



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 **58 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](#)

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

SUMMER EDITION

A Year to Remember



WHAT'S GOING ON

This was a high watermark year in the history of the club. For the first time ever, we played in a **National Title Match**. We provide a recap of the spring season that got us to the title game.

A National Title Match puts mental pressure on the Jayhawk players. We will share the story of the road trip to the finals and outline the style of the club to keep everyone even keel. (Brilliant)

A successful period of an organization can be its most dangerous, because **COMPLACENCY** can make us blind to essential tasks. We are asking alum Matt O'Donnell to help us with recruiting.

Taking 44 players to Arlington, TX just 3 weekends after we won our semifinal was a daunting task for organization and funding, but Alumni, Parents, and Sponsors showered us with donations.

The Newsletter runs with the Cowboys this year and lives to tell about it.

Decades after the establishment of Westwick, we have broken ground on some major infrastructure. The rugby complex will leap forward with amenities that enhance it as a fun place to play and to be a fan.

THANK YOU for being part of the Jayhawks!

Recognitions

Recap of Spring Season

The Coaches' Life Lesson to Players

Recruiting So Important *NOW*

April Donations Set a Record

Running with Cowboys In Arizona

Major Gift Spurs Westwick Improvements

On The Cover - Johnny's !!!

The Kansas Jayhawks have another undefeated year and get selected to appear in the National Final Game.

Where would any KU rugby club go, but to Johnny's Tavern on North Mass?

All the photos in this Newsletter were made by [GTH Images](#).



Recognitions:

Club Awards for the completed 2021/22 year Club Officers for next fall

The club had a team banquet on Saturday May 7, 2022 to celebrate the conclusion of a terrific year. The following team awards were voted upon by the club members and elected positions were established for next fall - **The club is built upon the work of these gentlemen.**

Rookie of the year - **Cael Kuhn**

Most Improved Player - (tied) **Kahlil Allen & Tyler Johnson**

Magnificent Masochist - **Reid Parsons**

(“Magificent Masochist” for being the fittest on the team.)

Persistent Perspirer—**Mason Enos**

(“Persistent Perspirer” is given to the player who may not be the best athlete, or the fittest, but consistently gives it his all every time he's on the field.

Kernow Cup - (tied) **Trevor Lister & Chandler Owens**

(“Kernow Cup” is given to the player/players who best exemplifies KJRFC: Shows true love for his mates, willingness to work hard, and outstanding representation of the club on and off the pitch. **The Kernow Cup is the Jayhawks’ highest award.**

Alumnus of the Year - **Mike Forth** (repeat of award)

Club Officers for fall 2022

Managing Director: **Doug McCauley**

Head Coach: **Andy Stewart**

Captain: **Trevor Lister**

President: **Wyatt Parsons**

Vice President: **Cael Kuhn**

Treasurer: **Luke Connor**

Business Secretary: **Mason Enos**

Game Manager: **Seth Johnson**

Recruitment Manager: **Caleb Little**

Field Manager: **Tyler Ruzich**

Social Committee: **Luke Lechtenberg & George Barron**

Equipment Manager: **Matt Schwartz & Henry Staples**

Kernow Cup 2021/22

(Left) **Chandler Owens**

Team captain, graduating senior, played flyhalf. Named by Goff Rugby Report as one of best 150 D1AA men's players in America. (Frost seen on the Cup is per tradition since the cup's inception 45 years ago. Upon award, it is filled with iced Bushmills Whiskey and the entire team takes a sip.)

(Below) **Trevor Lister**

Completed his sophomore year, played #8 in the loose forwards. Also named by Goff Rugby Report as one of the top 150. Will be team captain next fall.

Flanked by head Coach **Andy Stewart** and long time club sponsor **Rick Renfro** of Johnny's Tavern. (Renfro was awarded the Kernow Cup in 1979, then playing as the team's #8 in the loose forwards.)



