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RISE Adaptive Sports held fundraiser in Irving



By Deborah Fleck / News Assistant
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American Airlines Center, Dallas
- Hadoop Developer Training... **BUY**
Saturday, Jan 4, 9:00 am
Irving, Irving
- A Visit with Harriet Tubman
Saturday, Jan 4, 2:30 pm
Irving Central Library, Irving
- eReader and Tablet Fair
Sunday, Jan 5, 2:00 pm



Justin Ferguson is hugged by teammate Chance Bean at the RISE quad rugby fundraiser (Sarah Hoffman/DMN)

Irving-based **RISE Adaptive Sports** held its fourth annual Toys for Tots Exhibition Wheelchair Rugby Match at **Georgia Farrow Recreation Center** last Friday. Once again, the Cowboys beat the Harlequins.

The Cowboys, a **U.S. Quad Rugby Association** team sponsored by RISE, expertly navigated the court. The able-body Harlequins clearly weren't accustomed to using wheelchairs.

Paul Gray is the founder of RISE, which has grown rapidly in its first six years. The nonprofit offers free sports programs to all ages and for all levels of physical disabilities.

His organization holds the charity rugby match every December not only to collect toys for the **U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program** but to bring families and friends together. The match also showcases how sports can help the physically challenged "Recover, Inspire, Succeed and Empower," which is the nonprofit's motto.

"We have even more toys than last year," said Gray, surveying the piles of donated toys.

But more rewarding for him were the players' smiles. They're moving beyond their disability.

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