



## 2014-15 World Rugby Women's Sevens Series Game Analysis Statistical Report



## COMMENTARY

The 2014-15 World Rugby Women's Sevens Series produced an ever increasing high-scoring contest with New Zealand dominating the first four rounds and securing the series title for the third consecutive time since the series began in 2012-13. The 2014-15 World Series also acted as a qualification pathway for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio with New Zealand, Canada, Australia and England (on behalf of Team GB) securing the four automatic qualification places. In an exciting climax to the series, competition for the final automatic qualification place for Rio 2016 came down to the third place play-off in Amsterdam between England and USA, with England securing a dramatic 15-14 win.

New Zealand continued to exhibit their dominant style of play in winning the 2014-15 series with their ability to score from any source of possession or location and their physicality in possession proving to be the significant difference between them and the other teams:

- They scored an evenly distributed proportion of their tries from possession sourced from penalties and free kicks, turnovers, restarts and scrums (28 per cent, 24 per cent, 22 per cent and 17 per cent respectively) meaning that they posed a scoring threat from the majority of sourced possession
- They scored an evenly distributed proportion of their tries from possession originating from all areas of the playing field meaning that they posed a scoring threat from anywhere on the playing field
- Their opposition struggled to engage New Zealand into tackle/ruck contact situations with New Zealand producing a low rucking rate of one ruck every 30 seconds of possession, the second lowest in the series
- As a result, 73 per cent of New Zealand's tries were scored with no ruck or maul in the build-up, suggesting a direct, fast and physical style of play

The core elements of rugby sevens differ very little from year, as seen in the series statistical comparison from 2012-13 to 2014-15 within this report, however some small variations were witnessed in the 2014-15 series.

2014-15 was the highest-scoring series to date:

- An average of 34 points scored per game (compared to 29 points in 2013-14)
- An average of six tries scored per game (compared to five tries in 2013-14)
- A try was scored on average every 82 seconds of play (compared to 89 seconds in 2013-14)
- 57 per cent of all conversion kicks were successful (compared to 53 per cent in 2013-14)

Other notable changes in the women's game include:

- An increase in average ball-in-play time to 55 per cent or seven minutes 38 seconds, a level that is significantly higher than the men's game average of 50 per cent or seven minutes
- A gradual decrease in average from rucks from 21 per game in 2012-13 to 19 in 2014-15 and a gradual increase in five or more passing movements from one every nine movements in 2012-13 to one every seven movements in 2014-15, both of which suggests the development of a more open style of play overall
- A reduction in handling errors from an average of four per game in 2012-13 and 2013-14 to an average of three per game in 2014-15

The following report is a quantitative review of the 2014-15 World Rugby Women's Sevens Series. It brings together the relevant data relating to each round as well as the relevant data relating to each team's performance across these rounds.

The report has several objectives:

- Provide a profile of how the game of sevens was played at international level in the 2014-15 series
- Provide a profile of each participating team's performance in all rounds of the 2014-15 series
- Provide an instrument to compare the development of the game from series to series.
- Present the relative performance of each participating team in all aspects of the game enabling the comparison in performance between rounds and between teams
- Identify alternative strategies in performance adopted in certain area of game play by various teams

In summary, the report comprises an analysis of all aspects of play together with the approach and performance of all the participating teams.



## OVERALL STANDINGS

	Country	DUB	BRA	USA	CAN	ENG	NED	Overall
1	New Zealand	20	20	20	20	16	12	108
2	Canada	16	16	16	10	18	20	96
3	Australia	18	18	12	8	20	18	94
4	England	12	12	8	16	12	16	76
5	USA	8	10	18	12	14	14	76
6	France	14	14	10	14	10	10	72
7	Russia	6	8	14	18	8	6	60
8	Fiji	10	4	4	6	4	4	32
9	Spain	2	3	3	4	6	8	26
10	Brazil	4	6	6	3	1	-	20
11	China	1	2	2	2	3	3	13
12	South Africa	3	1	1	1	2	1	9
13	Netherlands	-	-	-	-	-	2	2

## TEAM FACTS

**New Zealand** scored the highest number of tries per match, scoring an average 4.7 tries per match or one every 48 seconds of possession

