

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 50 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](#))

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.

If you are interested in financially supporting the club, charitable gifts can be made to:

The Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.

PO Box 1074
Lawrence, KS, 66044

Featured In the next Issue:

**Summary of the
Fall 2016**

FALL 2016 PRE-SEASON REPORT



Informal Practices Began August 9

On-Campus site is 200 yards north of the original 1964 rugby pitch.
(Former pitch now occupied by the red roofed building in distance.)

We want more stories and photos from the past.

Send material to pd4bicycles@aol.com before December 1, 2016. Please provide your contact information.

Jayhawks Fall Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location
Saturday, August 27	Heart of America All-Star Team Try-Outs	Lawrence, KS
Saturday, September 3	Oklahoma State	Lawrence, KS
Saturday, September 10	UMKC	TBD
Saturday, September 17	Heart of America All-Star Team in Aspen/Washburn	Aspen/Lawrence
Saturday, September 24	Iowa State	Ames, IA
Saturday, October 1	Truman State	Kirkville, MO
Saturday, October 8	Pittsburg State	Pittsburgh, KS
Saturday, October 15	Kansas City Rugby Club	KC
Saturday, October 22	Missouri	Columbia, MO
Saturday, October 29	Washington University (St. Louis)	Lawrence, KS
Saturday, November 5	Wichita Barbarians	Wichita, KS

*Games in BOLD are Merit Table matched that count towards the national playoff eligibility

Directions to Westwick Rugby Complex **Home of the Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club**

- Go south on Iowa Street, past 31st Street South and past the K-10 south bypass.
- Turn west on County Road 458 (turn is just after you cross the Wakarusa River).
- Westwick is 2 miles to west, on north side of street.
- It's located behind houses, but the entrance is marked by large flags on game day.

Games normally start at noon, but check our Facebook page for the exact time earlier in the week of the game.

Overview of this Coming Fall

Playing rugby at KU in the fall is the best. The weather is warm when you start. The campus is beautiful as autumn approaches. You hope last year's undergrad's return and you look forward to pleasant surprises of new players that join the team. - We have a terrific fall season. Alumni are encouraged to come to a game and watch your old team.



Heart of America College All-Star Try-Outs at Westwick

The "Heart" is re-starting the rep side team and will take the best college players in the region to the **Aspen Ruggerfest** the weekend of September 17.

The try-outs will be at Westwick on Saturday August 27 from 11:00 - 4:00.

The best players from KU, KSU, MU, ISU, OSU, NU, Washington U, and Truman will be on our great pitch to be boiled down to a squad of 30 players.

We hope to have a group of our Jayhawks to play on the squad.

Thank You Olympics

The Brazil Olympics featured 7's rugby, which has the press covering a USA men's and woman's team. This will elevate the sport to the student body at KU. (Did you know that the USA is the defending gold medal rugby team? It was last played in 1924 in Paris, where the USA downed a French team in the final.)

3-Legged Stool

There are 3 aspects to the Jayhawk rugby club.

- The **club** itself has players, coaches, and organization.
- There are also the **facility** owners of Westwick, which gives the club a terrific home.
- Finally there is the Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc. which is the **charity** organization that accepts tax deductible funds from donors.



PayPal function is added to the Club's web page

Former Jayhawk CEO, **Paul Die-drich** has an article in this edition about this. **You can now support the club with a tax deductible donation with your credit card** by going to the club's web page JayhawkRugby.com

Alumni are going to a Royals Game August 31

Being a Jayhawk player is a lifetime thing.

Former Jayhawks club captain, **Duck Harris** bought a block of tickets a few months ago for the Yankees game. We sold out the block to former players and are going to load up a charter bus at Johnny's at 95th & Antioch in Kansas City.

If you are interested in taking part in these alumni events in the future, contact this newsletter.

Practice on Campus

The club already started their Tuesday - Thursday practices in early August on the campus, playing in a vacant lot next to Robinson Gym.

We want to be high-profile and attract new talent to the club. **This way of recruiting was very effective in the early days of the club.**

In fact, this location is within 200 yards of the very first 1964 rugby club pitch on campus.

Practices will next move to 23rd & Iowa and then games will commence at our great facility at Westwick.



