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MANYATTA



KENYA RUGBY UNION NEWSLETTER



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7's Circuit

Sevens Rugby

Mwamba run off with the Western Union National Sevens Circuit overall title

The curtains have fallen on the 2010 Western Union National Sevens Circuit with Mwamba RFC reclaiming the overall title that they last held in 2008. The black shirts were imperious over five legs, winning three consecutive tournaments, losing in the main cup final of one and getting to the semi final stage when that was all that they needed to do to be crowned Kenyan champions in the shorter version of the game.

The cutting edge

The presence of their Kenya Sevens contingent of Humphrey Kayange, Collins Injera, Horace Owiti and Lavin Asego who combined well with the excellent playmaker that is Edgar Abere ultimately proved to be the cutting edge between Mwamba and all other opposition. They led by example, playing a very big role in seeing that their club returned to the apex of the National Sevens Circuit.

Quins were Mwamba's closest challengers for the overall title, featuring in all five finals, winning the circuit opening Christie Sevens before going on to lose three successive finals before crowning their campaign with victory at the circuit closing Driftwood Sevens in Mombasa.

Perceived minnows catch the eye

While Impala RFC, Nakuru RFC, Kenya Commercial Bank RFC and Strathmore Leos routinely competed in the main cup quarter finals, it was the performance of perceived minnows in the form of Kisumu RFC, Homeboyz RFC, Blak Blad that caught the eye. The performances of Ken Moseti, Collins Mulaa and Hesborn Mataya all from Homeboyz RFC caught the eyes of the national sevens team selectors who subsequently gave them call ups to Shujaa's trips to the United Kingdom, Zambia and South Africa.

Unearthing diamonds in the rough

The circuit unearthed quite a number of diamonds in the rough, who with time, continued exposure and comprehensive nurturing could go on to feature prominently on the local and international stage. Nakuru's Bernard Chirchir is one of them. With Gibson Weru, Simon Wariuki and Oscar Ouma missing in the initial stages of the circuit, and despite being slight of build, he organized play excellently for the Wanyore. Kenyatta University Blak Blad's Kevin Nyeusi continues to grow in stature, playing a pivotal role for his side. Leonard Mugaisi (Kenya Commercial Bank RFC), Tony Onyango (Impala RFC), Eden Adero, Willy Ambaka, Allan Omuka (Quins) were just some of the many young guns who lit up the circuit and one can only hope that they become regular features in years to come.

Cast its net wider

While the jury may be out on the decision to expand some of the tournaments on the circuit, one cannot be blind to the fact that many more teams, and players were incorporated into the mainstream rugby playing arena. Teams like Greenfields RFC, Oryx RFC, Nairobi Mtaa, Nakuru Mtaa, Molo RFC, Kitale RFC, and Siaya KMTC all got a chance to slug it out with the likes of Mwamba, Quins, Impala, and KCB. Indeed the Mtaa teams from Nairobi and Nakuru did not disappoint, almost making the main cup quarter finals at the Prinsloo and Dala Sevens respectively.

Yes, they may have at a point conceded heavy defeats along the way but the exposure and experience can only serve to bring out the best in the teams and players, and also serve to further spur the growth and the development of the game in areas outside the traditional Nairobi-Nakuru-Western Kenya belt that has for years on end produced the bulk of the national fifteens and sevens teams.

Fifteens Rugby

2010 WESTERN UNION NATIONAL SEVENS CIRCUIT

FINAL STANDINGS

TEAM	CHRISTIES	PRINSLOO	DALA	KABEBERI	DRIFTWOOD	TOTAL POINTS
1. Mwamba	20	30	38	30	16	134
2. Quins	24	25	31	25	24	129
3. Impala	16	20	25	20	20	101
4. Nakuru	16	20	25	10	6	77
5. KCB	6	10	21	20	16	73
6. Strathmore	12	16	13	8	12	61
7. Machine	6	8	5	8	8	35
8. Homeboyz	4	8	11	5	4	32
9. Kisumu	8	5	11	0	0	24
10. Nondies	0	0	0	16	0	16
11. Blak Blad	0	0	7	0	6	13

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER - Edgar Abere (Mwamba RFC)

