



OLD BOY QUARTERLY

The Old Boy Quarterly

is targeted to the alumni rugby players of the Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club.

These issues chronicle both interesting parts of the club's **55 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

The club also has actively managed information on Facebook. ([Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club](https://www.facebook.com/KansasJayhawksRugbyFootballClub))

We are seeking to expand this publication's distribution. If you are aware of KJRFC alumni who would like to be added to the distribution, please forward this e-mailed newsletter to them.

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The Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 1182

Lawrence, KS 66044

2019 FALL PRESEASON



BLAKE MITTON

The pre-med junior is
Jayhawk Captain for 2019/20

WHAT'S GOING ON

This fall, the Jayhawks are in a great position to win their Heart of America Conference of college clubs. Many of the biggest qualifying matches will be at HOME. - If you get nothing else from this edition, get this...the Jayhawks would like to have YOU on the sidelines for these matches!

The Jayhawks have been in the "Elite 8" of the National College Playoffs of Division 1AA in 2018 and 2019. However they did not win their conference in either of those years. The club was invited "At Large" because they play consistently tough in a very competitive conference and were the runner-up. In the case of the recent 2019 appearance, part of the entry was because the Jayhawks have the organization and financial support to commit within 24 hours to travel to northern California (costing more than \$20,000).

In this edition Captain BLAKE MITTON and sophomore REID PARSONS detail their plans to expand the pool of playing talent of the club and the club's renewed commitment to training. - This is a pivotal year, because the Jayhawks graduated a lot of players last spring. - We will have 2 excellent backs joining us as foreign exchange students from the University of Hull (United Kingdom).

At the Alumni Weekend this past May, the club celebrated its 55th ANNIVERSARY. The banquet featured some excellent presentations by the outgoing seniors. Also at the banquet, the club continues to recognize the contributions of its ALUMNI BASE with additional Life Members and expansion of the Red Jacket Society. - We define "Life Member" and "Red Jacket Society" in this edition. -

Just because you hung up your boots, doesn't mean you can't have an active role in the success of this club.

Fall Schedule

Plan to come to a home game

- See Page 3

Matt Schwartz

Head Coach's Comments on the Jayhawks this fall

- See Page 4 & 5

Blake Mitton

Jayhawks new captain

- See pages 6 & 7

New Life Members

Jayhawks award 5 to Life Member status for their years of club service

- See pages 8 thru 15

Reid Parsons

Jayhawk wing becomes club recruiter

- See Pages 16 - 17

55 Years

of Rugby at the University of Kansas

Alumni Weekend May 3 & 4, 2019

"Red Jacket Society" expanded at banquet

(Red Jacket Society defined)

- See Pages 18 - 20

2019 Fall Schedule

| 2019 Fall | | College Varsity | Men's Club | Location |
|---|---------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| August | | | | |
| 22 | 1st Day Class | | | |
| 24 | | | | |
| 31 | Labor Day | Central MO State | Scrimmage | Westwick |
| Sept | | | | |
| 7 | | KCRFC | KCRFC | Westwick |
| 14 | | Oklahoma State | Nodaway (Iowa) | Westwick |
| 21 | | Truman State | | Truman State |
| 28 | | Nebraska | Nebraska | Nebraska |
| October | | | | |
| 5 | | Iowa State | Iowa State | Westwick |
| 12 | Fall Break | | Wichita Barbarians | TBD |
| 19 | | Iowa | Iowa | Iowa |
| 26 | | Missouri | Missouri | Westwick |
| November | | | | |
| 2 | | Kansas State | Kansas State | Westwick |
| 9 | | | | |
| 16 | | | | |
| 23 | | HOA All Stars | | Arkansas State |
| Yellow Highlight Games are Official Conference Matches to qualify for National Playoffs | | | | |

Check the club's Facebook page for match times, posted week of match.
 "Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club"

The Jayhawks' home pitch is at the Westwick Rugby Complex.

Find it on Google Maps.

Located on SW side of Lawrence.

On Iowa Street, go 1 mile south of K-10 and then 2 miles west on 458.

Head Coach Matt Schwartz

Comments on the Season Ahead

The Fall season is just around the corner and I am excited to see the club come together on the pitch in the following weeks. We have a great schedule with a **majority of the games being played at our home grounds at Westwick.**

The senior players, coaching staff, and alumni have been busy working on improving the fields and grounds around this wonderful facility this summer and can't wait to showcase it to you and our competition this Fall. There has been mowing, watering, filling in low spots on the field with top soil, and top dressing with sand taking place.....and more to come!

Thank you to the **Kansas Rugby Foundation** and the **alumni and friends of the club** for being a driving force and answering the call to making these improvements a reality. There is still a lot of work to do but each day, week, month, and

year that goes by, we are getting closer to Westwick being the premier rugby venue to play at in the mid-west.

