



Philippines RUGBY & MAUL

The Monthly Newsletter of the Philippine Rugby Football Union (PRFU)

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University of Cebu adopts Rugby

Last Thursday, 14th of May, Cebu Rugby Football Club expanded its development of rugby football within the Visayas region by adopting the 1st IMEC class which is located in the University of Cebu. The project, which was initiated through PRFU 7s Coach, Rick Hartley, will be the basis for incorporating Rugby Programs in the Universities around Cebu

The University of Cebu's Maritime Campus was the location for the 1st Rugby training. Over 50 students from IMEC's Deck and Engineering officer's training program attended, with few knowing or even hearing about the game of Rugby. Cebu Dragons players, Jerry Branzuela and Jethro Estimo, facilitated the training by first showing the students a game of Touch Rugby between the Pink Dragons ladies team and the Cebu Dragons mens team. Focused more on the Pink Dragons and this new and unusual sport, students from other courses began to watch and wanted to join in on the action. Soon the field was surrounded by more than 100 students, which also included the Marine Corps students, who are based next to the campus



Coach Rick Hartley with Cebu IMEC students

All who were interested to join were divided into groups and were taught basic passing drills. These groups were assisted by 2 or 3 Cebu Dragons and Pink Dragons. The small groups then played a quick game of touch rugby against each other to incorporate the drills they had learned.



Combined Cebu Dragons and Pink Dragons with IMEC students

The Finale of the training session was the challenge of the Cebu Imec students vs a combined Cebu Dragons and Pink Dragons team. The Dragons were quickly shocked by the speed and fitness of the Imec students who had a number of try scoring chances. The Dragons had to use experience and cover defense to win the game with a score of 7-1. Overall, the Cebu Imec had great fun and were given a Cebu Dragons ball from the club. Word has it that the students have been playing every morning since then.

The growth of Cebu Rugby in the Visayas looks promising and hopefully will soon be spreading to Bacolod and Davao.

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PRFU 15's League Round One and Two

The PRFU 15's League kicked off at the Phil Sports Stadium in Pasig. This was the first time that Rugby Union has been played at the Philippine National Sports Stadium and definitely won't be the last. The playing area had to be slightly shortened due to the permanent soccer posts, but the field and facilities were suitable to let the round ball players know that Rugby Union has started and an official request has been submitted to the PSC to provide both Rugby Union and Soccer removable goal posts at the upgraded Rizal Stadium Field.

A-Division

The day began with the A-Division Eagles v Nomads Clash. It was decided that this game would be played under full IRB rules and players would run for the full 80 minutes. The Nomads seemed better prepared during the warm-ups and this was true when they ran in two quick tries to take the early lead by 12-0. Both French Players Basil Ricarde and Bruno Vergnes scored on the back of a determined Nomads forward pack with two International Players Romain Barberis and Eric Savina leading the forward drive.

The Eagles were able to regroup and finally started to contest the Nomads up front with Ronald Fong, Evans Maina and Andrew Wolff all making incisive inroads into the tiring Nomads Forwards. The combined pressure from these players allowed some freedom for the ball to be moved to another International Player Rupert Zappia, who displayed a quality kicking game that eventually saw Nomads fumble and allowed ever energetic "Hooky" to score the first try.

The game was certainly on at half time with both teams evenly matched at 17-17. This would remain the same at the 60 minute mark with the score also tied at 22-22. It was the last 20 minutes that would see the youth and fitness of the Eagles team prevail over a never say die Nomads outfit. Andrew Wolff was able to evade several defenders to score a solo try and then repeated this performance to set up Eric Tai for the game breaking try and finally pull away from the Nomads. Ronald Fong took advantage of a Nomads infringement and took a quick tap to link up Rupert Zappia who was steaming up the middle of the field, Ronald threw the pass of the game and looked like a quality fly half to put Rupert through the gaping hole and he scored under the posts.

To Nomads credit they had one last throw of the dice and scored a last minute concellation try, but with two minutes remaining it was the younger Eagles team that won the day by 41-27.

B- Division

The B-Division of the PRFU 15's League saw two games. Unfortunately the Carabaos did not have enough members to field a team against MAAP. The draw was rescheduled and MAAP, who had 18 players were able to fill the void and played back to back games.

The first game had the Japanese R.C. play MAAP and because Japan only had 10 players, it was decided that this would be a 10's game. Japan proved to be strong all around the field and will be hard to beat in the B-Division. Led by Masayuki, the Japanese team controlled the ball. They scored 11 tries against MAAP's one try and ended the game on top with a final score of 63-5.

The final game of the day was the Ibons v MAAP and this was a 15's game. MAAP had woken up after the Japanese game and started to play a more structured defensive game. The Ibons decided to move Scotty McKinnon into the forwards and this proved to be a wise decision. He used his renowned basketball skills and dominated the line outs and played a "Man of the Match" performance, relishing the extra workload in the forwards. The game ended with a score of 86-0.





