

# COLLEGE SPORT



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## Rongotai the ones to watch

### RUGBY

RONGOTAI COLLEGE'S first XV have a message for their remaining opponents this season: "We're coming at you head on."

The team have been trying to implement an attractive, run-first style of play this year – the kind that would please their old boys Ma'a Nonu and the Savea brothers – but so far it has been hit and miss.

A first-up 26-17 win over Wairarapa was followed by a 41-12 hammering at the hands of Scots.

It looked like the Scots' form would continue against St Pat's Town last Saturday, when Rongotai found themselves down 19-0 at halftime, having kicked away too much possession.

Rongotai coach Dave Meaclem said he had confidence the running gameplan would eventually work, but after the first half he thought it might have to wait another week.

"We weren't getting any ball in the first half, we were kicking it to touch and giving it away."

"So the message at halftime was to keep the ball."

That seemed to get through, with tries to Karl Brownlie and Denzelle To'o at either end of the half leaving Rongotai ahead with two minutes remaining.

Ray Pouvalu's conversion of Rongotai's last try proved vital, putting Rongotai ahead 22-19, as St Pat's Town were awarded a penalty 35 metres out and right in front, with time almost up.

Being three points down rather than one, Town chose to run the ball and go for the win. Rongotai won a turnover and with it the game, before their jubilant fans stormed the pitch to celebrate.

It was Rongotai's first win over Town since 2013, and only their fifth win over a traditional rival in five years.

Meaclem said the new style of play was essential if his side were to foot it with the "big four" of Scots, Town, St Pat's Silverstream and Wellington College.



Rongotai College centre Denzelle To'o avoids the cover defence of St Pat's Town fullback Grayson Whitman to score.

Photo: DAVE BROWNLIE

**"We have to beat those top four teams if we want to make the semifinals. That's no disrespect to the other teams in the competition, but it's five teams going for four spots now that Scots are so strong."**

Rongotai coach Dave Meaclem

"We need to do something different to other teams, because we're not going to beat them at their own game. "We have to beat those top four teams if we want to make the

semifinals. "That's no disrespect to the other teams in the competition, but it's five teams going for four spots now that Scots are so strong."

He said he believed his side were genuine contenders now they had the confidence that the gameplan could work.

"It's good for the guys because now they know they can play that way and win."

"It's the brand of rugby we want to play. Getting the boys to believe we can play like that has been massive."

The win moves Rongotai ahead of Town into fourth on the table.

Scots remain undefeated at the top after a come-from-behind 16-12 win over Stream.

Stream coach Rob Ackerman said his side were over the top

lost after having the lead against the table-toppers.

"It was always going to go down to the wire but we didn't finish it off."

He said his entire team played well, led by No 8 Josh Brown and centre Tarquinn Alatiipi.

The third-placed Nelson now go into a traditional match at Wellington College today, with the latter in second place after a 47-13 win over Tawa on Saturday.

The game will be live on Sky's Rugby Channel from 1pm. "It will be the first time some of the younger fellas will be on the telly," Ackerman said.

## Fox on the prowl for Scots College

### RUGBY

SAM FOX has forgone an English summer to slug it out in premier Wellington college rugby.

Not that the 18-year-old from Truro College in the south of England minds too much, having arrived in the capital two weeks ago to find weather similar to that back home.

He played his first game for Scots College in their 16-12 win over St Pat's Silverstream on Saturday, starting at halfback before switching to first five-eighth later in the game.

"I didn't expect to play a whole game first up, so I'm a bit sore now, but it was great to get a win in such a big game for the school."

While the weather might not be that different from England, Fox said the style of rugby was poles apart.

"We like to kick it a bit more, whereas these boys like to run it and enjoy the physical confrontation at the breakdown a bit more."

Fox finished his schooling in England earlier this year and played for his hometown college against Scots at the Sanix world youth championships in Japan in May. It was there he met some of the Scots players and thought he quite liked the idea of playing for them.

"I liked their style of play so asked the coaches if I could come over and they were all for it."

However, rugby was not his primary reason for coming to New Zealand, he said.

