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For Phillip Teetor, rugby is about camaraderie. Although winning is nice too, it is the team aspect of the sport that has pressed him to come back year after year.

“Once I got into this sport, it was like nothing else I’d ever played, the camaraderie is there,” said Teetor, who was team president for three years. “It’s not like in football where you have a quarterback that can take you to the Super Bowl, or in baseball, you have a pitcher that can take you to the World Series.”

Back in action, after suffering from a year of suspension because of several hazing misdemeanors, the Radford University club rugby team lost their first game of the season, 18-10, to conference foe James Madison University on Saturday, September 14.

Returning to the field is not easy. The image of Radford rugby has not always been positive and although the team has won three consecutive conference championships, it has been difficult to overshadow the party reputation.

“We do more community service than anyone else, we win more than anyone else,” Teetor explained. “It doesn’t count for anything, because we’re digging ourselves out of a hole essentially. Ever since I got here, it’s seemed like there has been a target on our back, and now we got knocked down and have to fight our way back.”

The team has tried to move past their social loafer perception by partaking in community service projects such as dog walking with the Pulaski Animal Shelter, coordinating clothing drives, helping at the Carilion New River Medical Center and even volunteering their time to freshman move-in week on Radford’s campus.

Regardless, the team still is not permitted to participate in post-season play for the next two years.

“It bothers us when we win our conference and we don’t get to play in the playoffs,” Teetor said. “Because of our sanctions, because of what happened, the school said we can’t participate in post season activity for the next three years and this is the second year.”

Head Rugby Coach Mick Turk helped found the program in 1988 and coached two Division II national championship teams in 2003 and 2008.

Turk has instilled an aggressive playing style in the team and it is one that Teetor hopes can bring a conference championship to Radford once again in future years.

“We have always been a team that has been more athletic and a hit you in the mouth type of team,” Teetor said.

Teetor put a serious emphasis on the relentless nature of the team as a whole.

“We’re going to come out and we’re going to go harder,” he said. “We’re going to hit them in the mouth and won’t stop.”

Although, the wins do not come without hard work and dedication. The team devotes nearly three hours on most days to conditioning, working on skills and playing scrimmages against each other to prepare themselves for their opponents.

“With rugby, it’s 15 on 15 and if one person is to fall or one person is a superstar, it’s not going to cost you or advance you,” Teetor explained about the sport. “It’s 15 people playing together, and that’s what’s essential about the game.”

As the rugby squad continues on this season against fellow conference foes such as Old Dominion University, University of Mary Washington, William and Mary, Duke University and Virginia Military Institute, they will plan to take it one game at a time.

“Rugby is a pretty brutal sport, so we don’t play back to back games, we only play one game at a time,” Teetor expressed. “I’m excited for us to be back, it’s good to be playing rugby again.”

With their first game behind them and a full schedule left to go, the Radford rugby team knows exactly what to do to be able to say they had a successful year following all of their games this season. Dedication, perseverance and motivation all plug in to their winning-ways and with only one year left on their post-season restrictions, expect the team to maintain a determined demeanor on and off the field.