

COLLEGE SPORT



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Bryant ready to make mark

FOOTBALL

KENNEDY BRYANT wasn't thinking about making the New Zealand secondary schools football team at the start of the year. In fact, it wasn't till last month that the Upper Hutt College pupil became aware that a team would be touring Thailand in July.

"We got an email to say that I was a contender for the team. Till then, I had had no idea that they were making a tour."

But that did not dampen Kennedy's pleasure at making the squad. "I'm really excited. It will not be Kennedy's first experience of making a national secondary schools side as she was a member of an under-16 team that toured Fiji in late 2012.

She also showed sufficient talent to be selected for a national under-17 training squad when still in year nine. However, injuries – a torn medial ligament and a back problem – eroded her chances of making the Young Football Ferns for the under-17 World Cup, in both 2012 and 2014.

The year 13 midfielder has now set her sights on the next level and her major aim for the year will be to secure a trial for the New Zealand under-20 team. The next women's under-20 World Cup will be staged late next year.

"I hope I will be a contender but there are some really good girls who play in my position."

Bryant was initially attracted to football when older brother Clayton began playing. "He was three years older and I thought everything he did was awesome."

Bryant soon showed an affinity for the game and has concentrated on football since. "I played a little bit of softball at school but football has taken up most of my time. When you commit to a sport, you have to really commit."

In addition, the football season now stretches for most of the year, with the club season followed by the national women's league, which goes through to December. Bryant has been in the Capital Football national league squad for the past two years and plays central league for the Upper Hutt club. She has also resumed playing for her school side and when her TAP (talent acceleration programme) sessions are added to the mix, Bryant is either training

or playing six days a week. Upper Hutt is unbeaten after the first four rounds of the central league and Bryant has made a mark on a scoresheet, with four central league goals and another two in the opening round of the Knock Out Cup last weekend.

"I'm usually the assist person but it's fun to pop up and score a goal. Everyone loves scoring goals."

She is also enjoying playing school football again and will be a key member as Upper Hutt College attempt to earn promotion to the regional premier one grade. "It's a really fun atmosphere."

Upper Hutt were in the third tier competition last year but are expected to be competitive in the grading rounds.

The top two teams in the Hutt Valley grading rounds earn a spot in the premier grade. Upper Hutt have made a promising start, going down by one goal against the 2014 premier champions Hutt Valley High School, before recording a big win against Chilton St James.

Former Football Fern Wendt Henderson coaches the Upper Hutt central league team and has no doubt that Bryant has a bright future.

"She's definitely an up-and-coming young player and has a lot of the key attributes that coaches look for," Henderson said.

"Her technical skills are right up there in terms of her age and she has the mental attitude to go with it. She has a real willingness to learn, along with a good football brain and game understanding."

"She has the work ethic and a bit of toughness and grit. We also need players to be grounded and Kennedy has good self-awareness."

"We use her as an attacking midfielder and she has strength and power and is deceptively quick. She probably gets her quickness from being able to read a game."

Four Scots College pupils – Sargent Singh, Joe Bell, Sam Wilson and Ben Stroud – who are also members of the Wellington Phoenix Football Academy, were last week named in the national under-17 side that will play in a tri-series in Qatar this month.



Upper Hutt College's Kennedy Bryant heads to Thailand in July, with the New Zealand secondary schools football team. Photo: MARTIN HOLL/FARFAX NZ

Wellington College have been keeping the opposition goalkeepers busy in the first two rounds of grading games for the boys premier youth competition.

Wellington College defeated Pararamui 14-0 in the opening round, before recording a 13-1 win over Wellington High School last Saturday. Hutt International is the

other unbeaten team in the pool, with Hutt Valley and Rongangi the unbeaten teams in the second pool. The top three teams from each pool will play premier one.

Galloway chills after suffering burnout

SQUASH

SCOTT GALLOWAY has lifted his foot of the squash accelerator. The gifted sportsman is still playing the game – and still winning titles – but not with the same intensity.