Club Award Winners & Coaches 2021/22

(Left –right) Standing: **Doug McCauley** (Managing Director), **Marcus Williamson** (Asst Coach), **Mason Enos** (Persistent Perspirer), **Reid Parsons** (Magnificent Masochist), **Jason Willams** (Asst Coach), **Tyler Johnson** (Most Improved Player), **Trevor Lister** (Kernow Cup), **Chandler Owens** (Kernow Cup).

On Knee: **Andy Stewart** (Head Coach), **Billy Pryor** (Asst Coach), **Kahlil Allen** (Most Improved Player), **Cael Kuhn** (Rookie of the Year)

What is so encouraging for the club is that of those pictured, only **Parsons** and **Owens** are graduating. The others will be back next fall.



Jayhawks

Spring Season Recap

This season's story is really a multi-year saga. It started 30 months ago when the Jayhawks put together an outstanding team that won all its games in brilliant style and was poised to enter the National Playoffs and would have advanced. But Covid cancelled the spring 2020 games and robbed the Jayhawks of that opportunity.

This past fall there were only a few players from fall 2019, but the club sorely remembered what was not availed the earlier team and the entire squad was on a mission to not miss another opportunity. **So they ran the table on the Heart of America Conference** and focused on the next step, which was to get past the top 2 teams from the **Texas Lone Star Conference**.

In the lead up to those games, the Jayhawks scheduled some tough matches to stay sharp.

In late February they lined up a Lawrence match against Division 1A powerhouse **Lindenwood**, but the Westwick fields were caked with ice and unplayable. The match had to be cancelled.

On either side of Spring Break, they defeated **Iowa** and the **KC Blues** at Westwick.

The Texas opponents for the National Quarterfinals were established as **Texas State** #1 seed and **Texas San Antonio** #2 seed. The Quarterfinals & **Eastern Division** 1AA Semi were hosted at Westwick April 9 & 10. **Minnesota** returned as the Heart of America #2 seed.

The Lawrence weather was spectacular and we had a great crowd of fans cheering the teams, as respective #1 & #2 seeds met on Saturday. Winners were **Kansas** and **Texas State**. On Sunday April 10 Kansas defeated Texas State. That night was a big celebration at Johnny's (See cover photo).

The Jayhawks then began the planning logistics to get the entire team to the National Finals in Arlington Texas in under 3 weeks. This included a major funds drive. When planning a trip of this magnitude, you normally start months ahead, but since our fate was not guaranteed; we had to wait until we won. The first difficulty was there were **no charter buses available – ANYWHERE**. Club **Managing Director Doug McCauley** did the impossible and found a bus. The rub was that it cost twice what was anticipated due to late booking and the inflation in fuel costs. (Almost \$10,000 instead of expected \$5,000 budgeted from Indiana trip.)

Meanwhile the four Conferences that make up the **Western Divi-**

sion of American College Rugby held their playoffs in Bellingham, WA on April 16-17. **Fresno State** defeated **San Diego State** and **Western Washington** defeated **Sacramento State**.

In many ways Western Washington's playing style mirrored the Jayhawks, but in their Semifinal game Fresno State prevailed with their relentless running attack.

So the stage was set for the National Finals to be played April 30 in Choctaw Stadium in Arlington, TX and serve as the warm-up act before the pro rugby game between Dallas and San Diego.

Fresno State has had a phenomenal year. They ran up big score spreads of 40-50 points all year against all opponents. The Jayhawks had access to recorded game feeds of the matches in Bellingham, WA, but did not focus on that as much as what they would do to play a Jayhawk game.

Jayhawk Alumni and Player Families came in big numbers for this trip. That whole group assembled in a sports pub across the street from the stadium 3 hours before the final.

Putting these 2 groups together for that pre-match drink was one of the greatest things that has ever happened for the club.

They came from all over America and some came from over seas. They might not have known each other before, but there were no strangers after that pre-game party. The Parents got to meet nearly 60 years of collective Jayhawk Alumni. As well as get to know each other better. The common thread is that they all loved the Jayhawks team and appreciated what had been accomplished to get to this National Final.

The day was sunny and in the high 80's. We sat in stands that faced the sun without cover. It was unbelievably hot. The Jayhawks were wearing their white uniforms and Fresno State was wearing their traditional black. The pitch was artificial turf, which compounded the heat issues for the players.

