RUGBY AUSTRALIA BUILDING MEDIA KIT

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

In an Australian first, sport professionals will co-locate with sport and exercise science and physiotherapy students and researchers inside the Rugby Australia Building, which is a partnership between Rugby Australia, the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust (SCGT).

This is a major sporting milestone in Australia as this state-of-the-art centre will be the first official home for the Qantas Wallabies, Wallaroos and Australian Men's and Women's Sevens teams.

The integration of science and sport will be mutually beneficial, allowing UTS to work alongside elite athletes and providing athletes with access to valuable performance, injury-management and rehabilitation data.

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KEY BUILDING FACTS

Building name: Rugby Australia Building (known during construction as the Australian Rugby Development Centre or ARDC)

Location: Moore Park precinct, corner of Moore Park Rd/Driver Ave

Architect: Populous

Main works contractor: AW Edwards

Construction commenced: June 2016

Construction completed: October 2017

Building opens for teaching: March 2018

Floor plan:

- UTS Faculty of Health's sport and exercise science program occupies levels 3–5
- UTS Graduate School of Health physiotherapy program occupies part of level 2
- ARU occupies the ground floor, level 1 and part of level 2
- A public café is also situated on the ground floor

Student numbers: More than 700 sport and exercise science and physiotherapy students

Athletes: More than 100 professional athletes, including the Qantas Wallabies, Wallaroos and Australia's Men's and Women's Sevens teams

KEY RUGBY AUSTRALIA SPACES

Ground Floor: Hydrotherapy Room

This hydrotherapy room is the most technologically advanced and newest hydrotherapy set-up in Australian sport. The room features three separate areas including the 'Endless River' hydro-running pool, cold plunge pool and a spa. Each area serves its own purpose in assisting with the recovery and rehabilitation of athletes.

Ground Floor: Indoor Training Field

Located directly behind reception at the Rugby Australia entrance, this 25m x 15m synthetic indoor training field is one of the showpieces of the building. Visitors will be treated to clear views of the Australian national teams in action as they go through their paces ahead of the next Test match or tournament. At ten metres high, netting is stretched across the roof so kickers can roost the ball without risk of hitting the roof. High definition cameras capture all the action for team analyst.

Ground Floor: Gymnasium and running track

The gymnasium will host cutting-edge fitness and weights equipment as well as a 40-metre running track. It is here, that under the guidance of Rugby Australia performance staff, players will improve body strength and power, cardiovascular performance, running acceleration and speed.

Press & Co Café

Located on the ground floor, the Press & Co Café welcomes everyone in the local community to come and check out the cafe and enjoy a coffee on the ground floor where you might be lucky enough to bump into one of our Wallabies, Wallaroos or Aussie Sevens stars. The café will open its doors at the end of October.

First Floor: Ella Brothers Indigenous Education Centre

Mark, Glen and Gary Ella are cemented in Australian Rugby history as three phenomenal players who continue to do great things for the Indigenous community. Named in honour of the three brothers who blazed a trail from humble beginnings in the Sydney suburb of La Perouse to worldwide fame with the Wallabies, the Ella Brothers Indigenous Education Centre is the new national centre for Indigenous Rugby, the first of its kind for the sport. These rooms provide spaces for education and community seminars as well as conferences and learning programs, aimed specifically at nurturing the next generation of Indigenous Rugby players.

UTS COURSES ON OFFER

Undergraduate degrees – Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science, Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Management, along with the combined degrees Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science/Bachelor of Arts in International Studies, Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Management/Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science/Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation.

Research degrees – Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science (Honours), Master of Sport and Exercise (Research) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Physiotherapy programs: Master of Physiotherapy

Other programs: Potential for courses such as Graduate Diploma in Sports Media

UTS COURSE BENEFITS

- Prepares students studying sport and exercise, sport management and postgraduate physiotherapy for future jobs via real-world, practice-based learning
- Creates unmatched opportunities for UTS students seeking internships and careers within leading sports organisations
- Allows a transdisciplinary approach to research to produce a big-picture view of the factors influencing sporting performance, talent development, recovery and rehabilitation
- Potential to feed insights back to coaches and training staff in support of talent identification, development and performance, injury minimisation and best-practice recovery and rehabilitation

KEY UTS SPACES

Level 2: Activity-based workspace

The activity-based workspace will be shared by academics and research students in UTS's sport and exercise science and physiotherapy programs. The mix of open-plan workstations, quiet rooms and social spaces is designed to support different tasks and ways of working.

Level 2: Physiotherapy laboratories

The laboratories on this floor will enable researchers to continue their groundbreaking work, particularly in neurodegenerative and neurological disorders and rehabilitation.

Level 3: Multi-purpose sports hall

The sports hall accommodates coaching activities among other teaching practicals. This versatile space can be used for indoor games, performances or community events and can be converted into other sporting courts including basketball, volleyball and badminton. The sports hall will also be used for rehabilitation work conducted by the university's physiotherapy program.

Level 4: Skill acquisition research laboratory

This space will be used for measuring and developing perceptual-cognitive skills in high-performance athletes and officials. It incorporates a running track with a vision projection wall and 3D motion-analysis technology. Head cameras and eye-tracking glasses worn by athletes allow researchers to understand how high-performance athletes move and interact with each other.

Level 4: Exercise physiology research laboratory

Connected to the adjacent biomechanics research laboratory and biochemistry lab, this space is equipped with treadmills, exercise bikes and rowing machines as well as a range of devices used to assess physiological responses to exercise.

Level 4: Biomechanics research laboratory

Using technology that digitises movement, researchers can measure the impacts of speed and other forces placed upon the body during exercise.

Level 4: Environmental laboratory

A small space but an important one - the temperature and humidity controls allow researchers to investigate the impact of environmental conditions on athletic performance. The aim is to develop interventions that mitigate the impacts of heat and humidity experienced by athletes.

