

# Geneseo Rugby Alumni Newsletter



**ISSUE 5**  
**WINTER 2017**



**RAAC News and Events**

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## Warthogs Home Matches Return to Geneseo Campus

From its inception, the primary long-term goal of the RAAC has been to secure a safe, high-quality pitch on the Geneseo campus for the men's and women's teams to play rugby. We are excited to inform you that the goal has been achieved!

Beginning in the Fall 2017 semester, the Warthogs will once again proudly host home matches on the Geneseo campus. Two fields on campus -- Letchworth and Lower Merritt -- have been secured for use by the teams. Uprights have been ordered and delivered and will be installed in the spring when the ground softens. In the fall, both fields will be ready to host Warthog Rugby! Having a home pitch on campus was a very important goal of the RAAC and is a huge win for Geneseo Rugby. We anticipate that having an on-campus pitch to showcase Warthog talent will help to build the fan base and recruit more players as the programs continue to grow and improve.

This accomplishment was achieved thanks to the dedication and support of the RAAC over the past few years, particularly Jeff Meadows and Doug Evans who kicked off the efforts and got the ball rolling, and Mia Ferraina who took over primary responsibilities in the past year and steered the project to completion. The current teams' officers, notably Erika Esquivel, Veronica Tang and Chris Cummins, and RAAC member Shivan Chopra also played pivotal roles, helping to secure SA funding to procure uprights. The RAAC also worked closely with many supportive members of the administration and staff at Geneseo, in a truly collaborative effort, and recognizes the importance of that assistance.

Having achieved this important milestone, the RAAC is excited to move on to additional projects. **Plans for Alumni Weekend 2017 are well underway and we expect this to be one of our biggest celebrations to date as we commemorate the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Warthogs.** We hope that you will make the trip to Geneseo to celebrate with the current teams, your fellow Warthog alumni, and to have a chance to see the new home fields.

In this newsletter we are continuing the new section entitled **The Alumni Spotlight** – to showcase what Warthog alumni are up to post-Geneseo. This year we shine the spotlight on **Annie Schleining '12 and Greg Reardon '99.** Both Annie and Greg were accomplished rugby players at Geneseo and continued to foster their love of the sport after graduation as players, coaches, and supporters. We hope that you continue to enjoy this new feature in the newsletter as an introduction to your fellow alumni and a chance to check-in with old teammates. Don't forget to start thinking about nominating someone (maybe even yourself!) for next year's spotlight.

As always, we hope that you find this newsletter informative and that it helps to bring back fond memories of your time at Geneseo, especially on the rugby pitch. We hope to see you all in April, but in the meantime, best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy Spring!

Cheers,

The RAAC



# ALUMNI WEEKEND

**FRIDAY APRIL 28th –  
SUNDAY APRIL 30th**

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Friday: Reunite with teammates & students AND ribbon cutting for new fields!

Saturday: Men's & Women's Games AND Alumni/Student Awards Presentation

Sunday: \*Second Annual\* All-Warthog Brunch

**More detailed schedule coming soon!**

### Hotel Information:

Please make your reservations early to ensure that there are rooms available!

Hampton Inn  
585-447-9040

Quality Inn  
585-243-0500

Big Tree Inn  
585-243-5220

Oak Valley Inn & Suites  
585-243-5570

# Men's Team

The season began with a discouraging loss against RIT, a game no one expected to be less than an easy win. Then entering the second week with renewed intensity the Hogs beat their long-term rival "Buff State" 49-5. They then carried that momentum into the third week to beat Oswego 31-22. Oswego was the two-time defending conference champion.

After two easy wins against Fredonia and LeMoyne, the Hogs seemed to be in very good shape. Then the next game against Cortland resulted in a loss of 24-12. This was a somber reality check for the impending competition for the conference championship. They could hit hard.

The next and final season game was against Niagara, usually a challenging competitor. Despite their proximity to Lake Ontario, they still weren't prepared for that cold October morning. The Hogs beat them 87-0.

At this point the Warthogs were second seed and had a bye week for the first round of playoffs. The second round of playoffs was against Oswego. A much closer game than the previous matchup against Oswego, we ended up winning 35-34.

The Hogs needed two tries and two conversions in the last ten minutes of play to win the game. They scored with four minutes left and as the hogs were walking back to midfield their back captain David Levy said "I'm going to score the next one down the middle". And he did. Connor Mack made his final of many conversions that day to win the game. As Oswego shook hands with the Hogs, Oswego walked down the line saying "beat Cortland". The Hogs concurred.

The Hogs lost to Cortland in the conference championship 34-0. The loss was tough, but the team is full of ambition to take on next year.

## Opponent Outcome Final

|            |   |        |
|------------|---|--------|
| RIT        | L | 29- 24 |
| Buff State | W | 49- 5  |
| Oswego     | W | 31- 22 |
| Fredonia   | W | 43- 21 |
| Le Moyne   | W | 40- 8  |
| Niagara    | W | 87- 0  |



# Women's Team

DIVISION II

The year 2016 marked a period of tremendous growth and success for the Women's Rugby Club of Geneseo. The team completed a successful spring season, and finished the fall season ranked nationally in the top ten DII women's rugby programs.