If you watch the video of the game (see info box in lower right corner of this page), the stands look lightly populated, however many sat off camera, in the shaded end of the field.

(Read the game summary by Alex Goff to the right.)

The freak blocked kicked mentioned in the summary occurred at video moment 1.01:38.

After the match, the Parents and Alumni largely returned to the same pub where they started.

Meanwhile the Jayhawks stayed on the pitch after the match to talk to the Fresno State Bulldogs team and congratulate them on the win. With the 5 point winning margin, the Jayhawks were the only team to stay with the Bulldogs all year. The Jayhawks had controlled the ball and field position for most of the match. The Jayhawks were attacking the Bulldogs goal line for the last 10 minutes and could have won with a score. It was literally a game that could have gone either way, right down to the whistle.

The Jayhawk players got cleaned up at their motel and joined the group in the pub.

After a while, the Jayhawks sang the club song that they composed on their way to Texas.

Later, the Jayhawks do what they have always done and partied late into the night. Coach Andy Stewart said the bus was full of sleepers on the way home the next morning.

Men's D1AA Spring

By Alex Goff

Played in Dallas, this ACR final saw Fresno State weather a long period of pressure from Kansas early on. The Bulldogs came out of that still with a 0-0 game, and then a breakaway turned the tables and put Fresno State up 7-0. With Isaia Kruse pulling the strings nicely Fresno State started to find some space and a counter off a kick put wing Joshua Jacobson in a position to beat a couple of defenders and score. Fresno State up 14-0.

Kansas came back with a more tight, phase-oriented attack and they found some dividends by keeping it in the forwards. Flyhalf Chandler Owens attempted a long kick at goal which missed, but Kansas chased well, and eventually punched it over the line. Owens made the tough conversion for a 14-7 halftime lead.

Fresno State scored a try off a chargedown that saw the ball bounce very strangely—much to the Bulldogs' delight. Kruse added a penalty and it was 22-10 midway through the second half when Kansas camped out in the Fresno 22, forced a knock-on, and scored off an eightman pick through Trevor Lister. Owens converted and it was 22-17.

Kansas held off Fresno State again and then used the boot of Owens to flip the field. Fresno got out of it but Kansas got a penalty and kicked to the corner. They lost the lineout and were eventually penalized—it was that sort of game. Kansas had a couple more chances but just couldn't break through and Fresno State was able to kick the ball dead after tapping on a penalty to win a very tightly-contested match. *****

You can watch the entire National Final on YouTube, by searching:

**ACR National Rugby Championship
(Kansas vs Fresno)**

ACR D1AA CHAMPIONSHIP



VS



STARTING XV

1. Jack Bowersox
2. George Baron
3. Spencer Glaeser
4. John Koenig
5. Tyler Johnson
6. Dylan Hoyer
7. Nick Hafford
8. Trevor Lister
9. Luke Connor
10. Chandler Owens (C)
11. Reid Parsons
12. Fraser Brand
13. Wyatt Parsons
14. Kahlil Allen
15. Harrison Gloe

GAME CHANGERS

16. Quentin Pithey
17. Tom Richards
18. Xavier Doering
19. Wyatt Langfoss
20. Mike Callahan
21. Brandon Lock
22. Cael Kuhn
23. Jackson Schemmel

Reid
Parsons





Between Your Ears

Jayhawks' Coaches give the players a "life lesson" on how to cope with a big moment

We have all seen this movie. The players have worked hard all year, it's the seniors' last chance before they graduate, and they face the biggest moment imaginable. The music rises. You can just feel the stress of the situation....

We noticed that the players flow from one mass drill to another and the coaching direction is invisible. These are the drills they always run. They don't need instructions. The coaches have already taught them the plays. The team is fit. This is a

night to just relax and run around passing the balls and working on very basic skills. There is no stoppage for a big speech. It's like you walked in on a bunch of carpenters working together on building something. It just flows. The

The Jayhawks' coaches knew all this was playing out, so they provided the players with a terrific experience on how to get through it all. This won't be the last stressful thing the players encounter the remainder of their lives and they will undoubtedly remember this National Playoff and what it taught them. - Given the market for self-help books, you might just find this article the most valuable thing in this edition of the Newsletter.