What's next?

The club graduated twelve players last season. Seven of those players were starters or in the match day twenty-three in every Heart of America Conference league match last year. **Some people would see that as a void to fill for this upcoming season. I view it more as an exciting time and opportunity** for new combinations to form and grow with the returning players and newcomers to the club.

Nobody is a starter yet.

I'm looking forward to watching healthy competition between the squad and seeing them push each other towards a common goal. That goal is winning the Heart of America Conference and returning

to nationals. Two years in a row we have come in second in the conference. Two years in a row we have been the at large bid for nationals. Last year our only losses in conference play were to KSU at 12-19 and ISU at 29-33....both of those games were away.

What's my point?

We'd love to see the berms packed for all of our home games this season. It makes a massive difference to the boys when they walk out on the field and see and hear all of that support. Schedule is out so start planning now! It's a great time to catch up with old friends (and to make new ones), introduce somebody that hasn't been exposed to rugby, and meet the current team and staff.

Last but not least.

All of the gains that the club has been making recently are incredible. For me, having the moniker of



head coach is amazing and humbling but a bit misleading as it tends to reap most of the accolades. My dad (the original Coach Schwartz), coached Cross Country and Track and Field at Ohio U as an undergrad, Westpoint as a cadet, UMass and Penn State as an assistant, and University of Tennessee and KU as a head coach. **He always told me that his success came from the people that he associated himself with: i.e. the assistant coaches.** There are so many people that don't get recognition as they should. The true assets to our club are all of the people "behind the scenes." Assistant coaches **Andy Stewart, Alexis Alfaro, Jason Williams.** Strength & Conditioning Coach **Burt Cockley** and Sports Psychologist **Hannah Weingartner.** - To you all I say thank you. - The club is so lucky to have you. You have all made positive impacts in my life and the players lives.

There is also a massive amount of **Alumni** and long term friends of the club that do so much and get so little recognition. I know you don't do it for the recognition. **You do it because you believe, as I**

do, that our club has meaning greater than sport. It's more than what goes on in-between the lines on Tuesday's, Thursday's, and Saturday's. It's about friendship, learning time management, learning from both success and failure. It's about learning and accepting your teammate's differences and being part of something bigger than yourself. At least that's what I think about the meaning of Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club. I am proud to be a part of it.

Looking forward to seeing you at Westwick or any of our away games.

You can reach me at 785.331.7544 or at mattysshorts@hotmail.com.

Rock Chalk Jayhawk!

Matt Schwartz



Blake Mitton

Jayhawks' Pre-Med Captain

This coming year's college Captain is 6 foot, 195 lbs. junior, **Blake Mitton**. His team is loaded with talent, but is facing a rebuilding project to take the Jayhawks into the future. The spring 2019 graduation was hard on the ranks of the forwards, so Mitton would like to move from wing & outside center to play flanker. This depends on the other talent that they have available to play all the other positions. The Kearney, MO native played quarterback & outside linebacker in high school football, so has all the athletic talent needed for the demanding flanker position.

Before the article moves on to Mitton's bio and plans for the club, let's pause and answer a question....

What is a "flanker"?

There are 2 flankers on a team in a game. They are the loosely bound players on the sides of a scrum and usually the 2 players furthest from the sideline in a lineout. Their job is to pursue the opposing backfield players if the scrum or lineout is lost and to fill in and support their own backfield if the scrum or lineout is won. There is a great deal of freedom in the position, since unlike a backfield position, they are not closely marked by an opponent.

The flankers are the first of the forwards out of the scrums and lineouts. They have terrific vision for what is going on in the game and can run to the spot that will make a great play. As a result of

this "game vision" and ability to "impact a game", flankers are where many teams put their very best athletes and team captains.

The physical requirements for the position are that they have to be big enough to play with the forwards, fast enough to play with the backs, solid tacklers who can knock any player off his feet, and fit enough to run at pace through an entire game. – (You almost need a "Superman cape".)

Two years ago, Mitton came to Kansas as a freshman and fellow-freshman **Scott Merdinger** was across the hall of his dorm. (See Newsletter 28 about Scott Merdinger.) Merdinger brought Mitton to a rugby practice and Blake Mitton was hooked on the sport. The two have played side by side at outside center and wing for the past two years.

Rugby HQ

After their freshman year, Mitton and Merdinger started renting apartments in the same complex on the north edge of the campus. Next fall they will be joined in the complex by sophomore wing phenom, **Reid Parsons**. **Scott Merdinger will be the club's President next year.** There are more rugby players in rentals within a stone's throw of their place, so all the gears are in place to have a "Rugby HQ" at Mitton/ Merdinger/ Parson's complex. – These situations have historically lined up before and the



synergy of rugby talent frequently propels the club to new heights.

