

Player Retention

Best Practices Manual

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Rookie Celebration

- Rookies should be celebrated, not hazed
- Throw celebrations of their learning and commitment to the team
- Give away plenty of new player awards weekly to keep them all engaged
 - Most Improved Player
 - Best New Tackler
 - Fastest New Player
 - Social Butterfly Award
 - Impact Sub Award
 - Rookie of the Match/Week/Year
 - Best Recruiter Award



Developmental Matches

- Give all players opportunities to play
- Provide playing opportunities that allow for low stakes learning
 - Local tournaments
 - B side matches
 - Prom Dress Rugby
- Players have to get minutes on the pitch to stay around -- no one wants to be a practice squad player



Team Communication without Coaches

- Players need a space to talk without coaches outside of official team communication
 - Snapchat group
 - Groupme
- Allows for go-to source of info for new players



Team Dinner

- Enjoy teams meals before and after matches to curate social time with players
- College kids always want to eat!
- Eat in the dining halls together and plan for meals so no one has to have meals alone



Tshirt Giveaways

- Get new players in rugby gear as fast as possible
- Give away leftover/old/used kit to new players so they feel immediately part of your rugby family



RHINO RUGBY

ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI OFFICIAL MERCHANDISE

ENTER COUPON CODE "ILLINOIS" AT THE CHECKOUT PAGE TO GIVE THE RUGBY TEAM BACK A PERCENTAGE OF SALES

RHINORUGBY.COM

The advertisement features three pieces of merchandise: a short-sleeved orange t-shirt with a white collar and a large white 'I' on the chest; a long-sleeved orange and black striped hoodie with a white 'I' on the chest; and a long-sleeved orange zip-up jacket with a white 'I' on the chest. The background is dark and textured.

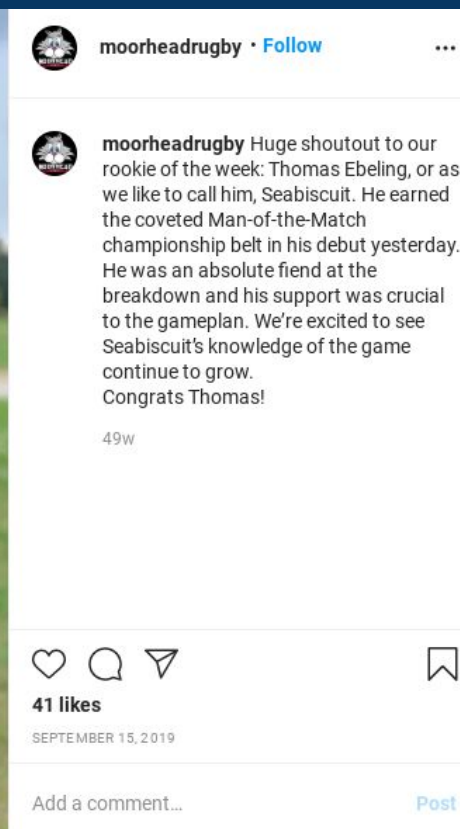
Dedicated New Player Coach / Captains

- Increase level of engagement with new players if it is one person' job to engage them
- Gives new player strong connection to the team
- Gives new player an immediate cheerleader to learn the ropes



Team Awards

- Highlighting new players on a regular basis allows for them to feel seen in the big scheme of the team
- A tangible fun award to win provides incentive to stay and win



Campus Hangout Spot

- Somewhere on campus to find rugby players will give new players an idea of where/how to socialize
 - Cafeteria
 - Student union
 - Reading room in the library
- Stronger bonds off the field will lead to stronger bonds on the field



Non-rugby related Activities

- Give players something to do other than play
- Allow community and team interests to guide ideas for outings
- Non - rugby activities allow for new leaders to emerge and excel



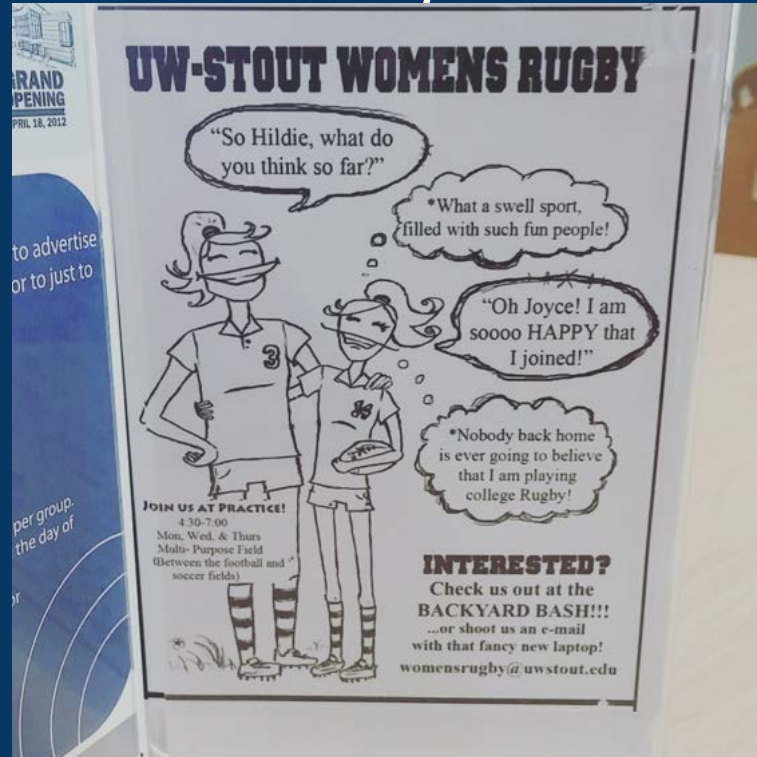
Alumni Support

- Regularly scheduled alumni events keeps them in tune with the current club
- Alumni give an atmosphere of legacy, and new players will feel like they are a part of something important and lasting
- Alumni are a great fundraising source if engaged consistently



Big Brother/Sister – Little Brother/Sister Program

- Create an environment of support between new and old players
- Having a designated point of contact on the team is a safe space for younger players to grow connections with the team



Study Groups and Tutoring

- Help players to maintain strong academic standing
- Schedule classes together to have a built in study group
- If the team has any excellent students, they could help their teammates with contact, study skills, and time management

