

Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh Champion Women's Rugby League in Headingley Stadium

MARCH 12, 2024 BY POPPI ANDELIN [ME22PA]

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The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh spectate female Rugby League trials at Headingley Stadium.

Credit: The Royal Family

In a recent visit to Headingley Stadium on Friday 8th March, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh demonstrated their commitment to advancing girls' Rugby League, marking international Women's Day with a focus on the future of sport.

The royal couple, passionate advocates for sports and recreation, engaged in a day of events towards the growth of the sport. This included spectating rugby trials, and attending the prestigious Community Sport and Recreation awards at the stadium.

The Duke and Duchess had the privilege of meeting inspiring female Leeds Rhinos' players, who showcased their talent and dedication to the sport.

Pioneers of women's Rugby League added inspiration to the event as the royal couple met with Julia Lee- the UK's first female RL referee to officiate a men's match.



Credit: BBC

Lee's commitment to growing women's involvement in the sport led to her appointment as the chair of the International Rugby League Women and Girls Advisory group in 2019.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Wakefield Filmmaker Talking For Today To Save Tomorrow

Louis Jones, a 24-year-old Wakefield-based Filmmaker, is using his struggles with depression and anxiety to help stamp out stigma surrounding male student mental health. As a young student, Wakefield born Louis Jones suffered with 'life threatening mental health issues'. Now a successful film-maker and editor, he has collaborated with student ran Charity 'The Grieving Pint' [...]

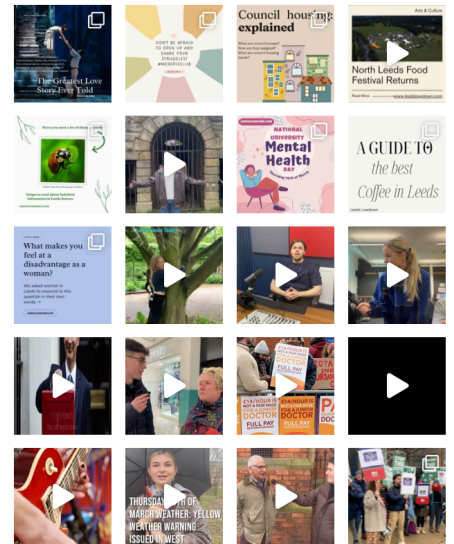
National University Mental Health Day returns to Leeds

Celebrated yearly, Thursday the 14th of March 2024 marks National University Mental Health Day. A survey conduct by Student Minds, the charity behind the day of awareness, showed that one in four students have a diagnosed mental issue. 30% of all students admit to their mental health declining after moving to University. As well as [...]

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After speaking with Julia Lee, she expressed how the way the Duke and Duchess interacted with the young people was very special; going on to portray how they both held a genuine interest and understanding in the diversity and inclusion growth of such grass roots sports.

Lee expressed how there are still challenges faced within the development of the sport, and was invited as a guest speaker to hook into how important history is in order to bring on and inspire the next generation.

“I think we’ve got a lot to do around the female athlete and making sure we cater for them, and I think that’s the next bit we need to do as a sport. But as regards to the season it’s an exciting season ahead, and things are getting better and better as we progress in standard and the way that women are treated.”

Julia Lee- Former RL Officiator. First woman in UK to referee a men’s RL game.

Lisa McIntosh also attended the event, former Great Britain RL captain, who made history as the first woman of colour to skipper a British sports team. These encounters exemplify the importance of breaking barriers in sports, and inspiring a new generation of females to chase their goals.

The event was organised on behalf of the Leeds Rugby Foundation who have shared statements in how this day has proved to be of great significance for the development of the sport.

When they Tweet, their Tweets will show up here.

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Tweets from @RugbyLeeds

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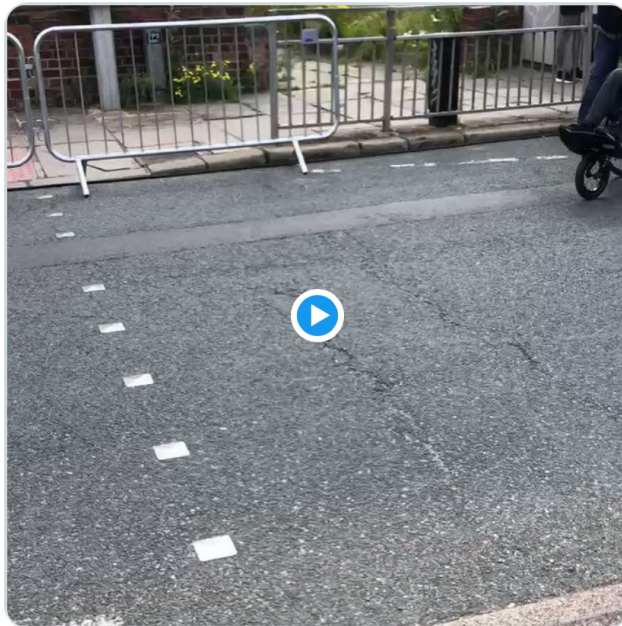


Leeds Rhinos Foundation @RugbyLeeds · Jul 3, 2022

Huge applause for Kevin Sinfield and @Rob7Burrow as they arrive at the start line for the @runforall Leeds 10K.

We are truly honoured to have them as part of our #RunWithTheRhinos team today!

#ChangingLivesThroughSport ❤️❤️



41 4,266



Leeds Rhinos Foundation @RugbyLeeds · Sep 9, 2021

You will always be a winner in our eyes, hearts and minds

“ “It was great to have so many players from local schools join us to showcase our sport to the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh at AMT Headingley. They showed lots of interest in the sport and the history of the women’s game and our ambitions for the future. It was a special day and one that all the young people involved with will never forget.”

Ellis Pascall- Women’s and Girl’s Development Officer at Leeds Rhinos Foundation.

As the Women’s Super league is set to launch today at York with the Challenge Cup ahead, the visit from Prince Edward and Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh, set a supportive tone for both the history of the sport and the excitement for progression. Julia Lee quotes:

“ “Getting it front and central and having a royal there makes such a difference, because it’s like a rubber stamp for it. And having Rugby League, from my perspective, as a frontal focus of such topic is just special to me.”

Julia Lee- Former RL Officiator. First woman in UK to referee a men’s RL game.

As President of the Sports and Recreation Alliance, the Duke of Edinburgh’s presence underscored the importance of sports in fostering community, inclusivity and personal growth. The visit not only celebrated the current success of women in Rugby League, but also served as a catalyst for future endeavours that inspire the next generation of girls to contribute to the expanding legacy of the Rugby League.