Direction

Of The Club

Players

- We stay focused on a high-profile image on campus, attracting students to the club in their early college years, when they can be developed into great players.
- We have our first recruited player in the **Study Abroad Program** and we are looking for more high-quality players.
- **There are potential “All American” quality athletes walking on campus right now. We want them on the club.**

Funding

- The club’s website now has a “**donate**” button using PayPal.- If you are providing financial help now, **THANK YOU FOR GIVING!**
- The club’s games are drawing spectators and the club is charging a modest **entry fee** to see a game at Westwick. We need to improve facilities to grow the spectator base.
- The club is doing a **MUCH** better job of getting available **funding from KU.**

Facilities

- **It’s the finest rugby pitch in the region. Period.**
- It is perfect for a function like the **Heart of America All-Star Tryouts** on August 27 and the **Kansas High School Championships** every spring.
- It still needs better toilet facilities and changing rooms. This development improvement is at odds with the “conditional use permit” (CUP) established 20 years ago.

Publicity

- The club started practice on a conspicuous field on-campus.
- We have the Heart of America All-Star Team Tryout at Westwick on August 27.
- The club’s **Facebook page** is updated weekly and includes a full summary of games for parents of players, alumni, and interested player candidates can follow the Jayhawks. (*Kansas Jayhawks Rugby Football Club*)
- The club’s website is now updated & linked to the club’s Facebook page.

Your Chance To “Give-Back” to the KJRFC

By Paul Diedrich

Jayhawks Rugby Club’s CEO or President 1976 - 1990

One of the age-old adages of rugby goes something like this: **“I got more out of it, than I could ever give back.”** Well, here’s your chance to “give-back” to the sport that we all came to love. For many of us, it has shaped our lives, not just in terms of what a team sport teaches young men and women about dedication, teamwork and hard work; but also created life-long bonds for many of us. Lessons were learned on-and-off-the-field as rugby has been, and continues to be, an amateur sport where the players are also saddled with the responsibility of governing and funding the club.

The Kansas Jayhawk Rugby Football Club (“KJRFC”) is fortunate to have been around long enough (50+ years) that the governing responsibility is not totally laid upon the shoulders of active players. In particular, there are two entities critical to the very existence of the KJRFC: **Westwick, L.C.** (“Westwick”) and **Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.** (“KRF”).

- **Westwick** owns the land where the **KJRFC** practices, plays and hosts numerous Mid-western rugby events. None of this would be possible without the continued support of the following individuals (**Jim Bartle, Don Harris, Grant Lechtenburg, Steve**

Merdinger, Rick Renfro and Louie Riederer).

- Equally important is the **KRF**, a 501(c)(3), entity which can accept tax-deductible donations from donors. Again, without the continued support of the following individuals (**Jim Bartle, Fritz Edmunds, Kevin Harder, Randy Renfro**) this would not be possible.

Go on the club’s website and click on “DONATE”. Its easy.
<http://www.jayhawkrugby.com/donate>

Recent events have made “giving back” much easier for those who are inclined. Due to the efforts of **Adam Rousch** (who deserves a great big “atta boy” for finally solving this puzzle), **we have a PayPal account that is linked to KRF and can be found at the club’s website:**

<http://www.jayhawkrugby.com/donate>.

Donations can be made on either a one-time or recurring basis. We are encouraging potential donors to consider the recurring basis and, in fact, there are a number of individuals who are already doing this. The obvious benefit to this is that it will provide a consistent cash-

flow to the club to help off-set the expenses of having its own pitch and other day-to-day expenses, not least of which is having a full-time trainer, who doubles as a first responder in a medical situation.

The PayPal donations to the KRF will be overseen by **Randy Renfro and Fritz Edmunds**. In addition, the KJRFC Executive and the KRF will work in tandem to allocate resources to the club annually. **Doug McCauley**, KJRFC CEO, and the rest of the Executive Committee will develop a budget each fall, to be approved by the KRF board.

These funds will **supplement** the funds received by the University and from players’ dues. **The goal of this “giving-back” fundraising campaign is to provide 50% of the annual operating budget.** Any funds that go above and beyond, will be used as prioritized by the three interacting entities (KJRFC, KRF, and Westwick), including but not limited to: facility maintenance, equipment, partial support for travel, coach and club trainer.

