

# Bombers Rugby Football Club

## Try Times

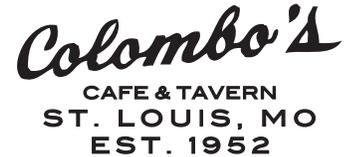
September 2014



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### 2014 Fall Preview-To the Mighty Bombers!

Exciting times are ahead for your St. Louis Bombers as the fall season is set to kick off following an August 23rd preseason match against Division I side, Palmer. Historically, the Bombers have battled Palmer in tough matches for the past several seasons and this match was no different, as the Bombers fell to Palmer 19-10 in sweltering heat at Lucier Park.

Looking ahead, the Bombers' Black Side will continue to play matches against top competition, including Lindenwood University and Chicago Griffins. League play then begins and includes familiar foes: KCRFC, St. Louis Ramblers, Omaha G.O.A.T.S., and newcomer K.C. Islanders. Facing top tier opponents, continued experienced leaders, and the new player development program should pay dividends in league play and will position the Bombers for another deep Division II playoff run.

The Bombers' White Side kicked off the season against cross-city opponent, St. Louis Hornets this past Saturday (article on page 2). The White side displays a promising mixture of youth and experience and is again poised to challenge for the MRFU Division III title. This fall season features a pair of matches against the Hornets in addition to other Division III area teams.

Both sides have put in exceptional effort in the off-season and seem primed to challenge top teams in their respective divisions. The goal for each team this season is to advance to the national playoffs. This season promises to be rewarding for all the St. Louis Bombers' players and supporters.

### 2014 Fall Schedule

08/23	Black/White	<b>Palmer</b>
09/06	White	Hornets*
09/13	Black	Chicago Griffins
09/13	White	Franklin County*
09/20	Black	KC Islanders*
09/26	Black	Lindenwood
09/27	White	Rowdies*
10/11	Black	<b>KCRFC*</b>
10/11	White	<b>Royals*</b>
10/18	Black	<b>Ramblers*</b>
10/18	White	<b>Kohlfeld*</b>
10/25	Black	<b>Omaha GOATS*</b>
10/25	White	<b>Hornets*</b>
11/8	Black/White	L.R Tourney

\*denotes league match

-Bold denotes home match

*How can I follow the St. Louis Bombers?*

STL Bombers' Homepage

Or on social media..

Facebook-St Louis Bombers Rugby

Twitter-@STL\_BombersRFC

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## New Faces Set Tone in Division 3 Opener Last Saturday

A Friday storm brought forth perfect rugby Saturday as the St. Louis Bombers took on the St. Louis Hornets in the first league match of the season. Though in St. Louis, the Bombers were the away team as the match took place in Forest Park, a few miles from the Bombers' pitch at Lucier. With both teams looking to start the season off with a big win, the teams took the field.

The match started out slow with a surprising amount of back and forth kicking in the first few minutes. However, from then out it was an exciting match as each team effectively worked the ball from sideline to sideline. Possession in the first half favored the Hornets and though the Bombers' defense played stout, the Hornets opened up the scoring with a try and successful conversion. The Bombers continued to defend well but eventually the Hornets broke through for another try and led at half by a score of 14-0.

Despite the deficit the Bombers seemed in control and began taking control of the flow of the match. The Bombers' first try came on a fantastic piece of play by two Bombers' playing their first league game in the black and white. Flyhalf, Rob Koehneman, broke the line and offloaded from the ground to fellow rookie, Jaxon McAllister, who was spot on in support, to get the Bombers on the board.

The Hornets continued to tenaciously hang on to the lead, despite several threatening Bombers' attacks. Kevin Ryan eventually found the try-zone and following a successful conversion the Bombers trailed 20-14. As time ticked off the clock and pressure continued to mount, a Bombers' substitute, Tim Brown took a quick tap from 10 meters out in for a try close to center-post. After trailing the whole game, the conversion put the Bombers ahead 21-20 which held until the final whistle. Colin Fitzhenry captained the team while Kevin Ryan and Tim Brown earned man of the match honors from the forwards and the backs, respectively.

