

Singapore and the SCC7s

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The Singapore Cricket Club hosts an annual invitational rugby sevens tournament which started in 1947 and brings together a combination of professional clubs, International A/Development sides and amateur scratch teams from all over the world. The tournament is played out in the shadow of Singapore's financial district and attracts rugby fans from overseas as well as a strong following from the huge expat community who live and work there.



Daveta Fiji, Ecosse Rugby, NS Wanderers (Malaysia), Palmyra, Randwick and Sunnybank (Aus), Ponsonby, Northland (NZ), Western Province RI (South Africa) and Naphta Pyrenees (France) were some of the teams competing in the 65th Singapore Cricket Club 7s.

In 2012, and for the first time, the SCC 7s tournament ran parallel to the Asian Rugby Football Union International 7s series, an IRB event which serves as

qualifiers for the next 7s World Cup, in Moscow next year. These fixtures were officiated by the ARFU panel referees while the SCC main tournament's referees were formed from a combination of local referees as well as those invited from, Japan, USA, Hong Kong, China and from England. Thanks to our Standard Chartered sponsorship, I was delighted to travel to Singapore, to take part in the event and to represent LSRFUR. During the three days of the tournament I was fortunate to referee seven games and to watch some highly entertaining, top class rugby, to meet, work alongside and share a beer with referees from around the world; some of which have refereed with us in London on the other half of this exchange. The weather in Singapore is subject to spectacular change and finals day brought a ferocious thunderstorm late in the afternoon.



Ecosse Rugby on their way to the Final where they met Daveta Fiji. Both the finalist contained numerous IRB 7s World series players who play alongside the younger, developing squad members. The iconic Marina Bay Sands Hotel is dimly visible though the monsoon-like rain.

Perhaps the biggest challenge I faced on the field was the quarter-final of the plate competition: NS Wanderers V Palmyra, when three minutes of rugby insanity saw two players sent off reducing the Wanderers to five players. One red card for punching and one for this tackle.....



Which occurred well after the ball had been shipped in-field. The vociferous and well lubricated crowd were chanting “off.. off ..off” on both occasions and after the citing, disciplinary session with DVD reviews both players were found guilty and received four match bans. The Wanderers managed their only two tries of the game when they were reduced to five. The player in the above photograph achieved 6 yellows and a red card in a three day tournament. This half really was an exception to a tournament played in otherwise excellent spirit and which provided some wonderfully skilled and positive rugby for a crowd that swelled to around 6000 on the last afternoon.

My last appointment was to the Bowl Final which took place after a break for the weather and saw Kenya loose to Swedish Vikings. Scotland lost narrowly to Fiji in the main final. I then faced a hefty fine from the referees for issuing two of only three red cards in the tournament and was shown the delights of Singapore’s social scenes including a place simply known as “the four floors”. (More research on this place can be individually undertaken.) Then back to the hotel for a brief sleep before the plane back to Heathrow. It was a superb four days and I was well looked after, made some excellent new friends and was reminded of the importance of the wider refereeing fraternity in what can occasionally feel like a fairly individual pursuit.



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