Chandler Owens**, who plays #10 was the last speaker. He commented how the club was achieving great things and that the players recognize and appreciate the contribution and work done by the alumni to help make it all possible.



Continued next page

October 2, 2021

**16-10 win over Arkansas Razorbacks at Westwick
“Barometer Week” – Who will be a player for the Conference Championship?**

In Conference

Coming off a quality win over Missouri and 3 quality wins over the Blues, Nebraska, and Wichita, we welcomed the Arkansas Razorbacks to Westwick. Their season so far had been a couple of scrimmage games with the Arkansas Griffins men's team and then a high-scoring conference game win on the road over Oklahoma State.

Had the Razorbacks been tested? The **Goff Rugby Report** who tries to rank college teams in the various college divisions, put the Razorbacks at #16 and the Jayhawks at #17. Part of the ranking was the high score that Arkansas posted in the OSU match. So our game would be about their offense and our stout defense.

Meanwhile, Missouri was traveling to Kansas State, who the preceding week had lost to the same Blues D3 we had shut out a few weeks before. We favored Missouri in that match. Up in the conference's, Northern Division, Iowa State was

hosting Minnesota. ISU had won conference matches over Iowa 18-10 and Truman State 92-0. Minnesota had beaten Nebraska 56-17. We didn't know what to expect.

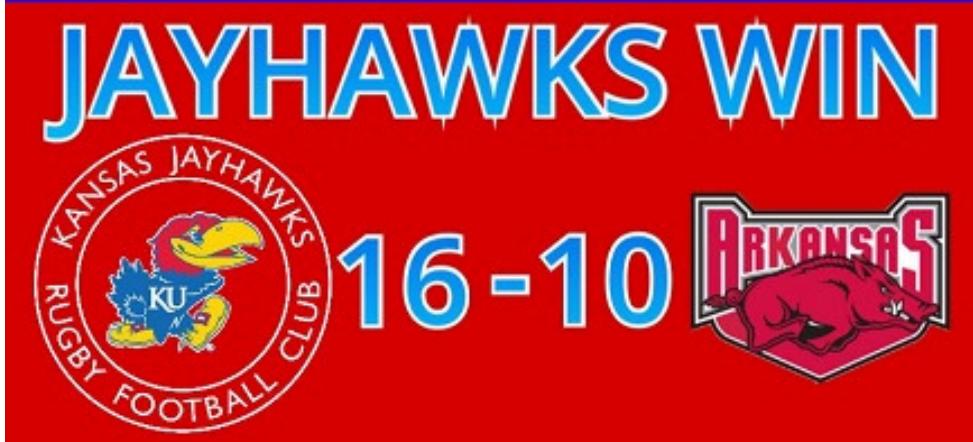
Results were Kansas State beat Missouri 13-10 and Minnesota beat ISU 36-35. So the fate of the conference is getting determined. Of undefeated teams, Kansas now has beaten 2 tough conference opponents, Kansas State awaits matches with Kansas and Arkansas. Minnesota still needs to host Iowa.

Arkansas Match

The club made this “Parents Day” so the sidelines were again filled with Parents, friends, and alumni. There was rain in the forecast, so the crowd was under a series of canopy tents that spanned most of the west side on the field. – The sidelines were hopping with music for a good hour before the game. The off-field festivities are becoming what the club and KRF had envisioned before the season.

In the game, we scored a try in the first minute. Converted it. Then we intercepted a pass and scored again 1 minute later, but the ref called that one back for a forward pass. 15 minutes later Arkansas scored, but missed the conversion so it was 7-5. Kansas kicked a field goal and was 10-5 at half.

In 2nd half, captain **Chandler Owens** went for posts and made it 13-5, so a 2 score lead. Another Kansas field goal and an Arkansas try made it 16-10. Arkansas was fighting clock in last few minutes and frantically picked up the pace of the game in an attempted to score, but Kansas foiled their long break attempts. At the end, Kansas



won their put-in scrum 15 meters from their own goal, passed to their backs, who kicked it backwards out of goal area and ref called full time. - Lots of drama at end.

Goff Rugby Report featured articles about this match in the preceding and following week. After the win, the Jayhawks moved up to #15 in his national ranking and above all others in the Heart of America Conference.

Two Big Takeaways:

1) This is the Jayhawks' 5th game of the fall season and only 2 posi-

tions have had a consistent starting player. The player rotation has overcome some minor injuries and also fueled the needs of a roster of more than 50 players. The club needs to put their big roster into big matches, to retain the interest of a depth of talent and also to get the big group the experience to jell together.

