

Value of Grassroots Sport and Recreation: Norths: A Photo Story



Acknowledgements

- This photo story was developed by Research NZ and based on a case study completed by Research NZ with Northern United Rugby Football Club, Porirua, in 2010 (see the SPARC website for the full report: www.sparc.org.nz)
- Research New Zealand sincerely thanks the club members, their families and the people of Porirua, who provided their valuable time and thoughtful insights about the value of North Rugby Football Club
- **Cover photo:** Great mates: Junior Team - U11 Norths Onepoto Warriors. From left to right: Nikura Kuvargi, Brodie Pikari-Hesp, Sheridan Bourne-Su'a, Brandon Bourne-Su'a and Jarrod Savill.



Value of Sport and Recreation

PHOTO STORY

About this photo story

- This story was captured during the 2010 club season
- Over 30 people were interviewed alone or in groups
- Club people
 - Players
 - Families
 - Club volunteers (coaches, managers and administrators)
- Local people outside the club
 - Social services
 - Educators (schools)
 - Media
 - Community leaders (councilors)
 - Sports clubs
 - Sporting associations

Using this photo story

- It shows the value of a single club
- An online case study toolkit will be available shortly
 - To explain this approach
 - To help you replicate this approach
 - To capture and describe the value of your own grassroots sport or recreation club or group

Northern United Rugby Football Club



'Porirua Boys'

Photo Craig Simcox/The Dominion Post,
February 15, 2010

Norths is a large, successful, rugby club based at Trust Park, Porirua City. Its catchment is the wider Porirua basin. It offers junior rugby and senior rugby to the local community. It has a strong Pacific membership alongside Māori and Pākehā

- Porirua basin is 25 km north of Wellington's CBD
- 150 senior players in 6 teams
- 450+ junior players in 26 teams
- 300+ social members
- 150 supporters in the 100 Club



Norths: Tatau, Tatau (it's the people...)

Norths has a strong culture: Rugby success, 'giving back', mentoring for excellence, and the importance of family are its corner stones, with Pacific cultural values woven throughout.

The club is a continuation of family, community and church.

The people are its strength 'Tatau, Tatau'.

HERE IS THE STORY OF NORTHS ...

Wellbeing and youth development



- Being a part of Norths contributes to the wellbeing and development of young people and adults involved in the club
- Teamwork, positive behaviour and having respect for themselves and for others' efforts are valued
- 450+ junior players attend two training sessions, a warm-up and a game every week
- High standards are expected
- Talent and achievement are recognised and celebrated



Anticipation at prize giving – Under 12s, Norths Onepoto Cobras

***“The expectation from the club is very high. These kids have to strive to achieve that”
(Local Council)***

“It’s helping that young person reach their potential, working in a team, it’s not a matter of ‘I’ as can be the case for a lot of youths, it’s doing something together” (Social Services)

Proud yet humble

- Pride in Norths, based on respect for family, church, coaches and managers is pervasive
- The community's pride in Norths' accomplishments is huge
- The 150 strong supporters club are so proud of the team
- Their team won the shield halfway through 2010

"Most of those guys we have in this club that are successful are very humble. The church keeps them grounded, their family keeps them grounded, their father can tell them to go and mow the lawns, they're very respectful of their parents. It's humbling to see that" (Team Manager)



A shared pride extends from the club's youngest to most senior

Mentors and role models for the whole community



- Norths people give a hand up to others and give back to their sport and their community
- They are rugby mentors and community role models
- The impact of role models goes beyond the club and beyond sport
- More than 100 parents, family members, past players and other community people coach and manage teams
- Role models: In 10 years more than 40 club members have had international experience, and 50 have been regional representatives



Premier player Anthony with junior players

"There's a ripple effect through each of these boys' family environments. There's this huge pride with Pacific families ... you've got your cousins, your second or third cousins, church members" (Local Council)

"People like Jerry Collins [talk at school] ... motivating kids to persevere, the commitment, making sacrifices, strong health routines, habits of mind" (Local College)

Dedication and Commitment

Coaches and players are committed



- Being at Norths means being dedicated to excellence in all aspects of the game: to training, nutrition and player development
- Commitment comes from 'within' players and from the club's support
- Coaches are busy and committed to family, to the team and to celebrating the successes

"They were brought up with nothing and they've survived, they don't get things on a plate, they have to work twice as hard. So they'll strive, they'll strive harder than guys that go to school in town" (Coach)

"This year has been a step in my career, learning from all the players. A lot of the game this year is new to me, I feel like I've learned a lot more about the game and about myself" (Senior Player)



Izzy Ford (Black Fern), shows real dedication and commitment as a player, coach, and Mum

