

Special U18

EDITO



120407 U18 Elite IR EN Game photo 7

SUCCESSFUL FIRST TIME IN SPAIN

First of all, I would like to apologise to the courageous readers who were able to decipher my last Flash Info. I am of the old school and my abundant handwriting disturbed the IT supremacy. In brief, I did not comply with formatting requirements and was given a straight red card: the font was illegible. To avoid this, my style will this time be more straightforward.

From now on, this space will be dedicated to the main information while the other news will be in the "In Brief" section in the following pages. Obviously the main title is the Justin Bridou U18 European Championship, which has just been completed. Our Spanish friends, following hosting in Italy and France, have delivered a perfect event. The organisation was a success with the innovative concept of a single place of accommodation for the 800 participants! The installations in Madrid, Toledo and Segovia were first class and the staff were competent, young and dedicated.

On sporting terms, if the final (England 23 - Ireland 13) was a remake, there are many other highlights: Georgia's defeat of Italy, the German "revival", Portugal's good performance versus Ireland and the progress by Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden prove that the qualifying process was a success and makes up for the disappointing performances from Eastern nations (with the exception of Poland). another major satisfaction: Rugby is definitely part of the Spanish culture!

The cherry on the cake would be for our British friends to host this event in the future.

HENRI GATINEAU



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Jean-Claude Baqué in Slovenia

The FIRA-AER President & Octavian Morariu, member of the FIRA Executive Committee and President of the Romanian National Olympic Committee, were in Ljubljana on Monday 5th March. During their meeting with the President of the Slovenian Union, Jos Zalokar, they heard about the financial difficulties the union is experiencing. FIRA-AER encouraged the union to get in touch with the IRB to figure out the development tools they could use.

The two FIRA-AER elected members met the President of the Slovenian National Olympic Committee, Mr Janez KOCIJANCIC, in the evening. They discussed the influence of rugby within the national sport context. Indeed, Slovenia has very good results in many sports (basket-ball, handball, ski...) but is having difficulties developing rugby in the country.

FIRA-AER facing European deputies

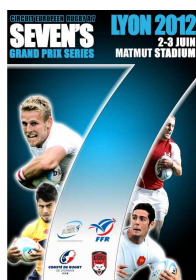


In collaboration with avec Jan KOZLOWSKI, Dany ROELANDS and Gilles BIZOT, Jean-Claude BAQUE met in Brussels with the European Parliamentary Group, chaired by Poland. The objective was for the European Association of Rugby to be better known by the political institutions who were advised of the Turkish RU's future entry.

On Wednesday 7th march, as part of the European Parliament Rugby Union Intergroup (EPRUI), FIRA-AER, represented by Jean-Claude Baqué, Dany Roelands (President of the Belgian Rugby Union and FIRA-AER assistant general secretary) and Gilles Bizot presented its activities and perspectives. Their speech focused on the development of rugby and the increase in the number of players in Europe through mass participation programs dedicated (age grade and women). Social integration through rugby could widely develop the practice. During this meeting chaired by two

members of the European Parliament, Derek Vaughan and Jan Kozlowski (also President of the Polish Rugby Union), many other topics were tackled, one of them was a commemorating project connecting rugby and the Great War, in memory of David Gallaher, captain and coach of the All Blacks, who passed away on the battlefield in 1917 in Belgium.

Official launching of the 7's GPS in Lyon



The second edition of the 7's Grand Prix series in Lyon was officially announced - 2/3 June 2012 - during a press conference held in the magnificent town hall this week. The deputy mayor in charge of sports, Thierry Braillard, is glad the French stage of the competition is taking place in Lyon. Accompanied by Daniel Falque, Vice-President of the French Rugby Union, and Yvan Patet, President of the LOU rugby club, he confirmed that this choice was resolutely forward-looking. They believe 7's rugby, becoming an Olympic sport in 2016 in Rio, has a huge potential and has a larger scope than fifteen-a-side rugby.

To report: the tournament will take place in the new Matmut stadium, where the LOU usually plays (TOP 14).

Gilles Bizot & Michel Arpaillange, on behalf of FIRA-AER, explained the format of the whole 7's competition, listed the stakes and the participating teams.

Roland Genet, manager of the local organisation committee, clearly stated their ambitions: welcome 10 000 spectators this week-end and entertain the fans just as for the IRB World Series in Hong Kong.





Häckes cup in Sweden - level 1 officiating sevens course

On March 2-4th in Vaxjo, Sweden the 14th Hackes cup was held and a team of 11 referees officiated at the indoor tournament that traditionally starts the Swedish season.

Alongside the course 7 of the referees also took part in the first ever Level 1 Officiating Sevens course to be held in the country. After 55 matches and a lot of classroom and group work the tournament and courses were completed. Visiting referees from Norway and Poland took part in the tournament with Monika Baniewicz of Poland being assigned the womens final and David Watson of Norway taking the bronze men's match. The final was refereed by Jan Craenen of the Swedish referee society.



Rugby World mourns the Passing of Jock Hobbs

The FIRA-AER is extremely saddened to learn that Jock Hobbs has passed away aged 52. He was Chairman of the NZRU from 2002 to 2010, as well as being Chairman of Rugby New Zealand 2011

Hobbs was present at the Rugby World Cup Final in Eden Park to witness Richie McCaw lifting the Webb Ellis Cup and, the following day, he won the prestigious Vernon Pugh Award for Distinguished Service at the 2012 IRB Awards ceremony in Auckland.

