

VARIOUS ARRA SEVENS TOURNEY REPORTS 2011



AUCKLAND CLUB SEVENS CHAMPIONSHIP 12/11/11

The annual Auckland Club sevens was played at Pakuranga RFC with all clubs represented with round robin sections all contested on Bell Park Number One.



REFEREES IN ATTENDANCE: R. Harman, P. Willis, C. Peoples, S. Piacun, M. Mataafa, N. Shirley, J. Kannemeyer, R. Drew, A. Sowerby, P. Van Etten

Marist came from behind to win the Auckland Club Sevens 26-19 against Suburbs with young Marist star Fomai Ah-Ki opened the scoring with a 60 metre runaway try, his first of three tries in the final. The tide turned however, Suburbs looking dangerous and with three quick tries they took lead. Tries to Lolagi Visina (2) and Willis Haloholo saw Suburbs with a 19-7 lead. Ah-Ki then scored for Marist on the stroke of halftime, Marist heading into the break 12-19 down. Early in the second half Suburbs lost their play maker Amasio Valence to injury, and from there on out it was all Marist. An intercept try to Aaron Smith made the scores level before Ah-Ki crossed the line for the winning try of the match. The ARRA members would like to acknowledge the support of the ARFU & the PRFC for their support on the day.



The Auckland Sevens Champions: Marist RFC (details courtesy of the ARFU)

View point from the PRFC new grandstand... with the ARRA refs in their new bright yellow ref tops which looked smart & reduced the need for jersey changes as there is no colour clash with these new light-weight tops.



CONDOR 7s (NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP 3/12/11)

KELSTON RETAIN CONDOR SEVENS TITLE (DETAILS COURTESY OF ARFU)



Rob Harman in action

Kelston Boys High School capped a stellar year with a 26-19 victory over Nelson College in the final of the BNZ Condor Sevens refereed by Chris Peoples whilst defending their title from 12 months previous the west Auckland school, who also won the Moascar Cup and the Top 4 championship in the 1st XV season, were too big and fast for the gallant Nelsonians. Two tries to Sosiceni Tokoqio and others to Lolagi Visinia and Leon Fukofuka in the first half took Kelston out of sight in the wet conditions.

Teams from the length and breadth of New Zealand made up the 16-strong field that included a number of rugby power-houses. Kelston BHS, last year's runners-up Mt Albert Grammar, six time winners Wesley College and Hamilton BHS were the top seeds at the College Rifles RFC. All three Auckland schools made the cup quarter finals, Kelston BHS and Mt Albert Grammar facing off in a repeat of the 2010 final, and Auckland Grammar up against surprise package Feilding College.

Kelston BHS were too good for Mt Albert Grammar, and a classy performance from Auckland Grammar saw Auckland claim two semi-final berths. Auckland Grammar was unable to overcome Nelson College in their semi-final clash, while Kelston BHS put in a huge effort against Hamilton Boys High School to advance to the final.

Mt Albert Grammar met Rotorua Boys High School in the Plate Final, and were triumphant 19-14 well refereed by Rob Harman.

Referees in attendance & managed by Greg Watson & Paul Van Etten were Rob Ah Kuoi, Peter Willis, Steve Picun, Chris Peoples & Rob Harman... with AR assistants on the day such as Nicholas Matthews

28 BLACK SEVENS 10/12/11 SHADBOLT PARK AUCKLAND



The Auckland Sevens team is on track to defend their national title, after winning their final pre-season tournament at the 28 BLACK Tourney & despite dropping one game in pool play Auckland showed their class and composure against some of their biggest rivals which included Cook Islands, North Harbour, Northland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Barbarians, Counties & the 4 Nations invitation side.

School-boy Lolagi Visinia continued his impressive form, bagging five tries in five games, while Auckland Academy members Ben Lam and Malakai Fekitoa both made easy work of finding the try line.

The Pub Charity Rugby Sevens is the national sevens tournament, played in Queenstown every January. Auckland has won 10 titles since the first tournament in 1975 – more than any other union.

Players have three and a half weeks of training before nationals; Pivac said this time will be spent working on fitness and decision-making. The final squad of 12 players will be selected before the New Year.

The ARRA referees controlled all the matches well and would like to thank the sponsors & Craig Lister for the support given on the day.

Final: Auckland v Counties
33-22



Referees I attendance were
R. Harman, S. Piacun, P. Willis, C. Peoples, R. Drew, D. Ramshaw, P. Wagner, N. Matthews, A. Sowerby, P. Van Etten with 'Hydro Technician' TJ Piacun

OTHER EVENTS HELD PRE-XMAS INVOLVING ARRA REFEREES INCLUDED...

