


RUGBY ATL 2023 MEDIA KIT



**THE NEW SOUTH.
PUNCHING ABOVE OUR WEIGHT.
UNMISTAKABLE.
UNAPOLOGETIC.
INFLUENTIAL.
WE ARE RUGBY ATL.**

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Atlanta is like no other place on earth.
Because Atlanta relentlessly tries.
For greatness.
For progress.
For culture.
For community.

For anyone who has ever dreamed
This place could be their place.

At the end of the day,
If there's only one thing the
world remembers about us:
Atlanta. Always. Tries.

We are Rugby ATL.
We are Try City.

2023 SCHEDULE



FEB. 4 (4:30PM): PRESEASON MATCH VS UTAH

FEB 17 7:00PM	TORONTO ARROWS	APR 22 3:00PM	NEW ENGLAND FREE JACKS
FEB 24 10:30PM	SEATTLE SEAWOLVES	MAY 06 6:00PM	CHICAGO RUGBY
MAR 04 6:00PM	NOLA GOLD	MAY 12 7:00PM	TORONTO ARROWS
MAR 18 6:00PM	SAN DIEGO LEGION	MAY 20 12:00PM	DALLAS JACKALS
MAR 25 8:00PM	HOUSTON SABERCATS	MAY 27 9:30PM	UTAH WARRIORS
APR 02 3:00PM	RUGBY NEW YORK	JUN 02 7:00PM	NEW ENGLAND FREE JACKS
APR 08 6:00PM	OLD GLORY DC	JUN 10 8:00PM	RUGBY NEW YORK
APR 15 8:00PM	NOLA GOLD	JUN 17 7:00PM	OLD GLORY DC

HOME MATCH THEMES

■ HOME □ AWAY

GAMES IN EST. GAME TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
ALL HOME MATCHES PLAYED AT SILVERBACKS PARK, ATLANTA

FEB. 17
WELCOME PARTY @ THE PITCH

MAR. 4
COLLEGE NIGHT

MAR. 18
BARK IN THE PARK

APR. 8
CELEBRATE ATL

MAY 6
FAMILY DAY / KIDS TAKEOVER

MAY 20
MILITARY/FIRST RESPONDERS


JUN. 2
DECADES PARTY/DRESS YOUR BIRTH DECADE

JUN. 10
AROUND THE WORLD

SOCIALS

 INSTAGRAM: [@rugbyatl](https://www.instagram.com/rugbyatl)

 FACEBOOK: [@rugbyatl](https://www.facebook.com/rugbyatl)

 YOUTUBE: [@rugbyatl6659](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6659)

 TWITTER: [@rugbyatl](https://twitter.com/rugbyatl)

 TIKTOK: [@rugbyatl](https://www.tiktok.com/@rugbyatl)

 LINKEDIN: [@rugby-atl](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rugby-atl)



PRESS CONTACT

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William Raymond Communications

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Rugby 101

School's in session. The rules of rugby are simple: bring the ball to your opponent's side and ensure the ball makes contact with the ground. The only problem is all the people in your way. In rugby, unlike football, players don't wear padding and helmets.

Humble Beginnings

According to legend, in 1823, William Webb Ellis picked up a soccer ball during a game of soccer and ran it to the opposing team's goal. This is against the rules of soccer, but it birthed an entirely new sport: rugby. Now, it's played internationally and is largely considered the precursor to American football.

How to play

Rugby ATL plays 15s Rugby, which is when there are eight forward players and seven backward players on the pitch. The pitch is the field where the play takes place—it's 100 meters, which is about 109 yards for us Americans. Each half of a game is 40 minutes.

To go forward in rugby, you have to throw backward or sideways. Players can run or kick a ball forward. On defense, it's only possible to tackle someone if they have the ball. Tackling in rugby is safer and more efficient than what we're used to seeing in American Football. The NFL has even been taking a page from rugby technique to make football safer.

When the ball is outside of play, the game can be restarted with a line-out. You've probably seen rugby teams lifting a player into the air to catch a ball. This is a line-out! It's like a lifting competition for possession of the ball.

If there's a foul or someone breaks the laws (rules) of the game, play can be restarted with a scrum, which is when both teams' forward lines push against each other to try and gain possession of the ball. In a scrum, the ball is on the ground, where both teams are trying to push each other and also use their feet to get the ball on their side.

