

Glendale Youth Programs Continue Success In 2013

by Eiden Hughes

Writer for and on behalf of the City of Glendale

With most of the focus being on the Raptors senior men's and women's squads, it is easy to forget that the Glendale family of rugby teams also includes a robust youth program. Led by Raptors veteran player, coach and Youth Program Coordinator, Jenna Anderson, the program is aimed at engaging boys and girls, between the ages of five and 17, in the sport of rugby.

The Raptors offer several programs for youth including the popular *TRY League*, *Girls' High School 7s* and *Select 15s* teams, and the *Boys' Raptors Academy* and *Rugby Colorado League* — to name a few.

Anderson is supported by several of Glendale's finest along with top-notch players from other local teams for the TRY League and after school programs. Raptors veteran and WPL-B coach Robin Roberts heads up the High School Girls' team, and Jared Heath is the head coach of the High School Boys' program.

"It has been great to see the support of the youth program by members of other Denver-area clubs," Anderson said. "It shows the sense of community within the sport — current and former players want to give back to the game and share their knowledge with the next generation of athletes."

Cultivating The Game

The TRY League, fall after school and spring after school programs began in 2008 and have since seen impressive growth. Strong participation and growing interest even contributed to the implementation of the *Summer Flag Program* in 2011. More families are hearing about the programs, many players are returning session after session, and younger siblings are reaching the entry age for participation. In 2013 alone, total participation in Glendale's youth programs increased 20 percent.

"Our kids come from all over the Denver Metro Area," Anderson said. "We have some who play rugby with us year round, but we have others participate in other



The Glendale Raptors Girls' High School team shows that they are number one for the second year in a row for the Rugby Colorado 7s division.

youth sports who continue to come back to whichever session works best for their schedules. We also have a lot of siblings joining the program once the younger ones become old enough to play."

One of the keys to success, according to Anderson, has been getting parents involved in coaching the programs. Doing this allows them to gain a much better understanding of the game, safety and techniques. Another cornerstone has been the enthusiastic commitment of Raptors players — and players from other local clubs — to coaching and leading the youth programs.

High School Girls Win

Back To Back 7s Championships

Anderson has two partners on the girls' side of the high school program — Katy Welter and Robin Roberts. In spite of losing several of the graduating seniors from the 2012 *Rugby Colorado* Championship squad, the girls were able to work together, push themselves and earn a repeat

championship title for 2013.

Additionally, Roberts earned the honor of being named 7s Coach of the Year for 2013 for her work with the Glendale girls — adding on to Glendale's reputation for coaching excellence (Anderson earned Division II Coach of the Year in 2011 for her work with the 15s team).

"There's no secret to my coaching," Roberts said. "I treat them like a team of athletes, set expectations and hold them accountable as individuals and as a team. I challenge them to be better for themselves and for each other, which goes a long way to instill a sense of 'team'."

The girls' 7s squad is a conglomeration of players from several Denver-area high schools including *East*, *George Washington*, *Cherry Creek*, *Denver School of the Arts*, *Thomas Jefferson*, *Liberty*, *Kent Denver*, *Alameda* and *DSST Stapleton*.

For 2013, the Raptors girls' side boasts

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Glendale Raptors youth coaches are posed for pictures prior to practice at Infinity Park.

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Farrell's eXtreme Bodyshaping Fitness Tips

Three Questions To Make Better Beverage Choices

by Dan Dorenkamp

Owner and Head Instructor at Farrell's eXtreme Bodyshaping You Are What You....Drink?

You've heard the phrase, "You are what you eat," meaning you are only as healthy as the food you put into your body. It is also true that you should pay as much attention to what you drink as what you eat. Some smoothies and coffee drinks can pack as many calories as a fast food hamburger meal, so it's just as important to know what you're drinking as it is to be aware of your food choices.

We're met with more than enough beverage marketing throughout our busy days, and marketers today are suggesting there are health benefits in everything from coffee to smoothies, and even beer! Fewer calories, more energy, less of this, more of that.

The truth is, more of something healthy doesn't necessarily mean healthier. Ask yourself these questions before you take another drink and keep your fitness plan on track:

Would water be as satisfying right now? The question isn't "Would water be a healthier choice right now?" because the answer would almost always be YES, and the point isn't to make you feel guilty, it's to help you bring more awareness to your decisions.

If you're watching the game at a local



Dan Dorenkamp

sports bar, water may not be as satisfying as another choice, but if you're ordering food from the drive-thru on your way to the kids' soccer game, does it really matter if you wash down your burger, or dare we hope, salad, with water or soda? It might not matter to your taste buds, but the extra sugar and calories might matter to your waist.

What's in this? Caffeine, artificial sweeteners, added sugars, fruit flavored syrup? A fruit smoothie might be made with fresh fruit and yogurt, or it might be made with syrups and ice cream. Artificial sweeteners can be a problem for many people, while others seem to tolerate them well. In any

case, if you don't know what's in your smoothie, ASK! Since they're typically made to order, you can usually make a few additions or subtractions to make your choice a healthier one.