2) Our Club side matches are having the same success as our Varsity side matches. This is great for both developing the future and to get the entire roster using our same coaching system.

October 9, 2021

26-19 Jayhawks win over Nodaway County Rugby Club at Westwick

It was "Fall Break" at Kansas so many on the team were taking some time off or nursing some minor injuries. Nodaway County RFC is a men's club from Maryville, MO and they came to Westwick to have a non-conference match. Jayhawks came from behind in a game with four 20 minute quarters. Nodaway with wind was ahead 14-0 at end of first period. Game tied 14-14 at half.

A surprise reserve player for the Jayhawks was **Tom Oliver** from the United Kingdom. He was a Study Abroad inside center on the Jayhawks' 2019-20 team that was undefeated in conference play. He has graduated from the University of Hull with a degree in Business Management.

The "Man of the Match" against Nodaway was prop **Tom Richards**, our current team's Study Abroad player from the University of East Anglia.

In the week that followed, **Goff Rugby Report** moved the Jayhawks up to #14 in his national ranking.

KANSAS JAYHAWKS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

NODAWAY COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB • EST. 2013

Tom Richards	Seth Johnson
Cian Kasten	Andrew Bartosz
Nick Hafford	Cael Kuhn
Isaac Schmidt	Mike Callahan
Mason Fowler	Omar Gonzalez
Louis Elliot	Josh Carlstedt
Andrew Augustine	Kahlil Allen
Orion Swienton	John Koenig
Ilam Goldbaum	Noe Gauna
	Connor Ragan
	Mason Enos
	Matthew Dubreuil
	Tyler Ruzich
	George Baron
	Linc Lechtenberg
	Henry Staples
	Tom Oliver
	Elias Ortiz
	Keaton Young

Continued next page

October 16, 2021

73-0 Jayhawks win over Oklahoma State at Stillwater Oklahoma

The Club Side lost 7-39 to the Tulsa Rugby Club (men's team)

This was the season's **FIRST ROAD TRIP**, where the players would play and then stay overnight. The club wondered if they would travel with a big roster, play well, and conduct themselves over night.
- We had good answers on all of these questions.

Over 40 players (almost 3 full sides) boarded the vans that the university provided the team. - In the overnight, most of the team and all of the younger players stayed in the hotel and there were no "incidents" to report. The older players who hit the town used Uber and not the university vans.

The "Varsity Game" with OSU went very well. The Jayhawks' big #8 **Trevor Lister** smashed through for a try in the first 7 minutes. Flanker **Dylan Hoye** and fullback **Harrison Gloe** had 2 scores each.

Wings **Kahlil Allen** and **Reid Parsons** had scores, as well as centers **Josh Carlstedt**, and **Wyatt Parsons**, prop **Tom Richards**, and flyhalf Captain **Chandler Owens**. On kicking try conversion points, **Chandler Owens** was 100%, scrum half **Luke Connor** went 1 of 2.

Punching Down – Oklahoma State has a thin club. They have a few very good players, but not a lot of players. This win is hollowed by that situation. The Jayhawks had to play it full blast, because it's a conference match to qualify for the national playoffs, however we are also supportive to the overall game of rugby and running up the score on an opponent is bad for the development of the losing side.

We also experienced the other side of "punching down". - To get a game for all of our players, we arranged for the men's team, Tulsa RFC to come 60 miles and play our "Club Side" which includes some players who are inexperienced and some are young. It's the Jayhawks' developmental side. They are a bet-

ter match for an opponent's 2nd side, but here was Tulsa with older, bigger, experienced players in a "friendly match". In the first half, Tulsa got ahead in score, but also taunted the Jayhawks. Late in the first half something happened that changed everything. Tulsa's full-back got knocked out on a clean hit by the Jayhawks' **Tom Oliver**. The Tulsa side needed a replacement player and the Jayhawks offered them a fullback and some reserves for the 2nd half. The mood of the match totally changed for the better.

In conference play; the undefeated **Kansas State** side traveled to **Arkansas** and lost 25-40. That makes the Jayhawks the only undefeated team in the conference's south division and increases the importance of our final south division match next weekend with Kansas State in Manhattan.

Midweek, the **Goff Rugby Report** moved the Jayhawks up to #13 in national ranking.

Our Varsity Side is undefeated through 7 matches.

