



Convicts make spectacular start to '07 season with 74-0 trouncing (14th April)

Australia's only gay rugby team, the Sydney Convicts, season is off to a spectacular start after beating Killara-West Pymble 74 points to 0 on their Woollahra home ground in the first game of the season.

A total of 12 tries were scored by seven Convicts in the first Noice Cup match of the season for our favourite gay rugby team.

"It's a fabulous start to the season, you couldn't ask for better," Convicts Club President Andrew Purchas (Fuzz) said.

"This is our biggest ever win at home, the only time we've got a higher score was 87-0 in a Bingham Cup match.

"This year is looking great for the Convicts in both grades.

"The entire team played well. With the squad only being decided the Thursday prior to the game, the unity and cohesion in the team was a pleasant surprise."

After success in the Bingham Cup, in New York, last year the convicts are forging into new territory vying for the Noice cup for the first time. With new territory ahead the Convicts are looking forward to a successful season and the intensity and passion shown from the first whistle really set the tone for the rest of the game and the season to come.

Chasing the kick off with a "braveheart" style battle cry, the first try was posted within minutes leaving the Killara boys wishing they had stayed in bed. From here the Convicts kept maintaining the pressure with a precision game which came just 2 days after the first team training.

"It's easy to let the intensity drop when it's going well but we kept it together, that was the most pleasing aspect of the game." said Convicts captain Charlie Winn.

"It was great to see the new players – Andy, Jase and Charles – sweeping the pools with the best and fairest points. The backbone of the team is still there as well, with all the boys combining beautifully, filling some big gaps in the line up after retirements post Bingham (cup).

"It's awesome to see more and more people getting something out of playing rugby – giving them an opportunity they probably wouldn't have had. We're fielding two teams this season with a bunch of keen new players

"Some have played rugby before, but a lot haven't – it's great to see.

“The second team starts their season next week with the guys chomping at the bit to get out there and have a go.”

Vice captain Matt Vagulans excelled coming back from a badly broke femur to tear apart the opposition with 3 tries. “Matty was on fire today, he didn’t put a foot wrong all day,” declared the captain who himself played his usual influential game.

Convicts coach Dave Jordan was impressed with his side’s composure with the technical aspects of the game setting up the win.

“Steve really kept the lineout in order even though we haven’t trained as a team so much. That experience is a huge asset.

“Speed was a big factor – our team motto is speed, space, structure and guys like Charles, Aaron and Pierce really executed that today.

“We had a couple of injuries in the front row but thankfully they don’t look too serious.

“We’ve got a lot of new players and it should be a great year.”

There was a good crowd on hand on a sunny afternoon in Rose Bay.

“It’s really encouraging to see so many people turn out to cheer the boys on. We are hoping to repay back some of the fantastic support we have received from the gay community,” Fuzz said.

“Convicts play at the Woollahra grounds of the Colleagues Club and are an important part of that team. Woollahra Colleagues lost in a close one but we are looking strong for the season. Convicts are very much part of the Colleagues Club which is something to be proud of.”

The Convicts Captain said with the successful Bingham Cup campaign being such a focus last year it was difficult to give our domestic competition the attention it deserved.

“This year our eyes are set on winning our second domestic cup – after winning the Halligan Cup two years ago in our first year,” he said.

With the season now officially underway, the traditional after match celebrations kicked on in a fashion to make any professional rugby club proud with our season launch dinner and after party at the Oxford Hotel.

The Convicts play their next game next weekend against Oakhill at 2pm at Francesco Oval, Francesco Cr, Bella Vista. The convicts had a number of very tight games with Oakhill last year, with Oakhill narrowly beating the Convicts into the semi-finals.

You can track the Convicts season and get club updates on the website – www.sydneyconvicts.org.

The Emerald Warriors, Dublin’s Gay Rugby Union team, have been awarded hosting rights to the 2008 Mark Bingham Cup, defeating bids by The Sydney Convicts and Les Galliards Parisiennes of Paris.

The tournament will be held over the weekend 13-15 June, 2008, on the grounds of Dublin City University.

“The Convicts bid was well received, but as we expected the travelling distance was a factor in the decision to go with Dublin as host city” said Sam Minter, co-chair of the Sydney 2008 bid team. “We were of course looking forward to defending the Cup and Plate in our home city, but we’re equally impressed with Dublin’s bid – we’re certain they will put on a great tournament”