

Interview with Anthony Coebergh

How's your life in Holland?

Moving abroad and living independently has definitely been one of the best decisions I have made so far. Throwing myself in the deep end and challenging myself in various environments has only fostered growth. Exposing myself to a new country with a different culture and lifestyle is the change I wanted and although I knew I was leaving so much behind in Hong Kong: rugby, great friendship and so on, I felt change was necessary so I learn in other ways to grow as an all-round person. In terms of university, I am enjoying my course, making great friendships, living the university experience and putting myself in challenging environments so I can't be complaining!



Did the YHKCC prepare you for your next steps?

Yes! Academically, I was never the smartest in the classroom but was definitely surrounded by individuals who were like-minded and ambitious. One of the many things I am grateful for the YHKCC is the dynamic learning environment. Being exposed to a multi-cultural and diverse student composition, not only presented me with the opportunity to integrate and be open-minded, but also allowed me to be humbled by the many differences and challenges that everyone has. Being humbled in such an environment contributed to my character development which becomes one of my biggest assets. This has taught me essential life skills such as being resourceful and taking initiative. I also have to thank Mr. Tuff in particular who I still contact for advice. He's played a huge role in my life as a fantastic rugby coach and a supportive head of year. He's had to juggle rugby with a career all his life and he's proved to be a great role model for me.

How does Holland differ to Hong Kong in life and in rugby?

Being raised in the dynamic and fast-paced city of Hong Kong, it was certainly a huge adjustment to move to the Netherlands. Not worrying about being drenched in sweat going to school is one of the many benefits of living here, but saying that, the weather is one of the huge adjustments I've had to cope with moving here. In comparison to Hong Kong, people tend to focus more on leisure and relaxation here rather than being task or career-focused which is something I am struggling to get my head around. In terms of rugby, moving here made me realize what rugby has to offer in terms of network and opportunities but more importantly, the enjoyment of playing rugby. One thing I do miss from rugby in Hong Kong is the social aspect of rugby and how important that was to create unique friendship.

Can you share with us more about the European rugby championships?

The European Rugby Championship is the highest level of competition for 2nd tier team within Europe. Countries over Europe such as Spain, Portugal, Russia, Romania and Germany compete against one another aiming to be European Champions. The European Championship winners qualify for the World Trophy where they get a chance to compete against the best such as Japan, Fiji or Scotland.

What's next after this tournament?

In terms of rugby, I don't have a confirmed path yet but I'm now enjoying my rugby with a good lifestyle. It would be an absolute honour to represent my country on the world stage and be part of the journey of becoming European Champions and getting into the World Cup. However, playing semi-professionally in Spain doesn't sound like the worst of options but we'll see what life has to offer with the numerous opportunities that will come my way.