Scoring

There are four ways to score in rugby:

1. Try - 5 points

A player takes the ball over the goal line of the opposing team and the ball makes contact with the ground.

2. Conversion - 2 points

After a try, like in football, teams can choose to go for a conversion and kick the ball through the goalposts in line with where the try was scored.

3. Penalty Kick - 3 points

If the opposing team commits a foul, it's possible to go for a penalty kick through the goalposts.

4. Drop Kick - 3 points

At any point and any place in the field, teams can choose to make a kick through the goalposts. The ball has to make contact with the ground before it can be kicked.



MUST-KNOW TERMS

Ball back: where play is restarted after a ball left the field of play

Conversion: kicking the ball between the posts and above the crossbar after a try for two additional points

Dropkick: a method of scoring three points at any point in the game; the ball must touch the ground before it is kicked and it must go between the posts and above the crossbar

Foul play: when the laws of rugby are deliberately broken

Goal: when a player kicks a ball through the goalposts and above the crossbar

Hand-off (fend): a ball carrier using an arm to keep a tackler away; the ball carrier's arm must be straight before contact

Kick-off: a coin toss whose winning captain chooses which direction to play or if the game will start with a kick

Laws: the word for rules in rugby

Line-out: used to restart play after the ball goes out of play; each team lines up parallel between the five and fifteen-meter lines; the hooker throws the ball straight on the line and each team can lift jumpers to gain possession of the ball

Line-out code: a coded signal meant to conceal the team's intentions for line-out

Mark: where play will begin after a stoppage; can also be where a clean catch is made and the player who caught the ball will call out "mark"

MUST-KNOW TERMS

Penalty: if a referee spots dangerous play, offsides, or any breaking of the laws, they'll put their arm straight in the air to signal a penalty; players can also be awarded yellow and red cards

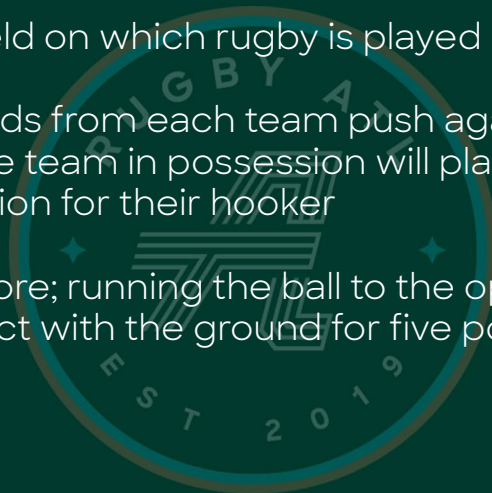
Penalty Kick: when the opposing team commits a foul, teams can choose to kick for a goal

Penalty Try: if the referee determines that a try was illegally prevented, he will award the team with five points under the goalposts, which is also an opportunity for conversion

Pitch: the 100-meter field on which rugby is played

Scrum: the eight forwards from each team push against each other; the scrum-half from the team in possession will place the ball into the scrum at the best position for their hooker

Try: the main way to score; running the ball to the opposing team's in-goal area and making contact with the ground for five points



POSITIONS

Center: players wearing numbers twelve and thirteen; this position is divided between inside and outside center, where the players tend to be strong runners and defensive tacklers

Flanker: wearing the numbers six and seven; players with less clear roles than the others, but therefore generally good all-rounders; very often the center of the action

Fly-half: the player wearing number ten; this player makes tactical decisions throughout the game and is usually the kicker

Fullback: the players wearing jersey number fifteen; they're the last line of defense and need to juggle a lot of roles including catching high balls and responding with similarly long-range kicks

Hooker: players wearing the number two shirt; they are the center position of the front row of a scrum; a demanding and more dangerous position

Lock: players wearing four and five; generally tall and good jumpers; typical targets in line-outs and good for making holes in defense

Number Eight: known by the number on their shirt, this player works with the scrum half on scrums and rucks; they will decide to pass a ball out or push forward in scrums

Prop: players wearing shirts numbered one and three; support the hooker in the scrum and must be big and strong

Scrum-half: the players wearing number nine; they link the forwards and the backs and maintain movement of the ball; they feed the ball into scrums and collect them afterward

Wing: players wearing eleven and fourteen; fast runners and able to avoid tackling; they are vital to moving the ball forward with good handling skills

