

Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program

2018 / 2019 Highlights
2020 Action Plan



2018 / 2019 Highlights

The Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program continues to see success in the development of our local athletes through the sport. Highlights from the program listed below. Many of the highlights have been profiled through our local media (including the Northern View) with links to articles and stories available on following page.

The successes in our youth program are made possible through the work of our club executives and members. In their spare time, many club members help train, coach, mentor, and travel with the students. Continued support from School District 52 has also helped to develop the youth rugby program. Other partnerships that have enhanced the program are Thunder Rugby, Celtic Barbarians, MacDowell Rugby and several BC rugby clubs have assisted with talent development by making opportunities available for our athletes.

The work being done by our Youth Rugby Program would not be possible without the ongoing support of the various partners through their contributions of funds. We share the success of our program with all those donors who are helping to assist in the development of our local youth.

Thunder Youth Aboriginal Rugby Program

<http://thunderrugby.ca/>

The Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby club, through assistance of funding partners, brought the Thunder Program to the North Coast in September of 2017. Thunder coaches Clay Panga, Barbara Mervin and Crosby Stewart visited several First Nations communities on the North Coast, with Prince Rupert being their final stop. Over the course of two days, the Thunder program worked with Prince Rupert young athletes and our high school boys' and girls' teams. The final session saw over 120 young athletes from 6 to 18 learn about the sport and have a chance to connect with national athletes. Through this camp the Thunder coaches identified athletes with potential to be seen by Rugby Canada and BC Rugby selectors.

Two Prince Rupert athletes attended the 2019 Thunder Camp on Vancouver Island. The camp was an opportunity to connect First Nations athletes from across the Province through sport and culture. The Prince Rupert athletes played for the Thunder at the 2019 Langford 7's.

Rookie Rugby

Through a partnership with School District 52, BC Rugby, Prince Rupert Port Authority Community Investment Fund and additional founding partners, the Seamen Youth Rugby Program acquired Rookie Rugby equipment for many schools in the region. Rookie Rugby is a non-contact, flag-based version of the sport. The club also provided the schools with coaching resource materials so that teachers could have success in teaching students to play Rookie Rugby.

In the spring 2019, BC Rugby visited Prince Rupert and worked with students at several elementary schools to introduce the game. Further work will be done with the program building to a school-based rugby jamboree.

High School Rugby Program - Girls and Boys Rainmakers

The high school rugby program has seen the participation of several hundred athletes over the last 10 years. The teams have competed in the region with other high school programs in Terrace, Smithers, Houston, Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Prince George and Williams Lake. The sport has connected athletes from nearby communities and from across the province.

Both the boys and girls Rainmakers have won the zone championships, with the girls team winning the shield trophy at the 2017 BC Championships. In addition, several Prince Rupert athletes have played for the regional team in the BC Summer Games.

In the fall of 2019, the high school teams traveled to Kamloops for the annual Kamloops 7s tournament.

Celtic Barbarians Program

The Prince Rupert Seamen have been working closely with the Celtic Barbarian program to provide opportunities for local athletes to train, develop and compete at the elite level. To date, eight Prince Rupert athletes have won the Barbarians jersey, playing across the globe in elite level tournaments (Paris, Dubai, Utah, Orlando).

Through the partnership, the Barbarians will continue to identify local athletes with the potential to thrive at the elite level and help the Seamen Youth Rugby Program to develop our ability to train athletes to reach the standards required to preform in top rugby competitions.

In Spring 2019, the Charles Hays Rainmakers joined with the Celtic Barbarians program for a tour to Abbotsford where they received high-level coaching and played against high school teams from the lower mainland.

MacDowell Rugby

<https://www.macdowellrugby.ca/about>

A partnership with the Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program and MacDowell Rugby will further enhance the opportunities for our local athletes. Robin MacDowell is a former national and professional player who has been focused on the development of young Canadian athletes. He has coached Canada's world university team, provincial teams and the national Mexico women's 7s team at the last World Cup. Robin has coached two of our athletes over the past year (Celtic Barbarians and Team Saskatchewan). Two of our Prince Rupert athletes attended his camp in the summer of 2019, receiving high level coaching and increasing their exposure to higher-level selection opportunities.

