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MIXAR
MAGAZINE 04

iTHANK YOU ALL!

MIXED ABILITY RUGBY: MAKING BETTER PEOPLE

Daniele Pacini
National Italian development rugby manager
M.I.X.A.R. project manager



We've made it! It seems like yesterday but it was spring 2015, that we timidly started talking with Paola (Performare) e Francesca (F.I.R Legal Advisor) about applying for an Erasmus grant. Then we had to decide upon the content, Mixed Ability Rugby, and then the choice of international partners using personal contacts (like Martino and Eliseo from Imas and Spanish Rugby Federation) and the ones that F.I.R and his Partners built over the years.

And off we went. The rush to deliver everything in time, dealing with procedures and technicalities.

Then finally the good news arrived at the end of 2017: the European Commission awarded us the grant.

Thinking it back, the good thing was the sense of achievement, of reaching a goal and all the efforts required to do it when we were just at the beginning.

The last two years, 2018 and 2019, have been very intense. Barbara came on board with Giovanni and Elena too, making a big and effective effort. There were endless meetings, international workshops, extremely complicated accounts to be reported and then we had to domestically spread and train Integrated Rugby.

Time flies. Time flies because the process in itself that was rewarding, whether it will work or not we will soon find out.

Participating to an Erasmus grant in its complexity is already an achievement and having it awarded is even better; having the chance, thanks to EU, to confront at International and National level was a great success; meeting and working with representatives of the other International Partners (which I won't name in case I forget some) showed not only their deep knowledge but also real passion and exceptional human qualities which will benefit not only the people involved in the project but the whole rugby movement.

Enough about the past, what is in waiting for us? what are the opportunities and the next steps? In 2020 all results, textbooks, university studies, procedures from the Erasmus Program will be available to whoever will be interested worldwide.

As for Italy and the Italian Rugby Union we will work hard to improve the development of Mixed Ability Rugby, remaining loyal to the idea that any sport, especially rugby, is the tool to make "Better people".

Good rugby to everyone.

SUMMARY

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The MIXAR project aims to harness the benefits of collaborative and inclusive partnership working and knowledge exchange to expand the potential of MA Rugby to achieve broad, sustainable, social inclusion outcomes for all participants, both disabled and non-disabled.

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SCIENTIFIC

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF
MIXED ABILITY MODEL

Barbara & Claudia - Per Formare

The European strategy on disability has for years been aimed at improving and strengthening social inclusion and the rights of disabled people, trying to spread inclusive culture in all EU countries. The strategy is based on the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the United Nations Convention on the rights of person with disabilities and the Lisbon Treaty. The Commission adopted the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, based on the experiences of the disability Action Plan (2003-2010) and identifies 8 areas of action, in the 2010-2020 strategy: Accessibility, Participation, Equality, Occupation, Education & Training, Social protection, Health, External and neighborhood actions.

The situation of the disabled people in European Union is a complex and multidimensional issue that affect over 80 million of person, living with disabilities. Although much has been done to promote equality, there are still significant differences in terms of legislation among EU countries. **There are many obstacles that disabled people have to overcome in order to get and hold a job and to ensure a social inclusion.**

Some social activities, as recreation, cultural activities and sports, can be useful to generate form of cooperation that can promote social inclusion.



A lot of studies underlined the importance of the social activities as sports in the construction of the social integration of disable and not disabled people. By doing sports, young people developed a series of skills useful in different life areas, promoting interaction and social support (Martin 1999; Tiggemann, 2004).

The interviews made under the MIXAR project, to analyze the development of the competences related to the implementation of sports activities, highlight a range of skills that are developed in people with disabilities engaged in sports activities, specifically in rugby. It was also interesting to note how certain skills are developed more strongly by people with disabilities than those who do not have disabilities.

The skills highlighted constitute a nucleus that approaches the European key competences, divided by specific areas:



1 Self-esteem, self-confidence,
emotional intelligence

Communication

2

3 Teamwork, Positive Attitude,
Leadership

Critical thinking, Making Decision,
Resilience

4

5 Creativity, Design

« Certain skills are
developed
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people
with disabilities
than those
who do not have
disabilities »



Exercise and sport would therefore help the development of a series of transversal competences transferable from sports contexts to social contexts, making the children of citizens more active and responsible.