**Australia** conceded the fewest tries per match, conceding an average of 1.3 tries per match or one every 176 seconds of the oppositions' possession

**China** scored the least and conceded the most tries per match, scoring an average of 1.3 tries per match and conceding an average of 4.7 tries

**Spain** had the highest rate of conversion success, successfully kicking 69 per cent of their conversions

**Spain** scored the highest percentage of their tries from a penalty or free-kick and **South Africa** scored the highest percentage of their tries from turnovers

**South Africa** scored the highest percentage of their tries from possession that started within their own half, while **France** scored the lowest percentage

**China** scored the highest percentage of tries with no ruck or maul in the build-up of play and also conceded the least and scored the highest percentage of tries with less than three passes in the build-up of play

**Australia** had the lowest percentage of tries scored with less than three passes in the build-up of play

**England** had the highest average percentage of possession in the series, 54 per cent, while **USA** had the lowest at 46 per cent

**Fiji** were the most frequent passers in the series, passing on average once every 5.5 seconds of possession and of all their phases of possession

**Spain** were the most likely team to make five or more passes in a phase of play, one in 3.9 playing movements contained five or more passes

**Russia** were the least frequent passers in the series, passing on average once every 8.1 seconds of possession

**South Africa** were the most likely team to take the ball into contact, rucking on average once every 18.4 seconds of possession

**Fiji** were, similar to their male counterparts, the least likely team to take the ball into contact, rucking on average once every 37.7 seconds of possession

**Russia and Australia** had the highest rate of ruck and maul retention, securing possession in 86 per cent of their ruck and maul situations, while **China** had the lowest rate of retention securing possession in just 69 per cent of situations

**Australia and Fiji** were the most likely to turnover possession in a ruck or maul situation, turning over possession in 23 per cent of their opponent's ruck or maul situations

**New Zealand** were the most likely team to kick a contested restart, while **Russia** were the least likely

**China** were the most competitive under a restart, regaining possession in 46 per cent of their contested restarts

**Russia** were the least penalised team in the series, conceding an average of just 2.9 penalties or free-kicks per match

**Fiji** were the most penalised team in the series, conceding an average of 4.1 penalties or free-kicks per match

**USA** received the most cards over the series, receiving seven in total

## STATISTICAL SUMMARY

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
	WSWS	WSWS	WSWS
<b>MATCHES</b>	204	170	102
<b>SCORING</b>			
POINTS (average per game)	34.4	29.4	28
TRIES (average per game)	5.6	4.8	4.8
TRY RATE (rate)	1 every 82s	1 every 89s	1 every 88s
CONVERSION SUCCESS (%)	57%	53%	48%
PENALTY / DROP GOALS (total)	0	3	4
MATCH WON by scoring most tries (%)	89%	90%	85%
SOURCE OF TRIES - pens/FKs (%)	37%	37%	39%
ORIGIN OF TRIES - own half (%)	42%	41%	37%
TRY BUILD UP – no rucks/mauls (%)	64%	64%	60%
TRY BUILD UP - 3 Or fewer passes (%)	56%	57%	57%
<b>ACTIVITY</b>			
BALL IN PLAY (%)	55%	48%	50%
PASSES (average per game)	70.2	69.4	68
5+ PASSING MOVEMENTS (rate)	1 in 7.3	1 in 7.6	1 in 9
RUCKS/MAULS (average per game)	19	19.6	21
RUCK/MAUL RETENTION (%)	81%	80%	80%
KICKS (average per game)	1.9	2	2.2
<b>SET PIECE</b>			
CONTESTABLE RESTARTS (%)	49%	52%	39%
CONTESTABLE RESTARTS REGAINED (%)	34%	32%	38%
RESTART ERRORS (rate)	1 in 12.3	1 in 12.1	1 in 19.2
SCRUMS (average per game)	3.6	4.4	4.6
SCRUMS possession retained (%)	94%	84%	87%
LINEOUTS (average per game)	1.8	2.2	2.2
LINEOUTS possession retained (%)	75%	73%	73%
QUICK THROWS (rate)	1 in 11.6	1 in 14	1 in 18
<b>PENALTIES/FREE KICKS AND CARDS</b>			
PENALTIES (average per game)	7	6.6	6.8
CARDS (total)	36	38	18

## SCORING AND CONCEDED

### TRIES

The average number of points scored in a match was **34**. The average number of points scored/conceded by a team was **17** but, not surprisingly, there were major variations around this average. **New Zealand** scored an average of 29 points and conceded an average of 10.5 points, whereas **South Africa** scored an average of eight points and conceded an average of 28.5 points.