We Scrum As One

The Prince Rupert Youth Rugby Program worked with HSBC in spring 2019 to send two local indigenous athletes to the 'We Scrum As One' event. Held alongside the Vancouver 7s, 'We Scrum As One' brings together indigenous athletes from across BC to connect through the sport of rugby. The two-day event includes high-level coaching and training, connection to indigenous and non-indigenous role models and taking in the first day of the Vancouver 7s tournament.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/indigenous-teens-rugby-workshop-rugby-sevens-1.4020679>

Senior Men's Seamen Rugby Team

Most of the current Prince Rupert Seamen RFC men's team are players who have graduated the local high school program. The team offers these athletes an opportunity to continue engaging in sport, playing in the men's league in Northern BC. The Seamen often call upon top level high school athletes to play during the season, assisting the development of these players and providing positive mentorship. The 2019 Seamen, with help from the high school players, had the most successful season on recent record.

Pathways for Success

Rugby offers multiple pathways for success of our local athletes; both on and off the field. The Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program is looking to provide our youth with opportunities to push themselves beyond what they think themselves capable of. See below examples of recent athlete's seizing these opportunities after graduating from the high school rugby program:

- **Maheer Atyah:** Maheer's family took refuge in Canada several years ago with Prince Rupert coming forward to support. Maheer worked hard to learn English and graduated high school in 2019. Maheer is a talented athlete who found the love of the sport through the Prince Rupert High School rugby team. He has played two seasons with the men's Seamen team and was recently selected for a Celtic Barbarians side. The Seamen club helped Maheer connect with Westshore RFC in Victoria and assisted with his travel. The club also worked with Westshore on helping arrange accommodation and employment. Maheer's talent and hard work quickly earned him a spot on their men's Premier Reserve team where he has been excelling on and off the field.

Cody Schaeffer: On a trip with the men's Seamen team to the 2018 Sasquatch tournament, Cody was soon noticed by the Meralomas club from Vancouver. Within a week, Cody was offered a spot on the team, a job and accommodation. Cody's hard work and skill earned him a place on their men's Premier Reserve team. Soon following was an invite to the Celtic Barbarians 2018 trip to Dubai. And in 2019, Cody was selected to the Vancouver Rugby Union's U23 rep team.

- **Hannah Scherr:** Hannah's skill and hard work has earned her invitations to play with multiple provincial and representative teams over the past several years. Last year, Hannah was part of the Oak Bay Castaways U18 team that won the provincial championship. She also played in the spring of 2019 for the Oak Bay senior women's team. A member of several Celtic Barbarians sides, Hannah's team in Orlando played in the final of the U18 elite division. She was scouted by both the UBC and UVic rugby programs.
- **Dionte Stephens:** Dionte is a standout indigenous athlete during high school for basketball and rugby. Identified during the 2017 Thunder Rugby camp by one of the Thunder coaches, Dionte was quickly invited to a Rugby Canada identification camp. Dionte was the top performing athlete at the trial and was invited to a second Rugby Canada / BC Rugby trial. The Seamen Rugby program assisted in getting Dionte to the trials where his testing identified him as the fastest athlete in Canada for his age playing rugby. Dionte joined the Westshore rugby club for several weeks in 2018. He played both Premier and Premier Reserve, scoring in every game he played in.

Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program

The Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Club has been developing youth sport and athletes in the community and the region.

Little Ruggers

The Little Ruggers camp provided an opportunity for children aged 6 – 10 to learn aspects on the game of rugby in a fun environment while making new friends and taking part in physical activity. The jerseys and equipment used by Little Ruggers was provided by funds from the Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Club. The program was taught by club members.



Rookie Rugby

Rookie Rugby introduces the game of rugby in a safe way for kids of all ages. The game is a non-contact form of rugby using flag belts, allowing players to learn the basics while being active and having fun with their friends. Boys and girls of all ages and abilities can easily pick up the game and begin playing right away. The rules are simple, the game is easy to learn, and minimal equipment is required. The Prince Rupert Seamen club has worked with SD 52 to put Rookie Rugby kits in all schools.



CHSS Rainmakers (Boys)

The CHSS Rainmakers rugby team started in 2010. The team has been a growing force in the northwest region with both a 7s and a 15s team. The Rainmakers have seen great success in recent years as the program continues to develop. A number of players were selected for a NW select team in 2015. Former team members are now playing for other clubs and university teams across the Province. The Rainmakers now have a Jr and Sr team.



CHSS Rainmakers (Girls)

The fall of 2014 saw the first ever Rainmakers girls rugby team at CHSS. With hard work and determination, this team has shown tremendous talent and strength. Over the past two years, they have become a dominant force in the north. Three girls played for the Zone 8 team at the 2016 BC Summer Games. Girls are also being selected for Provincial teams. There is a bright future ahead for the high school girls team.