The FIRA-AER, is associated to Bernard Lapasset, IRB Chairman and the global Rugby family, to extend sincere condolences to Jock's wife Nicky, his family and friends at this sad time.

International Coaching Conference and Coach of Match Officials Workshop Liege (BE) 20-23 March 2012



12 delegates from Belgium, Czech Republic, England, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain & Ukraine are attending the Conference and 9 from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Norway & Romania the Workshop.

The Conference will be analysing the RWC 2011 and looking towards 2015 in terms of how to best prepare for qualification towards and/or performance during the tournament. The Workshop will look at how to best perform as Coaches of Match Officials at FIRA-AER U16/17 Camps as well as FIRA-AER tournaments and matches.

The Conference will be facilitated by IRB RDM's Michel Arpaillange & Douglas Langley whilst the Workshop by Patrick Robin & Michel Lamoulie.

Day 1

After the activities' opening by Belgium Rugby Federation President, Dany Roelands, the Conference had presentations (via Skype) from IRB Analysts Corris Thomas & Rhys Jones on technical statistics from RWC 2011. Michel Arpaillange also looked back at the key points from the FIRA-AER "Stages Experts" (2007) which analysed the RWC 2007. The workshop which is running parallel to the Conference focused on the function of the delegates at U16/17 FIRA-AER Camps as Referee Educators.

Day 2

The Conference continued with Jon Callard (England) presenting on " Coaching Lessons for the RFU from RWC 2011". Kingsley Jones (Russia) then presented on preparation for and during the RWC 2011 and Richie Dixon (IRB & coach for Georgia during RWC) on the "Relationship between Coaching Development and Union Structures & Processes". Michel Arpaillange also presented to the IRB Strategic Plan and how it is linked to High Performance & Development.

The Workshop saw delegates discussing the function of Commissioner at FIRA-AER matches and the performance reviewing of referees at FIRA-AER ENC matches. In the afternoon the workshop then focused on Match Officiating and Sevens as well as the role of Referee Manager at FIRA-AER tournaments.

Day 3

Day 3 saw presentations from Michel Arpaillange on RWC 2015 Qualification, Corris Thomas by telephone conference presented some statistics on the 2012 6-Nations, Jon Callard on Coaching Lessons regarding Kicking from the RWC, Alessandro Troncon (Italy) on their preparation for the RWC 2011, whilst Emile Ntamack also looked at this from the French perspective.



Day 3 also saw the coaches and match officials do a joint workshop on the 5 main refereeing principles and discussed the current issues with the Scrum.

Day 4

The final Day saw both groups bring together what they had taken from the Conference & Workshop and the Belgium Rugby Federation (especially Dany Roelands) was thanked for their excellent hospitality and support in organising the activities.

2012 - U18 Closing ceremony



Following the win in the Ciudad universitaria de Madrid of U18 England, the Spanish Union has invited all players, Management, Volunteers, Officials, Clubs ... to the great auditorium in the Hotel Auditorium Madrid for a big closing ceremony.

First of all, the team Captains has received a gift, then the Spanish clubs. Alfonso Mandado therefore has awarded the Spanish responsible of referees, Jose-Maria Epalza and Jean-Claude Baqué. To finish the ceremony, Jean-Claude Baqué has highlighted the exceptional performance of Spanish Rugby Union to organise a great tournament without a mistake.

Finally a very impressive Gala Diner for more than 800 persons in Auditorium Hotel has been give, an other great performance. Next U18 Tournament in Grenoble (FR).

Photos: Hector Sanchez



U18 FIRA-AER European Championship Legacy Programmes



Saturday 31st March saw the start of the 2 legacy programmes taking part during this tournament. "Outreach" is aimed at Educating players to take responsibility to "Keep Rugby Clean".

The programme is being delivered by IRB Anti-Doping Officer, David Ho and is being supported by FER Technical Director Ruben Duque & FIRA-AER / IRB RDMs Douglas Langley & Michel Arpaillange. All 24 teams competing at this tournament have signed up for the program which will be spread over 3 days. It is an anti-doping program whereby teams will be introduced to the risks of anti-doping and how issues are prevented or tackled.

Legacy Programmes continue at the FIRA-AER U18 European Championship

Day 2 of the anti-doping "Outreach" program continued with FIRA-AER President, Jean-Claude Baque visiting the program. Speaking to one of the teams he expressed the importance of such a

program for the education of the players in their development.

The second legacy program took place in the evening at 3 Rugby venues across Madrid. 152 boys and girls participating along with their club coaches at Hortaleza, Puerta de Hierro & Valle de las Cañas. The aim of the program was to assist with promoting and profiling the Game locally as well as the Tournament. It also allowed the sharing of coaching ideas to local players and coaches. Each team participating in the U18 Tournament provided 1 coach and their captain to work with the players. Many thanks must go to the teams for supporting the program and especially to Ruben Duque of the FER for coordinating it.

Today, 2nd April saw the anti-doping program conclude with the Russian team. Since it started with the Scottish team, all 24 teams at the Tournament have participated with a total of 622 players completing the program. The Tournament Referees were also keen to complete the program. So along with team staff that attended the program, close to 700 Tournament delegates completed the program. Many thanks must go to David Ho for his time and dedication towards achieving this. For more information on anti-doping and Rugby please see <http://www.irb.com/keeprugbyclean/> "