There is a bright future for the KJRFC, but this is only possible with a consistent funding-base, so please consider “giving-back” to the club for all the things that you got out of it, if only great memories of the “glory days” of your career. ****

Mac Crowther

Jayhawk's scrum half 1966 – 1968

and

Regular supporter of the current rugby club

One thing you learn about **Mac Crowther** right off the bat; **he played on the best rugby team in the region and the Jayhawks should have been ranked as high as # 2 in the nation.**

He's not a guy whose comments you take lightly. He is the Vice Chairman of ARA Newmark, which is the leading real estate broker in the country, specializing in multi-family residential complexes.

Crowther graduated from Shawnee Mission East High School in Kansas City like several Jayhawks over the years, such as **Jay Clancey**. He was a varsity wrestler at KU. In his sophomore year, KU dropped their wrestling program. He points out that the wrestling program was never that big to begin with, but then your figure the top three wrestling programs in the nation were Iowa State, Oklahoma, and Oklahoma State. KU was never going to do well in that conference. So he gravitated to the rugby club and joined it right after they had taken their Ivy League Tour in the spring break of 1966. His

high school friend, **Jay Clancey** was already on the rugby club and encouraged Crowther to play.

Crowther said that playing rugby when he did was different than today. The Vietnam War and the military draft created a great deal of turnover on the rugby club. A player would get called up and would have to leave the club. So they were always recruiting new players.

In 1968 after **George Bunting** and then **Joe Kieltyka** and **Pat Rapp** had done a great job running the club, the rugby team voted Crowther and **Bill Wolford** co-captains. Wolford was a former All-Big 8 linebacker. Together they recruited a club full of football players and they were a huge side. They had former linebackers at prop, a tight end at #8, running backs and track stars in the backfield. It was a roster of big, gifted athletes that could quickly learn rugby skill sets. Some of these players were **Sandy Budda, Less Steckel, JC Hixon, Fred Exline and HB Marshall.**



Mac Crowther

Crowther also recruited his Sigma Chi fraternity brother **Kim Ewonus**.

“We beat everyone we played. We beat all the teams in the region. We beat all the clubs in Kansas City and St. Louis. Up in Iowa, Palmer has a great rugby tradition and they gave scholarships to all these foreign players with high skill sets, but those guys really didn't like the contact like we did. We beat them, too.”

(Continued next page)

Two great stories about spring 1968.

In spring 1968 they went to New Orleans and played in the Tulane Mardi Gras Tournament and were matched against Missouri. The Jayhawks had never lost to MU. The Jayhawks were hung over and played MU with only 10 players. MU had a full side. They were down 3-0 in the first half after MU scored a 3 point try and missed the conversion. Crowther ran the ball down to the MU 30 and passed to **Joe Groner** who kicked a drop kick to tie the game. Crowther said everybody's hangover suddenly disappeared and they picked up the pace. At half it was still tied. All sorts of spectators wearing rugby gear offered

to come into game to get the KU side to 15 players, but the KU players refused. The game ended a 13-13 tie. They had an old English ref and he said **"I've been around this game a long time and I've never seen better!!!"**

They next went to Chicago to play in the Lion's tournament in Grant Park. They were playing without their best player, fly half **Joe Groner**. So they replaced him with their wing **Jay Clancey**.

Sports Illustrated had just run an article, ranking the best college rugby teams in America. #1 Cal Berkeley, #2 Minnesota, #3 Indiana. After the article, Indiana beat Minnesota. In the Chicago tournament, KU was

paired with Indiana. Right before the kickoff, the Hoosiers were trash talking among themselves and taunted the Jayhawks "Let's kick these guys' asses back to the wheat fields!" The KU players laughed and said "What about your f*****g corn?" KU played them a very rough, dog fight of a game and KU beat them 8-0. **So per Crowther, KU should have been ranked #2 in America.**

I thanked him for the recent donation to the club. He said he does it every year. He plans on coming up to see a game this season; maybe the Oklahoma State home opener on September 3rd. ****



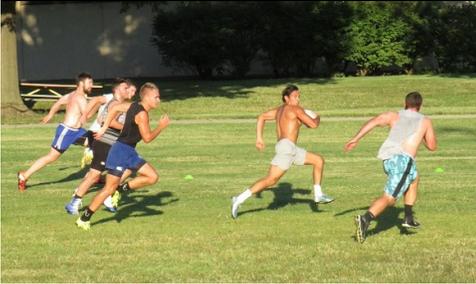
¹³ is similar to football's line-of-scrimmage. Eight forwards assemble in reverse wedge and try to kick ball with heels from center of scrum to backfield. (Journal-World Photos by Mike

Mac Crowther standing on far side of scrum (partially obscured by #13)

KU in dark jerseys on right. Opponent is Kansas City Rugby Club

Former KU football players **Bill Wolford** is loose head prop and **Bob Wisdom** is flanker. Former KU track team hurdler **Bill Chambers** is wing in upper right corner.

