

Buffalo Rugby Club continues its winning ways

Community Sports Report

The Buffalo Men's Rugby Club is continuing its winning tradition in their fall 2007 season. Participating in the USA Rugby Division I Conference for the first time, Buffalo has stepped up to the challenge and currently sits at second place in the Midwest division. The club was promoted to Division I after winning the Midwest Division II Championship in the spring of 2007 and previously in 2005. They were also the only men's team in the United States to qualify for the USA Rugby Division II National Sweet-16 for seven consecutive years between 1999 and 2005.

After suffering an opening season loss to the South Side Irish out of Chicago, Buffalo quickly bounced back with a grueling 25-24 victory over the Midwest powerhouse Cincinnati Wolfhounds, a team that placed in the Final Four at the Spring 2007 Division I National Championships. Buffalo followed up that victory on Sept. 29 with a decisive 65-0 blowout over the Grand Rapids Gazelles.

The transition from Division II to Division I has shown immediate success.



Buffalo Men's Rugby Club Team captain Alex Nadiak attempts a pass against Grand Rapids. Buffalo won the game 65-0.

"So far, the team has stepped up to the challenge," Buffalo captain Alex Nadiak said. "Initially, we were hoping to just be able to compete at the Division I level and now halfway through the season, we are in a good position to potentially win our league. The new guys who replaced our veterans have really stepped up their game. I believe one key ingredient is that our team has established a winning mindset. The players and coaches are simply willing to do what it takes to be successful."

The Buffalo Rugby Club's strong depth in numbers has also allowed it to place a side in the New York State Division

III Conference. After suffering defeats to South Buffalo and Cortland-Homer, a very young team has managed to stay in playoff contention with a 68-0 victory over the Binghamton Barbs and a 25-3 win over the Lockport Gangreen. Buffalo currently sits in fourth place in the eight-team division.

The Buffalo Rugby Club understands the importance of competing in New York State Division III.

"It has definitely increased the level of play," Nadiak said. "In the past, no official record was kept for our second side. Now if they are successful, they can qualify for their own playoff games and potentially achieve the ultimate goal of a national title."

The Buffalo Rugby Club will revenge its early season defeat by the South Side Irish on Oct. 13. The home game will be played at Delaware Park near the zoo with a 1 p.m. kickoff. Following the Division I game, Buffalo's New York State Division III side will compete against the Rochester Colonials. Buffalo's New York State side will also have a home game on Oct. 20 against the first place undefeated Syracuse Chargers.

The Buffalo Men's Rugby Club invites any new players that would like to come out and participate in the fun and exciting sport. No previous experience is necessary and more information can be found at the club's website, www.buffalorugby.org.