Prince Rupert Seamen Senior Rugby Club

The Prince Rupert Seamen have been an important part of the sports community for decades. In recent years, the team has shown great skills and teamwork and has competed well against clubs across the Province. The team prides itself on being inclusive of all who wish to learn the game and to the development of youth, in sport but also in the development of community leadership. A large number of the current club membership have been developed through the high school program.



Thunder Aboriginal Youth Rugby Program

The Prince Rupert Seamen have been working with the Thunder program to engage with youth on the north coast. The goals of the Thunder program are to promote the game of rugby to Aboriginal youth and communities and to identify high performance Aboriginal athletes that could one day represent Canada.



Celtic Barbarians Rugby Club Partnership

The partnership between the Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Program and the Celtic Barbarians has provided the opportunity for many of our young athletes to participate in elite level rugby. Exposure to the Barb's program has also allowed players to access high level training and coaching as well as exposure to scouts from clubs, colleges and universities. To date our local athletes have competed in tournaments in Paris, Dubai, Utah, Orlando, Victoria and Kamloops.



MacDowell Rugby Partnership

<https://www.macdowellrugby.ca/about>

A partnership with the Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program and MacDowell Rugby will further enhance the opportunities for our local athletes. Robin MacDowell has been involved in training, coaching and mentoring many of our Prince Rupert athletes over the last year. He is invested in helping the Prince Rupert Youth Rugby Program continue its success in developing our young athletes and finding pathways moving forward.



Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Football Club

The **Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Football Club (PRs RFC)**, a small hometown team that plays out of Prince Rupert, BC. We're a team that supports youth and community involvement at a local level. Together as a team we compete and represent our town regionally and provincially. We also donate our time around town to support many different functions, such as the Prince Rupert Rampage, the Prince Rupert Oldtimers Hockey League, the Prince Rupert Beautification Society, and Prince Rupert Special Events Society. Our volunteer activity at these various events serves to raise awareness of our sport in the community and also raises money to provide local rugby players with playing equipment, field times, and insurance.

We are a BC-registered non-profit society (**S-0063810**) and a large portion of our funds go to support youth rugby programs in our town. We currently have two high school teams of both boys and girls that require equipment, jerseys, protective gear, etc. We also train our youth in coaching and refereeing clinics that provide them leadership training and boost their self-confidence and social skills through many different aspects of the sport. Rugby is growing more popular with each season and we continue to add more high school teams each year with both boys and girls playing Sevens and Fifteens rugby.

The PRs RFC is looking to ensure the high school and senior clubs continue as a strong community team. We also want to continue to provide youth with the opportunity to gain new skills and confidence through sport and team work.

The Prince Rupert Seamen and SD52 are proud of the accomplishments to date from the youth development through the sport of rugby. Hundreds of players have come through the high school program over the past ten years. It has provided kids with eh sense of pride and accomplishment, developing skills both on and off the field.

Because rugby is an inclusive sport for all athletic types and body shapes, the rugby teams have provided a sport for youth that have not typically participated. It has also been important in providing at risk youth a place to participate and excel. Students have improved on an academic level in order to be part of the rugby program.

The sport has been a powerful tool for the girls in the community. It has provided them another opportunity to grow and develop and be empowered to accomplish great things. A number of Prince Rupert girls athletes have already represented the community on a regional level. And have opportunities to participate on a provincial level.

The boys and girls teams have been a strong force in the northwest. The boys have competed for zones championships for many years. The girls team dominated in only their third season and qualified for the 2017 provincials for 7s.

The sport of rugby offers opportunities for travel. A number of players have played in regional and national tournaments throughout Canada and the US.

High school rugby teams come from all over the area to play in Prince Rupert. During a tournament in the fall of 2016, there were thirteen teams participating (including 4 from Rupert). These visitors provide a significant contribution to local business with hotels and restaurants.

Charles Hays Secondary

Seamen Rugby Bursaries

The Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Club believes in developing athletes on and off the field as well as supporting their goals of higher education either through university or trades.

The Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Club provides for two rugby bursaries to students graduating from Charles Hays Secondary. The awards go to recognizing high level Grade 12 athletes who have led by example on and off the field. The bursaries support these athletes moving onto post-secondary education and continuing to play rugby at the club or university level.

