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## Manila 10's 2009

The Manila 10's celebrated the 20th anniversary of the tournament and did it with style with the 2009 tournament being touted as one of the most successful campaigns in the 20 year history of the Manila 10's with 32 teams, a lush green pitch, 12 corporate stands, great food and plenty of vocal supporters, the tournament was a huge success.



**Host Justin "Sambo" Sampson with celebrity guest speakers Frank Bunce and Jeremy Paul**

It all started at the Manila 10's Rugby Lunch on Friday with Justin "Sambo" Sampson hosting two Rugby Legends, the most capped Wallaby hooker, Jeremy Paul, and the most capped All Blacks Center, Frank Bunce.

Both celebrities humored the capacity crowd with the sorted stories from their rugby careers and various tours. Both Legends thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and everyone involved were suitably impressed with the lunch and the general rugby social scene.

Saturday brought on the opening rounds of the four divisions Cup, Plate, Bowl and Shield. A number of teams had arrived on the Friday evening and this showed with various players suffering through their first game to sober up and reclaim their playing rights as the day proceeded.



At the end of the Saturday all teams were ranked into four divisions with 8 teams in each division.

Sunday opened with the knock out quarter finals and all the teams were involved. As the day wore on, 24 teams were eliminated to leave the following teams to play the division finals.

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Cup  
Singapore Barbarians v CS Larrikins  
Plate  
Pot Bellied Pigs v Taipei Baboons  
Bowl  
Flying Elvises v Wagga Wagga Waratahs  
Shield  
Alabang Ibons v Brisbane Vulgarians

The finals proved to be very close and after ten years of competing to win the Manila 10's it was the Larrikins who overwhelmed a tenacious Barbarian team to win the Cup (17-10)

The Pot Bellied Pigs rallied to knock off the Taipei Baboons in the Plate Final (19-14).

The Flying Elvises stormed home to beat the Wagga Wagga Waratahs (21-10).

Finally it was the local Filipinos team the Alabang Ibons who were victorious over the Brisbane Vulgarians by 17-5 to win the Shield.

The general feedback and feelings from players, supporters, sponsors and the Nomads officials was very positive and everyone praised the efforts of all those involved to yet again host "The Best Social Rugby 10's Tournament In Asia".

Looking forward to 2010, when the Nomads will once again start another 20 year campaign of Manila 10's history.



## Philippine Legend Moves from National Player to ARFU Referees Committee

Philippine Rugby stalwart Phil "Stinger" Gittus won his first cap for the Philippines National Men's Rugby Team in 2008 and scored a try on debut. In the space of 12 months, he has managed to move from being a marauding, try scoring prop to being selected as a Referee on the Asian Five Nations Referees Panel.

Phil has had a colorful career as a rugby player, stemming from the days of the harsh winters of his youthful days in England, where he learnt that Rugby Union was a man's game and that ice on a frozen lake does break when your coach tells you to place your head in the pond. Phil was able to move on from those frosty and sometimes humiliating playing days and found that playing in the tropical weather with the Ko Sumai Simians, to be a much more palatable.



Phil Gittus explains his whistle technique in a South Manila Tri Series pre game educational speech, notice local PRFU Development Officer Arlo Abono listening to Phil's every word"

He then went on to Captain the 1999 Nomads to victory in the Manila 10's and recently culminated his stellar Rugby career with his test debut for the Philippines against Guam in 2008.

A prop from the "old school" style of rugby, 'Stinger' has never shied away from a scrum, ruck or maul until one memorable day, whilst wading in ankle deep water in between games at the Phuket 10's he was 'stung' by a very ferocious "JELLY FISH"

An advertisement for the website www.rugbyinasia.com. It features a man in a red and black polo shirt standing in front of a wall of computer monitors displaying various web pages. He is holding a laptop that displays the word "RUGBY" in large letters, with the word "ASIA" written below it in a smaller font. The background is dark, and the overall theme is digital and global connectivity.

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It was at this moment that "stinger" started to change his attitude to the game of Rugby and we now see the results of a fatal injury. Yes, he has become a top level referee.

The Philippine Rugby Football Union are proud to announce that the first local Philippine referee, Mr. Phil Gittus will represent the PRFU as an Asian Five Nations Referee. This is a tribute to a Rugby gentleman (Gentle?) who has devoted his time, body and energy to the sport of Rugby Union.