The last practice of the year

Lesson: You already know everything; just go do it.

An invitation went out to **Social Members** of the club, to attend the last Thursday night practice at Westwick, before the team left for Dallas. On arrival at the pitch, we were confronted by a big sound system that was pumping out lively tunes. The play list was made up of requests that every player offered as their "favorite song". The players were smiling and moving to the beat as they ran through drills.



coaches intentionally avoided teaching something new or having the players “over think” what they knew.

On the bus to Dallas

Lesson: A good bus ride will bond a team.

The club couldn't find a bus to charter, because we were reserving it at the last minute. We finally lined one up, but it's cost was twice what we had imagined. The easier and less expensive thing would have been to get a few vans. However the entire organization wanted a chartered bus. They wanted every single player on the team to go and they wanted them to go together. Cost was not going to be a driver.

The coaches didn't want the guys to get mentally tired thinking about the coming game, so they avoided the game as a topic. They kept the bus loose. The guys played trivia, did impersonations, told jokes, and wrote a team song, which they sang on the bus.

Dinner the night before the game

Lesson: Relax the night before and surround yourself with happy thoughts.

On arrival in Dallas in the late afternoon, the players got off the bus and had free time for 90 minutes to stretch legs. Some went to the hotel gym and did a light workout. The whole team went to a restaurant across the street from the hotel called Chicken N Pickle. Not formal; it was more of a buffet. Parents and friends joined them and sat at mixed tables.

Coach Andy Stewart announced that the team was “**KU Sports Club of the Year**”. The evening had a great vibe. Andy was impressed that the players decided they wanted to go home early to get a good night's rest.

The club is working on more pre-game engagement with Parents and friends. A few weeks ago, the club had a Q&A dinner the Friday night before the playoffs at Johnny's West in Lawrence. The coaches answered questions from the Parents about the team and the kind of rugby style the club tries to play. The players came into Johnny's West after their light, “Captain's Run” that they do the night before a match.

On game day at Westwick, we now have the players go over and talk to Parents and friends in the crowd before a game. It helps the players relax. Parents need it, too.

Morning of game

Lesson: Get adjusted to the environment.

The players had personal time until 9:30. Breakfast wasn't supervised either. The whole team went to the stadium at 10:00, (6 hours before match) to get the feel of the stadium and do a 45 minute workout on the pitch. The workout was just a runaround, not formal training.

The players had never been on the pitch in a huge stadium like this before (40,000 seats). They ran a few laps around the pitch and stopped under the goal posts every time around and together took a big breath to relieve stress. The coaches asked the players to hold up a hand if they felt anxiety about anything. By admitting your anxiety and having your teammates reassure you, it makes you embrace the anxiety and it goes away. If you



did NOT do that, those feeling would run you. When the young guys saw the older guys hold up their hands and admit they were anxious, the young guys realized they could, too.

Coaches pointed out the artificial turf was going to be faster than turf, so the ball will roll easier. The wind in the stadium is different. The short practice intentionally ended on a positive note.

During that warm up at the stadium, the 23 players who would dress for the game were announced. The coaches wanted the starters to process their roles. The non-starters to think about how they would help the starters get ready. Everyone needed to think about what was in front of them.

The coaching staff worked for weeks on “what if scenarios”. They had a contingency for every player and group of players. Bringing a high-energy guy off the bench is a huge strategic move in today’s game. Jayhawks have some players that can come in and totally blow up another team’s momentum. The Jayhawks have some versatile players that can play multiple positions, which is an advantage in a big game, when things happen and players get changed. Being in a jersey with a number 16-23 can be more important to a game’s outcome than the starters.

Aftermath of the title game loss

Lesson: Don’t look back; look up.