Playing and relating to children with other disabilities and with children who do not have disabilities, as in the Mixed Ability model, means having a more complete perception of oneself as an individual and as an individual inserted in a specific context. **Sport** in this sense is identified as indispensable for the integrated development of the disabled person, bringing positive effects in the rest of his life areas.



IT'S COMMING...

SIX MONTHS TO GO TO BIGGEST EVER MIXED ABILITY RUGBY WORLD CUP!

Martino Corazza- IMAS Director

The International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament (IMART) is **a celebration of rugby, diversity and inclusion**. During a week of games, educational and social events, Mixed Ability rugby teams battle for the 2 Trophies: The Winners' Cup and the 'Spirit of Mixed Ability Rugby Trophy'. The whole tournament is played abiding by World Rugby Laws and has grown to attract a global audience.

<< It showed a wider audience that not only is it possible to break down the traditional divide of able bodied and disabled sport, but that doing so results in a whole host of benefits for everyone involved >>



So, how did it start?

England's first Mixed Ability rugby team, the Bradford Bumble Bees was founded in 2009. Shortly afterwards, it was discovered that other teams in the UK and Europe, such as Llanelli Warriors in Wales and Chivasso Rugby in Italy, were already playing a similar format and IMAS wanted to establish and grow a network of clubs, promoting experience sharing and asserting the right of everyone to participate in rugby through the flagship IMART tournament.

The first ever IMART was held in Bradford (UK) in August 2015 and lined up more than 400 players from 10 different countries over five days of completely free and accessible events. Coinciding with the Rugby World Cup, and with the spotlight on England as the host country, the Tournament was an unmissable opportunity to promote and expand the Mixed Ability Model.

It showed a wider audience that not only is it possible to break down the traditional divide of able bodied and disabled sport, but that doing so results in a whole host of benefits for everyone involved. **The Sundays Well Rebels, Ireland's first Mixed Ability team, were the champions of IMART 2015, defeating the hosts, the Bumble Bees, in a thrilling final!** Gaztedi Rugby Taldea, from the Basque Country, were awarded the 'Spirit of Mixed Ability Rugby Trophy' as the team who best embodied rugby's values of integrity, respect, solidarity, passion and discipline.

Shortly after the success of IMART 2015, the Basque capital Vitoria-Gasteiz was chosen to host the second edition of the tournament. IMART 2017 saw the Rebels narrowly losing the final to the Argentinian Pumpas XV who came as a part of a 80+ contingent, and the Bumble Bees bringing the 'Spirit of Trophy' back to where it was conceived. Mixed Ability rugby teams are now growing across Europe and rapidly developing in Argentina and other South American countries.

The first Mixed Ability teams are also evolving in Canada, Georgia and New Zealand! We expect a staggering 15+ countries, more than 800 participants and up to 24 teams for IMART Cork 2020, with sides and delegations coming from Ireland, England, Wales, Scotland, Italy, Belgium, Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, Canada and beyond. Please, join us there and help us celebrate Mixed Ability sport at its finest. Rugby is leading the way in inclusion...let society follow!

If you want to know more please visit www.imartworldcup.org or get in touch at imart@mixedabilitiesports.org



INTERNATIONAL MIXED ABILITY RUGBY TOURNAMENT CORK 2020



1 week of Mixed Ability activities

The European Commission, through the Erasmus+ Not-for-profit European Sport Events, has agreed to support a week of Mixed Ability activities to coincide with the 3rd International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament.

Hosted by Sundays Well RFC

The 'Mixed Ability Week 2020' will be hosted by Sundays Well RFC and the City of Cork – Ireland – between 7th and 12th of June 2020.

24 Mixed Ability teams

From across the world playing rugby over the week at Irish Independent Park, with players and spectator numbers expected to run into the thousands.

#BetterTogether

Complementing and promoting the Mixed Ability Week 2020 will be a campaign across social media #BetterTogether, and a post-event photographic exhibition.



IT'S COMING ...

EUROPEAN COMMISSION THROWS ITS WEIGHT BEHIND IMART 2020!