"I wanted to try something different rather than staying home during the summer. It's a good opportunity to experience a different culture and a different way of life – having a bit of rugby on the side is a bonus."

Fox has the credentials of a



Englishman Sam Fox got his first taste of New Zealand rugby in Scots' 16-12 win over St Pat's Silverstream last Saturday. Photo: HAGEN HOPKINS

quality rugby player. He represented Cornwall at under-20 level, while also playing in the Exeter Chiefs under-18 club premierships side which finished fifth this year. He boards at Scots and attends classes, a strange situation for a person who has already finished high school.

"The uniform has taken a bit of getting used to, as I could wear what I wanted back home, but everyone has been great in welcoming me, I couldn't have asked for more from the school."

Fox will head home in September to study strength and conditioning at university.

## HIBS ready for strong football season

### FOOTBALL

HUTT International Boys' School can smell blood in premier youth football and are on the hunt.

HIBS found themselves in the easier of the two grading pools, but did the job in all but one of their games, a 3-2 loss to perennial contenders Wellington College.

They followed that result with a 2-0 win over Rongotai in the opening round of the competition proper on Saturday.

Goals to Tyler McRobie and Brett McBride sealed the win, which gave their coach, Brendan McIntyre, cause for optimism.

"We haven't had a particularly good record there over the years, so it was a really good result."

A bog of a pitch at Rongotai meant his side had to adapt their style, McIntyre said.

"We normally try to get the ball down and play, but the pitch didn't allow that so it wasn't pretty, but we got the win."

McIntyre made the switch to coach HIBS last year after six years at St Pat's Silverstream.

This year is the first time in recent memory that he has not been involved in senior football, after parting ways with Lower Hutt City.

In his first year in charge, HIBS came third in the Wellington premier division, their best result in the six-year history of the combined competition.

They also managed 16th at the secondary schools nationals, the school's highest ranking since a 10th-place finish in 2009.

McIntyre said the turnaround came about through a change of attitude within the squad.

"Last year we finished 16th at nationals, which was a good result, but this year we've tried to raise the bar again."

"There was an attitude when I



Last year's premier girls football winners, Hutt Valley High School (pictured after their win) started their title defence with a 4-0 win over Queen Margaret College.

started that if you did well and played well, then that was great, regardless of the result, but we've changed that mindset to where we want to win every game."

"HIBS is not renowned for football; cricket is the main sport, with rugby not far behind, so we're trying to find the credibility for football at the school."

HIBS face a step-up in opposition again this Saturday, as they play a HVHS side smarting from a first-up 2-0 loss to Wellington College last weekend.

"Unfortunately we've got to play on Trentham Racecourse – we couldn't play there last week because they were running a [horse racing] steeplechase on it."

"We might have to go pat down a few hoof marks at training but it could play into our hands, knowing the conditions and playing in similar [conditions] last week."

McIntyre was hesitant to place too high expectations on his squad but expected a strong showing.

"If we can qualify as a top-two team for the Wellington final, then that's enormous."

"But I don't want to heap the pressure on my boys; we're only

**"There was an attitude when I started that if you did well and played well, then that was great, regardless of the result, but we've changed that mindset to where we want to win every game."**

Hutt International Boys' School coach Brendan McIntyre

College. Scots' goalscorers were Team Wellington player Mickael Par-todikromo and Louie George, while Gus Mooney and Nicholas Brice helped earn Kapiti the draw. Kapiti face Rongotai in the final second-round game.

For the first time since 2009, when the Hutt Valley and Wellington football grades combined, the competition will be without a St Pat's team.

Neither Silverstream nor Town were able to make it out of a tough grading pool, finishing behind defending champions Hutt Valley High School, Scots College and Rongotai College.

In the girls' premier division, a brace to Genevieve Berry got Hutt Valley High School's title defence underway in a 4-0 win over Queen Margaret College.

Last year's runner-up, Wellington Girls' College, also started strongly with a 4-0 win over competition debutants Upper Hutt.

St Mary's, who won the 2014 premier two title, started the season with an 8-1 win over Onslow thanks to a hat-trick from Katie Barrott.

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