[COOK ISLAND SEVENS NOVEMBER 2011](#)

Attendees were Paul Van Etten & Peter Willis, their report will no doubt be posted on the web-site in the early new year...



[WAITEMATA XMAS BASH DECEMBER 2011](#)

A fun sevens event was staged at the Waitemata RFC pre-Christmas to which the off-field activities were controlled by 'paper/rock/scissors' for any team decisions and was an enjoyable day for the attending referees. Teams enjoyed the day in a Barbarians style but it still didn't take away the big hits or the skill levels.

As a novel approach there was a 'twin refereeing system' employed to gauge if it would be successful if tried in a more serious event...

The players enjoyed it as it meant that the ref was closer to any breakdowns, hence correct decisions whilst the trialling refs found it worked well as they covered sections of the field without having to go side to side.

The attending refs for the day were Roger Drew, Moe Mataafa, Bill Potter, Dale Ramshaw, Steve Piacun, Glyn Jones, Paul Van Etten, Massy White & Nicholas Matthews.





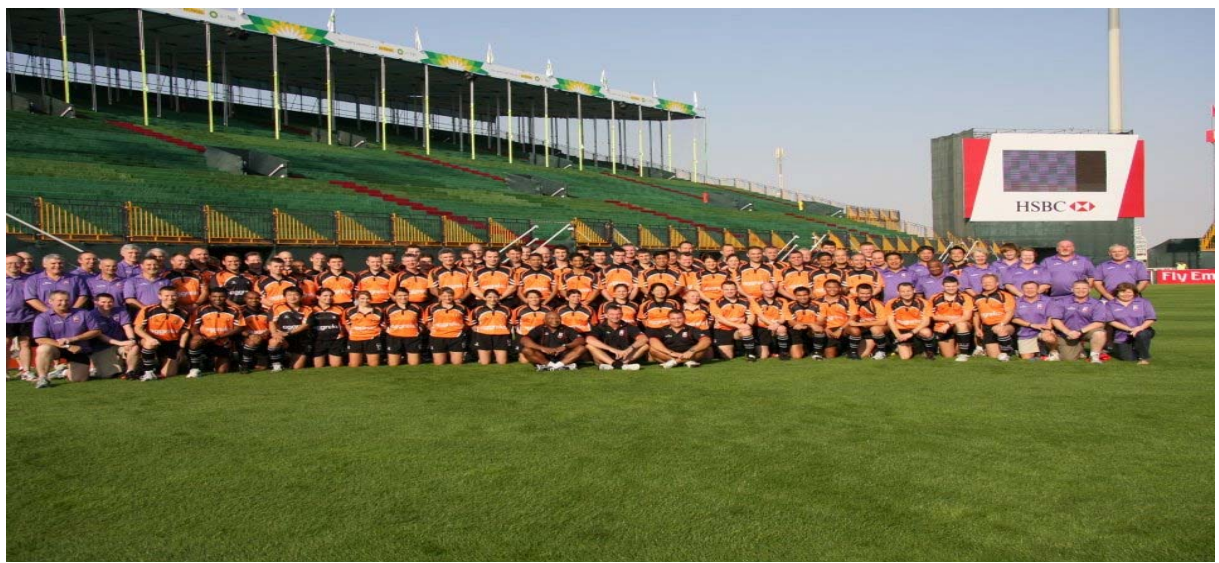
AUCKLAND RUGBY REFEREE ASSOCIATION REPORT ON 2011 DUBAI SEVENS EXPERIENCE by Roger Drew

The opportunity to visit the UAE international sevens & tens Tourney on behalf of the Auckland association's behalf to again honour the invitation sent by the AGRRRA had the following refereeing members Messer Rob Parkes, Hamish Walker & Angus Mabey fly to Dubai in late November to take part in the largest event of its kind in the Rugby world.

Our objective was to assist the home union & specifically the local referee group with both officiating & on-going management structures that had been put in place from the ARRA previous visits. This has provided leadership and coaching structures for a large contingent of overseas invitational referees & referee coaches to support the local referee association (is quite small) and needs the support of many established societies such as the English RFU full time coaches and referees/coaches from London, Bristol, Brisbane, Japan, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Wellington & also the ARRA.