Martino Corazza- IMAS Director

International Mixed Ability Sports is excited to announce that the European Commission, through the Erasmus+ Not-for-profit European Sport Events, has agreed to **support a week of Mixed Ability activities to coincide with the 3rd International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament.**

The 'Mixed Ability Week 2020' **will be hosted by Sundays Well RFC and the City of Cork – Ireland – between 7th and 12th of June 2020**, providing opportunities for people with and without disabilities from across Europe and beyond to unite in competitive sports, educational workshops and the unique Irish craic.

The Erasmus+ scheme supports events aimed at promoting social inclusion, equal opportunities and physical activity, increasing participation in sport, volunteering and raising awareness of the barriers many citizens still face.

The Tournament will see at least 24 Mixed Ability teams from across the world playing rugby over the week at Irish Independent Park, with players and spectator numbers expected to run into the thousands. For the first time, a Mixed Ability women's tournament will be organised, allowing 4 teams to battle for the world title.

Mixed Ability, championed by IMAS, began in rugby and **has become a social movement in grassroots sports creating societal change by encouraging disabled and non-disabled people to be part of the same teams or activities in grassroots community clubs.**

Martino Corazza, IMAS Director said: "The support from Europe is a fantastic news! It will enable us to showcase further Mixed Ability sports including boxing, rowing, running and kin-ball. We will also be hosting a series of accessible workshops throughout the week which will accompany an international conference, not just with sporting legends and leading academics, but giving a voice to participants with learning and physical disabilities".



"Moreover, the Mixed Ability Week is a great legacy for the Erasmus+ MIXAR project, as the event will include those teams from Belgium, Italy, Spain and Ireland who have been established thanks to the success of the programme!"

Sundays Well RFC were chosen to host the Tournament after their support for the first Irish Mixed Ability team, the Sundays Well Rebels, who have inspired change in their sport National Governing Body and led to the creation of several new MA teams.

IRFU President Nicholas Comyn said: "Mixed Ability is a wonderful addition to the family of rugby, and participants and visitors will receive a true Irish Céad Mile Fáilte. "A Hundred Thousand Welcomes".

Alan Craughwell, Sundays Well Rebel' s founder added: **"The support of the European Commission will allow us to leave a legacy long after the Tournament. Sport truly is leading the way in inclusion, and the rest of society is sure to follow"**.

Complementing and promoting the Mixed Ability Week 2020 will be a campaign across social media **#BetterTogether**, and a post-event photographic exhibition which will travel to participating European countries and beyond. If you are interested in or want to support any of these actions, please get in touch at **contact@mixedabilitiesports.org**.

**<< Sport truly
is leading
the way in
inclusion,
and the rest
of society is
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follow >>**





THE MIXAR PROYECT IN...

SPAIN

MADRID HOSTS THE III MIXAR FESTIVAL, THE BIG
DAY OF RUGBY FOR ALL

David Soto - FERugby

On Saturday, October 26, the III MIXAR Festival was held in Madrid, an event that is part of the activities that have been developed throughout 2018 and 2019 within the MIXAR Project (Mixed Ability Rugby for all).

This project is included in the ERASMUS+ program, in which the Spanish Rugby Federation (FER) is one of the participants together with the University of Salamanca (INICO) and the Italian Federation of Rugby (FIR), in addition to Per Formare Associazione, International Mixed Ability Sports (IMAS), Sundays Well Rebels Rugby FC and Rugby Vlaandere.

After the inaugural session that took place at the headquarters of the University of Salamanca, two other meetings have been held, in the cities of Bradford and Cork, in both cases with the Inclusive Rugby Festival. This time Madrid was the host of this III MIXAR Festival. With **a participation of 120 players of inclusive rugby teams from all over Spain**, the day took place at the facilities of Paraninfo,

of the Complutense University, in a festive and sporting environment that was accompanied by an awesome autumn climate perfect for the occasion.

The festival ended after mid-afternoon with its corresponding Third Time and the presence of all participants and their companions, who gradually retired on buses that took them back to their home towns.

After almost two years, during which this project has been developed, with meetings and conferences held in the countries of origin of the different project participants and whose summary can be consulted in the MIXAR publication. Only one more meeting remains in the city of Rome, at the beginning of November, which would be the closing of the MIXAR project. Subsequently, the conclusions and texts of the different meetings held will be published.





