



In Touch

Covering High School Rugby on Vancouver Island and British Columbia

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Quw'utsun are the Real Deal

While some may have thought their win against Shawnigan was a fluke, Quw'utsun's win over Oak Bay confirmed their status as the team to beat on the Island. It's been years since a public school other than Oak Bay posted these wins. In other games, Brentwood showed a high rugby IQ in overcoming a confident Claremont team, while Mt Doug saw their first win of the season against the Shawnigan 2nd XV. Finally, SMUS and Alberni played a fun 10-a-side game.

Games This Week

Tuesday April 15

Carson Graham at Oak Bay 1pm
Alberni at Shawnigan (Jr and Sr)
Royal Bay at Claremont (Jr)

Wednesday April 16

Brentwood at SMUS (Jr and Sr)

Thursday April 17

Oak Bay at Mt Doug (Sr)
Shawnigan at Claremont (Sr)
Robert Bateman at Oak Bay (Jr) 305pm

Power Rankings April 13

1. Quw'utsun
2. Shawnigan
3. Oak Bay
4. Brentwood
5. SMUS

Games Last Week

Claremont (19) at Brentwood (32)

Three Stars:

- ★★★ Rudolf Kruger (Brentwood)
- ★★ Fergus Jessop (Claremont)
- ★ William Lee (Brentwood)

Rowan Thompson provided all photos



Brentwood forwards Will Watts and Grady Norris put in a double tackle against Claremont's Ewan Gardiner.

Brentwood withstood some attacking pressure and some spells of ill-discipline to dispatch Claremont 32-19 on a sunny but windy day at their home field. Brentwood scored a well-worked try in the opening minutes, which combined structured forward play and expansive backline attack. From there, Claremont responded with their own try, helped by some ill-discipline and a yellow card to the hosts. Throughout the game, Claremont and Brentwood exchanged tries, but Brentwood kept their noses in front for the duration, ultimately winning comfortably. A few observations:

- Brentwood's Rudolf Kruger is back. After missing an entire season with a leg surgery, he is back at full throttle. His pace and tackling was the x-factor that Brentwood needed.



Rudolf Kruger with a strong fend. Photo credit Rowan Thompson

- Claremont bring athletes. Big prop Ewan Gardiner, hooker Fergus Jessop and Number Eight Gabe Regosa not only bring physicality but also a natural swagger that gives the rest of their team confidence. On the day, Claremont brought a lean crew of 15 players but they went the distance.
- Brentwood made adjustments on the fly. Their discipline and composure lacked for a short time in the first half but to their credit they had the sense to adjust things. You could hear them reminding each other to keep things tidy, especially at the breakdown.



Quw'utsun (19) at Oak Bay (11)

Three Stars:

- ★★★ Luke Prest (Quw'utsun)
- ★★ Mike Oughtred (Oak Bay)
- ★ Max Lang (Quw'utsun)

Scott Alexander provided all photos



Josh Williams carrying hard.

After defeating Shawnigan last month at their home ground, Quw'ustun travelled over the Malahat and ground out a victory over perennial powerhouse Oak Bay. The visitors played well across the board, with Luke Prest and Max Lang once again the most prominent. Oak Bay's Mike Oughtred played well for the hosts, his boot putting his team in the right part of the field.



Robert Reed is hard to tackle

I wasn't at the game, so instead of observations I will raise some questions:

1. Can Quw'utsun keep this momentum? They now head to the Tropical Sevens in Florida, play Mark Isfeld, and then play in the

Stadium Series in three weeks. They did not play their junior game so perhaps they are suffering some injuries that need to heal.

2. Can Oak Bay reduce its reliance on its big three? Robert Reed, Jasper Keast, and Mike Oughtred are instrumental for the Barbs, and so far they've stayed healthy. Elias Palov, a player of similar calibre, is due back soon. But the season is a grind, so the question will be which supporting players will step up.



3. Best public school? One aspiration for both teams is to be the best public school in the Province, and both of these schools are in the hunt for that accolade. The season is young, and we will see who can develop the most in the next six weeks.



Jasper Keast with a fend.

Shawnigan 2ndXV (12) at Mt Douglas (29)

Three Stars:

- ★★★ Conor Poulin (Mt Douglas)
- ★★ McLean Balderson (Shawnigan)
- ★ Tristan Greenwell (Mt Douglas)

Mount Doug hosted Shawnigan Lake 2nds looking to get their first win of the season. At kick off, Shawnigan came out with speed and swift handling, making a number of threatening line breaks through the Rams defence. However, Mt. Doug was able to hold the line with their physicality. The gameplay was competitive, with both sides winning possession through heavy tackling and rucking. Mt. Doug was able to break the stalemate with a few scrums and line breaks led by #2 Tristan Greenwell and #12 Bennett Anderson. A kick for touch, put them close to Shawnigan's goal line and #8 Kaleb Hunt was able to nudge it over the line. Rams outside centre Conor Poulin scored shortly after finding a gap for 50m breakaway.

Beginning of the 2nd half Shawnigan responded with a try of their own from solid phase play and strong running, wearing the Rams down. Mount Doug scored two tries shortly after with another 50m run from Conor Poulin, and Kaleb Hunt picking off the back of the scrum to dive over for five. Shawnigan came back with lots of intensity and ball movement, stretching Mt. Doug's defences, with them scoring just outside the posts. The final try for the Rams went to Caleb Jonker as he jotted over after some phases. Overall, a physical, competitive, and exciting day of rugby, keeping the spectators entertained.

Junior Rugby Roundup

Claremont (22) at Brentwood (34)

Brentwood withstood some athletic play from the visitors and put together a balanced attack with Bowen Calder and Arnie Marasek looked strong for the hosts.

SMUS (55) to Alberni (17)

Another one-sided game but Alberni were able to score several tries.

Island Boys First XV Stars Competition Leaderboard April 13

Max Lang (QU)	7
Jasper Keast (OB)	6
Jack Driscoll (SMUS)	5
Ferg Jessop (Clar)	5
Rudolf Kruger (BCS)	4
Owen Duncan (Cla)	3
DJ Banks (SLS)	3
Julian Bishop (BCS)	3
Luke Prest (QU)	3
Conor Poulin (MtD)	3

Short Lineout

One person's opinion, expressed succinctly

If a high school rugby season were a movie, April would be the musical montage.

-Phil Smith