



Philippines RUGBY & MAUL

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

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The Philippines Gain Full IRB Membership

The Philippines Rugby Football Union were granted full IRB membership at the IRB Council Meeting that was conducted in Ireland on Tuesday, 25 November 2008. This is the end result of two years as an IRB associate member and the PRFU's diligence in working to successfully meet all the IRB criteria to apply to become full members.



Over the last four years, the Philippine national rugby union teams have set exceptionally high standards in international competitions in the men's 15s, men's 7s and under-20 divisions. The successes of these national teams has enabled the sport of Rugby Union to gain full recognition by both the Philippine Olympic Committee and Philippine Sports Commission. In particular, the Philippine National Men's 7s team who won the Silver Medal at the last South East Asian Games and the Men's 15s National Team winning elevation to the Division 3 Category of the A5 Nations, have allowed the sport of rugby union to become a nationally accredited sport. Recently the Philippines also hosted the Division 2 Asian Rugby Football Union under-20s Tournament here in Manila and have applied to host the Division 3 A5 Nations International Men's Tournament in July 2009.

The sport of Rugby Football Union definitely has the potential to grow and succeed here in the Philippines and the elevation to full IRB membership status will now allow the PRFU to ensure that Rugby Football Union can be developed at all levels of the community, particularly focusing on the junior divisions and the Philippine National Military and Police Forces. National Team Coach Matt Cullen truly believes that the Philippines can and will be successful in the sport of Rugby Football Union and explains that Filipinos are gifted at this sport because they possess natural talents including speed, agility, coordination, strength, endurance and a unique sense of teamwork and sportsmanship.

Gaining full membership to the IRB now allows the PRFU to focus on developing the sport of Rugby Football Union throughout the Philippines. This will aid in implementing training programs, purchasing equipment and kit, running educational courses and staging tournaments to help promote the sport of Rugby Football Union to reach new heights.

The success of gaining full membership to the IRB is the culmination of eight years of dedicated work by all members involved in the PRFU who have generously given their time, efforts and sometimes even their bodies to promote, play and develop the sport of Rugby Football Union here in the Philippines. There are a number of unsung heroes who have had a hand in this process and the PRFU truly appreciates all that has been done, both on and off the field, by all members of the Filipino Rugby Football Union community. Without your contributions we certainly could not have achieved this milestone.

Christmas has come early in the Philippines for the PRFU and we wish everyone all the best for the Holiday Season.

Know that the PRFU will hit the ground running, so start training and we'll see you on the pitch in 2009.

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The Philippines To Host The A5 Nations Tournament In July 2009

The Philippine Rugby Football Union has won the rights to host the Div. 3 A5 Nations Men's Rugby Union Football Tournament which will be held this coming June 30th – July 5th 2009.

Members of the A5 Nations committee and the IRB recently visited the Philippines to supervise the Division 2 of the Asian Rugby Football Union U-20's tournament and were suitably impressed with the playing venues, accommodation and professionalism displayed by the PRFU.

In the Div. 3 of A5 Nations Tournament, the Philippines will come up against three formidable opponents in Indonesia, Guam and Iran. Both Indonesia and Iran won their 2008 regional tournaments with the Philippines beating Guam in their recent regional tournament. There are a number of exciting prospects about hosting the A5 Nations here in Manila and these include:



- The winning team receives promotion to the Division 2 A5 Nations Tournament in 2010.
- Raising awareness and promoting the development of Rugby Football Union in the Philippines.
- Promotional and sponsorship opportunities to advertise at the Asian Regional Level.
- Display of new world class venues and playing facilities at the University of Makati.
- Recognition from ARFU and the IRB that the Philippines is a country that can promote, develop and host Rugby Football Union Tournaments in Asia.
- An opening for all Filipino citizens to play and learn the sport of Rugby Football Union.
- A great chance for the Philippine National Men's Team to display their talents on home soil in front of a home crowd.