It has been an important activity, within the rugby inclusive program of the FER, very involved in the development of this modality of our sport. Recently, the FER organized in Madrid an interesting and successful day to discuss the National Plan for Inclusive Rugby (PNRI) with clubs and regional federations, a day that is planned to be repeated in early 2020.

All this in order to try to get a society more fair as far as rugby is concerned. to our tournament winners Worcester Mixed Ability and the Spirit of Rugby winners York RI Steamers!



THE MIXAR PROYECT IN...

IRELAND

MEETING FOR WOMEN'S MIXED ABILITY TEAM IN
BALLINCOLLIG RFC

Maeve D'Arcy

The first Irish Women's Mixed Ability team was ready to start in Ballincollig RFC in Cork and they held an information night in the club on Monday, 21st October 2019. Ciara Ahern who works for Cope Foundation in Cork contacted Rebels coach Maeve D'Arcy over the summer to inquire about Mixed Ability Rugby for women.

Ciara had several clients who knew players from the Rebels men's team in Sundays Well and were interested in playing themselves. Ballincollig RFC in Cork have a strong Women's team which compete in the Munster League and also a thriving underage section which has teams for girls and boys as well as an adapted tag rugby team for children with disabilities.

Since the MIXAR project began, the IRFU have now come on board with Mixed Ability Rugby bringing it under their Spirit of Rugby Program. **It was one of the goals set by the committee to get a Women's Mixed Ability Team started for the coming season.** These things usually happen organically as where there is an interest, there is a way.

Maeve contacted Ballincollig RFC and met with club president, Jim Nyhan and Ciara to propose the idea of a Women's Mixed Ability team in the club. Jim had an amazing response saying YES straight away. He already had coaches in the club he knew would be interested, along with some of the ladies



players past and present. Ballincollig player and club woman Breda Leonard got on board straight away along with coaches Rob Keane and Johnny Murray. A plan began to form to get it up and running.

Ballincollig RFC are currently undertaking a large re-development in their club grounds so the only set-back would be having a pitch space with lights so the team could start training. Maeve set about contacting every club she could think of in Cork to ask them to donate a pitch slot on a temporary basis. Muskerry RFC were amazing and came back with an immediate response that they would love to help out. An information night was organised for Monday night, 21st October in Ballincollig RFC Clubhouse. Several of the Sundays Well Rebels players, backroom and parents came along to support the initiative and **15 women signed up on the night to start training for the Mixed Ability Team.** This is a great start and they have enough for a team already!

Training started on Friday 1st November with all players and coaches having a fantastic time. Players are eager to come back week after week and the team looks set to grow as the season progresses! A Cork Mixed Ability Day is in the cards in the New Year to get all the teams together for some rugby and some socialising so watch this space!





THE MIXAR PROYECT IN...

ROME

FINAL TRANSNATIONAL MEETING FOR MIXAR

Maeve D'Arcy

Maeve D'Arcy, Alan Craughwell and Liam Maher from Sundays Well Rebels attended the final transnational meeting for the European Erasmus+ Project MIXAR in Rome in early November. It was a chance to finalise reports and outcomes for the project as well as discuss the sustainability and legacy of the project.

Hosted at Catalina Rugby Club and the FIR Headquarters in Stadio Olimpico, Rome, Italy, the weekend also consisted of several events for disseminating Mixed Ability Rugby, culminating in a Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament on the Saturday.

It was also the final time all the partners would get the chance to be together after nearly two years on a common journey. The friendships that have been made during the project are also something that will remain and grow long after the finish date.

One of the highlights of the weekend was getting to see the first tangible booklets produced during the course of the project. There was input into both the new 'Mixed Ability Start Up Guide' and the 'Transferability Toolkit' from Sundays Well Rebels and it is great to see our team featured in several aspects of the booklets. All of the Rebels players and team can be very proud of what they have contributed to the MIXAR project over the last two years.

THE COACHES
CORNERREBELS COMPLETE COACHING VIDEOS FOR MIXAR
PROJECT

Maeve D'Arcy

Some of the Rebels players dragged themselves out of bed early on Sunday morning, 24th of November for a training session with a difference. Many had been celebrating at team mate Patrick's birthday party the night before so credit must go to those that made the effort to come along.