Alabang Eagles



Nomads



Manila Hapons



Alabang Ibons



MAAP



ROUND TWO

The 'never say die' Nomads Rugby Union Club hit back with vengeance in the second round of the PRFU 15's league and ensured the last round would decide the 2009 PRFU 15's league champions.

The Nomads resorted to a basic forward orientated style of play and continually punched the ball up the middle of the ruck. Stalwart players like Max Stewart, Romain Barberis, Nick Holthouse and the ever dynamic Eric Savina controlled the possession and continually charged onto the ball on both sides of the ruck. This dominant forward play eventually led to the Nomads forcing Eagles' errors. Soon enough, they scored their first try from a push over scrum, with half back Aaron Bidden scoring at the end of a



A highlight of the match was the 'Man of the Match' performance by Eric Savina, who has represented the Philippine National Men's team for the last three years. He certainly let everyone know on Saturday that he still possesses the grit and steal to play at the International Level.

Alabang Ibons Jump to the Lead in B- Division

The Alabang Ibons played and beat the Japan Hapons by 27-0. The Ibons have won both their games in the B-division by beating MAAP and Japan in rounds one and two.

Photos courtesy of Christina Sang, Isabela Silva and Trisha Somera

Father Rocky Perpetual Cup

The summer holidays had given the boys from both Bahay Bata and Tuloy foundation the opportunity to spend extra time practicing their touch football skills.

Father Rocky, the founder of both foundations, suggested that a summer tournament be held. It would not only be a great way for the two clubs to compete, but would also provide the boys with a summer activity while they were on holidays.

On Thursday, May 14, 2008, The Father Rocky Perpetual Cup came to life as soon as the Bahay Bata bus pulled up at the Tuloy Foundation. Three teams from each of the schools were set to compete in round one and there included 12, 14 and 16 year old divisions. Father Rocky himself was present to open the tournament and the games were played in a competitive and sporting nature with all the players appreciating the opportunity to play against their friends. Round one was structured so that the three age divisions would play each other twice before lunch and again twice after lunch.



Father Rocky with Sponsor David Carman and the Bahay Bata Children

The 16 yr teams from both Tuloy and Bahay Bata possess young men who are extremely fit and display excellent skills at this new sport. This set the scene for a dynamic battle and it was the Tuloy Boys who were able to narrowly defeat the Bahay Bata Team by 3 games to 1 with all games being decided by no less than two tries. National Coach Matt Cullen was impressed with the skills of a number of the 16 year old players and explained to Father Rocky that at least 5-6 boys from both foundations would be strong candidates for positions in the Philippine National U/20 team in the next two years.



The youngest age category saw a combination of 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 year old boys play in four crowd pleasing games.

The Bahay Bata little ones played above their weight and size and carried the flag for Bahay Bata by defeating the Tuloy junior by 3 games to 1. The whole crowd thoroughly enjoyed watching these young guns play on the full sized pitch, and Fr. Rocky was delighted to see how well these boys played the game.



In the 14 year old division, it was again Tuloy who won the day by beating Bahay Bata by 3 games to 1 and Tuloy did have a distinct advantage with at least 20 boys available to play against the 8 boys from Bahay Bata.

The outstanding player from Tuloy was Jovic Paypon who definitely possesses the size, speed and skills to one day play National Level Rugby for the Philippines.

Round two of the Father Rocky Perpetual Cup took place at the Bahay Bata orphanage on Sunday, May 23rd .



This time it was Tuloy Foundation that travelled up to Angeles, Pampanga to once again challenge Bahay Bata in order to win ownership of the Father Rocky Cup. Bahay Bata would not give up the championship so easy especially not while playing in their home territory. The three divisions, 12s, 14's and 16's ,played two games in the morning and two more in the afternoon.

After several close games, it was Bahay Bata who proved victorious at the end of the day and was awarded the Father Rocky Cup.

Special thanks to the Alabang Eagles and Nomads Rugby Clubs for sponsoring both days. Also to both Marivi and Mercy of the two foundations, for organizing the transport, food and players for this tournament.



FILIPINO RUGBY TWO BLUES

With the Asian International Rugby Union Season upon us current and prospective Filipino-Heritage Rugby Union Internationals are hard at work with the Parramatta Two Blues Rugby Union Club preparing for the Asian 5 Nations (A5N) Division 3 tournament being held at the University of Makati in the Philippines between the 1st and 4th of July.

The Parramatta Two Blues Club has had a long history of developing Filipino-heritage Rugby Union players since the start of this decade with players like Chris Woo and the Isidro Brothers Timothy and Troy coming up through their Colts ranks.



