

## Centre Dufferin girls' rugby team has a strong performance in season opener

Written By Brian Lockhart

The Centre Dufferin District High School Royals girls' varsity rugby team put on a strong performance in its season opener against the Erin District High School Raiders on Monday, April 21.

The first game of the season was played on Centre Dufferin's home field, and the Royals left with a 47-9 win.

Playing in cool weather and strong winds, the Royals didn't let it dampen their spirits and dominated the game.

Royals players bring a lot of experience to the District competition, with many players entering their first year in rugby.

"We played amazing today. A lot of the girls had their first actual regular season game today, and we brought some dominant play," said Royals' Abi Wilson after the game. "I think a lot of us felt very good about the game. You can't be too confident but we were ready."

Teammate Brooke Bursey was playing her first high school rugby game and said she thought the team worked well together on the field.

"I think we did really good," Brooke said. "This was my first game and I feel like our whole team was really coordinated and did well communicating on the field and getting the ball around."

At the end of the game, a lot of the Royals' players were covered in dirt from the hard-hitting play on the field. Brooke said the dirt was an indicator of a well-played game.

"That's how you know you've had fun," Brooke said. "That's how you know you played your hardest. I like to go out there with a team, and I like to tackle."

Veteran Royals player Ridley Palmer is now in her fourth year on the team, and she said the team works well to bring new players into the sport every season.

"We've always done well, we've gone to OFSAA every year," Ridley said. "The team is always strong. We've really lucked out with how strong our Grade 9s come in and how strong the new players are. Every year, we get a new group of wonderful people. We play it because we love the sport."

Going on the road for their next game, the Royals will be up against Centre Wellington District High School on April 27.

They will return to their home field on Tuesday, May 5, to host Guelph Collegiate.

Game time is 2:30 p.m.