October 23, 2021

16-12 Jayhawks win over Kansas State at Westwick

Kansas State was scheduled to host this match, but their school refused them the use of a field just a day before the match, so it was moved to the **ALWAYS AVAILABLE** Westwick. It was a chilly game, with a side wind that made place kicks difficult.

KU got up quickly with a 3 point kick. Then KU lost their captain #10 **Chandler Owens** to injury. But the replacement reserve **Angel Morales** turned out to be up to the task. KU then scored a pair of tries,



but didn't convert, so it was 13-0. K-State scored a try on a long run and converted, so the score was 13-7. Late in game KU got a penalty kick 20 out, but kicked for the sideline for a lineout close to the goal line instead of the easier 3 which would have made it a 2 score lead. K-State intercepted a bad pass, ran the length of the pitch and scored under posts. With conversion, they would be ahead a point....but they whiffed. So game was KU 13-12. KU then got another penalty kick 20 out and this time successfully kicked for 3 to force K-State to have to score a try to win. So it was 16-12 KU and after a long, tough exchange, KU won.

High points of the game were two situations where Kansas State was pounding on the Jayhawks' goal line and were turned away without a score. In the first half it was a full 6 minutes of pounding phases. In the 2nd half it was as time was expiring and would otherwise have cost KU the match.

Low points of the game were the injuries to flyhalf **Chandler Owens** in the 1st half and both wings, **Reid Parsons** and **Kahlil Allen** in the 2nd half. - This is where the Jayhawks' 50-man roster becomes important as well as the practice of judicious rotation of players to get the whole roster playing experience.

The sidelines crowd was again very large and fun. The undefeated Jayhawks are 8-0 and the top seed for the south division in the Heart of America Conference.

This same weekend, Arkansas beat **Missouri** in the south division and remains the only 1-loss division team. In the north division, **Minnesota** defeated **Iowa** to remain undefeated and are the north's top seed. **Iowa State** is that division's only 1-loss team.

During the following week, Goff Rugby Report updated its National Rankings as follows:

- **Kansas Jayhawks #14**
- **Arkansas #16**
- **Minnesota #17**
- **Iowa State #22**

Kansas remained ranked above the high-scoring and undefeated Minnesota and high-scoring Arkansas (who the Jayhawks previously beat). The previous week's **Goff Rugby Report** article about those two rivals sounded like this week's ranking might favor them.

However, the Jayhawks were undefeated in a mixture of games with conference and very tough men's club's. All were "quality wins". The Jayhawks arguably played a harder schedule than any other conference team, North or South Division. They have a deep roster of 40 - 50 high-quality players that come to practice and travel to play. They neuter high-scoring teams with bone jarring defense.

The Jayhawks will face a very good Iowa State team on November 6 at Westwick; the same tournament where Arkansas will meet Minnesota; winners will then face each other to advance to National College Playoffs. In between now and then, the Jayhawks must play a non-conference match with the Kansas City Rugby Club; a men's team at the top of their separate men's rugby division. That game could be considered a distraction from the College Playoffs, but then this is the Jayhawks in an exemplary season. - They wouldn't have it any other way.



Continued next page

October 30, 2021

Jayhawks -15

Kansas City Rugby - 67

At City Park, Kansas City, KS

The Jayhawks rested virtually anyone who would play in next weekend's Heart of America Championship semi with Iowa State, but still had about 30 players to get into Kansas City game. - And all 30 got into the match. This is why that big group comes to practice.

As a match up, there was a very noticeable size difference between players, as all the Jayhawks were 30 pounds or more smaller than the Kansas City players. So Kansas City's level of experience and the players' size disparity were the story. To KC's credit, they pulled their impact players from the game, as it progressed.

The entire Jayhawk roster of 50 or so was there to cheer. Parking was scarce. What we saw was a number of very promising Jayhawks, even if in a tough situation. Freshman **CAEL KUHN** played #9 scrum half. He place kicked and scored a try that was "all him". He broke loose on a long run in the early second half and lost footing attempting to swerve past the last defender. He got to his feet from the ensuing ruck and ended up with the ball again. He broke tackles and got in for the score.

Kuhn is one of many young players to watch. He has great stamina and has been a steady scrum half all season. ****



Continued next page



Heart of America Playoffs at Westwick

Winner Goes to American Rugby Conference Playoffs

The Heart of America Conference has 10 college teams that are split into a North and South Division. The Conference's dream was to have a single event where all 10 teams could meet at one venue.

