



The Texas A&M Rugby Football Club and the Department of Recreational Sports is proud to announce the 1st Annual Rugby Challenger Game to be held during the Gareth Jones Challenge Cup on April 10th, 2010 at the Penberthy Sports Complex on the campus of Texas A&M University.

The anticipation for this event has been mounting since the event we had planned last year was canceled, due to being rained out. This has given us more determination to have an even better challenger game this year. The fundamental goal of the Challenger Game is to give everyone a chance to play rugby and have a rewarding experience, regardless of limitations. This game enables every child the opportunity to participate in a structured athletic event and have a wonderful time. It provides the "Buddies" with an opportunity to see the many challenges that these young players face on a daily basis.

The whole Rugby Challenge game is based on the Challenger concept developed in 1989 by Little League International. That program provided boys and girls with challenges the opportunity to experience the emotional development and the fun of playing Little League baseball. Our sense of inspiration and duty after hearing this idea will create the first Rugby Challenger game! Coach Johnny Smith said, "We have searched via the internet to see if there was a rugby model we could follow, but couldn't find anything. Luckily we got in touch with Joni Fichter down at the West University Little League Association and she has been able to assist us. Really this wouldn't be happening without her!"

Head Coach Craig Coates said, "I think this is just as big an event for our players as it is for the Challenger kids. I think everyone will take something positive away from the experience." The Buddies are looking forward to teaching their new friends the sport they love! With the fun way we plan to teach these children rugby and, I think getting them to stop playing will be the only problem. The World Famous Fightin' Texas Aggie Band will perform the National Anthem and the Flags will be presented by The Texas A&M Corps of Cadets. These talented young boys and girls will have the same fan fair as any college athlete that goes to Texas A&M. There will also be Carnival style games available before the game and lunch will be provided during the awards ceremony. Each participant will also receive a t-shirt, rugby ball and a participation medal. The general idea is just to show these children an amazing day of fun and games.

Texas A&M would like to thank the West Rugby Union, for its charitable support of the event as well. As West President Bill Sexton put it, "The Western Rugby Union is proud to support the "Rugby Challenger Game" being hosted by the Texas A&M University Rugby Club. Texas A&M Rugby has a long history of civic responsibility and action, and they continue to set an example for other college rugby programs in the West. This event will enable these children to experience what we all love most about rugby - the camaraderie amongst participants, the thrill of competition, and the excitement of playing the game. I am confident that everyone will enjoy themselves, and that the day will be filled with memories for a lifetime. This is not an event to be missed. "

If you are interested in participating, please contact Nathan Mentzer at nate_mentzer@tamu.edu or visit our webpage at <http://www.aggierugby.com/mens/challenger.html> for the entry form and information. There is no fee for participation.