TOP POINTS SCORER- Innocent Simiyu (Impala RFC)

TOP TRY SCORER- Innocent Simiyu (Impala RFC)

Christie Sevens Winners- Kenya Harlequin FC

Prinsloo Sevens Winners- Mwamba RFC

Dala Sevens Winners- Mwamba RFC

Kabeberi Sevens- Mwamba RFC

Driftwood Sevens Winners –Kenya Harlequin FC

Overall Circuit Winners- Mwamba RFC

Overall Circuit Runners Up- Kenya Harlequin FC

Overall Circuit Third place- Impala RFC





Commonwealth

Kenya's rugby sevens team will be gunning for the gold medal when the Commonwealth Games rugby sevens tournament gets underway on 11th October 2010 in New Delhi, India. Head Coach Benjamin Ayimba said, "We will be going for nothing short of the gold medal...we expect to be in the medals bracket at the end of the competition."

He was speaking while naming the 12 man squad to do duty at the games. Nondies back row Gray Cullen, Kenya Commercial Bank's utility forward Andrew Amonde and Kenya Harlequin FC lock Wilson K'Opondo, long at the fringes of the national sevens team, make the grade while regulars Innocent Simiyu, Victor Sudi and Ben Nyambu missed out on the final squad.

Kenya's squad to the Commonwealth Games

1. Humphrey Kayange (Captain), 2. Brian Nyikuli, 3. Wilson K'Opondo, 4. Gray Cullen, 5. Andrew Amonde, 6. Leon Adongo, 7. Lavin Asego, 8. Collins Injera, 9. Gibson Weru, 10. Biko Adema, 11. Sidney Ashioya, 12. Horace Owiti

While in India, Kenya will play against Papua New Guinea before taking on Uganda in the East African derby that is

bound to stir passions between these sides who share one of the fiercest rivalries in African rugby. Kenya will also play Samoa in what is bound to be a thriller, if past results between these two sides are anything to go by.

Sure bet to qualify for the main cup quarters Kenya look like a sure bet to qualify out of their group. They should easily beat Uganda and Papua New Guinea but the hardest task will be against Samoa. Once out of the group stage, anything can happen and they could just be among the teams competing for the gold medal on 12th October 2010.

And there is good enough reason to be optimistic; the team is sufficiently rested after the 2009/2010 IRB Sevens World Series and has had a good return to action courtesy of the National Sevens Circuit. They go to India in good physical shape and a competitive state of mind. They performed arguably well at the 2009 RWC Sevens in Dubai, making the main cup semi finals and would surely love to build from this experience as they embark on their quest to bring home Kenya's first gold medal from a team sport at the Commonwealth Games.

COME OUT AND PLAY

Whistle Blowers

Kenyan match official Constant Cap was appointed to officiate at the 19th Commonwealth Games to be held this October in New Delhi, India. Cap has officiated at the Safari sevens and Mosi Sevens in Lusaka, Zambia. He also officiated at the 2009 Junior World Rugby Trophy held in Kenya.

Also earning an international invite, Sarah Otieno will participate in a women's match official conference in Dubai later this year. Sarah has officiated at the National Sevens Circuit and is a leading lady referee.

The recently ended national sevens circuit had participation from Over 40 teams nationwide. Several new entrants were appointed as match officials after a nationwide fitness and laws written test. Victor Oduor and Samson Odhiambo from Nakuru, Ben Amboko from Kitale, Jeff Khaoya from Kakamega, Amos Wamanga from Busia, Vincent Barasa from Masinde Muliro, Nelson Kiambi from Nairobi and Oscar Owaga from Mombasa were among the newcomers onto the Match Official scene.

Meanwhile, the IRB has released 5 areas that required strict application after Tier 1 coaches met with the IRB referees manager, Paddy O'Brien earlier this year:

- Offside around the breakdown
- Offside players after kicks
- Illegal Maul Formation
- Slowing down of the scrum sequence
- Strict application of the Tackle Law.

A local conference between match officials and club coaches will be held at the start of the new 2010/2011 season in Nairobi to achieve law application congruence.

