

## Women's rugby, coming on strong

It hasn't been easy but with **spirit, dedication, confidence, perseverance, commitment and, of course, love**, we, women, have been taking small steps which allowed us to make our way in this wonderful sport that it's the rugby.

Expressions like "Feminine rugby is not rugby and is not feminine" have lagged behind because women's rugby is **stronger than ever**. It has passed from being played, in 1913, secretly in the schools to being played around the whole world both at a competition level between countries and provinces and at a university level between universities and faculties from the smallest to the oldest until the body gives out. Who would have thought.... Obviously, the bravest players who hid to practice it, did not. But in spite of this deserved space that women have been fighting for in sport in general and specially in rugby, there are many prejudices that continue to flood the minds of some people, and therefore, **we still have a long way to go**.

You have to play rugby in order to understand the reason of its existence. Watching a game, having a friend who practices it or even an enthusiastic relative, it's not enough. A well-known British saying says: "Football is a game for gentlemen played by ruffians and rugby is a game for ruffians played by gentlemen". I am going to avoid the controversy regarding football, but what it is said about rugby is totally true, and this is something really difficult to see outside the rugby field, without a team giving you self-confidence and without a crest in your chest to give you strength and courage. Women also had the right to live rugby from inside, without barriers not even prejudices, without being considered less women or more mannish for practice it, because as well as is a sport, beyond any border is a way of life.

It can seem a rough and disorganized sport, marked by its virility, which women shouldn't have access because of their delicate and refined constitution, but the things that rugby hides go much further. The organization and openness to all kinds of people, independently of their age, sex or physique, are key features to make this sport a school of values for all (men and women), boosting the inclusion.

What rugby has taught me about life, no other sport has taught me, and I would dare to say that neither any school. You learn to **love** you just the way you are; you are always going to be useful in a position of the team, so there is no place for rejection. You learn that **fifteen** or **seven**, according to the type of rugby you play, **push much more than one**, but if you stop pushing, the rest will notice it, and it will make a high difference. You learn to **pick yourself up** after falling, and if it would be necessary, do it with some help too, you are not alone in this. You learn to **respect** others; you are not more or less than anyone. You learn to **move forward** a goal, regardless of the way and its obstacles. You learn to **win** humbly but also to **lose** with dignity. You learn, which is

very important while you are playing, to **celebrate** your victories as well as to **congratulate** the opponent team. You learn of your **mistakes**, you don't harp on yourself because of what you made. You learn throughout all your life important foundations that allow you to grow as a person despite of the imperfections, and allow you to go further regarding your goals.

And I could write hundreds of pages more of what rugby is able to teach me but I am going to dedicate the end of the article to two very important players in the world of feminine rugby, Marina Bravo and Irene Schiavón, both players of the Spain National Rugby Union Team XV and Seven and a role model because of their determination and self-improvement. Both have opened their heart to speak to us succinctly about what it means for them rugby and about what has been fundamental to arrive where they are now, at the peak of Spanish women's rugby.

**Marina Bravo**, player of the Spain National Rugby Union Team and C.R. Complutense Cisneros.

*“For me, rugby is part of my life, like eating and sleeping, although is a philosophy. It can be said that is our job, because we dedicate our lifes to this sport, even though is also a constant learning and educative process. With his principles, challenges, creating new friendships and growing you as a person. To reach this point, wanting is fundamental. Wanting to improve, wanting to reach greater challenges, wanting to be constant, patient, wanting to enjoy what you do. There are tough moments, when you think about it as happens in life that has a lot of obstacles, but if you wish to overcome them, you'll end up getting through. Just love, believe and enjoy what oneself does”*

**Irene Schiavón**, player of the Spain National Rugby Union Team and Olímpico R.C. Pozuelo.

*“For me rugby is a life style because wherever you go you fine family, a family that you always be a part of, no matter where u come from, no matter if you are good or bad, and whatever happens they will support you. And for me, what makes me achieve and keep me in the national team, apart from the work done dreaming for playing with the best player in spain, it was my team, my Coaches and my club. Without the girls and their support i wouldnt have ever believed that the dreams can make true and they can last whatever you want them last”*

This are two examples of dreams comes true and “the power of wanting”. None of them have surrendered to any obstacle and by effort, dedication, confidence, constant, commitment and love for what **they do have contributed to make Women's Rugby greater each time a little more important and bigger**; elementary ATTITUDES in a sport like this one.

**Realizado por: Belén Caso Compairé**, jugadora de rugby en el equipo de 'Rugby Físicas' de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

**Traducido por: Daniel Martín Blanco**, jugador de rugby en el equipo de 'Rugby Físicas' en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

**Corregido y revisado por: Ana González Díaz-Peñalver**, traductora-intérprete jurado de inglés y correctora profesional.



**Marina Bravo**



**Irene Schiavón**



**Belén y Andy**



**Rugby Físicas en Granada (Torneo contra la violencia de género)**



**Rugby Físicas en San Valentín**



**Rugby Físicas después de un partido**



**Rugby Físicas en las finales de 2012**