

LES RUGBYWOMEN

TACKLING STEREOTYPES

SARCELLES, FRANCE

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In November 2016 I started following a group of rugbywomen from the Chantereine High School in Sarcelles, an impoverished low-income suburb located in the North of Paris. Last year they were one of the best newcomer teams of the country. In 2015 their coach Florian, started a program called 20 rugbywomen sarcelloises in which he prepares the team to international competitions. The main objective of this program is to use rugby as a way to limit the school dropout and to promote "citizenship values" in this areas.

As all the rugbywomen will quit the school next year, in June we made a photographic exhibition in order to highlight their engagement and commitment. 22 photos and 180 meters of prints were displayed in the walls of Chantereine. They trace the strength and pride (fierté) of being a rugbywoman. For these young women, rugby is an empowering medium to overcome difficulties and gain confidence. It is also a tool to reverse stereotypes and change the image of young women living in French suburbs.

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A short photographic film is available on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/239641834>.

This film was awarded with the Prix du Diaporama Sonore 2017 [Libération](#) et [Fisheye Magazine](#).

The website of the project: www.camilo-leon.com/



Training day in Charterreines under the snow. In the background, the social housing buildings of Sarcelles.



Sarcelles has the biggest social housing density of the country. View from Koumba's apartment.



They have been training together since 2014. In 2016 they were the best newcomer team of France(49)



I was specially interested in what happened outside the field. What they do when they weren't playing, how they employed their extra time. In this image CJaria takes some water



Koumba and Naoka kick themselves before a regional match in Bobigny. That is the way they train before a match.



Tenacity and commitment. They apply this values everywhere, particularly in their everyday life.



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In Charterreine 86% of the students come from low-income families. They prepare a travel to UK on May 2017.



Djeria and Asa at the final of "Top 14" (National Rugby League) in Stade de France-Saint Denis, 4 juin 2017.



Before a match they focus on the instructions given by their coach Florian. It is a moment in which they focus on the match.



Yvee-Joelle trains in the mist.



Ashley waits in the middle of the field for the next match. Gargès, 17 May 2017.



The rugbywomen from Charlerienne are mostly from low-income households.



Rugby is often considered as a "sport for men". The rugbywomen endorse a double bias: society and family stereotypes



Asa receives the trophy of Val d'Oise. Charlerienne UNSS (high school team) has been one of the best newcomers teams of the country in 2016-2017.



Rugby has been an empowering tool: they gain confidence to overcome gender, racial and social bias.

MAKING OFF OF THE EXHIBITION