The Rebels were shooting some coaching instruction videos as part of the European Erasmus+ Project MIXAR. Rebels head coach, Maeve D'Arcy has given some presentations on coaching throughout the course of the two year project and thought that **having a resource like some coaching videos would be a great addition to the Mixed Ability Start-Up Guide and Transferability Toolkit.**

The Rebels went through their paces with camera man Fiachra Gibbons capturing all the action. It is fantastic to get this resource completed. The videos will be available to view in the coming weeks once the air brushing is completed and hopefully will be of benefit for any coaches of Mixed Ability Sports.



A CASE OF SUCCESS...

THE STORY OF MATTIA

"I found a job throughout Mixed Ability Rugby"

The story of Mattia and rugby began with the expectation of finding an activity by sporting fare and filling the void of afternoons, in a traditional sports context but open to everyone's needs. To date, Mattia has been visiting the rugby field regularly for five years.

**<< Mattia,
serving at the
tables during
the social
festivities
discovered his
vocation: to be
a waiter >>**



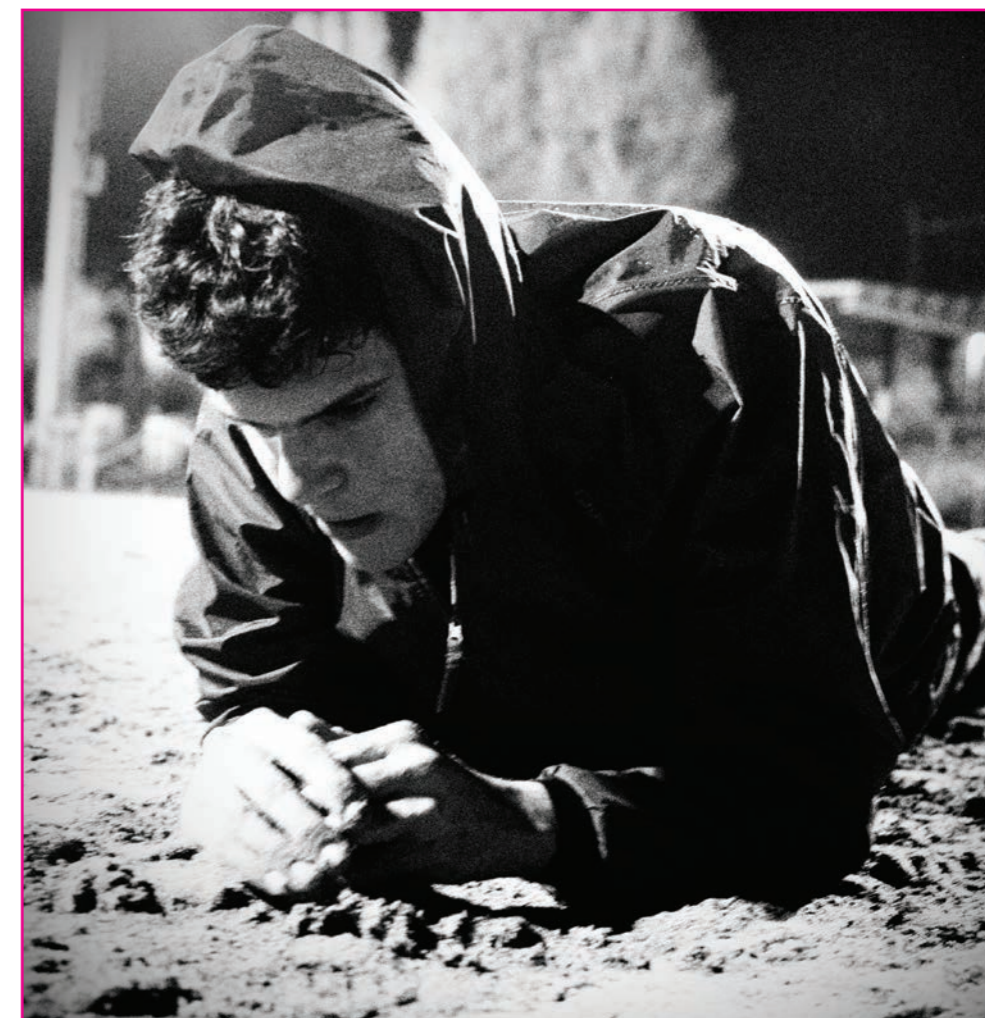
Many things that change, Mattia has become a man and the context in which Mattia plays is included and has evolved with him. A rugby team was born and raised - the Brancalone Collective - open, with no access exchange, in which all contribute to the development of the project. Rugby is a sport of combat and situation, which by its nature is the ability to read the context so that each workout is to work to improve the next one. **Step by step, training after training has grown the Collective and Mattia has grown in the Collective.**