Instead, his academic progress has become more of a priority and he has also taken the chance to spread his sporting interests, in his final year at school.

He played cricket and volleyball over the summer and will play hockey and badminton during the winter.

He had a top score of 42 for the Hutt Valley High School first XI in the premier one cricket competition and a strike rate of 130. Being a squash player, I go out there and have a whack."

Galloway played hockey at primary school and scored the winning goal for Wellington in the 2010 Curtis Cup final, when at Hutt Intermediate.

He made the Hutt Valley first XI squad as a year 9 but his squash commitments meant he had to stop playing.

He has enjoyed being back in the team this year and has taken up badminton for the first time.

"I'm still busy but it's been a change to do something other than squash."

"I'm also looking at going into the air force or navy and I need to focus on school and passing level III. I went away a lot last year and only just managed to scrape through."

Galloway also found that squash had become more of a chore than a joy last year, as he prepared for the junior world championships.

"I felt burnt out last year, leading up to the worlds. I think my game plateaued and I didn't feel right."

"I think I needed a break. I went to my first national when I was eight and have basically been training since then."

Galloway took a break from



Scott Galloway

squash over the summer and while he is back playing tournaments again, he will be selective about his targets and is doing comparatively little training.

"I still want to win but will be tackling them on my own terms and there has been less pressure on me."

Galloway also turned down the chance to be part of the 2015 national elite junior squad, which has been selected with the 2016 junior world championships in mind.

However, his squash subcommittee will not be permanent and he is keen to take part in the world champs next year.

"I'm not sure whether I will be able to get back in the New Zealand squad but if I don't, I'm definitely going over as an individual. Next year will be my last junior year and I want to have a decent crack."

Galloway, who played at No 1 for the New Zealand team at the 2014 world junior championships, has won numerous national and group titles and remains competitive at a top junior level.

He was runner-up at the national junior open last month and finished fourth at the Oceania championships the following weekend.

Since then, he has won the Wellington junior open and broke new ground last weekend, when he teamed up with Wellington's Corey Love to win the national senior doubles title in Palmerston North.

Wellington Girls' earn clash with Mt Albert

NETBALL

WELLINGTON GIRLS' College have earned a crack at the champs.

The WGC senior netball side will meet Mt Albert Grammar in the semifinal of the national college knockout competition in Palmerston North on Sunday.

Wellington Girls' reached the semifinals with a decisive 31-21 victory over Wellington East on Monday night.

Mt Albert Grammar has become the benchmark in college netball.

The Auckland school has won the national secondary schools championships for three successive years and was a finalist in each of the past seven years.

Their 2015 squad includes four members of the New Zealand secondary schools' side and they have stars at both ends of the court.

Defender Holly Fowler is in her fourth year in the national schools side and shooter Maia Wilson was selected for the third time last month.

MAGS have also won the knockout competition for three successive years and reached the 2015 semifinals with a 35-26 win over St Kentigern.

WGC coach Emma Weenink is looking forward to the challenge. "We went into last night's game [against East] with a bit of a nothing to lose attitude and if we take that approach again, and put our best foot forward, I think we can have a good crack at them."

"But I haven't seen them [Mt Albert] play and we have a bit of homework to do."

WGC also have a testing week. They play Palmerston North Girls' away today, as part of an annual

exchange, meet Wellington East again on Saturday, in a premier grade club match, before returning to Palmerston North on Sunday to take on MAGS.

East led 5-2 in the first quarter on Monday night, in what is an abbreviated format, with eight-minute quarters, but WGC were down by just one at the end of the quarter and weren't headed again.

WGC dominated the second and third quarters, scoring 19 goals while East managed just seven.

The WGC shooters rarely missed an opportunity, sinking 31 from 35 attempts, with Tegan Graham missing just one from 16 attempts and Aihua de la Mare shooting 13 from 14.

"We have three good shooters, who all play differently but know how to work together and that gives us a good tool box," Weenink said.