During the fall 2021, there were round-robin matches within each Division to determine a 1st and 2nd place team. Those 4 teams met the weekend on November 6 & 7 in Lawrence to play for the Conference Championship. The other teams in the Conference also attended to play their Division counterparts. **Kansas** and **Minnesota** had been their respective Division's 1st place teams and met on Sunday after defeating the opposing Division's 2nd place teams the prior day (**Kansas** over **Iowa State** and **Minnesota** over **Arkansas**).

Both **Kansas** and **Minnesota** are now in the quarterfinals of the National Playoffs and will face the **top 2 Lonestar Rugby Conference (Texas) teams** on **April 9 & 10** at a host venue to be determined. The winner of that 4-team elimination will represent the East and face the West winner of a 4 team elimination made up of the top seeds from **Gold Coast** (southern California), **Pac West**, **Pac Northwest**, and an "at large" team. That East-West final will be on **April 30** at a venue to be determined.

Hosting the tournament's 10 teams brought **approximately 300 college rugby players and staff** to over night Friday and Saturday in Lawrence.

The event also **drew a crowd of fans estimated at 700** on the peak day, Saturday. The Jayhawks set up a sidelines complementary bar tent and lined up a food truck, who easily covered their "minimum". A public address system located on the top of the central berm kept the crowd up to speed on games and scores. During warm ups they played music.

It was a great way to showcase the Westwick facilities. As one visitor said, "**Nobody objects to a game in Lawrence**".

Without any bias, the two matches the Jayhawks played were some of the most exciting imaginable.

November 6, 2021
Heart of America Semifinal
Kansas over Iowa State 27-24

Kansas and **Iowa State** were the best game of day by far.

10 minutes - KU went for posts 15 out, but KU's captain **CHANDLER OWENS** hit the top of the right post and bounced out.

14 minutes - Same situation, same place. **OWENS** made it. **3-0 KU**

24 minutes and 25 minutes ISU 22 out from KU goal and both times kicked for touch to go for a try off the lineout. They scored on 2nd attempt, but score in corner too hard to make, so **3-5 ISU**.

35 minutes - ISU was pounding the KU goal line. **CHANDLER OWENS** got his hands on the ball and broke a long run to mid field.



Then as he got surrounded, he punted the ball to the ISU goal. ISU got the ball and kicked the ball to midfield, but KU's wing **KAHLIL ALLEN** caught it in stride and ran it for a score in the left corner. **OWENS** was wide on conversion so **8-5 KU**.

KU's **GEORGE BARON** at hooker scored off a ruck. **OWENS** good on conversion. **15-5 KU**.

ISU backfield scored in right corner, conversion was wide. **15-10 Half Time.**

5 minutes - **KAHLIL ALLEN** was sent off for 10 minutes for cartwheeling an ISU player on a tackle, so KU was short.

7 minutes - ISU's outside center scored and conversion was good. **15-17 ISU**

15 minutes - KU's #8 **TREVOR LISTER** scored from 10 out. **OWENS** good. **22-17 KU**

31 minutes - ISU inside center scored from 75 out, conversion good. **22-24 ISU**

As time ran out, KU awarded a penalty kick on ISU 5 meter line

that was changed to a scrum, KU's ball. **TREVOR LISTER** picked up the ball and ran to the left and crashed in for score. **Game ended 27-24 KU**

It was like a movie.

The “**Urban Legend**” after the game was that in the game’s ending, with time run out and one last play to make, the Jayhawks were quickly considering a difficult kick for 3 points from near the sidelines. It was speculated that in that moment, **Trevor Lister asked for the scrum, so the game could be in his hands at the end.** Trevor later said he couldn’t remember what happened in the scrum decision. Whatever... it was a terrific way to end this battle of a game.

In prior games Oklahoma State over Truman State 68-10.

Iowa over Missouri 24-13.

Kansas State over Nebraska 41-19

Minnesota over Arkansas 37-19

November 7, 2021
Heart of America FINAL
Kansas over Minnesota 17-14

Championship Match:

Minnesota kicked off to **Kansas** with a deep kick to the Kansas 22. Making a statement, Kansas' captain flyhalf **CHANDLER OWENS** launched a huge punt using the stiff tailwind. The ball soared past the Minnesota 22 and bounced into Minnesota's goal area, where it was downed by Minnesota.

