

HS Showcase in MN a Success

Written by Julie Bode – CSB Rugby Public Relations Chair
Thursday, 14 April 2011 12:31

On Saturday April 9, the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University in Minnesota hosted the High School Showcase tournament, which included 13 high school teams and two collegiate matches.

With the high school teams coming from different areas, it was a great learning experience for new players and new referees. Tammy Cowan, coach of the SJU Rugby Club for the past 5 years, was the lead organizer behind the High School Showcase. Over the past 3 years, she and SJU club have tried variations of the tournament, but this year they included the CSB Rugby Club in their plans.

Together, the two clubs organized the tournament with help from Campus Admissions and Athletics. According to the Cowan, "The goal [of this tournament] is to showcase CSB/SJU. This tournament shows how the two schools support the rugby clubs, which is a problem at most universities."

Cowan is the Head of the Referee Society for the Minnesota Rugby Union and uses this tournament for new referees to practice their skills. There was no entry fee for the Showcase but instead the teams are encouraged to bring food items to donate to the St. Joseph's Food Shelf.

According to Jimmy Hanson, who has coached both the Minnesota U19 Select Side and the Armstrong Girls' Club, the tournament cost was a deciding factor in entering. Most tournaments charge fees of \$200 for teams to enter.

The tournament was well organized and many coaches and spectators were impressed by the coordination. David Dorholt, coach of STMA RFC since 2000, said, "[This is] better run than other tournaments ... it was nicely done." South's Co-coach Todd Fitcher said, "This tournament is a way for beginners to gain experience... the weather was nice."

According to Steve Bauer, SJU Alum of '82 and parent of Duluth player Joe Bauer, this was

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great tournament weather (not too rainy or cold) and it was well organized.

Bridget Herrmann, a parent of Southside player Nick and SJU player and senior Sam, has grown to enjoy rugby. When Sam first started playing in high school, she was afraid because she knew little about this strange sport. As for the Showcase, she thought it was well organized and at a great venue.

East Metro's Captain Emily Yee, a senior attending Marquette next fall, has played 3 years as the team's scrumhalf. She enjoyed the HS Showcase because it was a great learning experience for her team since over half of the East Metro team this year is new to rugby. Yee got involved in rugby because her high school's sports are too competitive for her liking.

Co-Captain Chris Marais of South Metro is a junior in high school has been playing since 9th grade. He got involved in rugby at the early age of six, and decided to go to a practice with a friend when he got to high school.

Brittany Olsen, a sophomore at East Ridge High School, has been helping out East Metro since she had surgery and was unable to play this year. She was a boxer before trying rugby, and loved it. She loved that the showcase was not super competitive but it still had the "you are a rugby player" expectations. "The tournament has been running great. It is fun to meet people and watch other teams play," Brittany said.

Amanda Pederson, a High School Senior who will be attending the U of M next fall and currently plays right lock for East Metro, got involved in the sport after seeing posters around school. She said, "This tournament is a great experience because the team gets to play a bunch of teams not in their conference and it is insight to watch other teams, both high school and college play."

Both SJU and CSB Rugby Clubs will be participating in the All-Saints Tournament at the end of this month.

Scores (Boys)

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Southside 24-0 Duluth

Southside 27-0 Duluth U17

Duluth U17 0-39 St. Cloud

South Metro 0-19 STMA

STMA 0-15 St. Cloud U17

Southside 8-9 South Metro

Duluth 0-32 STMA

South Metro 26-14 Duluth

Scores (Girls)

CSB 34-10 Gustavus

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Armstrong 38-0 South

East Metro 0-35 Armstrong

East Metro 15-10 South

East Metro 19-10 Hopkins

Waconia 0-48 Armstrong

South 0-32 Hopkins