His trainer, Mario, tells us that **Mattia has greatly implemented his motor and technical skills, working on the affective problem**

and eventually overcoming the fear of contact, with the ground and with others; has internalized the rules and above all the spirit of rugby. With his irony, Mattia is the glue and reference of the group - inside and outside the field.

In the collective each player is functional to the game, putting himself at the disposal of the team and this link is translated outside the field. In the Third Time, in fact, the relationships are strengthened and in the voluntary service that takes place daily in the sports society, there is a way to express oneself. **Mattia, serving at the tables during the social festivities, discovered his vocation: to be a waiter. You'll never find him without his pen and his order book! The volunteers of the sports club are activated, networking with other associations, have created the conditions for a job placement.** Mattia will soon be experimenting as a waiter in a real restaurant and this is the most beautiful destination that we have all achieved together.

"Rugby gives me excitement and joy", said Mattia satisfied after playing his first tournament.





NEWS

MIXED ABILITY RUGBY FOR ALL

Training in Tramore Valley Park



The Rebels had a change of venue for training tonight as Munster were playing in Irish Independent Park. The squad trained in Tramore Valley Park pitches and were finished up just in time for anyone supporting to make it across the road to watch Munster play.

Head Coach Maeve D'Arcy attended an IRFU Senior (Stage 3) Coaching Course last week and had lots of new ideas for the session. The players enjoyed the challenge of trying some new things and will have more new challenges as the season progresses. Having given several presentations and demonstrations on coaching Mixed Ability Rugby during the MIXAR project, Coach Maeve was delighted to be able to continue with her own coaching accreditation and complete the Senior Award.

Rebels Christmas Party Night 2019!

The Rebels took time out from training on Friday, 29th November to have their Christmas Party night. The evening began with a visit to the Cork School of Music for a Samba Drumming Session followed by drinks and nibbles in the Crawford Bar.

Christmas jumpers were the uniform on the night with players buying into the festive spirit. Winner of best outfit on the night was Rebels winger Rowan Gill who donned a full Christmas Suit!




MIXAR
Mixed Ability Rugby for All



Rugby in Valladolid, the spanish “oval” capital

Meeting between El Salvador and Hernani on a great rugby day!



Great atmosphere in the fields of Fuente La Mora, where Cetransa El Salvador Inclusivo and Hernani CRE played 4 games. Both teams demonstrated sportsmanship and good rugby levels, through the abilities acquired with their training sessions.

A perfect Saturday. This is how we can define what we have experienced in the fields of Fuente La Mora, where Cetransa El Salvador and Hernani have proved in the 'Ciudad de Valladolid Tournament' that rugby is for everyone.

In total they played 4 matches, each one of them around half an hour.

Nearly 50 players gathered in Valladolid, the competitiveness was as great, or even greater than in the other matches, ending the match with 14-0, thanks to two tries by Pablo Delgado and Kerman Urreta, which Iker Iraola was responsible for transforming.

“For us it has been a great joy to organize this II Inclusive Rugby Encounter ‘City of Valladolid’, with a great atmosphere from the first moment, and with a lot of rugby level from the players”, affirmed the president of the Rugby Club El Salvador Santiago Toca.

Ion Insausti, responsible for the inclusive team of Hernani CRE said that “the players have come to give everything, to enjoy with a rival like El Salvador, and having the opportunity to play in different fields of Spain with them is something magnificent, as well as seeing the great progress they make over time.”