Phil also currently runs a web-based company called "Rugby in Asia" ([www.rugbyinasia.com](http://www.rugbyinasia.com)) which promotes and reports on all rugby union events in Asia and around the world.

Well done Phil, the Rugby community in the Philippines, thank you for all your efforts to promote, play, coach, report and now referee the sport of rugby union throughout the Philippines and Asia.

## PRFU 10's League Finals

The PRFU 10's League took place in conjunction with the 2009 Alabang Eagles 10's tournament. The League was played over the last six weeks with the Alabang Eagles and Nomads competing for the "A" Division trophy and the Alabang Ibons, MAAP, Carabaos and Japan Rugby Clubs battling for the "B" Division trophy.

The PRFU 10's League tournament provided all the local Filipino Teams with the opportunity to prepare for the upcoming Manila 10's, which will be taking place at Nomads on March 21/22. The 10's League also saw the introduction of the Philippine National Police Academy team who played two practice games and then participated in the Alabang Eagles Rugby 10's tournament.

The finals were held in conjunction with the Eagles 10's Tournament and the "B" Division final saw the Alabang Ibons play the Japanese Rugby Club. The Ibons were the eventual winners and proved the defense does win championships by keeping the Japanese Team scoreless and running in three tries to claim the PRFU "B" Division trophy 19-0.

The "A" Division final also proved to be the Alabang Eagles 10's final, so the Nomads and Eagles were playing for two trophies. The series stood at one all and it was a younger Eagles outfit that ran in a three tries to one victory and claim both the PRFU and Eagles 10's Trophies with a 19-5 win over the Nomads. The game was played at a very high standard and both the Eagles and Nomads will be entering the Manila 10's as competitive local teams in an International Field.

The PRFU will now host the PRFU 15's League and this will take place in April, May and culminate in June with the selection of a National 15's training squad, who will prepare for the A5N International Series in the first week of July.

It was also agreed that all the PRFU 15's League games would be played under the A5N rules and this will include IRB Referee and Coaching Sessions, formal team substitutions and team areas, crowd control measures to keep spectators away from the sidelines and a full array of match officials.

Once again, Thank you to everyone involved in the 2009 PRFU 10's League.



***Carabaos v MAAP***



***Alabang Ibons v Manila Hapons***



***Nomads v Eagles***

## Alabang Eagles Rugby 10's and Touch Tournament

It was one of the hottest days in 2009 when the Eagles hosted 18 juniors touch teams, 7 ladies teams and 8 Men's Rugby Teams at the Alabang Country Club in the fifth Annual Eagles Tournament. This tournament started as a preparation competition for locally based teams to play in a competition before entering the Manila 10's Tournament.

However at present, The Eagles 10's has grown into a major event and is currently the second biggest rugby and touch football tournament behind only to the Manila 10's.

### Juniors

The heat did not prevent up to 220 juniors' boys and girls from playing Touch Rugby. Teams Ranged from 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 years and the players were given food, drinks, T-shirts and Caps from the new PRFU Juniors Sponsor ACTIVEFUN. The junior teams displayed some excellent skills and it was the Tuloy Foundation teams that won three divisions out of the five, taking out the 12, 14 and 16 years. Bahay Bata played against Tuloy in three finals but was only able to win the 10's final against other juniors' teams. The 8's final was shared between the British School and the French/Bahay Bata Barbarian Team.



Overall the juniors played 31 games and referees Matt Cullen, Juan Engelbrecht, Ahlo Abono, Peter Lawrence and Alvin San Diego and a representative from the Japan Club must be thanked for their efforts on such a hot and humid morning.

### Ladies Touch Football

The Ladies touch footballers played 21 ten minute games and it was the ladies from Nomads in their Body Glove Speedo Outfits that won a tight final game over the University of the Philippines by 3-0. The ladies played all afternoon under hot conditions. Ladies touch football is certainly alive and growing in the Philippines

### Men's Rugby 10's

The Men's Rugby Teams were split into "A" Division (Nomads, Eagles, Ibons and Japan R.C.) and "B" division (MAAP, PNPA, Carabaos, South Manila Barbarians), The "B" Division final was played between the Carabaos and MAAP and the Carabaos proved to be too strong around the paddock with Ian Taylor. The Carabaos scoring a last minute try to secure the championship 26-15. The MAAP players never gave up and were well supported by the Men's Team the PNPA who impressed everyone at the Tournament with their determination and fitness. It is fantastic to see two full Filipino Teams, MAAP and PNPA competing against each other in a regional tournament.

