

SEPTEMBER 2010 ISSUE

# MANYATTA



KENYA RUGBY UNION NEWSLETTER



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# Western Union



## The 2010 Western Union National Sevens Circuit

The 2010 National Sevens Circuit received a Ksh 4 million boost from leading global money transfer service provider Western Union in a ceremony held at the RFUEA Grounds this morning.

Kenya Rugby Union Chairman Richard Omwela expressed his gratitude to Western Union for their continued support of the National Sevens Circuit, noting that this partnership is a three year deal.

He went on to say, "We value our sevens programme because this is what has put Kenya on the map in terms of our playing unit... Western Union's sponsorship goes a long way in ensuring we continue to tap the talent in Kenya."

He also said that National Sevens coach Benjamin Ayimba would be invited to look at the outstanding players once that circuit comes to a conclusion with the aim of identifying talent as Kenya seeks to have the best available team taking part in the IRB Sevens World Series.

Western Union's Dr. Naomi Mang'ato said in a statement, "Kenyans are rightly proud of their world class talent in rugby sevens. Together with our Agents, Western Union is delighted to be the title sponsor of the National Sevens Circuit for the third year so that emerging talent can continue to be discovered."

Launched in 1999, the National Sevens Circuit is immensely popular not only with the rugby fraternity but it become a fixture on Kenya's social and entertainment calendar, running over a period of five weekends.



# Christies



## NAIROBI

The 2010 edition kicked off with the Christie Sevens held at the RFUEA Grounds on the weekend of 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> August 2010.

Kenya Harlequin FC successfully defended their Christie Sevens title with a come from behind 15-10 win over Mwamba RFC in the main cup final played at the RFUEA Grounds, taking an early four point lead after the first leg.

Here is a recap of the final match

It was Mwamba RFC who fired the first salvo, retaining possession from kick off. Their first foray into Quins territory saw Humphrey Kayange power his way to an unconverted try...5-0 to the black shirts...

They continued to dominate Quins, particularly at the contact points and forced the quartered shirts into a series of unforced errors.

Tournament MVP Edgar Abere soon stretched Kulabu's lead with a second unconverted try...10-0...Mwamba...

Mwamba would continue to enjoy the upper hand in this half but failed to translate their possession into the most important statistic on the day...points.

Half time score Mwamba 10 Quins 0

Felix Ochieng's half time pep talk must have fired up the home side for they came into the second half filled with zeal, prodding Mwamba as they clawed their way back from the dead. Their pressure paid off when Victor Sudi touched down, cutting Mwamba's lead to five points.

An unforced error from Horace Otieno gifted Quins their second try. His attempt at keeping the ball in play from an opportunistic Quins punt went horribly wrong and second half substitute William Ambaka was on hand to pick up the pieces and score the easiest of tries. Bondo summed up this tragicomedy by inexplicably missing the conversion in front of the sticks. Mwamba 10 Quins 10

Leon Adongo would eventually seal the win for Quins, touching down at the death to give Quins the title. Final Score Mwamba 10 Quins 15





# Prinsloo



## NAKURU

The second leg saw teams head out to the Central Rift Valley town of Nakuru for the Prinsloo Sevens a week later. It would be a repeat final with Mwamba getting the better of Quins, a 17-10 result that gave the Prinsloo title and more importantly, leadership of the National Sevens Circuit. For Horace Otieno, it was the perfect stage to redeem himself following his howler that granted Quins the Christie Sevens title and he did so in style. His brace led Mwamba RFC to a popular 17-10 win over Kenya Harlequin in the Prinsloo Sevens main cup final played at the Nakuru Athletic Club.

Mwamba were first to settle in this high paced match, asking questions of Quins and were rewarded when Otieno grounded the ball. Kevin Wambua converted for a 7-0 Mwamba lead. Kulabu would continue to have the upper hand. Otieno extended their lead with his second try. Wambua missed this conversion with the score line at 12-0.

Quins finally managed to keep possession, inching into Mwamba territory and were rewarded with an unconverted Victor Sudi try before the break.

### **Half time scores Mwamba 12 Quins 5**

The pace did not drop in the second half with both sides in search of a breakthrough. Wilson Kopondo's try narrowed the scores to 12-10. Sudi again missed the conversion with the game finely poised.

With the game wearing on, Mwamba began to see more ball, Steve Okeyo eventually scoring the all important try with little time left on the clock. They would come close to adding another try when Kayange gathered George Mbaye's deft cross kick but was denied short of the tryline.

Mwamba gained 30 points for winning the 24 team Prinsloo Sevens.