Recruiting Focus this Fall:

The club will man recruiting tables at the various campus organization functions.

The initial fall practices will be on the field at 23rd & Iowa, to organically grow the recruiting and make attending practice easier until the new players make friends with rides to Westwick.

Players will be encouraged to bring a friend to practice (especially a BIG friend).

Were you in a fraternity at KU?

The club is seeking help from **ALUMS** in speaking to current fraternities. The club would like to encourage the recruiting of more players from fraternities. That is where former high school athletes frequently live.

Contact the club if you will help.

Players will get a special rugby tee shirt to wear when they join the club and will be encouraged to wear it on campus.

What the coming year will look like:

The consistently toughest competitors of **Kansas State, Iowa State, and Missouri** will all be at Westwick this playing year.

Mitton hopes we can build big home crowds to support the club, especially coming off National Playoff appearances in 2018 and 2019.

Mitton noted that Kansas is in something of an “arms race” within the Heart of America and the above three college clubs in particular. All are broadening their club management to engage older alumni and have crowd funding efforts. The Iowa State club in particular will be a tough competition. They have a young roster and went to the National Playoffs this past spring in both 15’s and 7’s. These Iowa State playoff events were on different weekends and in cities 1,000 miles in the opposite directions from Ames, IA. – Not only were the Cyclones good on the field; they mustered terrific funding and logistical support.

Mitton looks at this level of competition in the Heart of America as a very positive thing. The Jayhawk team went to the National Playoffs these past two years partially because they do well in such a very strong conference. – *If you play in the Heart of America; you are playing some high level rugby.*

The club roster will have good players return at every position.



What the Jayhawks are looking for is depth and establishing a good base of freshman players for the future.

The British are coming... We have two foreign exchanges students coming from the University of Hull for an entire school year. Mitton played in a game in Cardiff Arms Park with **Tom Oliver** when the club was on tour this past spring in Wales. Mitton was more than impressed. Oliver was played at fullback and scored from mid-field on his first 2 touches of the



ball. Mitton looks forward to playing with Oliver and his speedy teammate **Harry Richardson**.

A Charter Bus to Iowa?

The club’s big away game this fall will be to play the University of Iowa in Iowa City, over 5 hours away. Iowa is our new entrant to the Heart of America. They came to Lawrence last fall and gave Kansas a very tough match. It would be great to put the Jayhawks on a bus where they can relax to the game and get home safely after the game. - A side benefit of a charter is that it gives the players a chance to bond into a closer unit. Charter bus trips are consistently a highlight of a season. ****

If the team, parents, and the alumni can afford it, Mitton would love that trip to Iowa be made on a chartered bus.

Make an earmark donation if you would like to make that happen. - See how on the last page of this Newsletter.



2019 CROP OF

LIFE MEMBERS

Per the club's original 1975 constitution: "The Club may choose to honor the **select few who have contributed outstanding service to the Club and the game of rugby over many years** by admitting those individuals to life membership. Approval of Life Member status is subject for the membership as a whole to be considered only at the AGM and may be conferred only upon the overwhelming assent of the membership and in no case by less than three-fourths affirmative vote".

Prior to 2019 there were eight members:

- [Allen Chapman](#) - 1984 (deceased 1995)
- [Joe KIELTYKA](#) - 1985
- [Rick Renfro](#) - 1986
- [Dominic Barnao](#) - 1987
- [Jimmy Bartle](#) - 1992
- [Grant Lechtenberg](#) - 2014
- [Paul Diedrich](#) - 2014
- [Dave Hamill](#) - 2016

The newly elected 2019 Life Members (on the following pages), recognize an exclusive group among the KJRFC family.

We feel that the newly elected alumni are deserving and meet the standards of the honor as defined above, having served the club for many years while maintaining a sustained commitment to the rugby ethic of social fellowship.

The club membership put a lot of thought into this and think, as an organization, KJRFC has been too slow in the past to nominate and elect Life Members (especially during the period between 1992 to 2014).

Going forward, we will start a more timely process for nominating life memberships candidates to the KJRFC executive committee so that more individuals are recognized for their contributions to KJRFC. This would avoid the pressure of having mass nominations like this year. It would avoid over-

looking past contributors whom many of the current club membership may not know.

The 55th Reunion was a great opportunity for the club to recognize these individuals for the contributions in front of their peers.

The new Life Members were petitioned to a vote of the active players of the club by: [Joe KIELTYKA](#), [Rick Renfro](#), [Grant Lechtenberg](#), [Paul Diedrich](#), and [Dave Hamill](#).