## Starting 15 vs Hornets 9/6

1. Neal Ford
2. Dan Bellavia
3. Pat Sokolowski
4. Mike York
5. Blake Garrity
6. Ryan Schulz
7. Colin Fitzhenry-Captain
8. Kevin Ryan
9. Zach Hatraf
10. Rob Koehnemon
11. Jaxson McAllister
12. Justin Mathis
13. Steve Hadcroft
14. Joe Swon
15. Chris Bellavia



*Every great offload requires great support as rookie backs Rob and 'Jax' demonstrate while getting the Bombers on the board.*



The win starts the division 3 side off at 1-0 and sets up a rematch with the team who eliminated them from last year MRFU playoffs, Franklin County, this Saturday. The division 2 team will also be traveling this weekend as they take on the Chicago Griffins in another friendly.

*D3 match captain, Colin Fitzhenry, leads a victorious Bombers side off the field after a last second penalty kick sailed wide right*

## 2014 Bombers Awards Night

On Thursday, August 14, the Bombers held their annual awards night at the Dubliner (featuring formal attire of rugby shorts and blazers). Over drinks and appetizers, the evening celebrated and honored many Bombers, closing out a very active 15's season and successful summer of 7's rugby. The following Bombers join a long list of storied players and club members committed to competitive rugby and a vibrant club atmosphere.

The handout of each award was paired with a corresponding beverage to match the spirit of the award. Big thanks to Alex Ochoa and Neal Ford for organizing, the Dubliner for hosting, and everyone who made it out in support. We look forward to the upcoming year of exciting rugby, eventually leading to a club-wide banquet at the end of the season.



*Joe Auger proudly shows off some hardware*

## Congratulations to the Following Bombers

- Newman – Justin McKay
- Hard Hitter – Alex Ochoa
- Mopes Award – Joe Auger
- 7's MVP – Joe Auger
- Most Improved – Bryan Hebron and Ryan McDonald
- Orville Turgeon – Ben Meyers
- President's – Dan Ward
- White Side MVP – Colin Fitzhenry
- Black Side MVP – Mark Menne

## 2013-2014 Season Recap

The Bombers' Division 2 team went 4-3 (4-2 League Play) in the Fall season, losing two league matches on the road early. The Fall season was spotted with inconsistent, leading to some tight losses. Whether it was a slow start or finish, it seemed the Bombers would play only 60 minutes of quality rugby, causing them to come up short. Knowing the talent was there, the Bombers put a focus on playing 80 minutes of good rugby and in the spring they did just that. After beating Nashville handily on the road, the Bombers were set up for a must win game against rival Omaha. With full concentration at training leading up to the game, the Bombers played their most complete match of the season; shutting out the G.O.A.T.S. 36-0. This win propelled the Bombers to the regional playoffs in Denver, Colorado. There, the season ended in bittersweet fashion with a loss to host, Glendale.



The St. Louis Bombers with former University of Missouri Rugger Kevin Ogar. [Learn more about 'Ogar Strong' by clicking here...or visit kevinogar.com](#)

The Division 3 side started out white hot, winning their first 5 games and finishing the fall season at 6-1. Winning big in most games, the team was primed for a run to an MRFU title; the lone loss coming in the second match against the St. Louis Royals. Building on the success of the fall, the Bombers were looking like the team to beat come Spring. However, injuries started to take their toll and the Bombers lost all 3 regular season games in the Spring. Each one against teams they had previously beaten in the Fall. The team was still able to qualify for the MRFU semi-finals, with hopes of taking the title home. Though the team played inspired rugby, they were not able to come out on top and fell to Franklin County in the MRFU playoffs. The season did not end in ideal fashion, but the team incorporated many young players who are sure to be big contributors for the team this upcoming season, some will challenge for spots on the Division 2 side. Outside of league competition, the Bombers were able defend their Ruggerfest title, winning the tournament for the 2nd time in as many years. Also, under new coach Cam Wyper, the Bombers 7's program took a big step forward, entering into two national qualifiers this summer and winning the St. Louis Area 7s league for the 2nd season in a row.