### **Final score Mwamba 17 Quins 10**

Strathmore Leos won the Prinsloo plate with a 10-5 win over KCB. Edwin Salamba scored both tries for Strathmore with Collins Kimani scoring for KCB

Other results:

#### **Bowl Final:**

Kisumu 14 Blak Blad 12

#### **Shield Final:**

Mombasa 31 Webuye 7

Results in Nakuru saw Mwamba build a one point lead over Quins. There were 38 points to play for in Kisumu and the usual four suspects, Mwamba, Quins, Nakuru and Impala would be in the main cup semi finals for a third successive tournament. Mwamba and Quins would again contest for the Dala Sevens main cup trophy, the third time that these two sides were vying for a Western Union National Sevens Circuit title in 2010.





# Dala Sevens

A bustling performance from Horace Otieno saw Mwamba win the 2010 Dala Sevens with a 15-12 win over Kenya Harlequin FC in the final match at the Kisumu Polytechnic grounds in Kisumu.

The match started on a slow note, Quins taking the early initiative, asking all the early questions and seemed to be in the ascendancy when Sidney Ashioya broke through the Mwamba rearguard. He played the ball to Naftali Bondo who dropped the ball with the try line in sight. Collins Injera picked up the ball, accelerating to score the game's opening try. Lavin Asego missed the conversion as Mwamba led 5-0.

The game remained tight, both sides giving as good as they got. Otieno would extend Mwamba's lead with a try midway through the first half and would crown his Man of the match performance by taking out Leon Adongo, gaining a good thirty or so yards before offloading to Collins Injera who grounded for a 15-0 lead.

Second half action saw Quins quick off the blocks, young David Ambunya breaking free before playing in Leon Adongo who touched down. Bondo would miss this conversion but there was a game on our hands.

It remained as finely poised as ever, Quins seeing more of the ball, Mwamba intelligently keeping them at bay. Quins pressure bore fruits when Bondo scored a try under the posts. He converted his own try for a 15-12 score line.

Both sides would push for more points, making for a pulsating end to the match. Eventually it is Mwamba who held out for the win, picking up 38 National Sevens Circuit points, opening up an eight point lead over Quins heading into the Kabeberi Sevens on Saturday 18th September in Nairobi.

KCB won the Dala Sevens Plate with a 22-0 win over Strathmore Leos. Tries from Dennis Mwanja, Fabian Olando and an Andrew Amonde brace peppered with a Peter Mutai conversion saw the bankers defended their Dala Sevens plate title and gain ample revenge over the students who beat them in the Prinsloo plate.

## Other Results

### Bowl Final

Blak Blad 12 Mean Machine 7

### Shield Final

KCA 5 Siaya 0

### Spear Final

Moi University 17 Catholic University 7

With two rounds of the circuit to go, Mwamba hold an eight point lead over Quins. Impala and Nakuru lie joint third.

There is still alot to play for and fans can expect a dramatic end to the 2010 Western Union National Sevens Circuit.

## 7's Circuit

	Christie		Prinsloo		Dala		Total Points	Position
	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank		
Mwamba RFC	20	2	30	1	38	1	88	1
Quins	24	1	25	2	31	2	80	2
Impala	16	4	20	3	25	3	61	3
Nakuru	16	3	20	4	25	4	61	4
Strathmore	12	5	16	5	13	6	41	5
KCB	6	7	10	6	21	5	37	6
Kisumu RFC	8	6	5	9	11	8	24	7
Homeboyz	4	9	8	7	11	7	23	8
Machine	6	8	8	8	5	10	19	9
Blakblad	0	10	0	10	7	9	7	10

# Other News



## Shujaa

The Kenya Rugby Sevens second string side, Shujaa, has been equally busy during the month of August, playing in two tournaments in the UK and Zambia.

The side featured at the Middlesex Sevens in London on August 14<sup>th</sup> 2010, beating Leeds 19-12 before bowing out to British Army 5-28 in the quarter final.

The side would visit Zambia on the weekend of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2010, playing in the Castle Sevens. They qualified second out of Pool A beating Lechwe 31-0, Matabeland 19-7 before losing to Northern Region 7-24. They would fall to Namibia in the Main Cup Quarters, going down 7-29.



## Mtaa Rugby

The Mtaa Rugby concept introduced by the Kenya Rugby Union is intended to tap talent outside the traditional rugby playing teams and towns. The first Mtaa Sevens Rugby tournament was held on 15<sup>th</sup> August in Nairobi where Oryx were crowned the inaugural winners.

A Nairobi Mtaa Select side constituted after the tournament would play at the Prinsloo Sevens in Nakuru two weeks later, winning two pool matches and losing one, narrowly missing out on main cup quarter final action due to an inferior points aggregate.