Resumes of Existing LIFE MEMBERS:

[Allen Chapman](#)

(1984 Inductee):

- The KU engineering professor joined the club in fall 1975 and was a transformational influence.
- Sold the players on the commitment to get to an extreme level of physical fitness.

- Created a structured organizational that had continuity beyond the present group. - He wrote the original constitution.
- Generated the imperative to acquire land for a playing field and clubhouse.
- He started the club regularly touring overseas to gain a perspective beyond our own little world. He knew this would transform and motivate the club to achieve the other goals, including owning a pitch.
- Created **OSVA Award** for most distinguished tourist.
- He introduced a new award to replace “Most Valuable Player” called the **Kernow Cup** (Kernow is Cornish for Cornwall).

“For Distinguished Performance and an Exemplary Attitude as Player, Complemented by a Sustained Commitment to the Rugby Ethic of Social Fellowship”.

- He introduced the “**Merit Table System**” to the HoA when National Playoffs needed a way to determine the HoA champion.

Joe Kielyka

(1985 Inductee):

- Founding Member of the KJRFC in 1964.
- Active all 55 years of the club as player, coach, mentor, frequent International Tourist, and social sponsor with his then restaurant Stone Wall Inn.
- “The thing that all “successful teams” have had in common over the years was that the players cared about each other.”
- He never looked at team’s

won-loss record as the gauge of a great team or game. Some of the very best games over the years were games where the Jayhawks lost, but played their hearts out.

Rick Renfro

(1986 Inductee):

- Joined the club as a freshman in fall 1975 and has been active in all aspects of the club ever since.
- Purchased the original Johnny’s Tavern in 1978 which provided a social setting and one of the first Rugby Clubhouses in the Midwest.
- Team Captain as a player.
- Kernow Cup award winner.
- Westwick Rugby Complex founder.
- He even has a home overlooking Westwick Rugby Complex.
- He is the face of KU Rugby.

Dominic Barnao

(1987 Inductee):

- New Zealand player/coach.
- Multiple International Tours.
- He helped evolve the club’s level of play with match strategies, etc. He was a great mentor and friend and has remained in contact with some of the older members to this day.

Jimmy Bartle

(1992 Inductee):

- Joined club in 1976.
- He was on the HoA and Western RFU All-Star Teams
- He did first revision of the club’s constitution.
- Established our 501(c)3 charity The Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc. (KRF)
- KRF Secretary for 30 years

until 2017.

- Westwick Rugby Complex co-owner
- Kernow Cup award winner.

Grant Lechtenberg

(2014 Inductee):

- Active 1990 to present as a player (longest active player in club history).
- Westwick Rugby Complex co-owner.
- Kernow Cup award (**TWICE**)
- Red Jacket Society founder.

Paul Diedrich

(2014 Inductee):

- 1976 to 1990 was an active player and club CEO or President during the club’s transformation into the organization it has become today.
- Kernow Cup award winner.
- KRF Board of Directors.

David Hamill

(2018 Inductee):

- Joined club in fall 1975 and active to present.
- Club Treasurer.
- KRF Board of Directors.
- Multiple International Tours.
- Player Support (providing player housing and construction jobs).
- Westwick event Gate Keeper.



The 2019 New Life Members:

- . Don “Duck” Harris**
- . Steve Lange**
- . Doug McCauley**
- . Randy Renfro**
- . Louie Riederer**

DON HARRIS

Don found rugby in 1976 and has been a member of the KJRFC Family for the past thirty eight years since arriving from “up the river” in 1981 (i.e. K-State).

Allen Chapman and **Greg Young** were his coaches that impacted his rugby career during his playing days with the K- State Club. After leading that Club to a “**Final Four**” appearance in 1980 and graduation, Don chose to relocate to the Lawrence where he played competitively for eighteen years as a flanker while holding various administrative positions including **club captain**.

He has been a consistent donor (both personally and through his position at Rew Materials), is a member of **Westwick, LC** and now serves as **President of KRF**.

He has been instrumental in turning the **KRF** into a major fundraising vehicle for the club.

Don was a recipient of several club yearly awards along with the **Kernow Cup**. ****





STEVE LANGE

For the past 8 years he has written the **Old Boy Quarterly Alumni Newsletter**. He helped revamp the club's website and Facebook page content. He serves on the KRF Board of Directors.

He played loose head prop from 1972 until he graduated in 1975. Steve was a player and president.

- He, along with **Rick Whitson**, started the **Alumni Weekend** in spring 1974.
- **Started the Annual Award Banquet** in fall 1974 after a fall season record of 11 wins, 7 of them by shut outs.
- His team won the **club's first championship** in taking the Big 8 Championship from Missouri in 1975. (It was the club's ONLY Big 8 Championship.)
- He got the club's **first national press** when Steve wrote a full page story in 1975 about the Jayhawks in Scrum down Magazine (the predecessor of Rugby Magazine.) - See in Newsletter #4, Page 20.

