

DRAWING OTHERS TO HIM

*Coming from a mixed background of Samoan and Manitoban cultures, **Tausani Levale** has been playing rugby for the Canadian senior national rugby sevens team for two years. Having competed internationally in the World Rugby Sevens Series, the Pan American Games and the Can Am Games, she has made a name for herself in women's rugby.*

I've been playing the game of rugby for six years now. I have always loved sports and been very athletic, but when soccer was becoming less exciting for me, I looked to rugby — a sport that has always been a part of my Samoan family's culture.

When I started playing in an amateur club league, I was the youngest player in a huge group of girls. It was there that I had the most amazing experience — never before with a sports team had I felt like I was part of a family like this. While the game itself was frustrating at first, because it took me a few years to understand all the rules and ways of the game, I kept coming back because I felt like I belonged.

In my last year of high school, I was really struggling to know what it was I was supposed to do with my future. I didn't feel like it was the right time for me to go to university, and I didn't want to do anything I felt God wasn't leading me to. I had just returned from the Bahamas, where

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I was on a rugby tour, when I completely broke down. I cried out to God and to my best friend, who told me, "Sometimes you just have to lay out the sheep's skin and ask God for a sign."

So that's what I did. "God," I prayed, "if You want me to play Rugby Canada, I want the head coach to send me an email asking me to join his team. If I get any emails from my current coach, then I will know I should give up rugby and go on missions for You."

The next day nothing happened, but the day after I received an email from Coach John Tait — the Canadian senior national sevens team. That's when I knew God clearly wanted me there.

I knew this opportunity would be hard; the program wasn't perfect. I knew this was a serious decision and I needed to be strong for it. Not sure why God was calling me here, I knew I needed to be a light in this place. The way I lived my life needed to be an example of Christ, drawing others to Him.

Sometimes that just means doing the little things like going to church on Sundays, because my teammates notice and care. They even ask me about it! My purpose on this team isn't only about playing the game, it's also about the girls I'm able to witness to. I'm here to be a light for Christ, and that's what I aim to be.

During the 2018 season with Rugby Canada, I experienced my greatest achievement in the game while playing in the World Rugby Sevens Series. Though I usually grow very anxious before big games like these, I felt so much peace before and during each game. I could have been breaking down with worry before the game, but because I was in a great place with my relationship with God, I felt nothing but peace and enjoyment for the game God had gifted me to play. I was able to trust in my ability and in God.

Never before had I experienced such peace, and I knew it was because I was relying solely on God. I was right where He wanted me to be. 🏈

Tausani's favorite verse:

***"Take delight in the Lord,
and He will give you the
desires of your heart."***

— Psalm 37:4

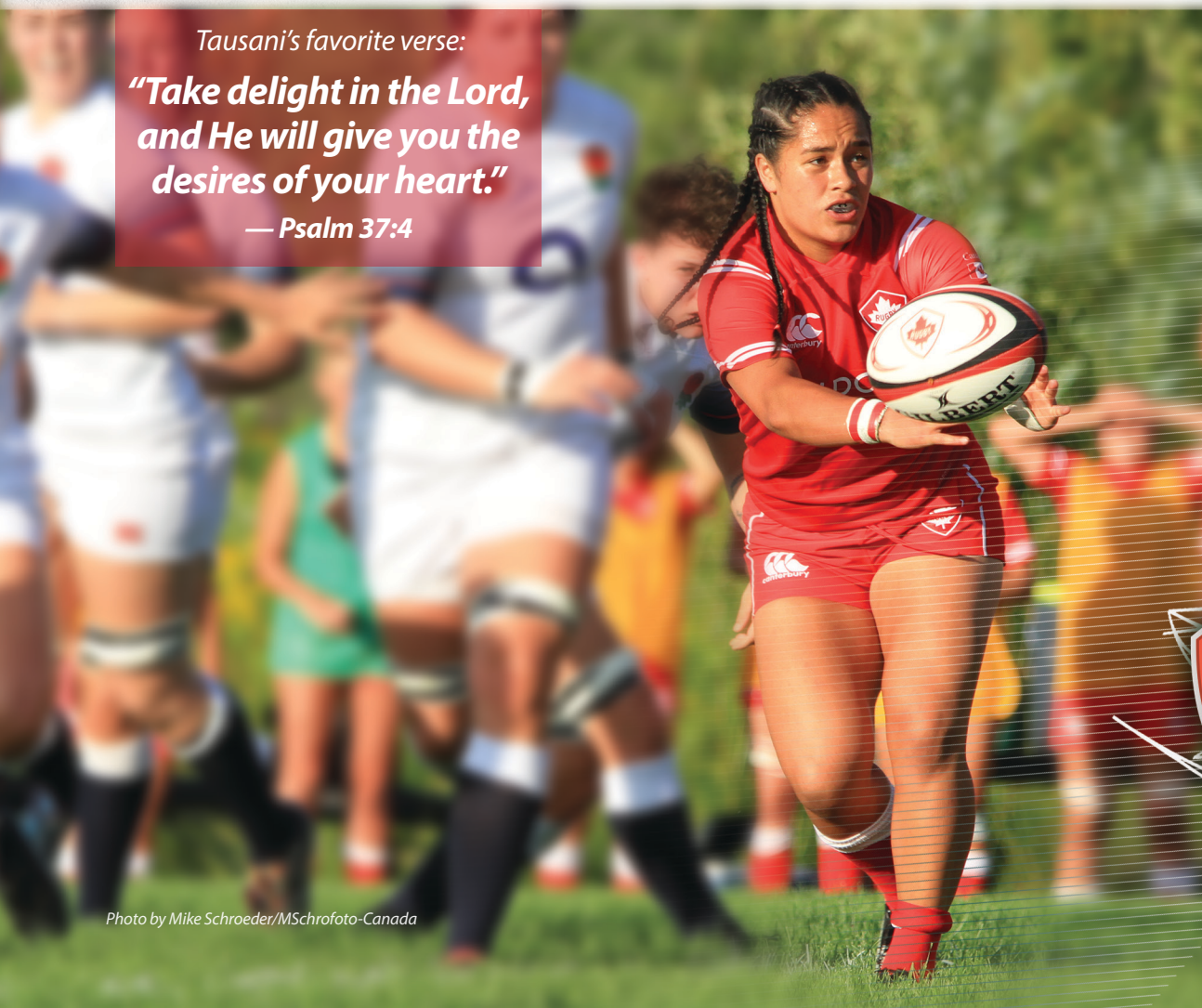


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