Overall there was a try scored every **82 seconds** of play. Try scoring rates show how effective each team was in scoring points in relation to the possession that they obtained, and try conceding rates show how effective each team was in restricting points in relation to the possession that their opponents obtained. The following table gives the relevant figures for each participating team. **New Zealand** had the best try scoring rate, scoring a try every **48** seconds of their own possession and **Australia** had the best try conceding rate, conceding a try every **176** seconds of opposition possession.

	Avg points scored	Avg points conceded	Avg tries scored	Avg tries conceded		Try scoring rate		Try conceding rate
NZL	29	10.5	4.7	1.8	NZL	48	AUS	176
AUS	26.1	7.3	4.3	1.3	AUS	58	CAN	124
CAN	24	10.3	3.9	1.8	USA	62	NZL	123
USA	20.5	16.5	3.3	2.7	CAN	63	FRA	103
ENG	19.1	13.2	3.1	2.2	AVG	82	ENG	102
AVG	17.2	17.2	2.8	2.8	ENG	85	USA	89
RUS	16.5	18	2.7	3	RUS	88	RUS	83
FJI	14.8	20.9	2.4	3.4	FJI	92	AVG	82
FRA	14.4	14.8	2.4	2.4	FRA	94	ESP	70
ESA	11.3	19.6	1.8	3.3	ESP	130	FJI	68
CHN	8.3	29.7	1.3	4.7	RSA	160	RSA	51
RSA	8	28.5	1.3	4.5	CHN	162	CHN	48
Non-core teams					Non-core teams		Non-core teams	
BRA	9.2	22.6	1.6	3.6	BRA	133	NED	71
NED	8.8	17.8	1.6	3	NED	143	BRA	62



## CONVERSIONS

The overall conversion success rate was **57 per cent**.

There were noticeable variations in the percentage success rates as seen in the below table. Because of the relatively few tries scored by some teams, applying percentages can only be regarded as indicative. In addition, the location of the score can be a significant factor in achieving a successful conversion.

The below table shows the success rate of all participating teams with **Spain** having the highest conversion success rate with **69 per cent** and **USA** the lowest with **25 per cent**.

There were **no** penalty goals attempted in the 2014-15 series.

	Conversion success %
ESP	69%
RSA	68%
FRA	62%
CHN	60%
CAN	59%
AVG	57%
ENG	53%
AUS	51%
RUS	50%
FJI	48%
NZL	45%
USA	25%
Non-core teams	
BRA	59%
NED	57%

## TRY SCORING

**1,142** tries were scored giving an average of **six** per match. **New Zealand** scored an average of five tries per match and conceded an average of two tries per match. The average number of tries scored and conceded by all participating teams is shown on the previous page. During the pool stages there were **637** tries scored, an average of six per match, and during the knockout stages there were **1,067** tries scored, an average of five per match.

## IMPACT OF TRIES

With no penalty goals and a conversion success rate of 57 per cent, it was inevitable that tries would determine the winning team in the vast majority of cases – and this proved to be the case. Of the 204 matches, 182 (**or 89 per cent**) were won by the team scoring the most tries, while in **22 (or 11 per cent)** tries were the equal. In those 22 matches, all were won by the team that kicked the more conversions and there were five draws.

## SOURCE OF TRIES

Teams obtained possession of the ball prior to scoring a try from a variety of sources which are presented in the table below. It can be seen that the most fruitful source of tries was penalties and free-kicks (37 per cent). The table shows the importance of turnovers also, with 23 per cent of all tries scored from possession originating at a turnover. The following table shows the possession source of tries scored by each team. The team that scored the highest proportion of their tries from penalties/free-kicks was **Spain**, from turnovers **Canada** and from restarts **New Zealand**.