After graduation he played for KCRFC then helped start Johnson County RFC in Kansas City in 1976 and then helped found Wichita Old Yeller RFC in 1977, which merged in 1982 to become the Wichita Barbarians, where Steve was its 2nd president.

STEVE's COMMENTS

The Newsletter was started to accomplish 4 things:

- **FIND:** Started in 2011 as a project to find & start dialogue with decades of alumni who are scattered around the world.
- **STORY:** 55 years of alumni from different eras would otherwise not know each other's stories. The newsletter accomplished that by sequentially telling the history of the club in 4 or 5 year time segments .
- **ARCHIVE:** The newsletter collected digital scans of its historical news clipping, photos, and especially the stories that accompanied those photos. Thanks to those that submitted photos, stories and sat for interviews.
- **RALLY:** The newsletter's goal is to assemble alumni & keep them engaged. The consistently great college clubs in the country benefit from a large alumni base.

The above 4 goals have been achieved and the last point about rallying the alumni to help the club prosper is in full gear.

The alumni have an unusually strong Emotional Connection.

I think its more than the great players over the years, the wins, or the tours we have made. Those things are just the grade cards. - **The real story is the WORK that went into making everything happen.**

The Jayhawks accomplish great things as an organization. They are the envy of other rugby clubs. **We are all proud of our own contributions and especially proud of what the Jayhawks have become as a club. - We keep our link.**

There are numerous alumni that I know have quietly stepped up in recent years and have done things with huge impacts on the club. I identify 4 here.

Mac Crowther - Played scrum half 1966/68. Was Captain on a team that went a year undefeated. Today Mac is a large financial contributor every year and in addition steps up to help finance special projects. He helped charter a bus to Missouri in 2017 and is helping with our scholarship funding for our 2019/20 English Study Abroad players.

Jacques Fluker - Played hooker in the early 1970's. Today he is in the IT industry. Over recent years he established and personally bought the various internet domain names that could be associated with our club and has them re-direct to our website. He then gave the club those domains.

Adam Roush - Played fly half 8 years ago. Today he works in the IT industry. He has re-built our website twice and installed a PayPal link that allows credit card donations directly to our 501(c)3 charity.

Matt O'Donnell - Played as a back in the 1980's. Today he coaches Blue Valley HS Rugby. He develops interest in the sport and teaches the fundamentals of the game. Many of his great players come to Kansas and play for us.

The above are **exemplary alumni volunteers** and are directly part of the club's success.

I am proud to be one of the HUNDREDS of players and alumni over the decades that made the Jayhawks what we have been and continue to be.

DOUG McCAULEY

Doug has been a member of the KJRFC Family for the past 43 years. His playing career began in 1976 and he was an active player for the next 20 years, playing flanker wing and lock.

He has held numerous administrative positions:

- Has been the **manager of three international tours.**
- Served as **Captain of the 1987 Tour to Holland and Belgium.**
- He is currently the **CEO of the KJRFC and Field Maintenance Manager.**
- He also currently **represents the KJRFC at the Regional Level of USARFU Rugby as the College Men's Director of the Mid-America Rugby Football Union.**

Doug's Comments:

I was told I had 3,000 words for our acceptance of the Life Member. - Hell, that won't cover the first year!

When I first came to KU Rugby I had no idea of what to expect, unfortunately nobody else did either.



Little did I know that it would produce life long friends, a family and a compassion for a sport like no other, including golf. **The life lessons included fellowship, camaraderie, sportsmanship, responsibility, accountability, humor, travel and more fun than I ever knew was humanly possible.**

Rugby has given me a home and a place that I feel I'm always welcome. I have true friends, not Facebook friends that tell you what time of day they had a bowel

movement, but ones that I can rely on anytime. There is no other sport like it on this planet.

“Honor” in the dictionary is defined as high respect; great esteem.

What does becoming a Life Member mean to me? It means just that. For me, there will be no greater honor in my lifetime. ****





RANDY RENFRO

Randy has been a member of the KJRFC Family for the past 43 years. He started with the club in 1976 and played hooker and wing for 12 years, while simultaneously serving as the Club Treasurer.

He was also **instrumental in establishing the KRF**, while gaining 501(c)(3) status and has served as the **KRF Treasurer and Board Member for the past 31 years.**

Finally, Randy was a recipient of the **Kernow Cup.**

RANDY'S COMMENTS:

I was recruited to KJRFC by **Rick Renfro** (who else?) my freshman year at KU. It was an easy decision because he had also recruited several other Shawnee Mission West Viking alumni. **Billy Boyle, Doug Hassig, David Hay, Kirk Goza, Kenny Dunn** and others started playing rugby at the same time. Many of my teammates during my college years turned out to be life-long best friends.