Fernando Raposo, president of the Rugby Federation of Castilla y León affirmed the “great satisfaction of all who work for rugby in Castilla y León to see this. Inclusive rugby has our full support, and seeing an event like this is something that satisfies and makes you happy. Last year our regional team was Spain’s champion, which was also very satisfactory.”



AVIVA loves Mixed Ability Rugby



As part of the Sustaining Irish Rugby forum, Alan Craughwell MIXAR Project member from Sunday's Well RFC delivered on inclusion in rugby and the benefits and findings of the Mixed Ability Rugby for All Erasmus Plus sport project in the Aviva Stadium Dublin.

Nutrition & Fitness – Sundays Well RFC

Rebels Head Coach, Maeve D'Arcy organised a nutrition and fitness day for the Rebels on Saturday, 26th October 2019. Players and backroom, along with family members all gathered in the Sundays Well Club House for a presentation on Health and Nutrition.

The presentation by Maeve covered the importance of sleep, hydration, nutrition, exercise and friends for general health and especially for rugby players. Detailed information was discussed with players to try and give everyone accurate information to help them in making choices for a healthier lifestyle in their everyday lives.



With sports nutrition and supplements now a billion dollar industry it is important that players are aware of the facts and don't get dazzled by all the advertising and promotion on the market. It is important to know that just because products are 'protein' or 'sports' versions, it doesn't mean they are suitable for you and the training you do. Eating a healthy balanced diet with lots of fresh food and drinking plenty of water is always the first and best option.

After the presentation, the players took to the pitch to complete their first fitness test of the season. It was the same as the tests we ran at the start and end of last season where all the players are tested for aerobic fitness, anaerobic fitness, leg strength, core and upper body strength. Last season saw a great improvement from the start to end of the season so the pressure was on to beat the scores from the last time out.

There was further improvements across the board from the end of last season which is great to see and puts the Rebels in a good position for the season ahead. We will keep working hard at training and with our exercise programs for home so that when we test again just before the world cup, we will all be in tip top shape!

6th Mixed Ability rugby "round" in Las Rozas

El Cantizal Rugby Field located in Las Rozas de Madrid hosted the 6th mixed ability rugby meeting.

The local team "Ingenieros Industriales Las Rozas" commitment to inclusive sports is absolute: these days are part of their inclusive project, through which they want to promote and develop inclusive sports.

These days are fun, and their only objective is to socialize, enjoy and have fun playing games based on typical exercises of a rugby training. We have very positive experiences that confirm that rugby is a catalyst for inclusion.

On this day we also played the first mixed ability rugby match in the history of the Club, so it was extra-especial!



New challenges are comming!

Rebels will Play a Match against New Mixed Ability Team, Bantry Bay RFC



The Rebels are all set to welcome new Mixed Ability Team Bantry Bay RFC to Sundays Well on Sunday, 8th December.

The Rebels visited Bantry for a joint training session earlier in the season and Bantry are now all set to take on the Rebels in their first Mixed Ability match. Both teams are looking forward to a good game of rugby, the chance to meet some new friends and socialise off the pitch too.

Much more than rugby



Sundays Well Rebels player Patrick O'Flynn turned 30 recently and decided to have a birthday party in his rugby club, Sundays Well RFC. Patrick is from Bishopstown in Cork and grew up with two brothers who both played for Highfield RFC, local rivals of Sundays Well RFC. Having spent his youth watching from the side-line as his brothers played out on the rugby pitch, Patrick jumped at the chance to join a rugby team when the Rebels Mixed Ability team started in Sundays Well RFC in 2014, despite knowing all the stick he would get at home!

Patrick has been a constant player with the Rebels since their inception in 2014 and has played in two world

cups with another one just around the corner. He got to play against his brother in a match against Highfield and joined up with him for a mix-up for the last 10 minutes of the game. Having his birthday party in Sundays Well RFC clubhouse and inviting the entire team is another example of how Mixed Ability Rugby has brought many different people together – even from rival clubs!

Patrick has given input to the European Erasmus+ Project MIXAR, attending and participating alongside his team mates in many of the events that were run over the last two years. Hearing Patrick and his family's story through the project has given partners a better understanding of what Mixed Ability Rugby is and what it means to people on and off the pitch. Patrick's mother Gemma helps out the Rebels regularly, particularly with finances, fundraising and administration. She is also great to organise the annual Rebels Ladies Christmas Party where all the boys are left at home for one night!