	Penalty & FK	Turnover	Restart	Scrum	Lineout	Kick
ESP	54%	16%	9%	9%	7%	5%
CHN	49%	18%	8%	13%	5%	8%
FRA	46%	25%	10%	10%	3%	5%
ENG	40%	18%	15%	20%	5%	3%
RSA	39%	29%	10%	20%	2%	0%
AUS	38%	22%	17%	13%	8%	3%
USA	38%	24%	14%	20%	3%	1%
AVG	37%	23%	16%	15%	6%	3%
RUS	36%	17%	20%	15%	8%	3%
FJI	33%	21%	21%	16%	7%	3%
NZL	28%	24%	22%	17%	5%	2%
CAN	28%	31%	19%	11%	8%	4%
Non-core teams						
NED	38%	38%	0%	13%	13%	0%
BRA	36%	26%	14%	7%	14%	2%

## ORIGIN OF TRIES

Of all the tries scored, **42 per cent** originated in the team's own half and **58 per cent** in the opposition half. The team that scored the highest proportion of their tries from their own half was **South Africa**.

	Own Half	HW-10m	10m-22m	22m-Try
RSA	59%	5%	10%	27%
CHN	56%	10%	23%	10%
RUS	51%	13%	24%	11%
FJI	49%	14%	22%	14%
ESP	47%	11%	33%	9%
ENG	43%	14%	26%	17%
AVG	42%	12%	27%	18%
AUS	41%	8%	29%	22%
USA	40%	13%	26%	20%
NZL	37%	14%	29%	20%
CAN	36%	12%	35%	16%
FRA	31%	16%	26%	26%
Non-core teams				
BRA	48%	10%	31%	12%
NED	38%	13%	0%	50%

## BUILD UP TO TRIES

The table below shows how many rucks/mauls and the total number of passes that preceded each try scored in the tournament. The table shows that **64 per cent** of tries were preceded by not a single ruck or maul and that **56 per cent** of tries were preceded by three or fewer passes.

	Ruck/maul in try build-up	
	%	cumulative
None	64%	65%
1 Ruck/maul	22%	86%
2+ Ruck/mauls	14%	100%

	Passes in try build-up	
	%	cumulative
None	13%	13%
1-3 passes	43%	56%
4-6 passes	26%	82%
7+ passes	18%	100%

The percentage of tries both scored and conceded with no rucks in the build-up – and the percentage of tries scored with three or fewer passes – are in the table below. It shows, 74 per cent of tries scored by **China** contained no rucks in the build-up, while 72 per cent of their conceded tries contained no rucks. It also shows that 72 per cent of tries scored by **China** contained three or fewer passes in the build-up, compared with 42 per cent by **Australia**.

% of tries with no ruck or Maul					
Tries scored		Tries conceded		% of tries with < 3 passes	
CHN	74%	AUS	51%	CHN	72%
NZL	73%	RUS	51%	USA	66%
USA	72%	CAN	58%	ENG	64%
RSA	70%	NZL	58%	ESP	63%
AUS	64%	ENG	60%	RSA	60%
AVG	64%	FRA	64%	NZL	59%
FJI	64%	USA	64%	AVG	56%
FRA	63%	AVG	64%	CAN	56%
ENG	63%	SPA	66%	RUS	53%
ESP	61%	FJI	69%	FRA	52%
CAN	58%	RSA	70%	FJI	48%
RUS	54%	CHI	72%	AUS	42%
Non-core teams					
NED	75%	BRA	67%	NED	75%
BRA	43%	NLD	73%	BRA	52%

## BALL IN PLAY AND POSSESSION

In 2014-15, the ball was in play for an average of **55 per cent** of available time with each team averaging **3m 49s** possession per match. There was a considerable variation in the amount of possession achieved by the various teams. This is shown in the below table which gives the average possession times and proportion of possession percentages achieved by each team and their opponents throughout the series. As seen in the table, there were some measurable differences. **England** averaged the highest possession per match with 4m 19s, with **USA** only averaging 3m 24s. **England** achieved the highest proportion of possession with 54 per cent and **USA** had the least proportion of possession with 46 per cent.

