

Airport  
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The hope is that by gradually introducing the sport to younger children, who will continue to play it throughout their school years and maybe even beyond, they can develop the sport from its roots and build a firm base from which a Phuket team will grow.

sport. With rugby, there is no discrimination. You can walk into any rugby club in the world and you are accepted regardless of nationality, religion etc.,"

While the sport has only recently been introduced to Thai schools children at BIS have been playing rugby for much longer. The Phuket Vagabonds now consists of a large contingent of current and former BIS pupils who recently put in an impressive performance to restrict a physically imposing HMS Bullwark side, featuring players who had represented the British navy at rugby, to a 12-0 win at BIS.

The success that Pat Cotter and the Phuket Vagabonds have enjoyed with introducing the sport of rugby to Phuket has not gone unnoticed. The New Zealand Rugby Union is considering setting up a Rugby Academy here and the Thai Rugby Union is also looking at Phuket as a venue to host visiting international teams and to host international events like the 80'80's rugby and regional Rugby 7s tournaments.

For Barry Daniels, who recently left BIS after eight years as a teacher and rugby coach there, it was an opportunity to play alongside some of the boys he had helped to develop, "I remember playing my first rugby game when I first arrived eight years ago and then to get the opportunity to play on the same side as the boys who I have been coaching is absolutely fantastic," he said.

The diminutive stature of the Thais is hindering the progression of the national aside in what is a very physical sport. However, in Phuket there is probably a higher concentration of Thai children being born with farang parents than anywhere else in the country who are likely to grow up to be taller and stronger as a result. Could Phuket be the perfect breeding ground for the Thai international players of the future? Pat certainly hopes so, "I never imagined when I first came to Phuket that rugby would grow here to the extent that it has. To see children from Phuket going on to represent Thailand would be a dream and if we get the backing of the Thai Rugby Union I believe it is a possibility," he said.

Asia  
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Pat Cotter is also grateful to rugby for the impact it has had on his life and hopes that youngsters in Phuket will be able to enjoy the sport that he grew up on, "I started playing when I was at primary school. I like the team work, the physicality, the social aspects of the game, the camaraderie - everything to do with the



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