

Sport Unlimited Case Study



Fit for Rugby in Tees Valley

Fit Rugby, a Sport Unlimited programme delivered by the Rugby Football Union in partnership with Tees Valley Sport has enabled young people to experience rugby and get fit at the same time.

The programme

The sessions are held in Middlesborough, Hartlepool, Stockton, Billingham, Redcar and Guisborough have proved popular with young people aged 11-13. The sessions are all fun based and focus upon basic ball skills, contact work and small sided rugby style games. The Fit Rugby programme is designed to be relatively intensive to keep young people engaged and interested. Dave Reed, Teeside Rugby Development Officer said: "Young people mainly enjoyed the game related drills and practices which keep them entertained".



Partnerships with Rugby clubs

The programme is cleverly structured with five or six sessions organised in schools from 3.15pm - 4.15pm while the rest are delivered in rugby clubs from 6.15pm - 7.15pm. Acklam Rugby Club are one such club who have supported and benefited from the programme and its approach. The positive response from young people has enabled them to recruit 30 new members.

Advantages of Rugby

One of the main advantages of the sport according to Dave Reed is that Rugby appeals to different types of young people in terms of size, weight and varying physiological strengths. Rugby is therefore an ideal starting point for all young people to become interested in sport. Also, the funding and facilities strategy established by the RFU has meant that local resources are in place to cater for any surge in demand which may take place in future.



Fit Rugby Successes

Dave Reed was also pleased with the response of semi and non sporty participants. He estimated that these two groupings contributed to 60% of young people who attended. Some of these have progressed to become members at local clubs. This is still a work in progress according to Dave Reed as his aim is to increase the amount of Sport Unlimited participants who join clubs during 2009. He said: "Our aim for this year is to increase the amount of young people who move into clubs. We also intend to analyse the percentage of young people who go onto clubs from school sessions." Another success of the programme was that it attracted a great deal of female participants. Due to this demand bids are now being submitted to ensure that specific female sessions are organised during 2009.

Funding

Fit Rugby has mainly been funded through Sports Unlimited and this money has been important in allowing more young people to experience Rugby. Also the RFU have organised extra sessions and therefore shown a great deal of support alongside the community sports network to make this program successful.

***"High quality delivery by National Governing Bodies is at the heart of Sport England's strategy. It's great to see Rugby Union playing a key role in Sport Unlimited."
Phil Veasey, Head of Children and Young People.***



Please email Louise Trillo at L.Trillo@tees.ac.uk for more information regarding Sport Unlimited.

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