DII had a successful season, coming away with a record of 7-1. This earned them a chance to compete in the Upstate New York Conference DII playoffs where they defeated Buffalo and went on to earn second place in the conference. After two weeks of intense preparation and dimly lit practices, the DII team advanced to national playoffs. The team traveled to Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY to take on the Brewers. Despite a hard-fought battle that exemplified team-centered rugby, Geneseo ended their national run with a loss to Vassar. When it all came down to it, Geneseo succeeded in proving that, while smaller than most schools, our team has no shortage of heart and talent.

All in all, 2016 has been nothing but exciting and momentous for the Geneseo Women's Rugby Team and each player has finished off the season incredibly proud to be a Warthog.

Captains,  
Victoria Allen & Megan Taggart



## Opponent Outcome Final

|            |   |        |
|------------|---|--------|
| Oswego     | W | 62- 0  |
| Brockport  | W | 53- 12 |
| Syracuse   | W | 51- 22 |
| RIT        | W | 62- 0  |
| Buff State | L | 20- 15 |
| Fredonia   | W | 102- 0 |
| Ithaca     | W | 38- 0  |
| UB         | W | 35- 22 |



# Women's Team

NSCRO



The NSCRO team showed tremendous growth this year. New rookies who never once picked up a rugby ball were determined, both in effort and performance, to improve. The dedication and passion for this sport was exemplified by the effort each player put into the team. Although rugby can be intimidating for new players, the help of fellow teammates made the learning process much more enjoyable.

With hard work and dedication, you can accomplish just about anything. The heart and soul of these players were poured into every second they were on the field. Each game you saw tremendous improvement not only individually, but as a team. The chemistry of the team became very apparent a few games into the season thanks to the foundations of some key veterans. The love for this game showed when players were pushing through sweat and injuries, not for themselves, but for their teammates.

One of our best accomplishments this season was tremendous improvements in both lineouts and scrums. Rugby teams do not rely solely on one teammate and must operate efficiently together, or else they cannot operate at all. The team showed how well they all work together and proved it by playing their hearts out against both Niagara and Rochester. Even when the weather was against them and emotions were high, the team finished the games together and with pride for one another.

The excitement continues to grow as we anticipate all that the future holds for Geneseo Women's NSCRO Rugby Team.

## Opponent   Outcome   Final

|                 |   |        |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| St. Bonaventure | L | 34- 12 |
| Niagara         | L | 49- 14 |
| Canisius        | W | 20- 0  |
| Rochester       | L | 64- 0  |
| William Smith   | L | 41- 0  |

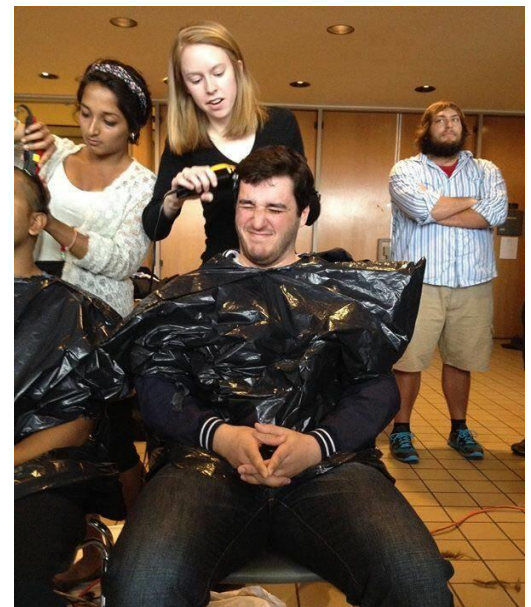


# Community Involvement



Geneseo Women's Rugby Club takes pride in our efforts to succeed during the season, but also to give back to the community and fundraise during our off-season. Aside from the exciting games, the women's team continued to maintain its presence on campus by participating in Relay for Life, the Oak Tree 5K, Adopt A Family, and various fundraisers for Valentine's Day, Halloween and Christmas. In addition to all this, we have continued our yearly tradition of Adopt-A-Highway on Route 63.

Every Spring semester the Men's Rugby Club hosts a 'shave-athon' to raise money for Relay for Life. In 2015 our organization received the Bronze award for raising the third highest amount of money, out of each and every other men's organization on campus. This year we hope to raise even more money with this tradition and other various fundraising events.



# Alumni Spotlights

## Annie Schleining '12



Annie playing at Mendon Ponds

Annie Schleining (Fitzgerald) "Spasms" began playing rugby Spring 2010, her first semester at Geneseo. She had been strolling the student activities fair, and "decided to sign up and see if getting beat up on the field was worth the social perks." And it was! Annie continued to play throughout her college career, primarily at hooker. She captained the forwards on the newly formed division three side from Fall 2010 - Spring 2012.

One of Annie's favorite undergraduate memories was parents weekend held sophomore year. Parents of all the players were invited up to Geneseo for a double header rugby game, followed by a get-together in the evening. The theme for the night was for students to dress like their parents, and parents to dress like their children, but the theme was a bit unclear ... resulting in parents and students alike wearing "very interesting outfits".