RUGBY ATL HISTORY

Established in 2019, Rugby ATL is Atlanta's professional Major League Rugby team, North America's professional rugby union. The team plays at Silverbacks Park in Atlanta, Georgia. Their premier 2020 season was cut short due to the pandemic, but 2021 proved the potential the young club has, quickly becoming one of the most successful in Major League Rugby as they advanced to the Major League Rugby Final. In their third, most recent season as an organization, the team reached the Eastern Conference Eliminator in the Major League Rugby playoffs. Sporting little turnover from the 2022 to the 2023 season, Rugby ATL hopes to defend its identity as a strong defensive team and cement itself as a team to beat in MLR.



CULTURE

Colors

Green, blue, and peach with black and white accents create a strong balance between boldness and clarity. Try City Green is strong and foundational, representing the canopy of Atlanta trees and the foundation of the game—the pitch. Accented with Electric Blue and Georgia Peach, the two secondary colors symbolize the bright streak of energy in the city and the famed symbol of the state Rugby ATL calls home. New gameday kits will be the signature Try City Green for home matches and So Fresh & So Clean White while on the road.



Logo

The North Star of the South. Our city guides our region. The four-pointed star – a recurring symbol throughout Rugby ATL branding – represents Atlanta being the beacon of the south, the North Star to guide us. Its fluid lines make the A appear alive and, upon a second glance, the “T” and “L” become apparent. This symbolizes the spirit of teamwork that is so vital to the game of rugby and how each individual moves as an essential part of the whole.



PACE

People, Accountability, Change and Execution. The number four represents Rugby ATL's core values that run together to bring our story to life. We are stronger together.

Rugby ATL celebrates the inclusive and diverse nature of rugby that comes naturally to a game that requires a spectrum of skills, body types, and temperaments. In this way, it will meld well with the North American spirit and, of course, Atlanta's tapestry of talent.



MAJOR LEAGUE RUGBY

Major League Rugby is a professional sports league entering its sixth season that represents the highest level of rugby competition in North America. The League evolved from seven teams in 2018 to 12 teams in 2023, featuring 11 from the United States and one from Canada. Matches are televised on Fox Sports, among other national and local market platforms. Select matches are available to stream live in North America on The Rugby Network, and all matches are available on The Rugby Network for international fans. MLR prides itself in fostering intense and high-stakes competition, while bringing together a passionate community built on the values of Respect, Inclusivity, and Tradition.



WHERE WE PLAY

Silverbacks Park
3200 Atlanta Silverbacks Way
Atlanta, GA 30340



Silverbacks Park is located in Atlanta, Georgia, and houses 3,588 seats. It is the home venue of Rugby ATL.

Tailgating for the 2023 season will take place in the Main/South lots. Additional parking is available in the Blue and Peach lots. Parking is \$5 on gameday, however, it is limited, so ridesharing is encouraged.

Blue Lot: Business District (Parking Only) along the NE Expressway Access Road

Peach Lot: Peachtree Inn & Suites (Parking & Tailgating) 4275 Northeast Expy Doraville, GA 30340

WHERE TO WATCH

FEBRUARY 17	TSN THE RUGBY NETWORK	APRIL 22	NBCSB THE RUGBY NETWORK
FEBRUARY 24	ROOT SPORTS THE RUGBY NETWORK	MAY 06	MARQUEE SPORTS NETWORK THE RUGBY NETWORK
MARCH 04	YURVIEW THE RUGBY NETWORK	MAY 12	TSN THE RUGBY NETWORK
MARCH 18	FOX 5 THE RUGBY NETWORK	MAY 20	FS1
MARCH 25	AT&T SPORTSNET THE RUGBY NETWORK	MAY 27	KMYU THE RUGBY NETWORK
APRIL 02	MSG THE RUGBY NETWORK	JUNE 02	NBCSB THE RUGBY NETWORK
APRIL 08	THE RUGBY NETWORK	JUNE 10	FS2
APRIL 15	FS2	JUNE 17	THE RUGBY NETWORK

ATL RUGBY GIVES BACK

The Rugby ATL Foundation is focused on supporting its community, empowering the youth, and providing education through rugby and its core values. The foundation runs youth programs throughout Georgia and the South East region through its partnerships with Memphis Inner City Rugby, Atlanta United Academy, and Cobb YMBA.