After graduating in 1979, I was fortunate to secure a job in Lawrence which allowed me to continue my

rugby career with KJRFC. During the late 70's and 80's the Club side matches took priority over Collegiate side. There weren't too many collegiate sides in the area and KJRFC was competitive with the top clubs in the Heart of America Conference and we were able to hold our own against the best teams in the Western Region.

During the 80's and 90's we were fortunate to have groups of 20-25 players who were able to continue playing for KJRFC for several years after graduation.

We had excellent coaching during my playing years. **Joe Kieltyka** was our coach when I started playing and I was fortunate to have been coached by **Bill Mills, Clive Emmanuel** and **Dominic Barnao**. My fondest memory during my playing years was the Western Union finals in Denver when we almost upset of the Barbarians.

During my playing years, I worked as an accountant for Maupintour, an international escorted tour company based in Lawrence. **Allen Chapman** started our bi-annual tour tradition in 1977. Due to my international travel connections with Maupintour, **I served on the tour committees for England/Wales/France '81, New Zealand '83, South America '85 and Netherlands/Belgium '87.** Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the '85 and '87 tours due to personal reasons (first marriage and first child).

Some of my fondest memories are from touring with KJRFC. I can't decide if my best memory from England/Wales/France tour was winning our last match vs Tours or

the pummeling of **Wint Winter, Sr.** by the crazy Asian at the sex shop in Paris before the France vs Scotland test match. The highlights of the New Zealand tour were attending the British Lions matches in Dunedin and vs the All Blacks in Auckland.

Due to my accounting background and not being able to find a replacement I am honored to have been the **Treasurer of Kansas Rugby Foundation (KRF)** since it was organized in 1988. **Jimmy Bartle, Paul Diedrich, Wint Winter, Roger Walter** and several others were involved in organizing KRF as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. KRF allows alumni and others to donate funds to develop and maintain the Westwick fields.

The last rugby match I played was the first time I played at Westwick. During the annual alumni game, I tackled incorrectly, with my head into the knee of the stud college player with the ball. The next thing I remember was waking up and Rick telling me the ambulance was on the way. I only had several stitches and lost a tooth, but was able to attend the banquet that evening. ****



LOUIE RIEDERER

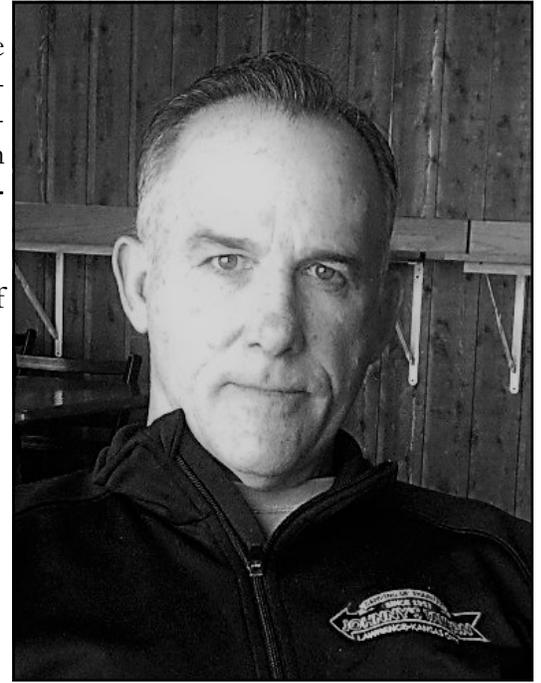
Louie has been a member of the KJRFC Family for the past 43 years. He too began his career in 1976, and played competitive rugby with the club for 25 years playing prop.

He has held multiple administrative positions and been a leader of multiple fund-raising activities during his playing days.

- He has been a **manager for several international tours.**
- **Captain of the 1983 Tour to New Zealand.**
- He is a founding member of **Westwick, LC .**

He is also the leader of the “**Cowboys**”, who not only participate in the annual “golf rodeo”, but are instrumental in **the most impactful fund-raising activities of the KRF.**

Finally, Louie was a recipient of the **Kernow Cup.** ****



Reid Parsons

Sophomore Wing Seeks to Score in Club Recruiting

Reid Parsons had a good freshman year.