5 minutes – Minnesota's #5 and #7 bumped heads making a tackle. That stopped the game for injury for several minutes. The #7 ended

up being taken to the hospital for stitches to a forehead cut.

10 minutes – Kansas ran the ball to the left corner of Minnesota's goal line. Kansas' 2nd row **NICK HAFFORD** scored from the goal line ruck. **CHANDLER OWENS**'s conversion attempt was wide. **SCORE: 5-0 Kansas.**



Nick Hafford

15 minutes – Kansas awarded a penalty kick 30 out and mid left of posts. **OWENS** was good on the attempt. **SCORE: 8-0 Kansas.**

35 minutes – Kansas awarded a penalty kick 22 out and in middle. **OWENS** was good. **SCORE: 11-0 Kansas at Half Time.**

4 minutes – Kansas awarded a penalty kick 25 out mid right, but now directly facing a strong south wind. **OWENS'** attempt was good. **SCORE: 14-0 Kansas.**

10 minutes – Kansas 2nd row **JOHN KOENIG** was yellow carded for a high tackle, so Kansas plays short a man for 10 minutes.

14 minutes – Minnesota awarded a penalty kick 15 out from Kansas goal. They toed the ball and fed the



Trevor Lister

forwards who scored mid left. Conversion was good. **SCORE: 14-7 Kansas.**

17 minutes – Kansas awarded a penalty kick 30 out. **OWENS'** kick against the wind went wide.

21 minutes – Kansas awarded a penalty kick 25 out in middle. **OWENS** good. **SCORE: 17-7 Kansas**

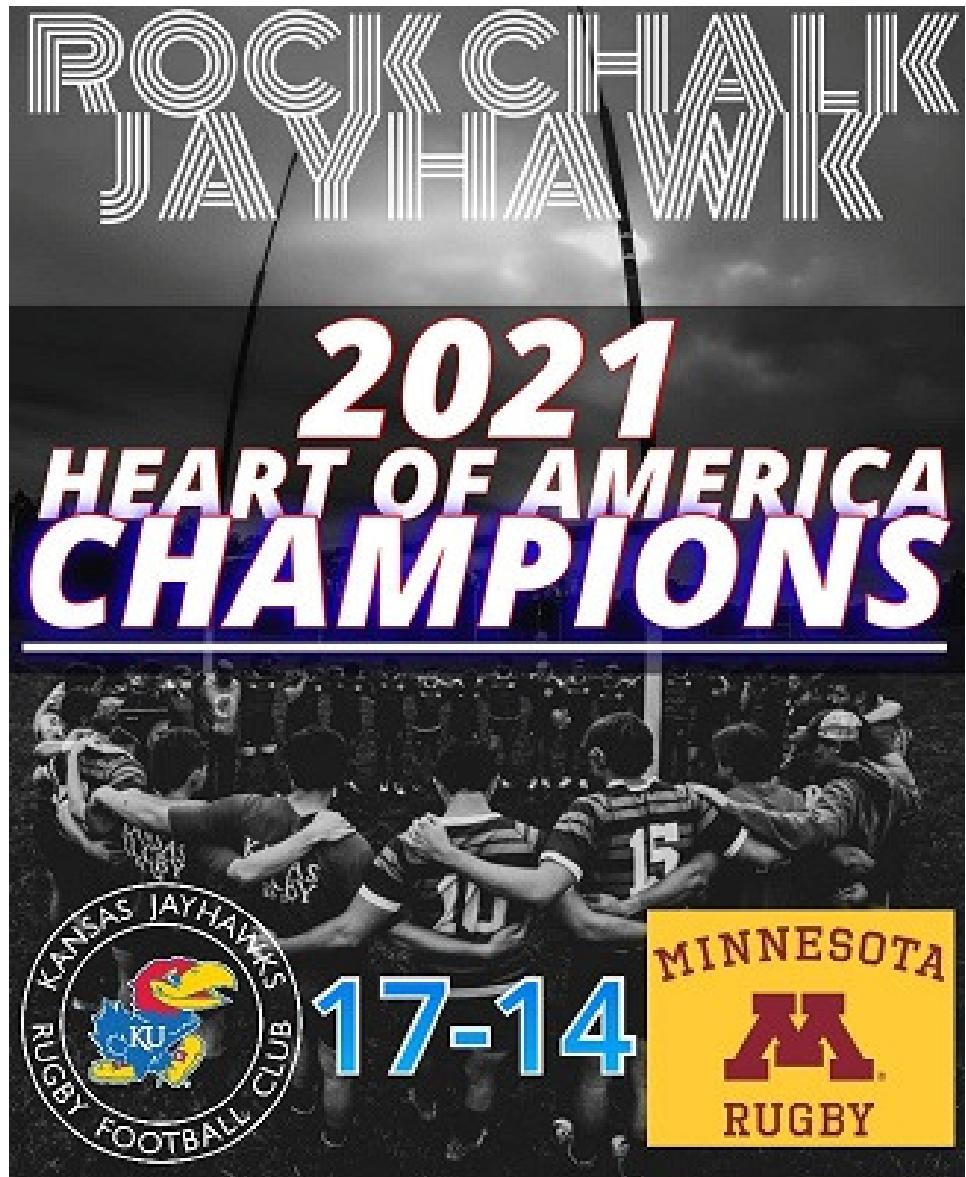
38 minutes – Minnesota used the wind and kicked a deep kick to the Kansas goal line with Minnesota in pursuit. Kansas was unable to manage the catch and Minnesota scored mid right. The conversion was good. **SCORE: 17-14.Kansas**