Olympics

The impact of Sevens Rugby on the Olympics

Without a doubt, the Safari Sevens has been the bedrock upon which Kenya's success in the abridged version of the game was laid on. Those results from the early days of the event have served as the start of a steep learning curve that has taken close to fourteen years. Kenya's rise in the sevens game has been one of the major talking points on the international team. It is teams like Kenya who helped push the agenda of sevens rugby into the International Olympic Committee's boardroom. So strong was the case that a big announcement was made on Friday 9th October 2009.

This was undoubtedly the biggest day in rugby union history since the game turned professional. It was a memorable day for rugby players, enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted to readmit the game of rugby to the Olympic Games for the first time since 1924.

Unlike 1924 when the rugby competition was a fifteens event, the game will be played in the abridged sevens version in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

While the news sinks in, it is time to look at the impact of sevens rugby on the Olympics and the game as well.

Speaking prior to the IOC vote, International Rugby Board (IRB) Chief Executive Mike Miller said, "I don't think people realize yet how big this could be for rugby," Miller said. "This is right up there with the inception of the Rugby World Cup and the game going open.

"We have 116 members of the IRB, but there are 205 nations involved in the Olympics and I have already been approached by a number of countries who have said that if sevens is included, they will be interested in investing in rugby.

"In countries like Russia, China, the US – big markets – it would make a huge difference. For instance in Russia they are only allowed to have Olympic sports on the school's curriculum.

"It would also lead to many millions of pounds being invested in the game across the world and many extra facilities being made available. It would have a huge impact in speeding up the growth of the game around the world."

Throw in the entertainment value and methinks sevens rugby will make the Olympics more memorable, though critics may argue that Usain Bolt has ably covered that gap. Think about Wales's unexpected win in the 2009 RWC Sevens or the fact that New Zealand, England and Fiji were not in contention when this tournament concluded. Think about Kenya making the semis of the same event at the expense of defending champions Fiji or their string of solid performances during the 2008/2009 IRB Sevens World Series.

Unlike the Usain Bolt dominated 100m and 200m sprints, where an American sprinter was quoted as saying that "you would probably have to trip that Usain Bolt to keep him from victory", anything could happen in the sevens event, the form book could be thrown out of the window, this gold medal could be



Fifteens

Fifteens Rugby

Kenyan rugby's focus returns to fifteens, which had taken a two month hiatus courtesy of the national sevens circuit. The 2010/2011 Kenya Cup, Eric Shirley and Universities leagues all kick off on Saturday 9th October 2010 at various venues countrywide. After a one legged competition in 2010 that was necessitated by the reconfiguration of the Kenyan season, the leagues revert to their traditional two legged, home and away format, meaning that it will a grueling journey for all participating teams. The most resilient teams at the end of the season will be crowned champions in the three divisions.

Kenya Cup

Kenya Harlequin FC are the defending league champions and will be hard pressed to pull off a successful title defense. Their stiffest competition for the Kenyan title will again come from Kenya Commercial Bank RFC and Impala RFC. This trio has over the past decade dominated the Kenya Cup and the big question is who or what will stop them from doing so this season? They have the depth in numbers, the pedigree and the

interest in the Kenya Cup, something that the other competing teams must pay attention to if they are to offer any longstanding threat to the Kenya Cup big three.

Eric Shirley Shield

Homeboyz RFC won the second division Eric Shirley Shield at their first time of asking but missed out on promotion to the Kenya Cup on a technicality. Top on their minds will be defense of their title, which this year should guarantee them that long awaited promotion to the country's top league. They were head and shoulders above the rest of the competition in 2010 and their biggest threat, on paper that is, should come from Kisumu RFC and Mombasa who are also eyeing a place in the Kenya Cup.

Universities and Colleges

Mean Machine II were the inaugural winners in 2010, they have since been upgraded to the Eric Shirley Shield meaning that this season's competition will be tough to call. The strongest team at the end of the grueling journey will be crowned winners.

Enjoy the rugby season, support your favorite team.