The Men's A division final was played between the Alabang Eagles and Nomads. This game proved to be the most intense game of the day with the Eagles scoring a three try to one victory over the Nomads, 19-5. Both teams displayed great spirit and skill and it was the youth of Rafael Zappia, Andrew Wolff and Ronal Fong that proved the difference. The Eagles gave away more penalties than the more experienced Nomads Team but were able to pounce on two open ball opportunities that resulted in tries. Man of the match went to Castiello Valentino who is an Italian player who has recently reignited his rugby career here in the Philippines.



# The Third Manila Touch Rugby Tournament

by Lala Lejeune and Sam Chittick

The 3rd Manila Touch Rugby Tournament was held last Saturday, March 14, 2009 at the Nomads Sports Club. From its humble beginning in 2007, the tournament has grown to also include a Juniors Touch Division for Under 8s, 10s, 12s and 14s which only proves that touch rugby is growing in popularity and becoming more recognized as a local sport! With nearly 30 teams competing in all divisions – Juniors, Ladies, Mens and Mixed, it was another great day for touch and a wonderful reminder of how diverse and vibrant the rugby community in Manila has become.



With the addition of Junior Touch, it was very fortunate that the weather cooperated. Most of the games were played with generally overcast skies with some spots of brilliant sunshine. Despite having only 6 training sessions, the Junior Nomads were able to form two teams and managed to finish 2nd in the U8s behind European International School (EIS). The U10s were dominated by the BSM Stormers and Cyclones respectively. The U12s and U14s saw Bahay Bata triumphing in both categories, closely followed by the Hapons (U12s) and BSM (U14s).

Parents and coaches alike were proud to see their little (and not-so-little) ones develop team spirit, discipline and good sportsmanship. Peter Lawrence of British School Manila (BSM) commended the MTRT's Junior Touch Division, "Great job all. It was a very nice tournament and had a great feel about the whole morning."

The Manila Touch Rugby Tournament is the brainchild of Clair Barberis, president of the Nomads Bullettes, together with fellow organizers Claire Schirmer and Rey Gigataras, have been working towards spreading awareness of the sport and developing more teams, both competitive and social, in Manila. With the attendance of the Cebu Pink Dragons this year, the MTRT may just have the potential to eventually grow into the M10s equivalent of touch rugby.

The Nomads Black remained undefeated for the past 3 years, with the University of the Philippines Varsity (UP) coming in close second. Placing 3rd were the Cebu Pink Dragons, followed by Faith, Hapons, and Nomads White respectively.

Mens Touch was won by the new kids on the block - the boys from the Bahay Bata orphanage - and they won the tournament in style. The young guys used their speed, their enthusiasm, and their continually improving rugby skills to match or outwit all the more favoured teams throughout the day. The fact that the boys finished ahead of two Nomads teams, the Alabang Eagles, UP, Manila Hapons and the pre-tournament favourites - the Anzacs shows just how far they have come, and what promising futures they have in rugby in the Philippines. Hopefully that success translates to similar results in contact rugby in a few years. The support from key guys in the Philippine rugby community has been critical in building up those results for the Bahay Bata crew, and so Romain Barberis and other assistants should be well satisfied with the results their young charges are getting.

The UP ladies and men proved that working together was their key to success garnering the top places for the Mixed Division with Nomads Black, Nomads White and the Hapons at their mercy.



The whole day was conducted in wonderful spirit, with only a few minor scheduling hiccups (it wouldn't be a real day without it), and served to remind everyone just how strong the rugby crowd has become.

Special thanks to Matt Cullen and Camille Cuna for the constant support from PRFU, Active Fun for supporting Junior Touch - the future of rugby, Rugby In Asia for web visibility and Sting Energy drink for the power-in-your-sprints.