	Own avg possession	%	Opp avg possession	%
ENG	04:19	54%	03:41	46%
AUS	04:12	53%	03:40	47%
CAN	04:05	53%	03:41	48%
RUS	03:59	49%	04:06	51%
ESP	03:51	51%	03:47	50%
AVG	03:49	50%	03:49	50%
NZL	03:48	51%	03:41	49%
FRA	03:47	48%	04:03	52%
FJI	03:42	49%	03:53	51%
RSA	03:33	48%	03:51	52%
CHN	03:31	48%	03:46	52%
USA	03:24	46%	04:00	54%
Non-core teams				
NED	03:49	52%	03:34	48%
BRA	03:27	48%	03:41	52%

## PASSING

The average number of passes in a game was **67**. The average number of passes by a team was **33.5** but, not surprisingly, there were major variations around this average.

The table below shows major differences between the teams. Such differences can, however, partly be explained by the amount of possession obtained by each team – more possession means more passes. If possession is taken into account, therefore, the **rate** at which each country passed the ball can be far closer. **Fiji** had the highest passing rates (passes per minute of possession) and **Russia** had the lowest.

Passing activity can also be measured as the number of passes made per phase (or movement) of play. The frequency at which a team completes five or more passes in one phase or movement of play is reported in the table below. A 5+ passing movement occurs on average once every eight phases of play. **Spain** had the highest frequency of 5+ passing movements and **USA** had the lowest, completing a 5+ passing movement only once every 19 movements.

	Passing rate	Avg passes		Movements with 5+ passes
FJI	5.5	40.4	ESP	3.9
AUS	5.7	44.5	AUS	5.6
CHN	5.7	37	FJI	6.1
NZL	6.4	35.7	ENG	6.4
AVG	6.5	35.2	NZL	7.2
FRA	6.6	34.3	AVG	7.3
RSA	6.7	32	RSA	7.3
ENG	6.8	38.4	CHN	7.5
SPA	6.9	33.5	RUS	8.1
CAN	7	34.9	CAN	8.3
USA	7.1	28.7	FRA	11.8
RUS	8.1	29.6	USA	19.0
Non-core teams				
BRA	6.1	34.1	NED	10.7
NED	7	32.6	BRA	11.3

## RUCK AND MAULS

The average number of rucks and mauls in a game was **19**. The average number of ruck and mauls by a team was **9.5** but, not surprisingly, there were major variations around this average.

The table below shows major differences in the average number of rucks created by each team. Some of this can be explained by the amount of possession obtained by each team. If this is taken into account, the rate at which each country rucked is far closer, as also shown in the table. This expresses rucks as 'rucks per minute possession'. **South Africa** had the highest rucking rate and **Fiji** the lowest.

	Rucking rate	Avg rucks
RSA	18.4	11.6
ESP	20.4	11.3
RUS	21.6	11.1
ENG	22.2	11.7
USA	23.9	8.6
<b>AVG</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>9.5</b>
CAN	24.8	9.9
CHN	24.9	8.5
FRA	25.1	9.0
AUS	28.2	8.9
NZL	30.2	7.5
FJI	37.7	5.9
<b>Non-core teams</b>		
NED	16.6	13.8
BRA	21.5	9.6

## RUCK SUCCESS

At the breakdown, the team taking in the ball retained possession by either winning the ball or being awarded a penalty on **81 per cent** of occasions. The percentage success rate of each team in attack and defence is shown below. In attack **Russia and Australia** had the highest success at own rucks while **China** had least. In defence, **Australia and Fiji** had the highest success at opponent's rucks, while **USA** had the least.

	% Success own rucks	% Success opp rucks
RUS	86%	18%
AUS	86%	23%
CAN	84%	16%
ESP	82%	18%
ENG	82%	21%
<b>AVG</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>19%</b>
NZL	80%	19%
RSA	79%	17%
USA	78%	15%
FRA	78%	20%
FJI	73%	23%
CHN	69%	17%
<b>Non-core teams</b>		
BRA	82%	24%
NED	81%	38%

## KICKING

Kicks comprises of all kicks made in general play including punts, chips, ground (i.e. football kick) and grubber kicks. The average number of kicks in a game was **two**. As can be seen in the table, **Fiji** were most likely to kick while **USA** kicked the least.