Do I want to count this as a meal or would I rather eat? Smoothies and coffee drinks can be an appealing and refreshing option, and they're not necessarily a bad choice. However, it's easy to forget that they can often contain more calories than a fast food meal. Since they do, the wise sipper must consider such beverages as a

snack or meal, and be aware of the carb and protein content of their favorite refresher. A bagel and an Americano just might be more satisfying AND better for you than the large, iced caramel latte.

Dan Dorenkamp is the local owner/operator of 2 Farrell's eXtreme Bodyshaping locations in the Denver metro area. Their 10-Week Fitness Challenge will guide you to an amazing transformation. The challenge includes fitness kickboxing, resistance training, nutrition advice and meal planning, personal coaching and a chance to win \$1,000 at www.JoinFXB.com.

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three Rugby Colorado All-State Players — rookie player Alison Koff, Grace Chao, and Raptors Captain Maya Learned. Learned was also named to the Under-20 USA National Rugby Team and has been in talks with Harvard and Penn State (among a few others) to continue her rugby career while attending college.

A Glendale Select 15s squad was also introduced this past spring and includes a geographically larger player pool which includes 7s players from other area programs and girls from as far away as Ft. Collins. The Selects took third place at the Rocky Mountain Challenge, a yearly tournament held for the best Under-19 and Under-17 teams.

"For the first time of having a Select 15s side, we weren't quite as on top of things as we would have liked, but the girls did great over their season," Roberts said. "For 2014 we plan to travel to one away match, play local rivals Summit a few times, and hopefully end the season with winning the Rocky Mountain Challenge."

High School Boys Have Good Showing, Tough Competitive Season

Jared Heath has been at the boys' program helm since 2009 and still skips the Academy squad. He is assisted by E.J. Pappas, who heads up the Rugby Colorado squad and acts as a backline coach, Dave Miera (forwards coach), Wayne Erickson (forwards coach) and Mike Pettes (backs coach).

The High School Boys' program fields two teams as well — one through the Rugby Colorado League and the Raptors Academy, which competes under the Eastern Rockies Rugby Football Union (ERRFU). Similar to the girls' teams, the Rugby Colorado side is geographically limited to the players who are eligible for their team (South, George Washington, Bishop Machebeuf, Den-

ver Academy), while the Raptors' Academy squad is not subject to geographical sanctions.

Due to a regulatory adjustment made by the governing body regarding player eligibility, the Raptors could not field their Rugby Colorado side this past season. They were able to field the Academy squad, who played well and finished the season 4-2 with losses to East and Colorado Springs.

The Academy also traveled with a 7s team to Albuquerque to compete in the Celtic 7s Tournament, where they finished 2-1, losing only to a team from Arizona, who ended up winning the tournament.

"Our biggest challenge was having a young team this time around," Head Coach Jared Heath said. "The majority of our team had less than one year of rugby experience, so we focused a lot on fundamentals and kept the game plans very simple."

The off season focus for Heath and the coaching staff will be recruiting eligible players for the Rugby Colorado squad, and finding a manager to help run the Academy team.

"I'm really looking forward to our returning players for the 2014 season," Heath said. "We've only lost three seniors [to graduation], and four starters due to off season injuries. My hope is that our injured players will recover in time to join the squad midway through the season, and that we will have a strong veteran squad to compete with."

As a preseason international match, the Academy side faced Trident High School from Whakatane, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand, on December 10. In what was a hard fought match, the New Zealanders came out on top.

To sign your child up for one of Glendale's youth programs or for additional information, please visit: glendalerugby.com/youth.

Glendale Sports Center Happenings



Here Comes Santa Claus: Angela, Emily, and Dan Fox are one of many families that weaved through the line to see Santa at The Glendale Sports Center's Annual "Christmas Around the World" Christmas Party. Children and families were given passports to "tour" different countries represented by different stations and tables. Each child also received a gift and picture with Santa and then had their picture put in their passport at the United States table for their final stamp.

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Youth Rugby Scores: Glendale Mayor Mike Dunafon receives a check for Glendale Youth Rugby from representatives of Applebee's and the Glendale Police Department. Applebee's donated 15 percent of guest checks on Oct. 15 while Glendale officers acted as added serving staff. Presenting the check from Applebee's were Kate-Linn Swisher and Shannon Mills, aka the Buzzy Bee. Police officers are Korbie Perking and Justin Baumgartner. Barret O'Brien represented Youth Rugby.

Botanical Drawing On Display At Botanic Gardens

Drawings from the final portfolios created by graduates from the Denver Botanic Gardens' School of Botanical Art & Illustration are on display through Feb. 9 in the El Pomar Room. The exhibit presents a unique opportunity to see the talent that emerges from this internationally renowned program. The school offers nearly 200 courses and workshops each year that help students combine scientific accuracy with an aesthetic vision to create beautiful botanicals. Beginners acquire new knowledge and skills while experienced artists refine techniques and discover fresh directions.