2018 Bursary Winners

Hannah Scherr
Cody Schaeffer



2019 Bursary Winners

Rebecca Sampson
Josh Wickett



Seamen Youth Rugby Program Supporting Our Athletes

- No Athlete Left Behind -

The Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Program believes that no athlete should be left behind due to financial constraints. The club has provided athletes with equipment and kit including cleats, shorts, and mouthguards. The club has also assisted in covering expenses for the athletes for travel or food. Players have also been helped in getting to high level trials or games. This philosophy has enabled the program to connect with young athletes who could not participate due to financial constraints outside of their control and opens doors for opportunity that may not have existed. The Prince Rupert Youth Rugby Program is working to help the athletes with academic supporting including a partnership with PAC10 Tutoring.



Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program Connects our Athletes to the World

The generous support of our sponsors has allowed the Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Program to develop our athletes to compete locally, regionally and globally. Where has our jersey been with our athletes over the last couple of years?



Paris



Dubai



Orlando



Regina



Abbotsford

Prince Rupert Rugby Athletes Playing Representative, Club or Elite Level

Maher Atyah	Celtic Barbarians 7s Westshore Men's Premier Reserve
Cody Schaeffer	Celtic Barbarians 7s Meralomas Men's Premier Reserve Vancouver Rugby Union U23
Hannah Scherr	Celtic Barbarians BC U18 Elite 7s Oak Bay Castaway Wanderers Women's and U18 (15s and 7s) Vancouver Island Crimson Tide Team Saskatchewan Northwest Wolves (BC Summer Games)
Steve Drozd	Nanaimo Hornets Men's Premier
Ryan Vick	Celtic Barbarians 7s
Owen Vick	Celtic Barbarians 7s
Jason Rioux	Celtic Barbarians 7s Westshore Men's Premier Reserve Rugby Canada / BC Rugby Trial
Aaron Chetwyn	Celtic Barbarians 7s
Mason Dileta	Celtic Barbarians 7s
Dionte Stevens	Westshore Men's Premier and Premier Reserve Rugby Canada / BC Rugby Trial
Dennay Yaroshuk	Thunder 7s
Kaden Yaroshuk	Thunder 7s



2020 Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Program Plans

Through the continued support of our partners and sponsors, the Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Youth Program is looking to continue the development of our athletes on and off the field. The program is working to advance several important pieces in 2020.

Thunder Youth Aboriginal Rugby Program Visit

In 2017, Crosby Stewart visited Prince Rupert as part of the Thunder Program visit. Crosby is an elite level indigenous athlete from Northern British Columbia. He is finishing his science degree at UVic, and has played for the UVic Vikes and currently the Rugby Canada Pacific Pride Program. This last summer, Crosby played for Canada at the World University Games.

Crosby is a role model for our young indigenous athletes. The program is looking to bring Crosby back up to Prince Rupert in the spring 2020 to connect with the local athletes and help with pieces of our youth rugby program.

Rookie Rugby

The program is continuing to develop the Rookie Rugby Program through the elementary and middle schools. Rookie Rugby is a non-contact, flag-based version of the game which is growing in popularity throughout North America. The Program is working towards a school rugby jamboree.

Celtic Barbarians Partnership

The Prince Rupert Seamen will continue the partnership with the Celtic Barbarian club to provide high level training to our local athletes. The Barbarian Program continues to select Prince Rupert athletes for elite tournaments providing our players exposure to the highest level of competition and visibility to university and club scouts. To date, eight Prince Rupert boys and girls have worn the Barbs jersey. And The Barbs program provided a tour for the Rainmakers to Abbotsford with elite level coaches involved.

MacDowell Rugby

The Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Program is working with MacDowell Rugby on elite level training opportunities. Robin MacDowell is a former national player for Rugby Canada. He has been running youth rugby academies for many years. He has coached elite level teams including Celtic Barbarians, provincial teams, Canada's World University team and the Mexican Nationals Women's 7s team at the Sevens World Cup in 2018. The Seamen program will be working with Robin to group our youth program and provide our athletes with additional training, mentoring and opportunities.

Development of High School Rugby Program

The Prince Rupert Seamen Rugby Club will continue to support the development of our high school girls and boys' teams. The rugby program has filled a gap for many athletes in the community, allowing them to succeed on and off the field. The Seamen Rugby club has added additional coaching resources to the program, including former national players John Turpin, Jon Phelan and Lucien Nel.