	Avg kicks
FJI	1.6
FRA	1.2
CAN	1.1
RSA	1.1
AUS	1.1
ENG	0.9
AVG	0.9
ESP	0.9
CHN	0.8
RUS	0.7
NZL	0.6
USA	0.3
Non-core teams	
NED	1.6
BRA	1.0



## RESTARTS

Restarts are the most common set pieces in sevens rugby with an average of 6.5 restarts per match. Restarts have been classified into 2 types, contestable and non-contestable: **49 per cent** of restarts kicks were **contestable** (kicked short) & **51 per cent** of restarts kicks were **non-contestable** (kicked long)

Retention rates reflect the number of times that possession was retained at contestable restarts – they varied considerably. Overall, of all contestable restarts, the kicking team regained **one in three** restarts. **New Zealand** kicked the highest percentage of contestable restarts, and **China** were the most successful in regaining their own short restarts. **Russia** were most likely to kick a non-contestable restart and were the least likely to regain possession from their own short restarts. There was a restart error once in every **12.4** restarts. **England** made a restart error one in every 7.6.

	% Contestable restarts		% Restarts regained
NZL	72%	CHN	46%
CAN	68%	FRA	43%
ENG	61%	CAN	38%
FRA	53%	AVG	34%
AVG	49%	FJI	33%
ESP	47%	USA	33%
CHN	47%	NZL	33%
AUS	44%	AUS	31%
FJI	43%	ENG	30%
USA	34%	ESP	29%
RSA	27%	RSA	18%
RUS	15%	RUS	12%
Non-core teams			
NED	67%	BRA	44%
BRA	47%	NED	25%

## SCRUMS AND LINEOUTS

Overall scrum success was **94 per cent** and overall lineout success was **75 per cent**. The following table shows the success rates for each team on their own put-in/throw-in and on their opposition's put-in/throw-in. Four teams won 96 per cent of their scrum put-ins and **Australia** won 88 per cent of their lineout throw-ins.

	Scrum success		Lineout success
ENG	96%	AUS	91%
ESP	96%	NZL	86%
CHN	96%	CAN	83%
FRA	96%	CHN	83%
RUS	95%	FRA	76%
CAN	95%	AVG	75%
AVG	94%	ENG	71%
NZL	94%	RUS	70%
AUS	93%	ESP	69%
USA	93%	USA	67%
FJI	93%	FJI	65%
RSA	90%	RSA	60%
Non-core teams		Non-core teams	
NED	100%	BRA	68%
BRA	97%	NED	67%

## PENALTIES, FREE KICKS AND CARDS

The average number of penalties and free kicks per game was **seven**. What needs to be noted here is that absolute statistics and averages do not necessarily reflect the true degree of discipline or ill-discipline of a particular team. The number of penalties can, for example, vary from match to match. Some referees penalise more than others. A better and probably more accurate indicator, therefore, is the proportion of penalties conceded by a team in all their matches compared with their opponents. Each team's proportion for and against can be seen in the below table together with the totals. It shows that only **three** teams were awarded more penalties than they conceded. Of the core teams, **Russia** were penalised the least and **Fiji** the most.

Of all penalties awarded, **75 per cent** were at the breakdown, with **49 per cent** of the penalties for the attacking team and **51 per cent** against the attacking team.

	Avg pen and FK against	% PK against	% PK for	Cards
RUS	2.9	54%	46%	1
CHN	3	57%	43%	2
ESP	3	59%	42%	2
RSA	3.3	49%	51%	3
USA	3.4	48%	52%	7
CAN	3.5	46%	54%	3
NZL	3.5	46%	54%	1
AVG	3.5	50%	50%	2.8
ENG	3.6	50%	50%	1
AUS	3.8	50%	50%	6
FRA	3.9	48%	52%	4
FJI	4.1	46%	54%	5
Non-core teams				
NED	3.2	58%	42%	0
BRA	4	48%	53%	1



For questions concerning any of the 2014-15 World Rugby Women's Sevens Series Statistical Report please contact:

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