The IRB Congratulates The Philippine Rugby Football Union

IRB Representative Mr. Jarred Gallagher congratulated the Philippine Rugby Football Union on being accepted as full members at the November IRB council meeting 2008. Mr. Gallagher was extremely proud of both The Philippines and Pakistan who were both elevated from their associate IRB membership status to full members and explained that these results stem from the development programs and National Team successes of both Unions. Mr. Gallagher also explained that this was a fantastic opportunity for both the Philippines and Pakistan. Moreover, this was the beginning of a new era of Rugby Football Union for both countries.

At the same time, Mr. Gallagher challenged The Philippine Rugby Football Union to strive to further success and was adamant that with the acceptance of Full IRB membership comes increased responsibility and commitment to advance the sport of Rugby Football Union in the Philippines at all levels, Juniors, Clubs and National.

The PRFU National Coach and Consultant, Matt Cullen recently met with Mr. Gallagher in Hong Kong and mapped out a new development and international program for the Philippines in 2009/10 and also accepted the opportunity to host the Division 3 A5 Nations Tournament, with the winning team being promoted to Division 2 in 2010.

Matt Cullen explained that "The Philippine National Men's Team has the opportunity to push for a place in Division 1 by 2011" and surely believes that his young team (average age of 22) will peak in the next three years and show Asia that The Philippines are a force to reckon with in the Sport of Rugby Union.

He also explained that "Hosting an A5 Nations tournament here in the Philippines will take a lot of work and we will need to raise funds to run this tournament" He believes that the Philippines are well able to hold a successful tournament and also win on home soil and is greatly looking forward to hosting the A5 Nations event.



University of Makati to Host Asian 5 Nations Tournament at World Class Stadium

The University of Makati has agreed to host the Asian 5 Nations Rugby Union Tournament from June 30th – July 5th 2009. The University has just finished building a state of the art Stadium that can seat up to 4000 spectators. The stadium has a full length Rugby Union Field, running track, score board, changing rooms, meeting rooms and medical facilities, that are all world class.

The Asian 5 Nations tournament will see the Philippines, Indonesia, Guam and Iran play four International Test Matches over two days. The first games will be played on Wednesday July 1st with the finals taking place on Saturday July 4th. The Stadium was only formally opened last week and National Coach, Matt Cullen was extremely excited to be able to play the series at such a new and professional venue and stated that "hosting this prestigious tournament would definitely put the Philippines on the map in Asian Rugby and give the Philippine National Men's Team the best chance of winning the tournament in front of their home crowd."



North American Branch of PRFU Breaks Ground



Standing (L-R): Clay Luraschi, Kit Guerra, Johnny Chia, Austin Dacanay, Kimani Davis, Adil Manari **Kneeling (L-R):** Kenneth Stern, Roderegus Cesar, Phil Pratte, Cheung Kan, Vince Petisme

The newly-formed North American Branch of the PRFU, headed by national team players Clay Luraschi (U.S.), Austin Dacanay (U.S.) and Jeff Betinol (Canada), made its debut this week at the prestigious New York Sevens Tournament.

Entered as the Philippine Barbarians in the Premiere Division, 11 players including four Philippine National Team players and two prospective Philippine players braved the 40 degree weather and strapped it on against top level sevens teams from the U.K., Canada and the USA.

"The idea behind this program is to let people in this part of the world know that yes, we are playing rugby in the Philippines and to create visibility of the PRFU among the 5 million Filipinos living in North America", said Dacanay.

Although no silverware was taken home, the goal of recruiting prospective national team players and bringing visibility to the PRFU in North America had very positive results.

"If we can add one to two players a year to the Volcanoes player pool and get a substantial sponsorship, I would consider that a major success. I saw what we were doing over in Australia last year and I was so impressed that I wanted to get that started here", Luraschi added.

In addition, the visibility PRFU / NA this past weekend attracted a handful of female Filipino players that were thrilled that a Philippine Women's National Side is in the works.