Seamen Youth Rugby Program

In The News

Rainmaker Girls – BC Shield Champions

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rainmakers-capture-shield-cup/>

Hannah Scherr Highlighted

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/mvp-of-the-week-hannah-scherr-embracing-the-rough-and-tumble/>

Rookie Rugby at Seafest

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rookie-rugby-debuts-on-seafest-weekend/>

Thunder Aboriginal Youth Rugby Visit

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/community/bringing-the-thunder/>

Dionte Stephens – Rugby Canada Trial

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/going-for-team-canada/>

North Coast First Nations Elite Rugby Athletes

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/north-coast-rugby-highlighted-by-first-nations-athletes/>

Rainmakers on the Road 2018

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rainmakers-rugby-team-battles-on-the-road/>

Rainmakers Season 2018

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rainmakers-close-out-rugby-season/>

Hannah Scherr – World Youth Games

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/hannah-scherr-competing-on-international-stage/>

Steve Drozd Highlighted

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/mvp-of-the-week-rugby-player-drozd-embraces-the-grind/>

Seafest Tournament 2018

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/annual-seafest-rugby-tournament-makes-big-return/>

Cody Schaeffer – Meralomas Rugby Club

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/schaeffer-brings-his-rugby-game-south/>

Training Equipment for Youth Rugby Program

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/prince-rupert-youth-rugby-receives-new-gear/>

Cody Schaeffer – Dubai 7s 2018

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/prince-rupert-rugby-player-rocks-international-stage/>

Hannah Scherr – Celtic Barbarians and Oak Bay Castaway Wanderers

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rupert-rugby-player-shined-for-barbarians/>

Rookie Rugby – Spring 2019 Visit from BC Rugby

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/b-c-rookie-rugby-program-travels-to-the-northwest/>

We Scrum as One 2019

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rupert-athletes-at-the-we-scrum-as-one-event/>

Five Prince Rupert Rugby Athletes at Tropic 7s Elite Tournament in Orlando

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rupert-rugby-athletes-in-orlando/>

Charles Hays Rainmakers / Celtic Barbarians Tour to Abbotsford and Vancouver

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/charles-hays-secondary-school-rugby-team-travel-to-abbotsford/>

Rainmakers High School Rugby Spring Season

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/playing-with-the-big-boys-chss-junior-rugby-team-too-good-for-their-league/>

Crosby Stewart – UVic and World University Games

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/prince-ruperts-crosby-stewart-representing-canada-abroad/>

Successful 2019 Prince Rupert Seamen Season

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/prince-ruperts-seamen-shine-in-year-end-rugby-victory/>

2019 Rainmakers Awards and Recognition Evening

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/awards-night-at-charles-hays-for-rainmakers-rugby-squad/>

2019 Summer Scrimmages and Youth Rugby Training

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rugby-summer-scrimmages-get-a-professional-touch/>

Seamen 2019 Sasquatch Tournament

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/season-finale-for-seamen-at-sasquatch-tournament/>

Cody Schaefer – Utah 7s 2019

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/prince-rupert-rugby-player-at-utah-tournament/>

Kaden and Denny Yaroshuk – Thunder Camp, MacDowell Rugby and Langford 7s

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/no-stopping-these-siblings/>

Message for Rainmakers from Canada Senior Men's National Team

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/watch-canadas-national-rugby-team-surprise-rainmakers-with-a-special-message-from-japan/>

Jon Phelan Highlighted

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/mvp-of-the-week-engineering-a-successful-career-on-and-off-the-field/>

2019 Kamloops 7s Tournament

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/rainmakers-rugby-makes-the-trip-to-kamloops-for-sevens-tournament/>

Duncan Ryan – Once a Rainmaker, Always a Rainmaker

<https://www.thenorthernview.com/sports/mvp-of-the-week-once-a-rainmaker-always-a-rainmaker/>

Opportunities to Support the Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program

The Prince Rupert Seamen Youth Rugby Program has developed significant relationships with funding partners in the community. This financial support has been essential to expanding the work we do with our local Prince Rupert athletes. The elements of teamwork, dedication and skill development plus the sense of pride an accomplishment is all critical to provide to our local youth. The sport of rugby has provided opportunities for growth both on and off the field. Our athletes are able to compete with the best in the world. And our program looks to open up pathways for success through opportunities made available.

The program has created multiple levels of support.

Platinum	(\$3000+)
Gold	(\$2000)
Silver	(\$1000)
Bronze	(\$500)

The program seeks to recognize contributions made to the program. For those at Gold or Platinum level, we are offering logos placed on the men's club jerseys (based on order of program partnership).

The program will work with partners on acknowledgement and recognition of Youth Rugby Program support.