Rugby Shorts



On-campus practices near club's original rugby pitch

The Jayhawks began their fall season August 9 with informal Tuesday – Thursday practices of touch rugby on-campus. The field located just east of Robinson Gym is ironically about 200 yards north of the club's 1964 rugby pitch (there's a building on that site today). This creates a walk-by advertisement to help recruit players. The practices shifts to the fields at 23rd & Iowa on August 23rd, where they will practice until games begin at Westwick. The 23rd & Iowa location is one of the busiest intersections in town and will also help recruiting.

The real numbers for the club won't be known until school begins on August 22. Students were still arriving at their dorms the whole week of August 15. The early on-campus practices were consistently drawing over 20 players who played from 6:30 until sunset.

Roster looking good

- There will be competition for spots at every position.

- We continue to have most of last year's core of players and will build upon that core.

- We have at least 3 junior year foreign players who will be joining us from the Study Abroad Program:

Barclay West (England)

Brent O'Rourke (Australia)

Cameron Millar (Scotland)

- Perhaps our most well-rounded skill player, junior **Ryan Russell** will probably be the scrum half. That's the 3rd position change in as many years. He was the hooker his freshman year and center his sophomore year. He has the game smarts, speed, and toughness to play that demanding position.



Ryan Russell

- We are delighted to have wing, junior **Arnold Dinh** return to the club. He took last season off to tour Vietnam. Dinh, is a phenomenal athlete. He's an ex-marine and was previously competing on the KU Track Team in the decathlon. Dinh makes impact plays on both offense and defense and probably



Arnold Dinh

brings a net 10-15 points a game to the Jayhawks. **Rick Renfro** says **"As good as he is; Arnold is a better person than a player. That will tell you something about Mr. Dinh."** The last game of the fall season will be against the Wichita Barbarians where his brother Tim is the scrum half. That will be a game to watch.

- Sophomore **AJ LaRocca** has returned to the club after undergoing knee surgery early last season. LaRocca brings his speed to the wing position and his toe to place



The Heart of America All-Star Tryouts at Westwick on August 27 will give many of the Jayhawks a tremendous experience in Aspen.

This is a chance to get on a 30-man squad made up of the best players from all the surrounding universities. A bonus is that the squad will travel to play in the Aspen Ruggerfest the weekend of September 17. For many Jayhawk alumni, playing in Aspen was the highlight of their playing career at KU. The Jayhawks were last in Aspen in the fall of 2012, entered as the club side. That was before the time of the current Jayhawks. The Jayhawks advanced to the semi-finals in that 2012 appearance.

Players going abroad

Ryan Russell and flanker **Max Palmer** are lining up their plans to go to Australia next season. Russell will be in the Study Abroad program for a semester. Palmer will take a year off from school to work and play rugby. Both talented players will return to the Jayhawks with the elevated skills learned playing in a rugby-playing country.

PayPal Button and Donations

The club's charity arm, the **Kansas Rugby Foundation, Inc.** is for the first time in its history enjoying a steady flow of donated funds from the alumni. As frequently reported in the newsletter, the club needs \$50,000 a year to



operate. The club's dues, fund raisers, and support from KU raises about half that number and alumni provide the remainder. www.JayhawkRugby.com now has a PayPal link to allow the ease of credit card donations directly to the 501(C)(3) charity. You print your own receipt at the end of the donation process. **Thank you for giving.**

Jayhawk rugby is baiting players to switch schools

Perhaps the biggest complement to our rugby program at KU is that we have received contact initiated by players at other universities around the country who want to transfer to KU and play. We are delighted that the 52 year legacy of consistently fielding an excellent team pays off. The readers of this newsletter created that legacy when you played and with your continued interest in the club today.***



(L-R) Head Coach Matt Schwartz & Fitness Coach Louie Riederer

