

Lismore RFC are back in business on the pitch

Children and young people under 17 have been allowed to play outdoor contact sport since 13 July 2020, and Lismore RFC were quick to gather their teams on the training pitch.

They have put the necessary public health measures in place and recruited a Covid-19 coordinator to take charge of this. They followed Scottish Rugby's return to rugby guidance in all of this, with advice for all players, coaches and club administrators.

The young players are now back on the pitch at Inch Park Community Sports Club although they have been active online during the past few months too. They raised funds for the Royal Blind Care Home, and collected supplies for the Edinburgh SE food bank. They also ran CV writing workshops for their young members, and they reached out across the world to their Australian counterparts who share the same name.



Training session at the Lismore Rugby club
photographs by Alan Peebles

They created the Lismore 2 Lismore challenge which involved a virtual race running, cycling and walking the distance between the two club houses.

The club's Youth Development Officer, Eric Jones, says doing what they could to help the local community and stay engaged

with its players was vital for the club.

He said: "The kids were delighted to see each other again and be able to throw a ball about. We've tried to get across the community ethos during lockdown. We've tried to stay engaged with everyone. We know we're a rugby club but we always want to be a bit more than that, we want to develop people as well as rugby players, that goes for supporting family members as well. That is a key message we wanted to get across.

"The challenge started as a way of engaging our youth players with some School of Rugby outcomes during lockdown. It has been important to Lismore to get the message across that we were still here to support all our players, club members and their families despite the current restrictions.

"The two main aims of the challenge were to help improving participant's physical fitness, and support wellbeing and mental health. Our youth players contributed over 1,000 miles to the challenge and have reported to our post-challenge survey that taking part in Lismore 2 Lismore has improved their wellbeing and mental health."

Scottish Government National Clinical Director Jason Leitch said: "Being physically active is obviously important for our physical health but it's great for mental well health too. It's great to see young people back enjoying being able to see their friends again and participate in sport, which helps them to build strong muscles and bones, while maintaining a healthy weight.

"Our national physical activity guidelines suggest that children and young people stay active for an average of at least 60 minutes per day. Unfortunately, the necessary lockdown restrictions made that very difficult for some children, so I hope that they can now unlock all the benefits that this latest development brings."

Stewart Harris, Chief Executive of [sportscotland](#): "It is

another positive step for sport that public health guidelines have been extended further as part of the Scottish Government's route map through the pandemic.

"Lockdown has been extremely difficult for us all, but it is great that children and young people who have been unable to go to school or see friends and family can now enjoy organised sport outdoors.

"While this is good news, it is not a return to sport as we know it and the most pressing priority remains public health and wellbeing. It is crucial that participants, and everyone connected with sport in Scotland, continue to adhere to the latest government guidance and the advice issued by the governing body of each sport."



Hamish Skene the Covid-19 safety officer of the club checks the temperatures of the team.

Lismore Rugby

photographs by Alan Peebles