In the closing minutes, Kansas got the action to Minnesota's 22. When they were sure of the time, they ended the game by winning their scrum and kicking to touch.

Kansas' **CHANDLER OWENS** was named the "Outstanding Player of the Heart of America Tournament" for his ability to adapt tactics and affect the game to give his team a chance to win.



Chandler Owens



Goff Rugby Report's Season Ending Ranking
Kansas #12



Jayhawks' 4th consecutive year qualified for the National Playoffs.

Both photos taken immediately after the title game win over Minnesota.

A few identifier tags in the photos:

- Holding the championship plaque is team captain, [Chandler Owens](#).
- Holding the #13 jersey is club president, [Trevor Lister](#). (The number #13 is to honor senior [Cole Williams](#) who underwent surgery for an illness on November 8. He frequently wore that number for years. The team did NOT dress his number all weekend.)

- Coaches: Laying with black trousers in front row are [Andy Stewart](#) and [Matt Schwartz](#). In hoops in back left is [Billy Pryor](#). In below picture front left is [Jason Williams](#).
- Other VIP's: Front row in tan trousers, medical trainer [Josh Aarnes](#). His counterpart [Jon Vincent](#) didn't make the photos. Front row center with arm around Josh is Study Abroad player [Tom Richards](#) who has been exactly the positive asset we hoped would drive the team. Back row left, big guy in blue shirt is [Marcus Williamson](#) who did a great deal to coordinate the tournament and manned the PA system. In photo below, 2nd row & 3rd row left end are [Rick Renfro](#) and (CEO) [Doug McCauley](#). There wouldn't be a successful club without them. Next to Doug is [Tom Oliver](#), a 2019/20 Study Abroad player who returned from England to help coach in the key, last few weeks.



KJRFC Social Club Member

BENEFITS

- + SUPPORTING A SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION ON AND OFF THE PITCH
- + ACCESS TO GAME FILM
- + MEMBER EXCLUSIVE EVENTS
- + FREE PARKING AT ALL WESTWICK HOME GAMES
- + MEMBERS HAT

COST – 1 YEAR

FULL MEMBER \$50 – JUNIOR MEMBER (UNDER 18) - \$30

E - kansasrugby@gmail.com
P – (785) 331 5785 (Andy)
Venmo @KJRFC-treasurer
Cash/Check – email above



Introducing: SOCIAL MEMBERS

All alumni, parents, and friends should become **SOCIAL MEMBERS** of the club.

Lunch with Rugby's Pioneers

Reagan Malone – Founder of the Heart of America Referee Society

Jerry Rutherford – The Player, Promoter, and Coach of nearly every local team

Jayhawk Rugby was totally different 50 years ago. All of the following didn't exist: Internet access to opponent's names and contact info, Email, Inexpensive long distance phone calls, Numbers on KU jerseys, Men's/College/High School Divisions, Conferences, USA Rugby, National Playoffs, or **TRAINED REFEREES**.

The two living local people who have contributed the most to make the sport what it is today are **JERRY RUTHERFORD** and **REAGAN MALONE**. In early October, the Old Boy Quarterly sat down for lunch with the pair to talk about local rugby 50 years ago and some milestones that have occurred since. This would be memorable, so **RICK RENFRO** (another driver of rugby's regional development) joined us to listen in.