"We knew we would have to play as a team and we did that."

Wing defence Hine Apunuihara was named player of the match by the Sky TV commentators.

"Hine really stood up and that was one of the best games I've seen her play," Weenink said.

East coach James Laursen had no excuses but was ruling a high error rate by his team.

"Wellington Girls' played really well and had more flow with the ball. The ball met the hands every time and they put it in the hoop," Laursen said. "It's not rocket science."

Scots College face new challenges at home

RUGBY

SCOTS COLLEGE will not be able to ease back into the local scene following their Japanese venture. They will meet a physical Hastings Boys' High team at Petone on Saturday in the final round of the first XV festival, and a week later will put the Mosscar Cup on the line against St Pat's Town.

The large Scots squad arrived back in New Zealand last Friday after playing six games in eight days.

Some of the players were feeling the effects of a testing schedule but will have little time to dwell on their bruises or the disappointment of failing to make the final at the Sanix world youth tournament. The New Zealand team had won the five previous tournaments but Scots were only third best last week.

They were beaten 34-8 in their semifinal clash with Brisbane Boys' College, who in turn went down 35-3 to Paul Roos Gymnasium, from South Africa. In the final, Paul Roos scored 216 points and conceded just 16 over the tournament.

Scots scored seven tries when claiming third place with a 45-7 win over Truro College, from England, in the playoff for third and fourth.

"We had played really well leading up to the semifinal but in the semifinal we didn't fire a



Versatile back Peter Umaga-Jensen leads the Scots College first XV.

shot," Scots coach Pilo Tlatia said. "We lost Henry Mexted in the warm-up and that unsettled the group. He is the head boy and one of our leaders. But that also gave opportunities for others to step up."

"The team was pretty upset after the loss but came back well

in the third and fourth playoff. "There are a few bumps and bruises and a bit of jetlag. They were a little slow when they trained on Monday morning but we are looking forward to the game against Hastings and then defending the Mosscar Cup."

FIRST XV FESTIVAL

- 1pm, St Pat's Town v Palmerston North Boys'
- 1pm, Silverstream v Napier Boys'
- 2:30pm, Wellington College v Gisborne Boys'
- 2:30pm, Scots v Hastings Boys'

Scots will be missing first five-eight Joe Roswell this weekend, through concussion, with skipper Peter Umaga-Jensen among the options to fill in for Wilson.

Umaga-Jensen played mostly at fullback in Japan but also had a couple of games at centre.

"He can cover a number of positions and he's growing every day with his leadership," Tlatia said. "His work rate [in Japan] was outstanding."

Hastings beat St Pat's Silverstream 21-10 in the opening round of the first XV festival, before going down narrowly to Fiddling High School last weekend.

Silverstream became the only Wellington team to record a win over the first two rounds when beating Gisborne Boys' 19-10 last weekend.

"Gisborne are a big side and it was a very gutsy performance," Silverstream coach Rob Ackerman said. "Some of our young

players stepped up against their big back and will learn a lot from the game."

Ackerman was also impressed by the contribution from the senior players Asafo Aumua, Tarquin Alapati and skipper Losi Filipo. "They are game-breakers."

Alapati, who is playing at second five-eighth, has previously concentrated on his league career and had not played rugby for Silverstream since the under-14 grade. "He's a class act," Ackerman said.

St Pat's Town, who had been well beaten by Gisborne the previous week, showed improvement when going down 30-22 to Napier Boys', with coach Glenn Donaldson impressed by his pack. "The boys did really well up front."

Wellington College, who have struggled in the pre-season games, went down 38-19 to Palmerston North Boys'.

The final games to decide the makeup of the Wellington premier one grade will be played on Saturday, with Rongangi, Wairarapa College and Tawa in the box seat in their respective pools.

Hutt International look less secure and need to beat Porirua to retain a place in the top grade.

Wairarapa took an important step towards premier one when beating Bishop Viard 34-26 last weekend.

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