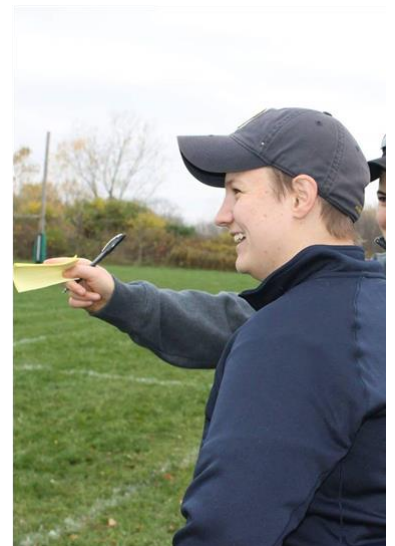
Annie enjoyed hanging out with her friends' parents in a social setting and came to the wonderful realization that her mom is actually really fun!

After graduating, Annie attempted to play with the Rochester Renegades, but was unable to overcome a shoulder injury suffered at Geneseo. However, her love of rugby persisted. Annie discovered that the University of Rochester Sledgehammers were in need of a forwards coach. She began her coaching career this past fall, and will continue into the spring. The Sledgehammers had a fantastic undefeated regular season, finishing 13th in the National Small College Rugby Organization (NSCRO) after a hard-lost game in the first round of playoffs. Annie is very proud of the team's ability to recruit and retain nearly twenty rookies this season.

She was amazed when her first rookie "actually rucked instead of just picking up the ball at the back of the ruck"!

In August 2016, Annie graduated from U of R with a Master's in Counseling and Human Development. She is currently working as a school counselor at East Big Picture, an alternative learning program that emphasizes student-focused learning and internships in Rochester. She also serves as an internship coordinator, helping to place students within the community.

Annie has also found love through her Geneseo Rugby connection. Deanne Collins '08 and Emily Lucci '03 set Annie up with another Rochester Renegade, Desiree. Annie was a bit nervous at first, but alumni know best! Annie and Desiree were engaged in October 2015, and are very excited to celebrate at their wedding October 2017!



Annie coaching at U of R

*"Decided to sign up and see if getting beat up on the field was worth the social perks"*

# Alumni Spotlights

## Greg Reardon '99

Greg "Jump Jump" Reardon was first introduced to rugby in his sophomore year at Geneseo. He would notice his suitemate coming back from practices and games looking very tired and dirty, but he found this to be intriguing and a challenge. The following year when he studied abroad in New Zealand, he quickly realized that New Zealand eats and breathes Rugby, so he decided to play for a club team and had an awesome experience. After returning to Geneseo, he became a Warthog and played until he graduated from Geneseo in 1999. While playing at Geneseo, he held the honorable and important position of social master.

After graduation, rugby continued to be a big part of his life. He played first for a men's club in New Jersey and then in New York. In 2014, Greg played his last full contact match, but did not leave the sport. He still enjoys playing local pickup touch rugby games.

Most notably, in the summer of 2016, Greg helped organize the first and only youth flag rugby club out of Northport, New York. The youth rugby club is affiliated with Long Island Rugby Football Club and is open to youngsters from ages 5 through 12. Last season was their first official season, and they had 100 youngsters come out and play rugby for 10 weeks over the summer. Due to its success, there is now an indoor winter rugby clinic, and they are anticipating a thriving summer season.

Rugby, like many sports, builds a path towards fellowship and the opportunity to play with many diverse cultures and personalities in a team environment. Two life lessons Greg learned were that hard work pays off, and that it's important to always do your best.

Greg's favorite memory of playing was feeling absolutely drained after a game but still standing. He would look around at his teammates, understanding that they had just gone into battle together, and they played their hearts out. With Rugby, every player counts, every player contributes. Rugby is a game of perpetual motion, and you cannot hide. It truly is a team sport based on a foundation of respect for yourself, your teammates and opponents.



Greg (left) reuniting with fellow rugger John Truehart at a Geneseo event

*"Rugby is a game of perpetual motion, and you cannot hide. It truly is a team sport based on a foundation of respect for yourself, your teammates and opponents".*



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# Honorary Warthog

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Kate Rebban



Kate Rebban with RAAC student representatives

Kate Rebban is the Director of Programs, Personnel, and Finances for the Geneseo Student Association and is celebrating her 20th anniversary working with SUNY Geneseo. The Warthog family extends her our sincerest gratitude for all of her help over the years. If you've ever been to an SA Meeting or have ventured down to the SA office in the back of the Student Union, you have likely witnessed Kate helping a group of students with a variety of needs. She is always willing to lend a helping hand; there is not one student organization that does not owe her tremendous thanks! She has also always been a supporter of the Warthog teams, even attending some games and serving as the men's club advisor at one point. Recently, Kate played a pivotal role in helping the teams acquire fields on campus and secure SA funding for the uprights to be installed. Kate has supported the rugby club in many different roles and is our Honorary Warthog for 2017. The Warthog Family extends its thanks and love to one of our very own, Kate Rebban.

**Don't forget to join the RAAC's  
Facebook page for frequent team  
updates and information about  
**Alumni Weekend!****