

Frisko Conquering Texas DII

Written by Pat Clifton

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The Texas DII season about a quarter of the way done, and the Frisko Griffins sit comfortably in first place with a 3-0 record. Houston United is also undefeated, but their games have been much closer than the Griffins'. So far, Frisko is beating its opponents by an average of more than 45 points a game.

The Griffins are now in their fourth year of existence. The club was started from scratch by English expat Phil Camm, who attributes the club's recent success to new-found experience and an influx of talented players.

"This is only our fourth season as a club, so we've been able to implement a system from the beginning with some of the newer guys, and they're finally understanding," said Camm, "so combining that with some experienced recruitment has probably been the biggest difference this year."

Headlining Frisko's recruiting class is No. 8 Gonzalo Ruiz. He was one of the anchors of the

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Dallas Harlequins pack the last several years, and he's tied for the league lead in tries.

Another big get is wing Ben Ferrero, the one tied with Ruiz with six tries this season. Plucked from obscurity in Nebraska, Ferrero has been a revelation on the wing in Frisco.

"He's just an amazing athlete – very fast, an intelligent player. Just one of those guys, he listens at practice and picks up the game really quickly. He's one of those players who's in the right place at the right time, every time," said Camm of Ferrero.

"He pops up, he takes great inside channels. He works for the offloads, so anytime a guy breaks the gainline, the next guy in line is usually Ben. He is always seeing those gaps. He's kind of like a miniature version of Chris Ashton. He kind of pops on those inside balls when you don't expect him to."

It helps that Ferrero has a guy like Justin Boyd opening up holes in the midfield, too. Boyd is in his second season with the Griffins, and the 7s Eagle is coming into his own as a 15s player.

"We're seeing a different guy out of him this year. He's become a lot more of a play maker," said Camm of Boyd. "He hasn't scored as many tries as he could have done. He's been looking for the offload a lot more and getting the other guys the ball. He's become a much more stable 15s player than he used to be."

Why is Frisco so successful in recruiting talented players?

"We play at a really nice facility in Frisco with locker rooms and concessions and we pull in a few hundred people to a game, so it's the atmosphere that we can offer to a player, it feels like he's playing on a big stage," said Camm. "The benefits for the players as well – we make sure we take care of their health. Any injuries, it's the club responsibility to take care of them as best as possible. They come to us and we ask a lot less than other clubs. Our dues are lower, we help out with travel and that kind of stuff."

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Frisco takes on 0-3 Katy Saturday, and while the Griffins are heavy favorites to win, they'll set themselves some goals to meet within the game.

"We're aware that Texas is not the strongest state in the country, so every game we play it's been a vision of if we think we can beat this team, let's beat them by 50 points, let's beat them by 70 points, let's not concede a try," said Camm. "We always set ourselves very clear goals knowing that when we get outside of Texas and carry on and win the division, we're going to be playing much tougher teams."