October Fixtures



	KENYA CUP LEAGUE	ESS POOL A (EAST)	ESS POOL B (WEST)	UNI League POOL A	UNI League POOL B
1st Leg	Nakuru vs Nondies	KCB II vs Homeboyz	Kisumu vs Kisii	Kabarak vs Moi	Spartans vs Sheperds
09-Oct-10	Impala vs Mwamba	Nakuru II vs Nondies II	Mmuliro vs Siaya	Impala III vs Blakblad	Homeboyz vs Nazarene
	Machine vs Strathmore	Impala II vs Mwamba II	Kakamega vs Webuye	KCA vs Catholic	Oryx vs K.Poly
	Quins Rest	Machine II vs Strathmore II	Bungoma vs Maseno	Egerton vs KEMU	USIU vs Daystar
	KCB Rest	Quins II vs Mombasa			
2nd Leg	KCB vs Mwamba	Homeboyz vs Quins II	Siaya vs Kisumu	Blakblad vs Kabarak	Nazarene vs Spartans
16-Oct-10	Nakuru vs Strathmore	KCB II vs Mwamba II	Webuye vs Mmuliro	Catholic vs Impala III	K.Poly vs Homeboyz II
	Impala vs Machine	Nakuru II vs Strathmore II	Kakamega vs maseno	KCA vs KEMU	Oryx vs Daystar
	Quins Rest	Impala II vs Machine II	Bungoma vs Kisii	Egerton vs Moi	USIU vs Sheperds
	Nondies Rest	Mombasa vs Nondies II			
3rd Leg	Quins vs Nondies	Quins II vs Nondies II	Kisumu vs Webuye	Kabarak vs Catholic	Spartans vs K.Poly
23-Oct-10	KCB vs Machine	Homeboyz vs Mwamba II	Mmuliro vs Maseno	Impala III vs KEMU	Homeboyz II vs Daystar
	Nakuru vs Impala	KCB II vs Machine II	Kisii vs Kakamega	Moi vs KCA	Sheperds vs Oryx
	Strathmore rest	Nakuru II vs Impala II	Siaya vs Bungoma	Blakblad vs Egerton	Nazarene vs USIU
	Mwamba Rest	Strathmore II vs Mombasa			
CONFEDERATION OF AFRICA RUGBY POOL B					
4th Leg	Mwamba vs Quins	Mwamba II vs Quins II	Maseno vs Kisumu	KEMU vs Kabarak	Daystar vs Spartans
30-Oct-10	Nondies vs Strathmore	Nondies II vs Strathmore II	Kisii vs Mmuliro	Moi vs Impala III	Sheperds vs Homeboyz II
	KCB vs Nakuru	Homeboyz vs Machine II	Kakamega vs Siaya	KCA vs Blakblad	Oryx vs Nazarene
	Impala Rest	KCB II vs Nakuru II	Bungoma vs Webuye	Egerton vs Catholic	USIU vs K.Poly
	Machine Rest	Mombasa vs Impala II			

KENYA CUP TEAMS' FACTS



KENYA HARLEQUIN FOOTBALL CLUB

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1951

Nickname: Quins

Home Ground: RFUEA Grounds

Head Coach: Edward Kinyany

Kenya Cup Titles (6)



STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY

Location: Nairobi

Nickname: The Leos

Home Ground: Nairobi School

Head Coach: Mitch Ocholla



IMPALA RFC

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1956

Nickname: The Gazelles

Home Ground: Impala Club

Head Coach: Bill Githinji

Kenya Cup Titles (10)



NAKURU RFC

Location: Nakuru

Founded: 1929

Nickname: The Wanyore

Home Ground: Nakuru Athletic Club

Kenya Cup Achievements

Fourth Place: 2008, 2009, 2010

MWAMBA RFC

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1977

Nickname: Kulabu

Home Ground: Nairobi Railway Club

Kenya Cup Titles (1)



MEAN MACHINE RFC

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1977

Nickname: Eschuma Absolute

Home Ground: University of Nairobi Grounds

Kenya Cup Titles (3)



KENYA COMMERCIAL BANK RFC

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1989

Nickname: Lions, Kakamega Crazy Boys

Home Ground: KCB Sports Club (The Lions' Den)

Head Coach: Michael Otieno

Team Manager: Howard Okwembah

Captain: Edwin Alubaka

Kenya Cup Titles (3)



NONDESCRIPT RUFC

Location: Nairobi

Founded: 1923

Nickname: Nondies

Home Ground: Jamhuri Park

Kenya Cup Titles (18)