Erick Situma, speaking about Mtaa, said, "The idea behind Mtaa is to more or less open up the space...we have a limited number of clubs participating in rugby. They tend to be very formal, very structured. We are trying to tap into that pool of players who ideally cannot train every so often but still have the talent to play. This kind of set up will allow players to train once a week and participate probably once in a month in various tournaments all over the country. From their tournaments, be it in Nairobi or Kisumu, we'll pick the best players and try to expose them in the mainstream arena."

"In terms of their performance, we are very impressed. They finished second in their pool, winning two matches and losing honorably against Quins. I think they're on the right track. We want to fast track this concept and rope in other towns. We hope to send a Nakuru Mtaa Select to the Dala Sevens...its logistically easier...and will give the idea of Mtaa rugby in Nakuru the much needed impetus. We also hope to see a Mtaa team in Mombasa just within this circuit. There are immediate plans to have it rolled out regionally."

A Nakuru Mtaa team would take part at the Dala Sevens, impressing in all their matches, eventually bowing out at the Bowl Semi finals after a narrow 10-14 loss to Mean Machine

# IRB Grant



by Fred Ollows

In Kenyan rugby, game development excites the most debate. This is natural considering that even though the game is on an upward curve, by increased participation and national interest, we are largely underdeveloped.

The 7s game provides some comfort, our having reached a world cup sevens semi final providing proof. Nonetheless, final growth and development in the game is measured by performance in the full game.

A key reason for which there may be considerable debate is the fact that Kenya Rugby Union (KRU) receives an annual development grant from the International Rugby Board (IRB). Most in the Kenya Rugby fraternity suppose that this money is a discretionary fund sent to the KRU. As such there are typically many suggestions on what the money ought to do. This is not the case. The funding is negotiated for various projects monitored by the IRB.

As a start, the IRB conditions that development money be straitjacketed into the following broad areas: age grade, technical advisory, match officials and women. In terms of levels, game involvement is divided into 3 broad areas - participation, performance and high performance. The participation level, which is the highest concern of IRB development funding, essentially involves an attraction of numbers to the game, and learning game basics based on fully amateur tenets.

In 2011, the KRU and IRB have the following negotiated projects for the GBP 95,000 (KES 11.8m):

**Age grade rugby.** We intend to have at least 12 below 14s tournament, 12 under 16 tournaments, 1 provincial under 19s 7s tournament and, for the first time since the 2004 experiment, a provincial under 19s & 15s tournament. Age grade rugby is the basic lifeline of game development. This aspect of the game has seen the most exponential growth. Outside the IRB funding, we hope to gain sponsor funding to select a Kenya Schools XV to tour Zimbabwe, funds allowing.

**Provincial spread.** The KRU will support and further train provincial and district development officers. At the moment, the following have been conducting provincial development coordination work - Nairobi (Greg Sang), Central (Paul Weloba), Eastern (Richard Mokaya), Rift Valley (Lameck Ongati), Nyanza (JJ Masime), Western (Henry Barasa) and Coast (Twaha Mwatsahu). Certain identified districts have also had development

officers -

Nairobi (Sebastian Shivoka), Kakamega (John Asila), Bungoma (Vincent Barasa), Nakuru (Roy Lovega) and Mombasa (Tolbert Achayo).

**Women.** The grant will support women match officials and coach training programme. We intend to position the existing match officials and coaches into two focus groups that will be trained to deal with a gender focussed approach to the training of women coaches and match officials. Further, we will deepen and entrench the girls age grade competitions that we had this year. Age grade retention programmes will see us collaborate with teacher training colleges in terms of competitions and technical support and oversight.

**Match officials.** We will support the match officials' technical and administration desks at KRU. We will continue to use the services of John Kagagi and Osborne Bulemi. Kagagi has been responsible for executing the match officials' technical development programme while Bulemi administers the match officials' operations. It is anticipated that the huge expansion seen this year will continue next year.

**Technical advisory.** At least 28 training courses are lined up for coaches and match officials in the course of 2011. The courses will have a provincial focus and 4 of the courses will have a special focus on age grade practitioners. The main aim of this training will be on follow up into the practical zones of the coaches and match officials. This technical focus has seen the emergence of new officials this year, a trend that is expected to continue in 2011.

**Equipment.** A part of the grant will be allocated to procure equipment to run this programme and also donate to the extremely deserving cases. It is well nigh impossible to donate to all cases given the game's huge expansion. For instance, the game now serves at least 500 learning institutions involved in age grade rugby. Nonetheless, needy cases will still be isolated and served.

Separately, we will actively seek game development funding from government, corporate sponsors and well wishers for broader game development and especially our Mtaa programme that is catching on like bushfire. We are already working with Safaricom Foundation and will continue to do so.

The only way is up for the game.





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