Winning and Success

Being a part of something positive boosts everyone



Champion Mako's (Under 9s) – three seasons with a loss

- Being competitive and aiming for success is a passion for many at Norths
- Club members love winning, they love being a part of the success
- Players are passionate about their team and their game
- The excitement and energy on the sideline and after the game gives a real lift to players, coaches and volunteers alike

Winning and Success

Club stalwarts gather and travel with the team to the season final

- The '100 Club' has over 150 members, getting non players involved in club activities
- Most are 40 – 60 years old, some are well into their retirement years



100 Club preparations for another Jubilee Cup final



Career aspirations

22 New Zealand, 21 International and 50 regional representatives



Norths is a pathway to right to the top

- A career in rugby is a dream that can come true, at Norths
- Many young players and local youth have big career aspirations
- The club's success shows young people that they too can achieve in sport and other areas

"A lot of the guys have gained employment because of who they play for, because it's on their CV. Your profile, yes it does help. It shows that you're committed, dedicated" (Coach)

"They know that in their local community they can be aiming for a career in rugby at the highest level" (Local College)

"The kids that run around on the frost-bitten parks in Cannons Creek, if they keep playing well they'll get into their local club and then possibly go on if they're good enough" (Local Media)



Legacy

Decades of history behind us

- There is a strong sense of loyalty and an emotional bond to Norths and its history
- Its been twenty years since the club formed from two local clubs

"Mum's in her seventies, if you go to our home in Titahi Bay, it's all Titahi Bay photos and Norths with my nieces and myself, when I played for Norths way back then" (Committee/Governance)



A rich sense of history and loyalty binds the club

Family time

Saturdays and events together



Game day is family day

- Being with Norths means family time. For others the support of their families is what makes it all possible
- The club fosters and strengthens family connections each year and through the generations

"Saturday mornings is, we go and watch the schoolboy games ... we watch every home game with the kids. My son and son-in-law don't play rugby now, but they come down and watch. They sit up on the bank and the kids are down playing touch rugby. My wife is in the 100 Club here"
(Club Volunteer)

"We're just gutted when a game is cancelled you have to wait another whole week for the game, to see that competition and to see your boy out there doing something he loves" (Junior Player's Parent)

Norths

It's a community – friends for life

- Norths is a community in itself
- Significant time is spent together planning new activities and keeping the old traditions
- Children, youth as well the older generation participate in the club

"Like your own family, no matter who you are, I walked in here and didn't know some from a bar of soap, and they treated me like family. They welcomed me in, gave me what I needed, offered me a hot drink, and it's just like a family here now" (Senior Player)

- The club has 100+ volunteer coaches, managers and administrators. Many give 2 to 5 hours each week, some give 10 to 20+ hours each week to their community



Great mates through sport!

Norths

It's a community – for young and old



- 100 Club members and long time supporters Jim and Mihi



Ivan and Alison in support

- At over 90 years old Ivan is a keen supporter of Norths, Ivan and the Alison (wife of the Junior Convenor) support the under 13s at the 45th annual home and away against under 13s from Lyttelton RFU, Christchurch



Jim and Mihi show their colours

Norths - a community icon



TJ and junior fan

Local premier player TJ Perenara at his old primary school



"There's a real sense of pride in the kids that they belong to a strong sporting community. I mean for Pacific and Māori people it is important to be excellent at sport" (Local College)

Norths - a community icon and hub



- A community icon and a community hub for activity
- Norths is a community resource, it's a place for youth to hang out and a community meeting point



Crowded House – the community comes out in support

- The stand seats 1800 and gets a good crowd for many club games through the season

"On Saturdays or evenings, I think wow this is cool, look at all the cars, its just packed! And that's neat because you take that away, what else do you have that is of entertainment on the el cheapo?"
(Social Services)

"To be able to hear the kids speak about [these suburbs] in positive ways ... you don't have to go to town and watch the Hurricanes, this is our place
(Social Services)

Norths - Central to the City's identity

- Norths is central to City pride and identity
- The City supports and assists the club
- Norths success is integral to the City's success and image



Norths is an important part of Porirua's identity

"It's been a boon for Porirua, because to be honest it hasn't got the best name nationally. It's actually a pretty vibrant city. The success of the rugby club [has] been part of Porirua going ahead"
(Local Media)

Norths - Central to the City's identity



Trust Park Porirua: home of Norths – second to none

- Norths ground facilities, proudly owned by the Porirua Council, are the best in the region

For more information

- For more on the North's story, see the full report on the SPARC website:

www.sparc.org.nz/en-nz/resources-and-publications/Reports-and-research/Value-of-Sport-and-Recreation/



Josiah Norths under 7s

Thanks Norths!