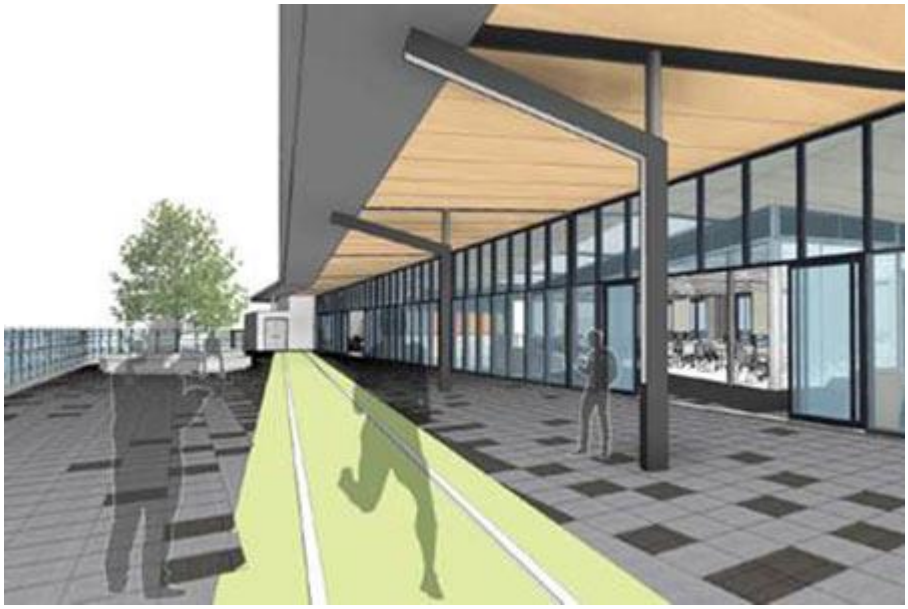
Level 4: Strength and conditioning laboratory

Primarily a teaching space, this resistance (weight) training room is where sport and exercise science undergraduates gain practical experience in prescribing and supervising exercise.

Level 4: Body composition laboratory

Equipped with a DEXA (dual-energy X-ray) machine, this lab measures athletes' bone density – as well as muscle and fat content – providing a precise assessment of body composition that feeds into both health and performance outcomes.

Level 5: Rooftop running track



An open-air running track on the top-floor roof terrace will be used for practice-based teaching, including the assessment of speed and acceleration among athletes.

UTS PROFILES

These researchers and students are available for interview. Please contact UTS Media Manager Lesley Parker lesley.parker@uts.edu.au or 0422 000 249.

Mitch Henderson – UTS Honours student

Sevens Rugby players must have the full package: endurance, fitness, speed and strength. In collaboration with Australian Rugby, UTS Honours student Mitch Henderson is helping players attain these crucial attributes by analysing their physical, technical and mental performance.

His research aims to shape training programs, recovery plans and game strategy – with the ultimate goal of more tries on the field.

Henderson is using tools such as wearable GPS devices to track players' movements during matches, along with after-match video analysis to assess their technical performance. In addition, players complete wellness questionnaires on their main training days and undergo periodic aerobic fitness assessments throughout the season.

He's excited about having access to the state-of-the-art facilities in the purpose-built Rugby Australia Building. "It's bringing together researchers with the sports performance staff who work with teams on the ground, which means the research will translate into real-world application with some of the best athletes in Australia," Henderson says.

Joanne Hausler – UTS research student

Translating drills on the training paddock into tries on match day is the key to success for all Rugby players, and UTS research student Joanne Hausler is looking at how to optimise training to best prepare players for games.

Focusing on tactical performance, Hausler is investigating new evidence-based, scientific approaches to enhance the training practice of teams.

Hausler uses data generated by wearable microtechnology on players to study the movement patterns, strategy and tactics of players. She also interviews coaches to understand and then develop practices used in training and game-play.

“The ability to embed my research is a unique and valuable experience, because it gives me insights into real problems within the sport at the most elite level,” Hausler says.

Dr Job Fransen – Researcher

How do you know, when a young athlete is just starting out, whether they have what it takes to become an elite sportsperson? Dr Job Fransen has found a way to assess sport-specific perceptual-cognitive skills to predict success.

Working with the Sydney Swans Academy, Dr Fransen is measuring young Australian football athletes' ability to make fast and accurate decisions, using a lab-based task that closely replicates on-field performance scenarios.

Researchers like Dr Fransen can use a virtual reality (VR) function in the new UTS skill acquisition lab – with simultaneous back and front projections of life-size images simulating game-play scenarios – to accurately measure players' perceptual-cognitive abilities.

"The new facilities mean we have state of the art tools to measure players' decision-making and to help shape talent identification and development of future athletes," Dr Fransen says.

Dr Katie Slattery, Researcher

Can Australian athletes get the benefits of high-altitude training just by taking a supplement? This is an important question in the lead-up to major international competitions such as the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Dr Katie Slattery and researchers from UTS, the Australian Institute of Sport and the NSW Institute of Sport are investigating whether boosting elite athletes' antioxidant intake with a single supplement, N-acetylcysteine (NAC), improves athlete performance.

Elite swimmers, middle-distance runners and triathletes will trial NAC during altitude training camps to test whether those that take NAC stay healthy, train harder and have accelerated red blood cell production. If the data is positive, NAC could be used in elite training programs at far less cost and logistical difficulty than sending athletes to train in higher-altitude international venues.

"I'm really looking forward to being able to test and train our athletes in one location. The resources and facilities like the exercise physiology research laboratory and the environmental laboratory will be invaluable to our PhD students and our industry partners because they'll allow us to build our capacity in endurance physiology research" Dr Slattery says.