The main objective of The Rugby ATL Foundation is to use rugby to give under-served children the opportunity to develop into future leaders using the team's core P.A.C.E. values. P stands for People, A for Accountability, C for Change, and E for Execution.

On top of creating spaces for rugby, Rugby ATL Foundation has partnered with the Children's Hospital of Atlanta, Marietta Food Bank, and Truth in Nature. They have given their time and resources to help enrich the community.

Contact:

Mark Carney

Chief Executive Officer, Rugby ATL Foundation

mcarney@rugbyatl.rugby



STAFF



Amanda Windsor White
President, Business Operations

Amanda Windsor White is the President of Rugby ATL, where she leads Major League Rugby as the first female president in league history. Her experience includes combining sports and entertainment in the areas of brand strategy, activation and licensing content development, and event management. Before joining Rugby ATL, Windsor White was the Senior Sports Marketing Manager at The Coca-Cola Company. Prior, she served as the Vice President, Experiences for Endeavor, a global sports, and entertainment company. During her seven years with Endeavor, Windsor White also held roles as the Director of Client Hospitality (WME | IMG) and Director of National Events & Entertainment (IMG College). She started her career at AmericasMart Atlanta, followed by Octagon Marketing North America.

Windsor White earned a Master of Business Administration in 2018 from Emory University's Goizueta Business School and a Bachelor's Degree in Sports Marketing from Ohio University. She is an Executive Board Member of the Giving Kitchen, a nonprofit organization providing emergency assistance to the members of the Atlanta restaurant community.

Rajpal Sagoo
Chief Information Officer

Josh Le
Director, Corporate
Partnerships and Marketing

Nikki Worthy
Director, Ticket
and Premium Sales

Bryce France
Photographer and
Creative Director

Shannon Leach
Operations Manager

Boston Brown
Manager, Group Sales

Brooke Aumer
Coordinator, Events and
Partnerships

Kyle Soto
Coordinator, Social Media
and Marketing

COACHES



Steve Brett
Head Coach

A former New Zealand rugby union player, Steve is now Head Coach at Rugby ATL. He played as a back for the Crusaders, New Zealand's professional rugby union and the most successful in Super 14's history, and later on for the Blues. He's also played for Tokyo Verblitz in Japan and France for Bayonne. After playing, he decided to use his know-how to coach, starting with the Colorado Raptors and now as head coach here in Atlanta.

Blake Bradford
Assistant Head Coach

Lucas Baistrocchi
Strength and Conditioning,
Skills Coach

Zac Schner
Lead Athletic Trainer

Ryszard Chadwick
Assistant Coach

Brian Roberts
Athletic Trainer

Anja Enstrom
Athletic Trainer

Mark Carney
Director, Rugby Operations

Kevin Piland
Director of Rehabilitation



ALEX MAUGHAN

Age : 27
Position : Prop
Height : 5'10"
Weight : 260

Alex Maughan's nickname is "Old Man" because, according to him, he's the oldest 27-year-old you'll ever meet. He started playing rugby at eight years old. The motto of rugby: "Anybody can play, we all essentially do the same thing. Kick, run, and pass," inspired him since he thinks of himself as a jack-of-all-trades. In college, he was a three-time All-American player, played with the USA select team three times, and won the 2016 National Championship with Life University. He loves to spend time with his two kids, Milly and Maverick, and his wife outside of rugby.



AUSTIN WHITE

Age : 28
Position : Wing/Full-back
Height : 6'
Weight : 205

Austin White found rugby after playing college football for four years. He had played for a season in high school before, but other than that, he was new to the sport. Despite this, he played for the USA 7s Falcons and has traveled to South America to play, as well. He misses his family in Tulsa, Oklahoma where he grew up, but he values all the fun he's having, as well as the time he gets to spend with his twins and girlfriend. After rugby, he'd like to helm a clothing brand someday, since he is currently the general manager of a printing company where he screenprints.



BEN STRANG

Age : 23
Position : Hooker
Height : 5'10
Weight : 220

Hailing from Wanganui, New Zealand, Strang proudly represents his town in rugby. He's never shied away from this goal, starting at age five and making the NZ schools' rugby team. He has his eyes on education too, studying sports development at Massey University. He'll even be working on term papers this season. A man of many interests, he also plays golf and cricket, surfs, and enjoys rewatching The Office.