The coaches got the team in a circle under the goal post immediately after the game. Some players very upset and in tears, while some were resolved they had played their best. **Coach Andy Stewart** said:

“All year, the Jayhawks were a team that never lost and only momentarily even been behind in a game. They have had an exceptional year. Fresno State was an excellent rugby club and the caliber of rugby played by both sides in the Title Game was incredibly good. The Jayhawks were with Fresno State to the last second.

This year the club has done what no other KU club has ever done and played for a National Title. That had impact off the field with the school, the town



of Lawrence, and alumni. The club is getting new notoriety and interest.

Don't boil the ocean thinking about this last game. Instead, think about the entire year and what was accomplished. Let's go to the pub and have a drink and DON'T talk about the game. Think about things that make you personally happy."

The players then went over to the sidelines and thanked the crowd. Then they went over to have a longer conversation with the players of Fresno State. After getting cleaned up at the hotel, they joined

their Parents and Alumni in the pub across the street from the stadium. They sang the song they had written on the bus on the way down. (Like most rugby songs, it puts new words into an old song's tune. In this case it's "Glory Glory Hallelujah".)

On the bus home the next morning, the bus driver, who watched his first rugby game, had the entire team sign a cardboard Jayhawk. They started out singing and dancing on the bus, but their late night quickly had them all asleep for most of way home.

The following week they elected new officers and gave awards at banquet on May 7 (see earlier article). The coaches encouraged them to play rugby over the summer for other clubs like the KC Blues. Coaches will send them workout assignments to keep them engaged. They will start plans for next August's pre-season camp and do it all again. They will have a great core of returning players, but are eager to see the new players that show up next fall. The club works around the players they end up getting, so the game plan for next year could be completely different.

"We want all the players we can get."



17



**FRESNO STATE
RUGBY**

22

Recruiting So Important NOW

By Matt O'Donnell (Jayhawk Recruiting Director)

I have been asked to take on a new role for the KU Rugby Club, it is a volunteer position!!

A little background on me . I started playing in the Fall of '86 and finished in 2001-2002, with a 3 year stint in St, Louis playing for the Ramblers from '93-'96. The positions I have held with the Club have been CEO, Co-Coach of the Collegiate team and Co-Coach of the Club.

I assisted in the fund raising for Westwick and have spent hours lining and cutting the fields at Westwick. My new role will involve connecting high school players /recruits /rugby programs with KU Rugby.

We want to take advantage of the recent success and fill the roster each year with quality athletes.

I will need YOUR help in doing this.

We will be reaching out to you to "talk up" the program either through Social Media or simply talking to your neighbors, co-workers and anyone else you run into.

We can provide you with KU Rugby business cards that will have the club's various media accounts and the club email. contact information.

I am excited about this opportunity and super excited about the possibilities for the future of the Club. RCJH !!



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Website: JayhawkRugby.com
Email: KansasRugby@gmail.com

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PO Box 1182
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KJRFC (est. 1964)



Matt O'Donnell as a long-time high school coach of Blue Valley rugby in Kansas City.

Money

How we did in the SINGLE month of April Getting Ready for a National Title

April 2022 (Breakdown)

\$8,195 carry over from aborted Indiana trip fall 2021.

\$18,955 April KRF donations, nearly all with earmark for playoffs.

\$2,443 to club through Venmo.

\$2,000 University of Kansas Sports Recreation Services Supplemental Playoff Funds

\$2,200 approximate player funds at \$50/player x 44 players.

\$33,793 total travel funding

(\$22,000) cost for bus, rooms, and team meals (Bus costs elevated due to short horizon booking and current fuel charges, which was double of previous Indiana cost covering same miles.)

\$11,793 remainder, which could be base funding available to play other "ranked teams" who are outside our conference, starting next fall.

Thank you to all who donated to the travel funds for this great team!

The only way the Jayhawks can grow as a premier club is to play an occasional match against a strong club that is outside our normal conference schedule. This past year we tried to have a match at Indiana and with Lindenwood at home. Both were called off for unfortunate reasons. We are looking at other interesting matches that will be exciting for our great players.

This is another reason why a great athlete should want to play rugby at Kansas.



If this Newsletter edition didn't have so much to report, this would have been a feature story.

