



INFORMATION PAGE

Week of March 27th, 2011

1 Hong Kong Sevens Results

Congratulations to the Men and Women from Canada and the USA on their performances at the Hong Kong Sevens. Canada's women retained their strong form shown in the Las Vegas Sevens to win the Cup final, while the USA women took fourth. The USA Men accomplished an impressive victory over Tonga in the Bowl quarter final but were narrowly beaten by Japan in the semi-final. Japan then lost to Canada, who won the Bowl to gain their first 5 points of the 2011 IRB Series. Full reports on this and other HSBC IRB World Sevens Series events can be found at: <http://www.rugbycanada.ca> and <http://www.usarugby.org>.

2 IRB Establishes Women's Referee Panel

(A loud HURRAY! for Dana, Joyce and Sherry. This is a well-deserved result for their skills and dedication, and for three of the eight panel members to be from NACRA Unions is a testament to the quality of development and support that is provided to female officials in our region –Scott)

The International Rugby Board has underlined its commitment to the development of the world's top female referees with the announcement of its first-ever Women's Referee Panel.

Sarah Corrigan (Australia), Joyce Henry and Sherry Trumbull (Canada), Clare Daniels (England), Sylvie Bros (France), Gabriel Lee (Hong Kong), Nicky Inwood (New Zealand) and Dana Teagarden (USA) have been selected for the inaugural Panel following a detailed review of performances at Women's Rugby World Cup 2010.

Supporting the Panel will be a development pathway that will standardise and structure performance management and preparations ahead of Rugby World Cup Sevens 2013, Women's Rugby World Cup 2014 and the Rugby Sevens tournaments at the 2016 Olympic Games.

The process will also ensure that the world's top female referees will have regular opportunities to officiate international men's and women's matches.

The referees will have access to a centralised IRB fitness, performance analysis and mentoring programmes that promotes consistency and best practice, mirroring the system used for their male counterparts on the IRB High Performance Referee Panel.

IRB Referee Development Consultant Bernd Gabbei will manage the programme, working closely with IRB Referee Manager Paddy O'Brien to develop and implement structured performance programmes specifically targeted at raising women's officiating standards globally.

"The IRB is committed to the growth and development of Women's Rugby worldwide through our strategic plan and there are now more women and girls participating in the sport than ever before," said IRB Chairman Bernard Lapasset.

"The introduction of a dedicated female referee Panel and performance management structure is a milestone for the Women's Game and will provide the opportunity and the environment for the world's best to realise their potential, while ensuring that consistency of performance is of paramount importance."

IRB Women's Development Manager Susan Carty added: "This is a major development for the Women's Game, which is continuing to go from strength to strength worldwide. Women's Rugby World Cup 2010 set new standards for elite Women's Rugby on and off the field and today's announcement further underlines our commitment to increasing global standards."

Gabbei said: "I am very excited about this programme, which is the first of its kind. Our Member Unions have been extremely supportive and all eight referees have great potential. We hope that this process will not just enhance standards and promote consistency, but provide a pathway for more up and coming referees to reach the highest levels."

Several members of the Panel officiated during the recent RBS Women's Six Nations, with Women's Rugby World Cup 2010 Final referee Sarah Corrigan taking charge of Ireland v England last weekend, while Joyce Henry will take charge of the Bahamas v Bermuda men's international in April.

The Panel will also benefit from access to existing IRB training and education programmes, including the Talent Optimisation Programme (TOP) run at Stellenbosch University in South Africa and cross-Region exchanges.

3 St. Barth's Tournament

Please see the attached announcements regarding the St Barth's Sevens tournament.

4 Other Tournaments and Events

If you have a Rugby event, course or tournament that you would like to announce to a wide audience, you can send me the details and we will try to include it in the Info Page or put it on the www.NACRugby.com website. We might not be able to get them all posted but we will do our best to spread the word.

5 Universal Sports Presents Over 8 Hours of Live Multiplatform Coverage of the Legendary Rugby Sevens World Series in Hong Kong

(This sort of coverage is very valuable to the growth and profile of Rugby in our region-let's make sure that Universal Sports hears of our appreciation! –Scott)

Los Angeles, CA- March 24, 2011--Universal Sports will deliver more than eight hours of LIVE coverage of the HSBC Rugby Sevens World Series in Hong Kong on Saturday night, March 26 beginning at 12:00 midnight ET, 9:00 p.m. PT. The broadcast will feature all of the Cup matches, from the quarter-finals to the finals. Additionally, all the semi-finals and finals of the Shield, Plate and Bowl brackets will be shown.

Hong Kong, the fifth stop of the 2011 HSBC Rugby Sevens World Series, is the largest and most prestigious tournament on the annual tour, featuring boisterous multinational crowds at the sold-out Hong Kong Stadium. The field consists of 24 national teams that will play over 60 games in three days. Last year, Samoa came from behind to beat perennial favorites New Zealand to win the Cup final. They would eventually go on to win the 2010 Sevens World Series championship. Currently, the All Blacks are tied with England for first place in the series standings.

Universalsports.com will stream the event LIVE on a subscription basis, including replays, highlights and analysis. To access and subscribe to this content available on-demand, visit universalsports.com/rugby.

Universal Sports will continue its coverage of the HSBC Rugby Sevens World Series with broadcasts of the tour stops in Australia on April 3, England on May 22 and Scotland on May 29. The network will also be the U.S. broadcast home for the 2011 Rugby World Cup, set to take place this fall in New Zealand.

ABOUT UNIVERSAL SPORTS:

Universal Sports, a partnership between NBC Sports and InterMedia Partners, LP, is the premier multi-platform media destination for Olympic-related sports programming in the United States. Universal Sports is available to more than 63 million homes across the country, including all of the nation's top 10 media markets and 20 of the top 25. Major world championship sports events aired on Universal Sports include track and field, skiing, swimming, gymnastics, marathons, figure skating, cycling and rugby. The network's website, UniversalSports.com, delivers an immersive user experience via live and on-demand competition coverage, interaction with top athletes through interviews and blogs and in-depth access to Olympic sports news and information year-round. For more information, please visit UniversalSports.com.

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6 **Picture caption**
Here's a shot from the recent match in Turks and Caicos. Yes-#22 has the ball! If you think of a witty caption for this shot, please send it to me and I'll share the top few in next week's info page.



Actively yours

Scott Harland

Regional Development Officer

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