Parties like Patrick's birthday are the times where players really get to know each other. The social side of rugby is what makes it so special and often the memories off the pitch are the ones that stay with us as the years pass by. It may not be a typical third half but after training the night before, it's just the same. The evening started off with everyone admiring each other in their glad rags as we are so used to seeing each other in rugby gear and mud! This was followed by general merriment and mischief, as would happen on any rugby team! Music, food and of course a few beers ensured a great night was had by all and it will go down as another great team night for the Rebels.



Joint Mixed Ability Session with Bantry Bay RFC

New mixed ability rugby teams are starting up in Ireland



Bantry Bay RFC contacted Rebels coach Maeve D'Arcy over the summer break for some information about Mixed Ability Rugby. They currently had a West Cork disability tag team and had several players' both men and women, who were interested in taking the leap forward to contact rugby. The plan was to begin training with a new Mixed Ability Team in Bantry Bay RFC for the coming season.

Since joining the European Erasmus+ Project MIXAR, the development and growth of Mixed Ability Rugby in Ireland has been fast tracked. With the support of the IRFU, new teams are starting up and the Mixed Ability ethos is being experienced by many more players around the country.

The new team started training in early September 2019 and the Rebels promised to visit as soon as they were up and running. On Wednesday evening, 25th September, Rebels coaches, players, physio, medic and kit man all drove in convoy to Bantry Bay RFC in West Cork for a joint Mixed Ability training session. Rebels Head Coach Maeve D'Arcy had a taster session planned out and both teams joined together

for a great nights training. The players went through skills, fitness, contact and game play. Everyone worked hard on the pitch but there were smiles all around during the session.

Bantry Bay RFC put on a superb spread after the match with all involved getting the chance to socialise off the pitch while being fed and watered! Players got to share their experiences and coaches from both clubs had the opportunity to chat and discuss Mixed Ability Rugby.

The Rebels look forward to welcoming Bantry Bay RFC Mixed Ability Team up to Cork City later in the season.



Rugby & values

Rebels Pack Christmas Shoe Boxes for Cork Penny Dinners



The Rebels began a Facebook appeal during November to collect clothes and toiletries for Cork Penny Dinners shoe box appeal. Cork Penny Dinners are a local charity that help the homeless and those in need. They serve approximately 2000 hot meals every week. They have a shoe box appeal for Christmas and the Rebels will take time out from training on Friday 6th December to pack and box up what they have collected over the last few weeks.

Special mention must go to Gemma O'Flynn for organising the charity drive as well as the packing on the night. After the Rebels Christmas Appeal for Rugby Gear for Belarus last year, it's great to get another chance to give back for the season of good will, this time to a local charity!



Spanish Clubs join the MIXAR movement

New Mixed Ability teams are starting all around the country



Sanse Scrum, from everyone and for everyone "is not a phrase or a topic, it is the basis of a project and work methodology based on Sanse Scrum Club, in Madrid. The objective is to offer the real possibility of practicing rugby to all people who are interested in participating and knowing a new sport.

Since 2018-2019 season they are promoting an inclusive rugby team, where people with functional diversity can learn and enjoy rugby as one more. They want to provide a model that increases the participation of people with disabilities in sports clubs, as well as making visible the importance of inclusive sport in the general population.

The technical director and the coaches that are part of their team of professionals, will ensure to develop an integration methodology, treating with respect and equality all the members of our school and offering a close and trustworthy environment.

They are establishing agreements with both national and foreign clubs to organize sport events that help the growth of inclusive sports. As well, at the end of the season all the different categories of the club will travel during a whole weekend to compete in the Championships of Spain and / or make a tour to other Spanish locations, in order to reward the work of a whole year.

The inclusive rugby project is aimed at all those people over 4 years with disabilities who wants to learn and enjoy training, teammates and rugby in a normalized and integrate context.

Also in Catalonia, Unio Esportiva Santboiana is starting their own team as Rugby Fenix is doing in Aragón... MIXAR rugby is starting to take off in Spain and we are delighted!!

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