With the Philippines Rugby Football Union (PRFU) still in its infancy the club played a major role in the Philippines first International victory with then Head Coach Gary Ella being brought to the Philippines through the sponsorship of local Parramatta business Focused Business Solutions and current PRFU Rugby 7s Head Coach Rick Hartley and his Philippines based business RJH consultancy to coach the PRFU's Rugby 7s team in the 23rd South East Asian (SEA) games in Manila in 2005 where Rugby 7's was a site sport, with the Philippines winning the Gold Medal, defeating Indonesia 32-5 in the final.

The club offered more assistance to the PRFU for the 24th SEA games in Thailand in 2007 by allowing a Filipino-Heritage team to trial against the club in September and releasing their 1st Grade Coach Alan Macdonald to accompany the team to Thailand in December to act as a specialist coach supporting the PRFU Rugby 7s Head Coach Rick Hartley where the team won a Silver medal for the Philippines being piped 28 - 14 in the final by Thailand.

With the encouragement of Parramatta Two Blue's 2008 1st Grade Coach Alan Macdonald the Zappia brothers, Rafael and Rupert and Saunders brothers, Oliver and Matthew played for the club, and all four young men played pivotal roles for the Philippines in winning the 2008 A5N regional tournament by defeating Guam and Brunei.

This year current Philippines Rugby Internationals Rafael Zappia and Kim Hillis and U20 International Graem Stevens and prospective Internationals William Turk, Marcus Casaclang and Cleo Gomez have all made their presence felt in the Two Blues club especially the performances of Kim and Graem in the Parramatta Two Blues Colts team. All are keen to make this year's Philippines International side next July and play their part in another Philippines Rugby International tournament victory.

With sponsorships hard to come by with the present state of the Australian and International economy the Parramatta Two Blues club is currently in a rebuilding stage and is struggling as an amateur club in what is a professional Sydney Rugby competition. But the fight has not gone out of the club, with this weeks Round 8 Shute shield 24-19 win against Warringah Rugby Union club which coincidentally have 3 Filipino-heritage Rugby Union Internationals also playing in their ranks.

The Filipino Two Blues players performed their part in this Round 8 competition too, with Rafael Zappia potting over a conversion in the Henderson Shield match and Graem Stevens playing his part in the Colts side 31 -21 win over Warringah.

The PRFU and its Rugby 7s Head Coach Rick Hartley would like to thank the Parramatta Two Blues club for their continuing work with developing Filipino-heritage rugby players and making them feel welcome in the Two Blues family. The Club would welcome any support from the Filipino community in Australia as the club rebuilds this season. Go to the Club's website for further information on playing for or offering assistance to the club www.twoblues.rugbynet.com.au.

We would like to acknowledge Raiya Isrin for the photo with Graem Stevens, Cleo Gomez, Raf Zappia & Marcus Casaclang from left to right (photo has been photo shopped - Graem is not bigger than Cleo).

PRFU FEATURED PLAYER:

Name: Clay Luraschi
Age: 35
Date of Birth: March 10, 1974
Current City: New York, New York
Heritage: Filipino (Father) Italian (Mother)
Team: Philippines Men's National Team
Position Played: Fullback / Wing
Rugby Hero: WAISALE SEREVI
Interesting Skill: I can hit a baseball pretty far.



Why RUGBY? : It's the consummate team game. If there is one broken piece among the 15 parts, it does not operate correctly and when everyone is doing their job, there is no team sport that is more perfect.

Clay started playing rugby in college at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. After graduation, he moved to New York City and started playing with the Village Lions RFC, which is the team he is still with. He also spent some time in San Francisco playing for The Olympic Club in the U.S. Super League. He had the honor of playing in the Philippines' first ever test match in 2006 vs. Guam, which they won and he scored a try. He's been on the team the last 3 years. According to Clay, "Playing on the Philippine National Team has been one of the best experiences of my life. There is no better feeling in sport than wearing your country's jersey and stepping on the pitch to play. It's much deeper than just a game."

Recently, he's helped start the North American Branch of the PRFU to spread the word of the PRFU in that part of the world and to recruit both male and female Filipino heritage players for future national teams. He says "It's a way for me to give back to something that has given me so much."

PRFU UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 20 - National Men's Team Trials

July 1 & 4 - A5N Division 3 Tournament



HSBC
A5N
asian 5 nations

DIVISION 3
RUGBY TOURNAMENT
2009
University of Makati Stadium, Makati City
Philippines

Wednesday, 1 July
Indonesia vs. Guam
Philippines vs. Iran

Saturday, 4 July
Battle for 3rd place
Division Finals

Official Residence: **Waldy Inn**
Tournament Venue: **OVERGAARD** Complete Pseudo Systems
Supported by: **GENRIC**, **RH**, **PHILIPPINE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**, **PHILIPPINE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**, **PHILIPPINE RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**

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