It was a long season for many of the Bombers as they sent over 10 players to the MRFU Bears, the St. Louis area all-star team. A summer of rest, recovery, and preparation is exactly what some players needed. The 2013-2014 season provided both teams with the knowledge of where they need to be and the motivation to work hard in the offseason. The Bombers' DII finished the season off 6-6 overall, 6-2 in league play while the Bombers' DIII side finished 6-5 overall and 5-5 in league play.



Player-coach Ben Meyers has instituted the Bombers Player Development Program. The program adds weight training and fitness training for participating players. Under the tutelage of strength and conditioning coaches, Steve Welch and Scott Smith, respectively, the players involved have already made tremendous strides in their physical development. The 2014-2015 season will be a big one for the Bombers and they have very high expectations for themselves.

*New and old Bombers alike congregate at the team's watering hole, Colombo's, on Thursdays after training to share a meal and beverages.*

### **Coach's Corner-A Tough Loss, A Tough Win, And A Challenging Week Ahead**

*-Bombers' coach Ben Meyer's thoughts on the previous game(s) and his outlook for the upcoming weekend*

Conditions were brutal when the Bombers' D2 side opened their season 2 weeks ago with a non-league match against D1 club, Palmer Griffins. This is truly a game that was lost by the Bombers, as there were at least 4 or 5 tries that were left on the table and could not be finished, due to either a drop ball at the line or the "last pass" not hitting the mark. Palmer was able to stay in the game and in the last 20 minutes, scored 2 tries to put them ahead at the end 19-10. Despite that, there were some very positive signs from the Bombers' side, which dominated possession and looked sharp for the first 3 quarters of the match. Palmer always provide a tough hit-out, particularly for the forwards, however the Bombers pack more than held their own and were able to both secure and contest rucks very well. Improvement in attacking structure will help the Bombers pack be a force this season. The backs were quite strong defensively and there was some very strong running in the mid-field with some large gains being made, however they had a tough day with ball distribution across the entire backline with many passes going to ground. With time, practice and more games this is sure to improve as players start to gel. With the talent in our backline, we have the potential to be very dangerous.

The D3 opened the season with their first league match against the Hornets at Forest Park, which was an absolute nail-biter right until the very end. There was an abundance of fresh faces across the entire team, with many new players pulling the Bomber jersey on for the first time, and it took a while for the boys to click into gear. Some very tough forward play and tremendous defensive hits, particularly from No. 8 Kevin Ryan and prop Neal Ford, eventually wearing the Hornets down. After half time, the Bomber backline finally started to hit their straps and were dangerous out wide; with great energy brought by halfback Tim Brown. Down 17-0, the Bombers came back with a wet sail, taking the lead at 21-20. Though weaknesses were exposed, it was a great display of character to keep working right until the very end.

This week will be a challenge for both sides. D2 travels to Chicago to take on the Chicago Griffins in a non-league match. D3 will take on Franklin County in a league match in Washington, MO. Last week's D3 match was tough and resulted in several injuries. Couple that with several players unavailable with work obligations and the Bombers are left thin on both sides. The team will need some players to really dig deep this weekend. The Griffins are one of, top club in the Midwest and this weekend will be a great hit-out for the D2 side before the first D2 league game vs. KC Islanders next week. Franklin County has a young and very enthusiastic team who showed to be the most improved D3 side last season. We will need to match their enthusiasm and carry on the performance of the 2nd half against the Hornets to claim the points.