DAEMON TORRES

Age : 26
Position : Number8/Flanker
Height : 6'3
Weight : 240

Daemon Torres is from Austin, Texas where he played both football and rugby growing up. He appreciates the collaborative quality of rugby and credits its values for shaping him into a team-oriented person. In 2017, he competed in the USA U20 Rugby team and he's been with Rugby ATL since 2021. He's very proud of his Mexican-American heritage and wears his last name on his arm for every game. His family is just as important to him and he sees his parents as his heroes. He also has a wiener dog named Bubba.



DUNCAN VAN SCHALKWYK

Age : 26
Position : Scrumhalf
Height : 5'9
Weight : 175

Duncan Van Schalkwyk has been attacked by a lion before, but that's not even the most interesting thing about him. He's felt connected to rugby from a young age in South Africa, where he was born and raised. From then on, he's had success in the rugby world from playing U20s All-American, being a three-time collegiate All-American, winning the National Championship three times, as well as traveling with the USA National Team to Argentina, Chile, and South Africa. He also holds a degree in Exercise Science, with his doctorate in chiropractic imminent. One day, he hopes to have his own practice.



EVAN CONLON

Age : 23
Position : Scrumhalf
Height : 5'9
Weight : 185

Evan Conlon discovered his passion for rugby in The Woodlands, Texas where the people he first played with helped him fall in love with the game. Conlon also spent a decade of his childhood in Taiwan. If he weren't a U23 All-American Player and 7s National Champion, he thinks he might be a soccer star. He plans to become a nurse practitioner and he's already on his way with his BS in Biology.



FREDERICK HENRY-AJUDUA

Age : 29
Position : Lock/Back Row
Height : 6'3
Weight : 253

Frederick Henry-Ajudua's introduction to rugby was a little unconventional. He started playing to stay in shape after playing in the NFL for the Jacksonville Jaguars and the CFL for the Montreal Alouettes. He was born and raised in Nigeria and moved to the US with his family when he was 16. His father is his hero and always described the US as the "land of the free and the land of opportunity." Henry-Ajudua has never let a great opportunity pass him by. He has been on the honor roll for the past three years at Life University, was an All-American Football player, and has won the ARP twice. Beyond his schooling and athletic achievements, he's active with his family's charity, Vebron Carre, which helps families in need.



GEORGE BARTON

Age : 25
Position : Center (inside center)
Height : 6'1
Weight : 240

George Barton, or King George as he's known on the pitch, is from Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, British Columbia on the west coast of Canada. He's very passionate about his home, which he describes as a beautiful part of the world. At three years of age, he joined the Cowichan Rugby Club's Junior Piggy Program, following in the footsteps of his father who played for Canada. He's made a name for himself as Captain of Canada U20 in 2018 and as a member of the Seattle Seawolves in their back-to-back Championship seasons from 2018-2019. Barton is a real outdoorsman and enjoys hiking, biking, and working on his family's 60-acre hobby farm in the off-season.



HARLEY DAVIDSON

Age : 28
Position : Wing
Height : 5'9"
Weight : 185

Harley Davidson may share a name with the famed motorcycle company, but he also has made a name for himself in the rugby world. In college, he was an All-American and MLR: Player Varsity. Davidson also came back from an ACL injury in 2016 to have his best college season, winning the National Championship and being named MVP that year! He's from Boise, Idaho where he said he learned a lot of life lessons and where he credits the values that helped make him the man he is on and off the field.



ISAAC BALES

Age : 23
Position : Hooker
Height : 5'9"
Weight : 245

First in his family to play rugby, Isaac Bales is from Glenwood, a small farm town in Iowa. He learned to appreciate hard work and dedication from his tight-knit community. He's captained six different teams throughout his high school and college years. Outside of rugby, he has a degree and several certificates in various welding processes, though he plans on training to be a first responder after playing. He enjoys hunting, fishing, camping, and playing the ukulele, and has an impressive knowledge of musicals and Disney music.



JACK SHAW

Age : 22
Position : Center/Wing
Height : 6'2
Weight : 205

Jack Shaw's rugby roots stretch back to his grandad who played for the London Irish. Shaw is from England originally, but he moved to Canada in 2010. During his rugby career, he's been honored with the 2018 Rugby 2nd Team All-Star, 2018 Bishops University Rookie of the Year, and captain of the Bishops University Rugby Team in 2021 and 2022. He's also played for Canada U20 against Portugal, as well as Canada's 7s Team. He loves being outdoors, especially when he's boating and snowboarding.



