



INFORMATION PAGE

Week of December 10th, 2004

1 All Regional Associations to sit on IRB Council

In order that the goals and objectives of the new IRB strategic plan are achieved a new governance model was approved at the November Interim Council Meeting to enhance the representation, effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.

This new model includes the expansion of the IRB Council that is the ultimate legislative body of the game.

In an historic move the Interim Meeting agreed that all the Regional Associations should be officially represented on the 28 Member IRB Council, effectively meaning that for the first time all member countries have representation.

FIRA-AER (Association Europeene de Rugby) is a full voting member and will now be joined by CAR (Confederation Africaine de Rugby), FORU (Federation of Oceanic Rugby Unions) & ARFU (Asian Rugby Football Union). Previously they were associate members with observer status only.

CONSUR (Confederation Sud Americana de Rugby) and NAWIRA (North America West Indies Rugby Union) have been granted Observer Member status on the Council with a view to being accepted as full Members in the future. Previously these two associations were not represented at Council.

The role of the Regional Associations is central to ensuring that the IRB can effectively implement the Strategic Plan and lead world Rugby to new levels of growth and development. The proposed role of the Regional Associations is to:

- Provide a forum for the Unions in the Region to work together to develop Rugby Union.
- Be the body for the purposes of developing the Game and organising Regional tournaments and representation of the views of Members in the IRB.
- Represent the views of the Region on the Council to the IRB.
- Formulate a Rugby specific strategic plan for the Region to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the IRB.

- Approve an annual business plan to translate the strategic plan into action.
- Monitor the implementation of the Rugby plan in the Region and achievement of Key Performance Indicators.
- Ensure the Regional Association operates as an effective business and Member services organisation.
- Ensure there is a sound system of internal control and risk management policy and process in place to identify and manage risk. Standard constitutions and frameworks will be developed for each Regional Association along with regional specific frameworks.

2 NAWIRA Women's Meeting

On Saturday December 4th, a meeting of the NAWIRA Women's Committee was held in Florida. Attended by Anne Barry, Roxanne Butler, Mary Dixey (Chair), Kathy Flores, Grace Gavin, Annemarie Henning, Tom Jones, Dan Lyle, Julie McCoy, Candi Orsini, Jan Rutkowski and Lisa Williams, there was an excellent exchange of views and experience.

This was the inaugural meeting, so the first order of business was to establish a mutual understanding of the history of the women's game in the Region, and the role of NAWIRA and the IRB in past and future developments. This was followed by a sharing of views on what might be undertaken by this Committee, and by the NAWIRA member Unions, to promote Women's Rugby development. This list of possible initiatives was generated:

Ongoing

- Promote regional U19 events
- NAWIRA sevens tournaments
 - * Add value with coaching sessions/school visits by players
- Coach, administrator, referee, referee coach exchanges/"adoptions"
- Distribution of tape/DVD production of matches/clinics
- Media exposure/visibility
 - * Slice of life stories (daughters of female Rugby players now playing the game, for example)

2005

- Coaches at national team training camps
- NAWIRA meeting at Canada Cup
- Women's referees/coaches at Canada Cup, mentoring, technical seminar, Conference on the Game

2006

- Coaches conference at WRWC, to be pursued through the IRB Women's Advisory Committee
- NAWIRA meeting at WRWC
- Referees/coaches at WRWC, mentoring, technical seminar

It was agreed that successful achievement of these initiatives will depend on energy and determination by the members of the Committee and others, in cooperation with member Unions. The IRB's Staff Coach program will support exchanges.

3 IRB Sevens in Los Angeles

I have read that ticket sales are going well for this the Sevens in LA (February 12 - 13). *Do whatever you can to attend!* It is the prime international event in the NAWIRA calendar, and a thrill to be part of. Go to <http://www.usasevens.com/>

4 Guidelines from the IRB

At its 18th November meeting, the IRB Council agreed guidelines. These were promulgated to Member Unions on December 3rd:

- **Mixed Gender Rugby**
The cut off point for mixed gender Rugby should be from twelve years of age onwards.
- **Age Grade Players**
The existing guideline on the age at which young players be allowed to participate in senior Rugby should remain at eighteen.

I am shutting the office for three weeks over the Christmas and New Year holidays, effective December 13th.

May I offer you my very best of wishes for this festive season. 2004 was an excellent year for Rugby. Now we look forward to 2005, and another good year for the Game, and all those involved in it.

The next *Information Page* will be for the week of January 7th, 2005



Tom Jones
Regional Development Manager