*Bombers' coach, Ben Meyers, also boots up and takes the field on Saturdays*



*Vic is seen above in a trademark "flying scrumhalf" position distributing out to the backs. The other Bombers pictured here from left to right are John Mowat and Deke Dicandia.*

## **Bombers' Old Boy of the Month-September**

*Vic Miller-Years Played: 1965-1982*

The St. Louis Bombers want to begin to honor those who have helped pave the way for the club. As such we have decided to celebrate Vic Miller as our inaugural 'Old boy of the Month'. Vic started his rugby career at fly half but moved into scrum half where he became a staple of the team. Vic settled in very comfortably at 9, once saying the position was simply "taking the ball from the forwards and giving it to the backs." Our current 9, Bryan Hebron might disagree. Vic always enjoyed that wherever he went the Bombers were recognized as an elite organization and was always proud to be affiliated with the club.

These days Vic is retired and enjoys spending time with his 6 grandchildren. Even at 71 years young, Vic keeps his body in enough shape to lace up his boots when the opportunity presents itself. In fact, Vic has taken the pitch at least once in every decade since the 1950's! A truly remarkable accomplishment, which he intends to keep going until at least 2020. The entire Bombers' organization owes the ruggers their respect and admiration. Thank you Vic for donning the black and white and we look forward to seeing you at our home matches this season as we push toward the national playoffs.

## **St. Louis High School Academy**

We are proud to announce for the third year in a row, the Bombers will be involved in the Missouri United High School Academy side. This side gives high school players the opportunity to compete in rugby during the fall season. In August the 7's program, led by John Watson (Bombers), Matt Brotemarkle (Bombers), and Joe Husgen (Southside) made a successful trip to the Elvis 7's tournament in Memphis. The second side took third place; with their only loss coming to the Memphis Elvis Academy. The first side went on to defeat the Elvis Academy in the championship game to claim the coveted Elvis Trophy.

As we go into September, the program will be switching gears into 15's. Practices will be held at Forest Park on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The United side will be taking on academy sides from Chicago, Memphis, Arkansas, and Kansas City. Other sides are in the process of being scheduled. Stay tuned to hear the results and, most importantly, spread the word as we grow the game!



*Big Sloan and the MRFU Academy team in action at Elvis 7's in Memphis*

## **Bomber Supported Area Rugby Programs**

- MRFU Bears (Men's select)
- St. Louis Sabres (Woman's)
- Lindenwood University
- St. Louis University
- University of Missouri
- University of Illinois
- St. Louis University H.S.
- Christian Brothers College H.S.
- DeSmet Jesuit H.S.
- St. Louis Priory H.S.
- Fox H.S.
- Eureka H.S.
- Jefferson City H.S.
- Kirkwood H.S.
- Parkway United H.S.
- Marquette H.S.
- St. Louis H.S. Academy
- St. Louis Rookie Rugby

## **St. Louis Rookie Rugby**

Rookie Rugby is a flag version of rugby. There is no contact involved in any aspect of the sport. Any boy or girl between the ages of six and thirteen are more than welcome to join the club. We are interested in teaching some of the basic fundamentals of rugby in an engaging and fun way for kids of all ages. If you are interested in learning more USA Rugby's website, <http://usarugby.org/rookie-rugby>, has plenty of instructional videos that cover the rules and provide demonstrations of how the game is played.

The St. Louis Rookie Rugby Club is the only youth rugby club in St. Louis! If you are interested in learning more send an email to [stloorkierugby@gmail.com](mailto:stloorkierugby@gmail.com)



## **Want to Learn How to Play?**

It is never too late to pick up a new sport. The St. Louis Bombers practice twice a week from 6:30-8:30 Steger Middle School, 701 N Rock Hill Rd. If you would like to hear more please contact Matt Brotemarkle at 636-236-9855 or by E-mail at [bbrotemarkle@gmail.com](mailto:bbrotemarkle@gmail.com)