To all the referees who took time out from their busy weekend schedules to ref all 64 games: Matt Cullen, Richard Radier, Rey Gigataras, Harold Gigataras (Rey's brother who happens to be a level 5 ref), Maesy Inigo, Rizza Manzano,



Kid Galeria, Juan Engelbrecht, Jay Savage and Ahlo Abono --- thanks for the fair calls.

And finally to all the teams that participated and contributed to the touch awareness campaign --- British School Manila (great numbers, Peter), Bahay Bata, Manila Hapons, The EIS Barbarians, Brent International School, Alabang Eagles, ANZACS, Faith Academy, The Cebu Pink Dragons, The University of the Philippines Touch Club --- we hope to see you again next year.



## PRFU FEATURED PLAYER

**Name:** Jake Letts

**Nickname:** Lettsy (little Lettsy when my brothers around)

**Age:** 21 years young

**Birthday:** 16/3/88

**Current City:** Sydney Australia

**Heritage:** Filipino Australian

**Team:** Warringah RC

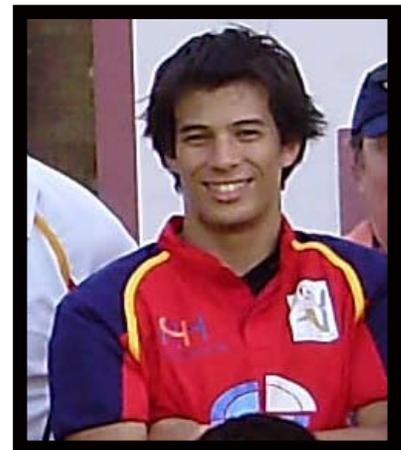
**Position Played:** Scrumhalf

**Rugby Hero:** Rupert Zappia..... Quickest try in Test Match History.....

**Interesting Skill:** All rounder.....

**Why RUGBY? :** Followed my brothers into the game at a young age, sort of never looked back, these days the boys you play with end up being the best bunch of guys you come across. End up being great mates! On and off the field!

Jake's dad got him into rugby at a young age, 6 years old from memory! He always enjoyed it so he stuck to it, from there he played close to 200 games for his home club Newport Rugby, that's where he met fellow Philippine International Andrew Barbacetto and to this day they still play Rugby together each weekend for Warringah and for the National Team. In the end, what inspires him to play Rugby is all the hype leading up to the game, playing with his closest buddies and thriving on the winning feeling after a hard close fought out match. Playing the Test Matches for his country are definitely the biggest games on the Rugby Calendar each year and definitely the most enjoyable, he always look forward to catching up with all the boys and has a lot of fun taking the field with them all and winning for the Philippines there's nothing better.



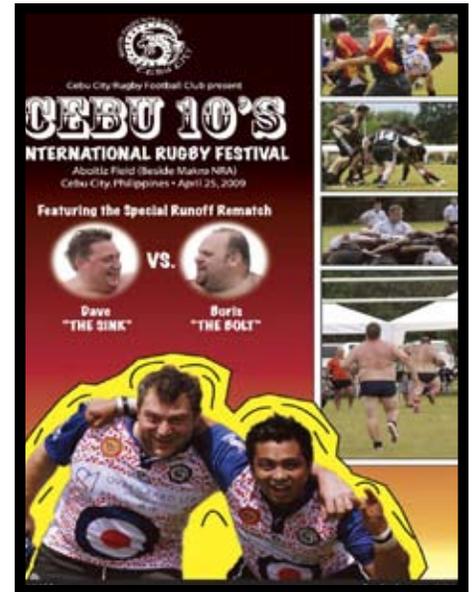
# PRFU UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 17 - PRFU QUIZ NIGHT  
@ Murphy's Bar

April 25th - Cebu 10's  
@ Aboitiz Field, Cebu

May-June PRFU 15's League

July 1 & 4 - A5N Division 3 Tournament



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Ahlo Abono

Juan Engelbrecht

**PRFU Administrative Assistant:**

Camille Rachelle Cuna

**PRFU Quote of the month:**

Whilst stretching between refereeing games at the Manila Touch Tournament, Jay savage was quoted.. "Touch wood, Ive never pulled a hamstring from running." Whilst walking past... Romain Barberis heard this statement and exclaimed.. " Jay, you ACTUALLY have to run to pull a hamstring!"



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