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Exiles second in nation

Aug. 21, 2002

From staff reports

The Maryland Exiles, a Bethesda-based amateur rugby club placed second among 428 adult men's rugby teams at the 2002 national seven-a-side championships in Philadelphia on Aug. 10-11. The Exiles lost in the final to Old Mission Beach Athletic Club of San Diego.

To get to the championship game, Maryland defeated Nashville, the Chicago Lions, the Gentleman of Aspen (Colo.) and the Olympic Club (San Francisco). Sixteen teams met for the weekend tournament. The D.C.-based Potomac Athletic Club placed 15th.

Though rugby is professional in much of the world, the United States maintains an amateur competition that flourishes at the senior men's, women's and college levels. From these ranks, the U.S. governing body chooses a national all-star side (the U.S. Eagles) to face the professionals in competition around the world. The sport is tipped to return to the Olympics in 2008 and has a strong following at American colleges and is rapidly growing in high school and youth (under-15 and under-11) levels. The Exiles Club operates high school and youth teams throughout Montgomery County (www.highschoolrugby.com).

"Rugby is the 'x-treme' sports father of American football and is enjoying a big comeback among the Generation X, Y and Z crowd," said Exiles manager Jason Maloni. "The action is non-stop like basketball, it's physical like football and anyone can pick up the ball and score."

Maryland draws 18-35-year-old players for its adult program from all over Montgomery County, plus D.C. and Virginia.

"We're working professionals during the week - three of our players have Ph.D.s - and train for this on the weekends," said Maloni. "The most important aspect to a successful adult athletic program is understandable bosses and a lot of Advil."

The fifteen-a-side season, more traditional rugby, is just starting this week and the Exiles are always looking for athletes willing to try a new sport. If interested look on www.marylandrugby.org or call 301-652-RUGB. The Exiles would like to thank their new sponsors, Chrome, of Bethesda.



The Maryland Exiles adult rugby team placed second at the national seven-a-side tournament in Philadelphia two weeks ago. Back row, left to right: Jeff Bogart, Marc Frey, Jason Maloni, Jarlath Tracey and Jason Sanabia. Front row: David Ries, Chris Harvey, Paki Tanuvasa, Owen Lentz, Alex Prasertchoung and Tom Sanders. Not pictured: Tom Brown and Tim Stello.

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