



Ignatius Park College



RUGBY LEAGUE ACADEMY

Our

VISION



Ignatius Park's Rugby League Development Program began in 2001 and has already provided a proven pathway to success in the national arena for several of our students. Emphasis is on developing well-educated and responsible young men who enjoy their sport.

The Rugby League Program at Ignatius Park College (IPC) aims to develop outstanding athletes and exceptional young men through a high-performance environment grounded in the values of Integrity, Pride, and Commitment. As a Development Pathway Partner with the North Queensland Cowboys, the program utilises the latest analysis technology to enhance coaching and support the development of student-athletes.



Integrity | Pride | Commitment

Ignatius Park is recognised as an important development base for players wishing to continue their sporting careers beyond school. Over the last five years alone we have had a number of our players making Australian and Queensland sides at the open and under 15 level, as well as a going straight into NRL and QLD Cup Systems. The Ignatius Park College Rugby League Program is nationally acclaimed for producing not only top-level Rugby League players, but also quality young men.

NRL PLAYERS

- Danny Moore
- Scott Prince
- Aidan Guerra
- Anthony Mitchell
- Michael Morgan
- Kyle Feldt
- Moses Pangai
- Valentine Holmes
- Chris Grevsmuhl
- Coen Hess
- Patrick Kaufusi
- Corey Jensen
- Kalya Ponga
- Gehamat Shibasaki
- Jamal Shibasaki
- Tom Chester
- Tom Duffy
- Ben Laity
- Michael Hogue
- Andrew Bulmer
- Adam Cook

AUSTRALIAN KANGAROO REPRESENTATIVES

- Michael Morgan
- Aidan Guerra
- Valentines Holmes
- Scott Prince
- Danny Moore
- Gehamet Shibasaki





QUEENSLAND STATE OF ORIGIN REPRESENTATIVES

- Michael Morgan
- Coen Hess
- Valentines Holmes
- Aidan Guerra
- Kalyn Ponga
- Scott Prince
- Danny Moore
- Gehamat Shibasaki

NRL PREMIERSHIP WINNERS

- Michael Morgan
- Kyle Feldt
- Aidan Guerra
- Corey Jensen
- Valentines Holmes
- Scott Prince
- Gehamet Shibasaki

NRL CLUB CAPTAINS

- Michael Morgan
- Scott Prince

ALUMNI

Our



Photos courtesy of NRL media

Our

EXTENSION PROGRAM

Entry into the program is by application only. Selection is based on a combination of rugby league ability, academic performance and exemplary behaviour across all areas of school life.

The Rugby League Extension Program is part of IPC's Physical Education Curriculum Extension and is offered to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 in 2026, with plans to expand in subsequent years. The program provides a structured pathway for student-athletes to develop technically, tactically, physically and socially through the sport of rugby league.

Year 8 - Students participate in one early morning gym session each week and complete theory and practical field sessions as part of their HPE classes

Year 9 & 10 - Students participate in one early morning gym session each week and complete theory and practical field sessions as part of their HPE classes.



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Our

EXTENSION PROGRAM

Year 9 and 10 students selected in the Cowboys Challenge Squad complete a combination of early morning gym and skills training sessions twice per week, along with theory and practical field sessions in their HPE classes. These students take part in block sport and if selected take part in the Cowboys Challenge games.

Theory units in the Rugby League Extension Program will align directly with the Australian Curriculum for Health and Physical education relating to the importance and needs to become a professional Rugby league player.



Students in the program may be selected to represent IPC in:

- Queensland Schools Rugby League Competitions
- Townsville Secondary School Rugby Gala Days
- Cowboys Challenge
- QISSL Confraternity Carnival
- Annual Domestic development tours* (subject to availability)
- International tours* (subject to availability)
- Northern School Region Representative trials for Queensland Secondary School Sport Championships

Our

OPENS PROGRAM

Opens Squad students continue to work on the foundations they have built in the extension program whilst building towards the Aaron Payne Cup and QISSRL Confraternity each year. They complete early morning gym sessions and skills training three times per week.

Practical in class sessions as well as Cowboys challenge and Opens training sessions consist of:



- Skill Development – core skills/ fundamentals of both attack and defense.
- Transition/Effort Components – in game importance and roles.
- Tactical Understanding – game sense, schools sets and structures and positional play
- Strength & Conditioning – age-appropriate physical preparation.
- Leadership & Character – teamwork, respect, discipline, and selflessness.



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Our

CO-ORINATOR

Aaron Payne is a former professional rugby league player who spent his entire 11-year NRL career with the North Queensland Cowboys. Debuting in 2002, he played 219 NRL games as a hooker and was a key member of the Cowboys side that reached the 2005 NRL Grand Final. During his career he earned a reputation as a tough, reliable leader and was twice named the club's Player of the Year, receiving the Paul Bowman Medal in 2006 and 2008.

Aaron Payne



Following his retirement in 2012, Payne transitioned into coaching and development roles, working extensively within elite pathways programs which included NYC Head coach for the North Queensland Cowboys.

He then progressed to head coaching roles with the Townsville Blackhawks and Wests Magpies in both the QLD Cup and NSW Cup respectively, as well as a stint with the Cowboys as an interim NRL Assistant coach to Josh Hannay during Covid and finishing his Sydney venture being a valuable full time member of Benji Marshall's Wests Tigers.

With his passion for helping guide young players toward professional rugby league careers, at Ignatius Park College, Aaron Payne brings elite-level playing experience, strong leadership, and a deep understanding of player development pathways. His background working with emerging athletes would allow him to mentor students both on and off the field, fostering discipline, teamwork, and high-performance standards while helping young players progress through school and representative rugby league programs.



Our

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

All selected students are trained by Strength and Conditioning Coach Matt Hamm and his team from Hammer Athletic, and have access to video and performance analysis technology to support their development.



HAMMER
ATHLETIC



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PROFESSIONALISM

The school has invested in a drone to film training sessions and Hudl (video editing platform) to further progress the school's Rugby league program. Allowing coaches and students the ability to analyse, review, and improve through visual learning.



COST OF THE PROGRAM

- Rugby League Extension Program Shirt - \$35
- Cowboys Challenge Squad Uniforms- \$200
- Opens Squad Uniforms- \$300
- Students must provide their own boots and protective gear
- Additional costs for competitions and tours will be communicated in advance

Our TRIALS

Trials will be held in Term 4 of each year

Selection criteria include:

- Academic engagement and behaviour
- Performance in training and trials
- Leadership and role modelling
- Coachability and responsiveness to feedback

Participation in the program is a privilege. Students must uphold high standards to retain their place. Students must follow the Extension Class Participation Policy outlines when accepted into the program.

How to Apply

Current Students - Applications will be open to students entering Years 8, onwards and will be communicated to them in Term 4.



Integrity | Pride | Commitment



Our SPONSORS

We are grateful for the ongoing support of our sponsors and take great pride in the valuable contributions they bring to our school and wider community.



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