Some of the first people he met in school were rugby players. He played wing on a very good team. He scored or broke open big plays that led to scores in a number of Merit Table Matches. That style of play identified him a young player to watch. Over Spring Break, he went with the team on tour in Scotland & Wales, then came back to travel to California to play the best teams on the west coast in the National Playoffs. – **Not a bad start for a freshman at the University of Kansas.**

This coming year, he will be heading up the club's recruiting efforts and seeks to load up the team on good young players to try to repeat last year's National Playoff appearance as often as possible in his coming years.

His own journey to the Jayhawks provides something of a road map on how to recruit.

The 5' 11", 175 lbs athlete is a Lenexa KS native who had been a baseball player. He started playing rugby in his junior year at St. James Academy. Its team was a composite of his school, Shawnee Mission East and another school. Parsons played flyhalf and outside center. His team played in the Kansas High School Playoffs at Westwick.

He was impressed that the Jayhawk players came to that championship and talked to him. – He made a note of their interest and planned to come to KU to play.

His freshman year, he joined the team in its initial practices at 23rd & Iowa. He was in a crop of experienced freshman players from Minnesota who had come from **Jack Dienst's** high school. Upperclassman **Scott Merdinger** came over and introduced himself to Parsons and looked after him. The two became good friends. This coming year Parsons will share an apartment with **Merdinger**, who will be college club President and team Captain, **Blake Mitton**.

Parsons observes that his experience at KU his first year would not have been the same without the rugby club. He really didn't know anyone. He had upperclassmen friends from rugby who showed him the ropes on campus.

Recruiting Plans:

- He and some other Jayhawks already attended the **Kansas High School Championship** that was moved to St. Thomas Aquinas from Westwick this year, because the wet conditions made Westwick unplayable. The Jayhawks talked to area coaches and a number of senior players who are already planning to come to KU to en-



courage them to continue to play. They talked to the underclassmen about coming to KU.

- There is a **Wednesday evening touch rugby game all summer**, played on a field behind Oliver Hall on campus. That is keeping players fit and introducing a few new faces to the team.
- They will have a **pre-season training camp** that will start a few weeks before school to introduce the incoming freshmen and get a head start on practices sessions.
- Next spring, the Jayhawks will **stay in contact with area high school coaches** and **attend as many high school games as possible**.
- Parsons' father has made some **recruiting videos** for the club that include video streams taken from his drone camera. They have been **on the club Facebook page** and are very well done. (See the videos on "Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club"). His dad has some additional videos underway and will be released soon.

- The players will all get a special **rugby club tee shirt** when they pay their fall dues. They wear them during game warm ups and when they go to class on campus.
- The club **Publicity Officer, Will Jarka** will be active promoting the club on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. These will be targeted at both the KU students and high school students.

Parsons notes the great things about rugby at Kansas: - It's a very easy sport to fundamentally learn. - It's an easy way for a good athlete to get involved in a sport where they can represent their school. - At KU you also get a chance to travel around the world to play that sport. - You travel all around the Midwest to play matches with other universities. - Kansas is getting a track record of making the National Playoffs.

To parents who may be concerned about rugby hurting a student's study time:

"Coming into college and especially being a freshman, rugby takes up a decent amount of time. You have to be committed, but with that commitment, you establish a work ethic that carries over to the way you study in school. We all work out together, we all go to practice. I had to learn time management, because obviously school comes first since that's the reason we are at KU. I know that and the coaches know that. **I think rugby really helps with handling responsibility, because we hold each other accountable.**" - *Reid Parsons*



55 Years

of Rugby at the University of Kansas 1964 – 2019

Alumni Weekend May 3 & 4, 2019

The Jayhawks celebrated their 55 years of excellence over the Alumni Weekend this past May.

Friday:

There was a 9-hole scramble at The Jayhawk Golf Club. The morning rain stopped just before the tee time.

That night the club held a gathering at Johnny's and the Club House upstairs where old friends assembled to remember past fun.

Saturday:

The Jayhawks found a last-minute opponent in Washburn Rugby Club from Topeka. A nice-sized crowd was there to cheer the players.

That night, the club held a formal dinner at The Oread Hotel. At that dinner:

- Graduating senior **Neil McCarthy** won the **Kernow Cup**; the club's highest player award for excellent play and off field spirit.
- New **Life Memberships** were awarded (see earlier article).

- The **Red Jacket Society** inducted another expanded batch of alumni.

To answer questions about **“What is the Red Jacket Society?”** here is a long post, but explains all.

In short summary – It's an internal 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 win-



ners 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.

Here is the long version - starting with the 2018 & 2019 expansion, followed by the official criteria going forward for 2020 and after wherein **only 3 new members will be added a year.**

The purpose of the R.J.S. is to recognize individuals that have helped in the success of the Kansas Jayhawk Rugby Club organization. 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.