Our referee attendees competed against their visiting peers over the three day event, both in AR and running referee capacities to help manage the 400+ matches allocated in conjunction with the International IRB sevens circuit. Dubai runs both the domestic invitational tourney & the IRB Sevens series and is managed now by Emirates as the official sponsor.

This photo depicts the largest team at the Dubai invitational sevens with over eighty members from both the surrounding Middle East areas as well as local-visiting Administrators, Communications Teams, Doping Officials, Side-line Staff, referees from all over the rugby globe & a large team of visiting referee coaches, plus the appointed invitational IRB AR's, but not including the official IRB coaching staff members or the IRB visiting referees who take part in the World Series IRB SEVENS circuit...



BACKGROUND INFO FOR SEVENS & TENS... Dubai 2011

The Dubai domestic international invitation tourney was celebrating its 4^{1st} anniversary this year and the remarkable fact is that this tournament is older than the country it is played in.

There are close to 160 visiting teams that attended, from not only the Middle East but a world-wide mix from various exotic locations such as Russia, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the UK to name just a few and the mix of players is as cosmopolitan as all parts of the globe & are represented by enthusiastic rugby-heads... that just grows each year. This is the largest rugby event of its type in the world and is the stage to which the IRB hold their second international IRB SEVENS circuit tourney.

The local domestic 'invitational tourney' operates over three days & intermingles with the IRB7 section (which is played in the last two days)... It has a visiting crowd that can range between 20,000 to well over 60,000 in a day, with the main stadium seating close to 42,500 people alone.

Pitch 2 is also used for a number of the domestic invitational finals and has its own live commentary team, TV and big screens, along with small grand-stands and presentation dais. There are six pitches used from early morning to late evening & games run like clock-work to accommodate the tight schedule, to which there were a minimum of 170 domestic matches on five grounds on day one, 145 domestic matches on six grounds on day two and close to 80 matches on day three, not including the IRB schedule which only operates on Pitch One for two days featuring sixteen sides for 2011.

Facilities for the event are huge, the SEVENS site is located on the Dubai-Al Ain Road approx 40 minutes from the waterfront of the CBD. The team hotel is a 20 minute bus ride, the accommodation is appropriate for the needs of the visiting attendees.

Security is restricted with x-ray entry and swing accreditation tickets that must be worn at all times. This is a highly professional & controlled environment.

The site is 3,700,900m² in size, has over 26KM of roading, 15,000 car-parks and the grass for the rugby area alone is 64,000m². Also the site is the HQ of a number of UK Football teams, the IRB ME Asia HQs and houses basketball, soccer, net-ball & cricket with the ICC offices already based in Dubai. Media is fully catered for with international live TV feed, sports commentators and interactive displays, plus large big screens & on field commentary.

A fully equipped hospital, physio areas and high-quality modern facilities are at the site with the local sports-clubs also using these areas, which includes a three storey club-house, a swimming pool, corporate event spaces, bandstand with dance-floor for many thousands, expo displays, meeting rooms and restaurants, kiddies spaces, sales areas for merchandise plus even a shaded space for relaxing & sun-bathing.

The SEVENS is also serviced by shuttle buses and transport from various parts of the city via a connected motorway & includes a totally 'free bus' for visitors on match days. The domestic tourney has a minimum of twelve distinct competitions including many visiting rugby internationals for both Sevens & Tens, men's, ladies & schools, plus veterans... and grows more with every passing year... all finals feature on Pitch 1 & 2 in between the IRB playoffs and the visiting referees are selected 'on merit' by the coaching group to be involved in teams of five, so that all the visiting refs get onto the main ground when the main matches are played... a nice touch, in front of up to 40,000+ fans.

PITCH ONE ACTION FOR BOTH IRB & INVITATION MATCHES



Finals matches being refereed by selected teams of five... including AR, In-goal and the man/women in the middle.

Both Hamish Walker & Angus Mabey performed with great credit to the association and were both involved in finals matches...whilst Rob Parkes took part in a number of IRB matches in the role of IRB AR & in-goal duties & had great reviews. The writer's roles included assisting in managing the coaching teams as well as working with the IRB group on the new Women's refereeing section, as this is now a new addition to the circuit to encompass both CWG & Olympics as part of the global expansion of Rugby.

COMMENTS

Dubai is a mix of old, new and unbelievable... on behalf of the attendees we would like to thank the ARRA for their support with providing the opportunity to attend and represent the Auckland referees at this event...



The Dubai Creek water taxi & a typical skyline architectural view of modern Dubai...

Roger Drew ©