

## Club founder 'elated' by road honour

LINDSAY RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB: Vince Jones Rd. signs erected last week

Posted By DAVE FLAHERTY, LINDSAY POST REPORTER



The dedication of a road in his name has left Lindsay Rugby Football Club founder Vince Jones "elated."

Signs for Vince Jones Rd. - which runs between Post and Settlers roads east of Lindsay - went up last week after council decided Jan. 19 to rename Greenway Rd., which the club calls home.

"I am elated," said Jones, who started the club in 1978. "It's beyond my wildest comprehension ... "I love rugby and I'd do anything to further its standing in Lindsay, the province and Canada."

Jones told The Lindsay Post when he moved to the area 30 years ago, there was no rugby.

"I had to have some rugby here. Lindsay was being denied."

He threw out some feelers to the community, garnering a positive

reaction and on Aug. 10, 1978, raised the club flag.

Fourteen men and boys showed up the first day with promises of others who wanted to participate.

Jones said the first season was a success, but the second and third were not without their problems. But they didn't last long.

"We regrouped and have never looked back."

He said the club really started moving forward when it gained its own building just east of town.

They purchased a plot of a cornfield and spent many hours and dollars building the facilities.

After a decade of success with only male teams, Jones was approached by a group of high school girls in the early 90s who wanted to play rugby.

"I have to admit I didn't think it would work, but lo and behold, it took off," Jones said.

The club's players have had great success locally, as well as provincially and nationally.

"There is a brilliant athletic gene in this area," Jones said. "We have more players per capita that make the provincial and national teams that any other club."

He said slowly but surely the club has become more stable on the administrative and volunteering side as well.

"For the longest time we had one person doing three jobs. A lot of parents didn't know what rugby entails."

Jones said he is trying to establish the concept of a "rugby club" instead of a "rugby team".

"A lot of players only look at the club in terms of the year they are playing," Jones explained.

He also wants to promote the social side of rugby more.

"It's the best part of the game. Anywhere there is civilization you are not far from a rugby club. There are a lot of stories of players going to new cities or countries and meeting a number of new friends through the game."

Jones said a key to continuing the success of the game in Lindsay is to introduce kids at a younger age and have them grow up through the system.

While Jones did acknowledge he may be seen as the public face of the club, he doesn't want to give the perception that the club would not survive without him.

"That's one of the reasons I stepped down from the presidency. Our last three presidents have done excellent jobs.

Our committee is a strong group of vibrant, young people. The club will be strong for a long time. No one is irreplaceable."

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Article ID# 2645724