# The Welsh rugby family whose new generation swapped boots for four-inch heels



Steele Quinnell presents a striking contrast to the towering rugby legacy of his family. At 26, Quinnell, grandson of Derek Quinnell and son of former Welsh rugby star Scott Quinnell, has carved out a distinct path far removed from the pitch. While his grandfather, father, and uncles are celebrated giants in Welsh rugby, Quinnell's stage is a theatrical one—as the drag queen Heidi Heights, a persona he launched in the spring.

The unexpected twist in the Quinnell rugby narrative has caught the attention of Welsh rugby fans, particularly after a local newspaper interview to promote a race weekend at Ffos Las racecourse went viral online. Quinnell, who works as a personal trainer, was initially unaware that the local interest in his drag career would escalate into widespread enthusiasm across the rugby community.

Growing up, there was never familial pressure to follow the rugby tradition, though Quinnell did try the sport briefly, playing one game in childhood before deciding it wasn’t for him. His father was supportive, encouraging him to pursue whatever ignited his passion rather than boxing him into a rugby career. Instead, Quinnell’s interests lay in music and theatre—fields in which his family encouraged him wholeheartedly. He learned saxophone, guitar, and piano, and took part in school plays, cultivating a love for musical performance alongside his academic pursuit of psychology.

Quinnell’s entry into drag was almost serendipitous. During an audition for the local production of Kinky Boots, directors suggested he try playing the drag queen character Lola instead of the initially auditioned role. Discovering a genuine affection for drag’s flamboyance and creativity, Quinnell adopted the stage name Heidi Heights, crafting a persona that reflects his towering presence—standing 6ft 6in tall, or nearly 7ft when wearing heels. His act, which is less about flashy dance routines and more about quick-witted audience interaction, aligns with a distinctly British style of drag, inspired in part by his father’s knack for humour and crowd engagement.

Quinnell’s unique position as a Quinnell family member defying expectations resonates within the wider Welsh cultural landscape, which is increasingly embracing diversity and queer representation. Although he notes the success of Heidi Heights, he remains uncertain about where this journey will lead, holding ambitions to eventually pursue a PhD in psychology. Meanwhile, there is talk of a charming double act with his father, who humorously suggested blending his media talents with Quinnell’s musical drag performances on a potential tour. Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2025/aug/29/scott-quinnells-son-delights-welsh-rugby-fans-as-drag-queen-heidi-heights> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.inkl.com/news/scott-quinnell-s-son-delights-welsh-rugby-fans-as-drag-queen-heidi-heights> - An article from The Guardian detailing how Steele Quinnell, son of former Welsh rugby star Scott Quinnell, has embraced a career as drag queen Heidi Heights. The piece highlights Steele's divergence from his family's rugby legacy and his supportive upbringing, including his brief attempt at rugby and his passion for music and theatre. It also discusses his recent success in drag performances and the positive reception from Welsh rugby fans.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/sport/quinnell-i-ve-had-welsh-hate-mail-too-6339520.html> - A report from the London Evening Standard where Scott Quinnell reveals receiving hate mail from Welsh fans during his rugby career. Despite the criticism, he remains committed to representing Wales with dedication and professionalism.
4. <https://south-wales-weddings.co.uk/listings/heidi-wurst-drag-queen/> - A listing for Heidi Wurst, a drag queen and comedian based in Cardiff, offering entertainment services for weddings. The profile highlights her experience, versatility, and commitment to professionalism, ensuring a memorable experience for clients.
5. <https://podtail.com/podcast/ruck-n-roll-1/scott-steele-quinnell-special/> - An episode of the 'Ruck ‘n’ Roll' podcast featuring a special segment on Scott and Steele Quinnell. The discussion covers various topics, including rugby, personal experiences, and insights into their lives beyond the sport.
6. <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/lifestyle/gallery/pinc-list-walesonline-2021-result-21103997.amp> - An article from Wales Online presenting the Pinc List 2021, showcasing Wales' most influential LGBT+ individuals. The list includes notable figures such as Rob Keetch, a prominent drag artist and activist in Cardiff, and Ryan McGavock, manager of the women's/non-binary team within Cardiff Dragons FC.