For the years of 2018 and 2019 is an opportunity for as many members to be inducted as possible. For the years after 2019 the nomination and election process shall follow the procedures outlined in the regulations under Red Jacket Status. All 2018 & 2019 members are welcome to purchase their own individual red jackets that they can have the patch sewn on to. All new

inductees from 2020 forward will receive name on plaque and a red jacket with the badge at the annual awards banquet. The jackets will be paid through the R.J.S. with funds collected from annual dues of \$20 from each R.J.S. member. We are working with the Kansas Rugby Foundation to manage this portion. ****

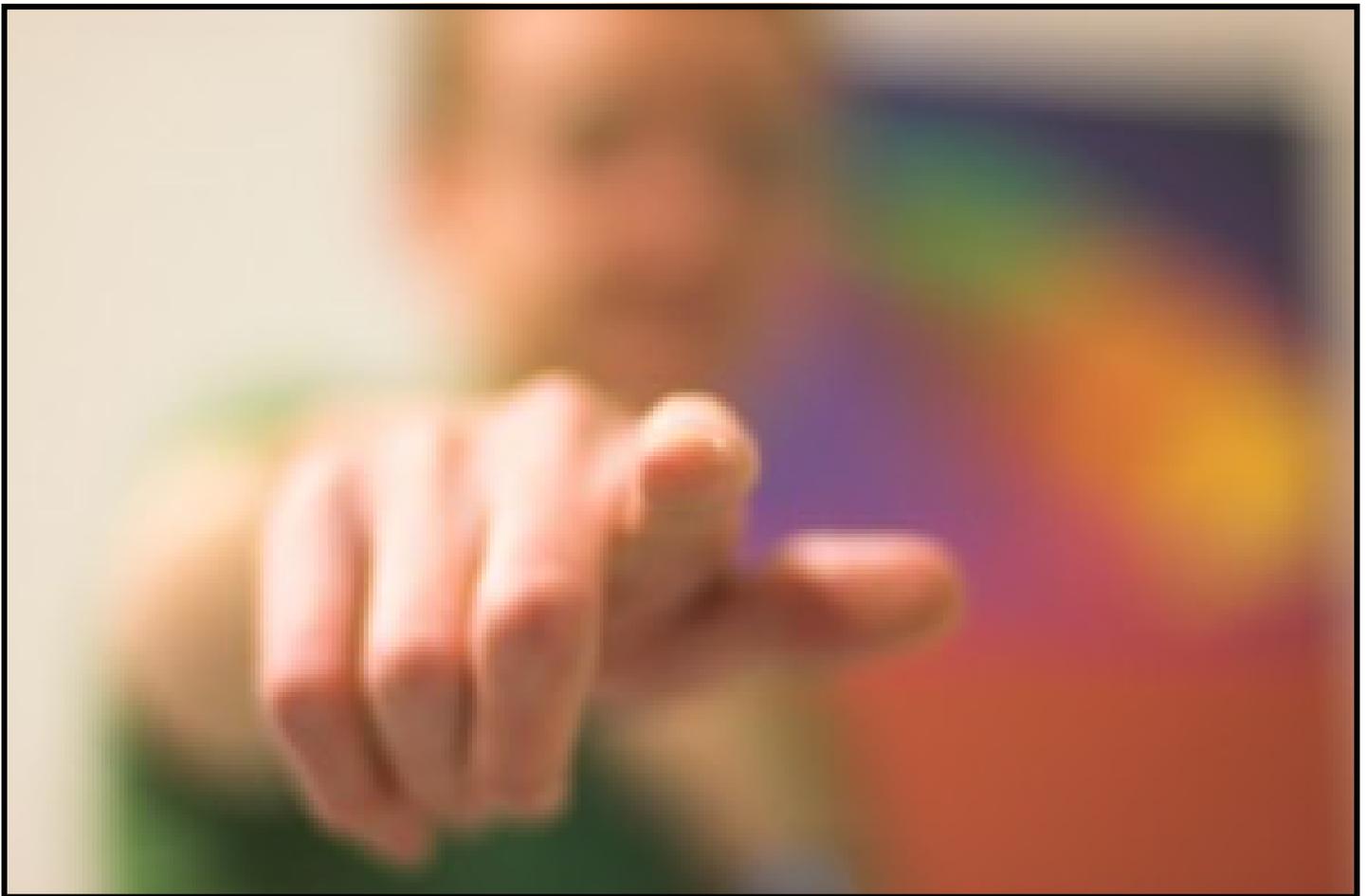


2019 Kernow Cup Award to graduating senior flanker/hooker, **NEIL MCCARTHY**



Grant Lechtenberg presided over the 2019 expansion of the **Red Jacket Society** at the 55th Anniversary Banquet.





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Hit “Donate”.

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