Biographical Background:

Iowa native, **Jerry Rutherford** attended KU from 1964 -1968. He was a hooker who played behind **Larry Hartnet**. After graduating, he played for **Kansas City Rugby Club**. The **KC Blues** were formed in 1966, but almost folded in spring 1971. They had no roster, jerseys, or balls. HoA Union President **Gerry Seymour** asked Rutherford to help the Blues as a player-coach, to keep rugby competition in Kansas City. Rutherford enlisted the help of fellow ex-Jayhawk **Tommy Doyle** as a new captain and remade the Blues. From 1968 to 1980, Rutherford was also instrumental in the **Heart of America Tournament**, which at one time

was the largest rugby tournament in America. Rutherford enlisted the financial support of **Anheuser-Busch** for the support of rugby in Kansas City and together they created a template model for tournament management & financial support that was applied around the country. Besides playing for the Blues and refs games, Rutherford coached **Rockurst College** 1976-1980 until their players graduated. Rutherford retired from playing in 1979 and in 1980 became the coach of the southern KC metro men's club **Johnson County RFC** for 2 years. After a few decades away from the sport focusing on his family, he came back to coaching and has been an assistant coach of **St. Thomas Aquinas High School** for the past 15 years. Rutherford is the owner of the clothing silk screen and embroidery business, The Shirt Hole, in Bucyrus, KS.

Texas native, **Reagan Malone** was in the **US Marines Active Reserves** and was transferred by his employer in 1967 to Kansas City. Malone began to play for the KCRFC at the same time as Rutherford. In 1971, a new men's rugby club was formed called the KC Bulls and Malone joined that new club. That same year, Malone injured his leg while playing against the Jayhawks on the field along 19th Street. He retired from playing and started refereeing rugby games. In 1973 he started the **Heart of America Referee Society**, which provided books of "Laws" (aka "Rules") and held seminars for

players interested in learning to be refs. **Malone realized that the regional development of the sport was going to be greatly shaped by the availability and quality of refs.** He first recruited an Australian and a New Zealand ref from the international officers



Above: Reagan Malone
Below: Jerry Rutherford



stationed at Ft. Leavenworth. The quality of all the region's rugby games immediately improved. Malone was then involved as a ref in major tournaments all over the country.

Malone also attracted famous international refs to visit the region and call games. In spring 1974, Malone brought in the English international ref, [Johnny Johnson](#) who was himself a former prop for the English national team. Johnson refereed a Jayhawk game with Topeka RFC and then went to dinner with many of the Jayhawks' players at [Joe Kieltyka's](#) Lawrence restaurant, the Carriage Lamp. Johnson was the first famous international rugby player the Jayhawks ever met.

How to Schedule a Game in the Old Days

In the 1960's and 1970's, everything was done on phone calls and with post cards. There was no internet to search out a club's key contact information, so it often started out with who you knew to get a phone number or address. Invitations would go out and the representatives of all interested rugby teams in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Iowa would come to Kansas City over an arranged weekend to meet in a bank's conference room. News would be shared about the sport within the region and then the teams would mingle and work out their schedules, carrying calendars and writing in the dates and contact info.

Tournaments Instead of Playoffs

There were no "conference champions" and no playoff system, since there was no national rugby organization before the 1975 founding of

the USA Rugby Football Union (predecessor to USA Rugby). So the way to establish the rank of a good rugby team was to do well in a large tournament. In this time of the late 1960's and 1970's the big tournaments were a huge draw. It

gave teams a chance to meet teams from far off places. The Heart of America Tournament in Swope Park, Kansas City, MO was one of the largest in America. Its 32 team draw attracted teams from the Rocky Mountains to the Southeast.

(Holding ball) Rutherford with Blues in HoA Tourney 1973



Malone calling a Big Ten Tournament match in 1978

The first Heart of America Tournament was in a (then) vacant field on the NW corner of 95th & Metcalf in Overland Park, KS. The **Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club** lost in the final to the KC Blues. The tournament then grew and moved to an open polo field by the lagoon in Swope Park, where there was room for multiple pitches and ample parking. (That location was lost when the Zoo expanded in the 1980's.)

In the tournament; teams were not in divisions of college and men's teams; it was just a men's and a women's bracket in one big tournament. It had a consolation bracket, so that a loser of a first match went into a bracket with all the other losers of first round matches. The games started out with short halves of maybe 25 minutes and worked into longer halves as you progressed, until the final was with regulation 40 minutes halves. The rules forbid mid-game substitution, except for injury. Most tournaments limited the player roster to 20 players, so the judicial rotation of players became a science in having your best 15 on the pitch.