JORDAN BROWN

Age : 23
Position : Lock
Height : 6'7
Weight : 260

An attendee of The Kings School in Sydney, on scholarship to Leeds Beckett University in England, and playing in Australia against Argentina as well as the Waratahs A against the Brumbie Runners, Brown's resume is expansive and impressive. Outside of rugby, he makes films and holds a degree from Leeds Beckett in filmmaking. He will continue his filmmaking career after rugby.



JASON DAMM

Age : 27
Position : Number 8/Blindside Flanker
Height : 6'4
Weight : 250

Jason Damm loves that rugby is the kind of sport where anyone, regardless of shape and size, is welcome. He has been playing rugby since his senior year of high school. From there, he won ACR Freshman of the Year at Clemson University, All-Americans, 2nd team All MLR, and Execution Award for Rugby ATL. He played for the Glendale Raptors in 2019 and for Rugby ATL since 2020. Damm has many talents beyond rugby including bass guitar, cooking, and baking. He has also published two papers on his expertise: salamanders.



JOHAN MOMSEN

Age : 27
Position : Lock/Back Row
Height : 6'4"
Weight : 250

Johan Momsen is a team player through and through. He loves the camaraderie and team aspect of rugby. He hopes to share this passion with the youth through coaching someday. Momsen's father played rugby, sparking his interest as a toddler. As a professional, he played in the National Provincial Championship, was Western Province Club Rugby Player of the Year in 2018 for the University of Stellenbosch, and was the MLR/Rugby ATL Player of the Year in 2021. Beyond rugby, Momsen is an avid singer and loves being active in choir as well as playing the guitar.



JOHN-ROY JENKINSON

Age : 31
Position : Prop
Height : 5'9"
Weight : 295

John-Roy Jenkinson started his rugby journey in his hometown of Cape Town, South Africa. He played U20s with South Africa and the Sharks, Blue Bulls, and Leopards—all South African professional teams. These days, he plays with Munakata Sanix Blues in Japan's Top League as well as Rugby ATL. He speaks three languages and loves being outdoors.



JONAS PETRAKOPOULOUS

Age : 24
Position : Prop
Height : 5'11"
Weight : 240

Jonas Petrakopoulos was born in Amsterdam but hails from Indiana, where he says you learn a lot of hard-working blue-collar values. These translate well to the rugby world, where he played for the Royal Irish, winning High School Rugby Championships in 2014, 2015, and 2017. He played for SAS Rugby in 2018 and Greeton Marist and Ngawha in 2019. In 2020, he returned to the USA to play for RUNY. Now, he's with Rugby ATL!



KURT COLEMAN

Age : 32
Position : Fly-Half
Height : 5'10
Weight : 185

Kurt Coleman hates his middle name and went pro at 19. He felt nervous coming off the bench to debut since rugby is such a big deal in his home country of South Africa. One day when he's not playing professionally anymore, he'd like to coach and maybe open a side business.



LINCOLN SII

Age : 25
Position : Tighthead/Loosehead
Height : 6'
Weight : 275

Born in Japan and raised in San Diego, Lincoln Sii was 2022's Most Improved Player. He's known as Linc on the pitch and started playing in college where he studied electrical engineering. He quickly proved his worth and signed with Rugby ATL. Sii even ran 80 meters for a try once!



MARTINI TALAPUSI

Age : 28
Position : Full-Back
Height : 6'1"
Weight : 217

Martini Talapusi is part of a family of rugby players, with his dad, younger brother, and even his fiancée playing in the professional rugby space. Talapusi is a New Zealand native and served as captain of Samoa U18s and U20s. Beyond rugby, he has a commercial pilot's license and enjoys activities on the ground like hiking and camping too.



MATT GELHAUS

Age : 22
Position : Lock
Height : 6'5"
Weight : 238

Matt Gelhaus is an outdoorsman at heart; he loves camping, hiking, canoeing, rafting, and, of course, rugby. Growing up, he played lots of sports in Cincinnati, Ohio, where the rugby community is strong and nurtured his love for the sport. Gelhaus has been selected to play with the USA U18, U20, and U23 as well as playing with the international US team U18, U20, and U23s. He's also passionate about men's health awareness and is a big supporter of the Movember initiative.