The night before our Title Game, **KU Sports Recreation Services** had a banquet for KU's 31 member sports clubs. The rugby club's membership in that organization is how we stay affiliated with KU.

Everybody on the rugby club was in Dallas for the game the next day; but Club Managing Director **Doug McCauley** stayed behind in Lawrence that night to attend the banquet.

Doug McCauley called Dallas right after the banquet to let everyone know that KJRFC was recognized as...

KU's "Sports Club of the Year".

There are 31 sports clubs at KU. We last won it in 2018. It's a huge honor. It is based on a report card of things the team (students) turned in on-time to the school, our participant count, as well as our outstanding record. **It puts the rugby club on the highest possible tier of...**

KU FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Well done gentlemen!!!

Running with Cowboys In Arizona



They call themselves **COWBOYS**. They have met for a destination golf trip the weekend before the Super Bowl for 24 years. They are all Alumni of the **Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club** and their ages span from their 20's to 70's. They are also **the largest financial sponsors of the rugby club**.

This year's event was a week later than in the past, thanks to the NFL lengthening the regular season and thus pushing the Super Bowl back a week on the calendar. The group had its largest attendance ever with approximately 50 attending.

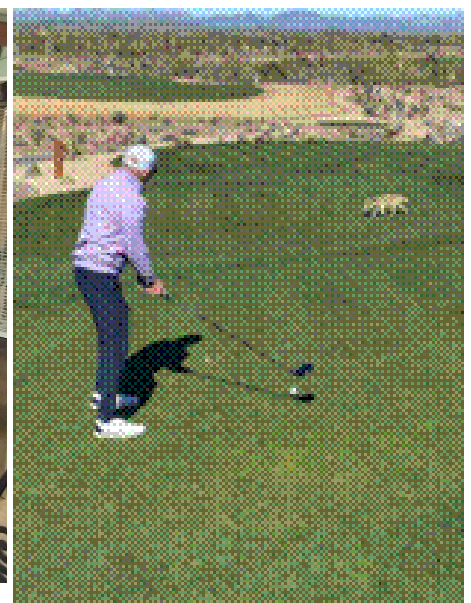
We met at the **We-Ko-Pa Resort** on the east edge of Phoenix, AZ on February 3-6.

There was drama just getting here. The days before the event had a nationwide blizzard close down various airports for ice and snow. Attendees scrambled to get earlier flights and work around closed hubs.

You really feel the depth of the club's history on a multi-day trip like this. There are former **All Americans** and guys who were just good **Club Men**. They traveled and played together all around the country and all over the world.

- A terrific experience. - Golfing skills not required.

See **Louie Riederer** if you would like to attend next year.



Major Gift Spurs Westwick Improvements

During the Cowboy Trip, Jayhawk alum, **Mark Mitscher** (aka “Boomer”) announced that his mother, **KU philanthropist Betty Jane Mitscher**, is donating **\$150,000** to the **Kansas Rugby Foundation**. The funds will come in 2 annual installments of \$75,000.

Mrs. Mitscher has been impressed by the way the rugby club has positively influenced the lives of its players over several generations.

Our club gives a warm THANK YOU to Mrs. Mitscher !!!

The above funds come in addition to the **\$100,000** capital improvement donation from **Rick Renfro** and **Louie Riederer**.

Another group of alumni are coming forward to make smaller donations of **\$10,000 each** to raise an **additional \$100,000**.

Together, all these special donations will be used to build out and maintain the infrastructure at Westwick that will enhance the **player and fan experience**. This was defined with architectural sketches in the Fall 2021 Newsletter published August 2021.

Construction Permits were granted and work is now underway to erect a building for player changing rooms and equipment storage. We are also underway to build flush toilets in the fan area.

Our days of having players dress in their cars are over.

Moms, wives, girlfriends and all women fans in general will no longer have to face the horrors of the porta-potty.

We want top notch rugby watched by a big fan base.

Pictured:

Betty Jane Mitscher, KU Philanthropist
and her son

Mark “Boomer” Mitscher, former KJRFC player





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.