Reagan Malone told the story of being in the referee pool at the Mardi Gras Tournament in Hammond, LA. A women's team showed up without registering in advance, hoping that a women's team would be a no-show or somehow get into the tournament at the last minute. The brackets turned out to be full and the unregistered team of women were disappointed. So the refs agreed to give them a game and played the women in a game that Reagan said was very fun. The women were great players and the refs went easy on the tackles to avoid getting anyone hurt. (The refs won.)

The Violence of Rugby Games

Rugby was much rougher in the 1960's and 1970's. The place it's most noted are the rules about rucks. In the old days, a tackled player had to immediately release the ball and nobody on either team could use their hands on the ball until it came out of the ruck.

"Hands in the ruck" was a penalty kick. So a tackled player would go down and try to put their body up-field of the ball to make it more difficult for the opponent to access. Players of both teams would blast into the group bridging over the tackled player and try to drive the other side off the ball. The players would use their feet to fish for the ball and haul it out of their side of



Malone calling the "freezing" Big 8 Tournament at Missouri in March 1975.

Below Malone calling the tournament finals, where Kansas beat Missouri 7-0.



the ruck. The players on the ground who were involved in the tackle would likewise be unceremoniously healed out of the back of the ruck by the cleats of the players overhead. The thick cotton shirts helped protect the player's skin, but being at the bottom of several rucks made you look like a survivor of a car accident.

The other factor in the roughness of the game was that the refs were reluctant to eject a player from a game, since it meant the team would have to complete the game with less than 15 players. There were no "yellow cards" for a 10-minute ejection from a game. There was rumored to be a "**3 fight rule**" that meant a ref would not eject a player until there was a 3rd fight. **Reagan Malone** would not allow that in one of his games. He made it clear that if altercations were serious enough, a player or players could be sent off immediately. Players would complain that he had to give a warning before he could send someone off. His response was "There is nowhere in the rules (LAWS) that require a warning for dealing with foul and dangerous play." When people realized his seriousness about this, he had very few fights in his games and recalled only 2 or 3 occasions where he had to send someone off. Most often, things could be settled with a good stern warning. The teams likewise understood that having a player ejected and playing as a short team would pretty much assure a loss, so they were good about pulling the fighting players away and settling them down.

KU's Westwick and the Future of the Sport

Both Malone and Rutherford said the dreams of the players 50 years ago was to have a rugby stadium

and provide big-time matches to attract top teams and paying crowds. Having such a stadium would trigger growth in the quality of teams near that stadium. They had once targeted Kansas City's Satchel Paige Baseball Stadium for conversion to be such a rugby pitch. This came very close to reality. The very first "Final Four" of men's rugby in 1979 was held in Kansas City on a temporary fenced pitch with tents set up at Avila University in south Kansas City.

American rugby came close to making Kansas City's central location the sport's playing hub. However at that time, the internal political tugging of everything about the management and priorities of American rugby made locking in a national sponsor muddled. The potential sponsorship funding for a Kansas City stadium dried up before the project could be seriously pursued.

More recently, the Sporting Kansas City's soccer stadium in Kansas City, KS was built with holes in its pitch to accommodate rugby uprights, but no deal has ever been worked out with a rugby team that could financially support the stadium's use.

So that brings into focus the **Westwick Rugby Complex**. It's the only exclusive rugby facility in the region. It can be gated to manage a paying crowd. It's a huge asset per the visions of the early rugby players from decades ago. This should enhance the development of the sport. - Today we have an environment where high school rugby teams are struggling for survival. There are fewer local high school teams than there were a decade or two ago. **But the Jayhawks' program provides hope.** - (1) The existence of Westwick, (2) the success of the Jayhawks' college program, and (3) the growing size of the Jayhawks' crowd of attending fans is good for showing high school athletes what can be achieved at the college level of the sport and may encourage growth of the sport with the region's young athletes.

- That's good for the Jayhawks and good for the sport in the region. ***



In 1974, Jerry Rutherford obtained financial support from Anheuser-Busch that almost made Kansas City the rugby hub in the USA.



Support your rugby club!

Put it on your credit card.

Go to www.jayhawkrugby.com
Hit “Donate”.

It’s a PayPal link directly to our charity account.