MATT HEATON

Age : 29
Position : Openside Flanker
Height : 6'2"
Weight : 224

Matt Heaton is from Canada and knew nothing about rugby until he tried it out in high school. He's been playing it ever since. Since he played in Canada, he was able to easily travel to the US and UK to help grow his rugby career. He was Canadian Player of the Year in 2017 and 2019. He also won the Rugby World in 2019. Heaton has an interest in cyber security and a passion for learning new things, so he plans to return to school someday.



NAHUEL MILAN

Age : 25
Position : Lock
Height : 6'7
Weight : 268

Ever since Milan was eight in Buenos Aires, Argentina, he knew rugby was for him. Since then, he's participated in Pumitas Junior Rugby World Cup Games and played for Argentina XV. For the 2019-2020 season, he played in Italy with Lazio Rugby. In 2021 and 2022, he played with Peñarol in the Super Liga de Americana. His plans after rugby are still rugby-focused, be that coaching or anything that relates to the game! In his local club, his friends call him "chiqui", meaning small, though he is pretty big!



NOLAN TUAMOHELOA

Age : 24
Position : Wing
Height : 6'
Weight : 195

Nolan Tuamoheloa started rugby in 5th grade and has been playing ever since. In college, he won Man of the Match in The Rocky Mountain 7s and was recently called up for two tours with the US 7s team to Hong Kong and Dubai. He plans to return home to American Samoa and serve the community, maybe as a police officer.



REWITA BIDDLE

Age : 24
Position : Fly-half
Height : 5'11
Weight : 180

Fly-half Rewita Biddle has been playing rugby since the tender age of five and has several honors under his belt: Opotiki College 2015 Player of the Year, 2016 St. Peter's Cambridge Top Senior and Top Male Athletics, 2018 Raro 7s Player of the Tournament, 2019 BOP Mens Premiership Competition Player of the Year, 2022 Western Australia Club Competition Top Try Scorer, 2022 Palmyra RFC Player of the Year, and 2022 Singapore 7s Player of the Tournament. Beyond all of these accomplishments, Rewita has several hobbies including traveling, camping, diving for seafood, making art and music, and various sports—especially surfing, which he thinks he'd be doing professionally if not for rugby.



ROSS DEACON

Age : 28
Position : Forward
Height : 6'2"
Weight : 255

Ross Deacon is from Ireland, where rugby reigns as one of the biggest sports. It was this countrywide interest and his parents bringing him to a local rugby club as a kid that made him into the player he is today. He played for the US in the U24 Cup in France in 2013 and, in 2016, he moved to the US where he's been a strong forward on the Austin Elite, RONY, and now Rugby ATL. In his free time, he golfs and has run charity marathons for cystic fibrosis in honor of his friend who battles the disease.



ROWAN GOUWS

Age : 27
Position : Scrum Half
Height : 5'9"
Weight : 180

Rowan Gouws grew up playing rugby in his native South Africa, where it's wildly popular. He feels lucky to have had the chance to play professionally for his home country. He played for the Eastern Province Elephants and was proud to be part of Rugby ATL's debut season, winning the Eastern Conference and heading to the finals! After rugby, he plans to put his business degree to use and work with the family engineering business, run a coffee business, and help his wife open a salon.



RYAN REES

Age : 25
Position : Scrumhalf
Height : 5'10
Weight : 170

Ryan Rees is the first in his family to start playing rugby and started later than some in his junior year of high school. He wasn't even planning on playing more, but he met Life University's coach at a tournament and the rest is history. During his time at University, he won the MVP award and also won two National Championships at Life University.



SETH PURDEY

Age : 24
Position : Fullback/Center
Height : 6'0
Weight : 200

Seth is from the land of hockey, Prince George, British Columbia. He was there for a decade before relocating to Vancouver Island. Though he spent a lot of his athletic career on the ice, he found rugby in the much more favorable climate of Vancouver Island and never looked back, fully transitioning to rugby in college. He's represented his province and his country from U16-U20, as well as various age-grade teams. Beyond his skills on the field, Purdey also graduated from the University of California-Berkeley with majors in history and urban studies. He's interested in commercial real estate or law after his time playing.



