

UYWRUFC create new team for next BUCs season

The club has grown from 12 to nearly 60 players this year

By [James Hall](#), Travel Editor (2016/17)
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The University of York Women's Rugby Team (UYWRUFC) have entered two full teams into next year's BUCs rugby leagues, the first time that this has occurred in the history of the club and University.

The club was founded in the 1970s and has seen a dramatic increase in membership this year from 12 to 60 members, enabling the creation of a second 22 player squad.



Image: Sophie Penny

Sophie Penny, the president of UYWRUFC said: "Its a huge deal for the club and we've been working towards this for years.

"Entering a 2nd XV Team for the first time next year is really exciting for the club and just goes to show the incredible efforts by our girls, old and new, into developing the club to this level.

York's women's Rugby Union sevens teams won both of their matches during Roses with a score of 22-5 and 15-12 for the first and second team respectively. The second sevens team has been nominated for the Roses team of the year.

The captain of the newly created second team, Gabriella Espina, commented that "having played rugby in Hong Kong for a majority of my life coming to UYWRUFC created a home from home, a sense of familiarity coming into a completely new environment.



Image: Sophie Penny

“The greatest part of the club was its inclusivity and welcoming nature, the older girls really helped me settle in, which is something that I really needed coming from half way across the world.

“I’ve seen a lot of people who are new to rugby this year, some left, some persevered. There are two names that come to mind when I consider who’s improved a great deal over the season. First of all Rachel Davies, I’ve seen her transform into a fierce 9 on the field who honestly I would not like to play against. Secondly, Caitlin Burge has developed into such a strong tackler yet is so kind-hearted off the pitch, you wouldn’t imagine that she could crush you. The development of players completely new to the game has been phenomenal and next year we hope this is seen even more in the new team.”

As a new member of the team and someone who is new to the sport, Charlie Langford described the club as being like “a second family,” and said: “That’s the greatest part of the club, we’re not just a team, we’re a family and look after each other on and off the pitch!”

She also added: “what I love about the club is the fact it’s not exclusive to experienced players and as a complete newbie, I felt so welcomed and encouraged to just give it a go! There’s no stigma to being clueless and after a year, I now feel like I’ve got a good understanding of rugby.”

Penny emphasised that “the creation of a new team has been largely down to a funding drive to support a development team by the club and also the fantastic support of our sponsors Enterprise Rent-a-Car. I’d like to thank both our sponsors and all of our supporters in helping to make our dreams of a competitive 2nd XV possible.”

For more information on the UYWRUFC, visit <http://www.uywrufc.com/>, their Facebook page, or email womensrugby@yusu.org.



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