For more info, please contact Clay Luraschi (prfuna@gmail.com)

PRFU 2009 Development Programs



The Philippine Rugby Football Union are committed to developing the sport of Rugby Football Union throughout the Philippines and 2009 stands as a productive year with the National Coach and Development Officer "Ahlo" Carlito Abono beginning the year with a new focus on introducing programs at the Philippine National Police Academies and the Philippine Military Forces.

Development programs will begin in earnest at both the PNPA academies in Cavite and Olongapo with the focus of beginning a Police league that will include Maritime Academy Asia Pacific. The program at the Cavite PNPA is supported by the Alabang Eagles and a new South Manila tri-series will begin with the PNPA Cavite, Adventist University and HMR –Envirocycle teams competing on a monthly basis.

This league will be matched in the North with a new club starting at the PNPA Olongapo. The Barretto Blues will provide coaching every week to support this new club. The Northern League which will be played at the Subic Sports Complex will include the

Barretto Blues, PNPA Olongapo and the Maritime Academy Asia Pacific Teams.

Development is also happening in the Visayas with the Cebu Dragons leading the way. The Dragons went on a development and recruitment drive and recently held The Inaugural South v North Regional game. This was played in Cebu and the first game was won by the South (Visayas) over the North (Luzon). The return match has been scheduled for May 2009 which also became part of the National Team Selection process to choose a Men's development squad and ultimately the Philippine National Men's Team who will compete in the A5 Nations tournament in Manila in June 2009.

PRFU National Coach Matt Cullen is also hopeful to introduce the sport of Rugby Union in the Philippines to the Military forces and points to other Asian countries such as Thailand and Malaysia where up to 80% of the National Teams come from the Police and Military forces.

Coach Cullen admires the courage, dedication, teamwork, fitness and attitude of the Philippine Police and Military Forces and says that "The PNPA and Military Academies are the breeding grounds for future Philippine National Players, because they are based at the Academy for 4 years and enjoy learning and playing a physical, team oriented sport that also improves fitness and morale, like Rugby Football."





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

(January-June)

| DATE | ACTIVITY | HOST | VENUE |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| JANUARY | | | |
| 10, 17, 24 & 31 Sat | MANSAC Schoolboys Rugby Competition | MANSAC | School fields |
| 31 Sat | PRFU Amazing Bike Race | PRFU | AAV |
| 25 Sun | Dragons Chall. Cup/IRB Lv1 Coaching Course | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| FEBRUARY | | | |
| 6 Fri | PRFU Quiz Night | PRFU | Murphy's Bar |
| 7 Sat | Nomads Rugby Skills Competition | Nomads | Nomads |
| 7 & 21 Sat | PRFU 10 Aside Domestic Tournament | PRFU | Nomads |
| 19 Th | Manila South Tri-Series | PRFU | Adventist Uni. |
| 22 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 1st or 2nd wk | Alabang Eagles Annual Tour | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| TBA | Cebu Touch Rugby League | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| MARCH | | | |
| 5 to 9 Th-Sun | ARFU Delegates Meeting | ARFU | Dubai |
| 7 Sat | Alabang 10's Tournament/ PRFU 10's final | Alabang Eagles | Alabang |
| 20 Fri | Manila 10's Rugby Lunch | Nomads/ANZCHAM | Renaissance Hotel |
| 21 & 22 Sat-Sun | Manila 10's Rugby Tournament | Nomads | Nomads |
| 27-29 Fri-Sun | Hong Kong 7's | HKRFU | HK Stadium |
| 29 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| APRIL | | | |
| 2 Th | Manila South Tri-Series | PRFU | Adventist Uni. |
| 10 Fri | PRFU Quiz Night | PRFU | Murphy's Bar |
| 25 Sat | Cebu Sinulog 10's Tournament | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 26 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| TBA | Oiney RFC Tour to Cebu | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| MAY | | | |
| 9,16 & 23 Sat | National Team Selections & Training | PRFU | Nomads |
| 16 Sat | 2nd Annual North vs. South Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 31 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 30 & 31 Sat-Sun | Phuket 10's- Extinct Volcano's Tour | Phuket R.F.C. | Phuket, Thailand |
| TBA | East Toothless Tigers RFC Tour to Cebu | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| JUNE | | | |
| 6 & 20 Sat | National Team Selections and Training | PRFU | Nomads |
| 27-29 Sat-Mon | Men's 15s Team National Training Camp | PRFU | Laguna, Phil. |
| 28 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 30 Tue | A5 Nation's Div. 3 Tournament | PRFU | Manila |