TE RANGATIRA WAITOKIA

Age : 26
Position : Wing/Full-back
Height : 5'11
Weight : 200

Te Rangatira Waitokia has been playing rugby for as long as he can remember. It's only natural since he was born and raised in New Zealand, where rugby is the number one sport in the country. He was the 2016 Heartland Player of the year, which was a memorable game for him since he was playing for his hometown where his family was watching. When Te, as he's called on the pitch, isn't playing rugby, he's playing golf, video games, basketball, poker, or hanging out with friends.



TIAAN ERASMUS

Age : 26
Position : Hooker
Height : 6'1
Weight : 230

Tiaan Erasmus comes from the land of rugby, South Africa. His father used to play, so it was only natural that he also found himself passionate about the sport. He was named team captain for his college team, going on to play for many of South Africa's professional teams. Erasmus eventually made it to the US in 2019 to play for the Austin Elite, the Austin Gilgronis in 2020, and the Houston Sabercats in 2021. Now, with Rugby ATL, he continues his career. Erasmus also boxed until he was 20, choosing rugby in the end.



VILIAMI HELU

Age : 26
Position : Blindside Flanker
Height : 6'4
Weight : 235

Viliami Helu was inspired by his dad, who played for the US Eagles in the Rugby World Cup and started playing rugby at 13 in Danville, California where he grew up. His dad coached him when he was young and he had the chance to get to know his dad's teammates. These connections built a network of rugby coaching and mentorship early on. In college, he was an All-American twice and toured with the All-Americans to Queensland, Australia. He's been a part of the Rugby ATL team since 2020. He and his wife support two missionaries in Thailand and a few in Mexico where they help build homes.



WIKUS GROENEWALD

Age : 26
Position : Prop
Height : 6'2"
Weight : 270

Wikus Groenewald is a South African native whose interest in rugby was the biggest influence in his life and helped him get into the high school of his choice and, eventually, to America. He has won the 2017 Bronze Medal in the Junior World Cup South Africa, the National Title U21, and Runner-up in the 2021 MLR season. He played the Currie Cup, South Africa's premier rugby competition, for both the Leopards and Pumas before coming on to Rugby ATL. Groenewald has a passion for hiking, road trips, and ecology, which he says Georgia is the perfect place for.



WILLIAM BURKE

Age : 27
Position : Tighthead Prop
Height : 6'0
Weight : 250

William Burke is a Buffalo, NY native and has played with Rugby ATL since 2021. He was All-Conference twice and a Collegiate All-American nominee. After graduating from the University of Buffalo, he played for the Buffalo Rugby Club and then went on to Northern Ireland where he played with Lurgan Rugby Football Club. He is passionate about health and wants to open a chiropractic office with his girlfriend in the future.



WILL LEONARD

Age : 27
Position : Center
Height : 6'2
Weight : 220

Will Leonard is originally from Ireland but found himself in Atlanta with the team after a lifetime of rugby. He began at the age of six with the Shannon Rugby Club where his younger brother now plays. He was Player of the Year for the Shannon Rugby Club and was nominated for Provincial Player of the Year in Ireland. In the US, he's played with RUNY for three seasons and is in his second season with Rugby ATL.

2023 PARTNERS

Barbour Orthopaedics returns as the team's Official Medical Provider for its fourth year while Silverbacks Park is back as the Official Pitch Partner. A mix of national and local sponsors have renewed their support of Rugby ATL, including Coca-Cola United, BODYARMOR, Prima Atlanta, H-Factor Water, Revolution Chiropractic, and PlayerData.

Terrapin Brewing Company is new to Rugby ATL this season, signing on as the Official Craft Beer Partner for the team. Terrapin will be highlighted this year in the NEW Terrapin Terrace VIP space for fans, as well as hosting all official away match watch parties at their Terrapin's Atlanta Brewery and Taproom. Other new local, national and international partners for this season include Arrow Exterminators, Veldskoen Shoes, Elastoplast taping products, Unsukay Restaurant Group, Grinds Coffee Pouches, Aramis Rugby training equipment, OddBalls underwear, Budgie Smugglers swimwear, and Riddley Commercial Cleaning, Tito's Handmade Vodka, University of Wollongong, Post Meridien canned cocktails, Georgia Natural Gas, Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Atlanta, and Café I Am.