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

(July-December)

| DATE | ACTIVITY | HOST | VENUE |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| JULY | | | |
| 1-5 Wed-Sun | A5 Nation's Div. 3 Tournament | PRFU | Uni of Makati |
| 2nd or 3rd wk | Dragons's vs. MAAP 15's Game | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 3rd or 4th wk | Pink Dragons Inaugural 7's Competition | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 26 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| AUGUST | | | |
| 8 Sat | Subic 10's | Barreto Blues | Subic |
| 9 Sun | IRB Referees Course | PRFU | Manila |
| 8 and 22 Sat | PRFU 7's League | PRFU | Nomads |
| 1st or 2nd wk | VIRFU Beach Rugby Tournament | VIRFU | Boracay |
| 30 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| TBA | Cebu Touch Rugby League | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| SEPTEMBER | | | |
| 5 Sat | Fat Boy 10s Tournament | Potbellied Pigs RC | Clark Freport |
| 5 to 7 Sat-Mon | ARFU Sri Lanka 7's Tournament | Sri Lankan Rugby | Sri Lanka |
| 2nd or 3rd wk | Pink Dragons Annual Touch Competition | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 3rd or 4th | Nomads Annual Tour | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 27 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| OCTOBER | | | |
| 10 Sat | Subic 7's | MAAP | Subic |
| 25 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 30-1 Nov Fri-Sun | National U20 Training Camp | PRFU | Laguna, Phil. |
| NOVEMBER | | | |
| 3 to 9 Tues-Mon | ARFU Under 20's Tournament | ARFU | Hong Kong |
| 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Sun | MANSAC Schoolboys Rugby Competition | MANSAC | School Fields |
| 29 Sun | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 3rd or 4th wk | MAAP Annual Tour | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| TBA | Cebu Touch Rugby League | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| DECEMBER | | | |
| 12 Sat | Dragons Challenge Cup | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |
| 12 Sat | CCRFC Annual Awards Night | Cebu Rugby Club | Cebu |

**schedules are subject to change*

PRFU FEATURED PLAYER

Name: Noel Flowers
Nickname: Daisy
Age: 28 years old
Date of Birth: June 6, 1980
Current City: Cebu City
Heritage: Fil Australian
Interesting Skill: I can set my head on fire
Team: Cebu Dragons/ Philippine National Men's and 7's team
Positioned Played: Wing / Full-Back
Rugby Hero: Matthew Burke



Why RUGBY?: Why I love to play rugby union can be summed up with one simple quote from former NFL quarterback Joe Theismann, who was once quoted as saying; "Rugby is great. The players don't wear helmets or padding; they just beat the living daylights out of each other and then go for a beer. I love that." Need I say more?

Noel first fell in love with rugby union as an undersized 10-yr old in a school crazy about the game they play in heaven. Rugby is not just a sport at St. Joseph's College in Sydney, it was, and remains a way of life, and winning was the way to live that life.

He is currently active in the Cebu City Rugby Football Club and he declares that "playing for the CCRFC has brought a much-needed balance back to my life, and provides me with the physical outlet that every red-blooded male craves. It takes a certain personality to embrace the culture of rugby, and it is great to be able to engage with kindred spirits on and off the pitch."

He has, over the past few years, represented the Philippines on a number of occasions, of which the highlight would be winning the Silver medal at the SEA Games in Thailand. He will continue to play at international level as long as he can, and plans to get involved in management and coaching when his playing days are done.

The PRFU is proudly sponsored by:

