



Federación Mexicana de Rugby A.C.

ESTABLISHING RUGBY IN A NEW MARKETPLACE

INTRODUCTION - A GLANCE AT MEXICO'S RUGBY UNION HISTORY

DEAR FRIENDS

FIRST OF ALL I WOULD LIKE TO THANK NEAL BRENDEL, SYDNEY COLEMAN AND TOM JONES FOR THEIR KIND INVITATION TO THIS IMPORTANT EVENT.

IN SECOND PLACE I WOULD LIKE TO WARN YOU THAT OUR MICROSCOPIC EXPERIMENT IN RUGBY IN MEXICO HARDLY GIVES US THE EXPERIENCE OR KNOWLEDGE THAT THE TITLE OF THIS BRIEF EXPOSE IMPLIES.

THE MEXICAN RUGBY UNION WAS FORMED IN 1972 BY MR. WALTER IRVINE AND A FEW ENGLISH, FRENCH AND MEXICAN FRIENDS OF HIS.

AFTER 10 YEARS OF BRILLIANT AND CONSTANT WORK FROM THE UNION'S PRESIDENT (WALTER'S SON ANDY) AND HIS TEAM, MEXICO'S RUGBY HAD ACHIEVED QUITE A TAKE-OFF:

14 SENIOR TEAMS

7 JUNIOR TEAMS

A STEADY TOURNAMENT AND FLOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR NEIGHBOURS FROM TEXAS AND THE BRITISH ARMY IN BELIZE, VISITS FROM ARGENTINIAN TEAMS, ETC....

WHEN ANDY AND HIS TEAM RETIRED, THE GROWTH NOT ONLY STOPPED BUT REVERTED.

IN 1999 ONLY FOUR SENIOR TEAMS REMAINED, RUGBY WAS ONLY PLAYED IN MEXICO CITY AND WAS ALWAYS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION.

IN 2000 WE TOOK OVER THE CHALLENGE OF BRINGING BACK THE GROWTH AND VITALITY OUR UNION ONCE HAD.

1- THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE PROJECT

ALTHOUGH THIS MEETING IS ORIENTED TO THE MARKETING SIDE OF THE QUESTION OF RUGBY DEVELOPMENT A QUICK LOOK INTO THE MINIMUM LEGAL, MATERIAL AND HUMAN INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSARY TO OPERATE EFICIENTLY IS IN ORDER:

Villahermosa No. 21-B
44-38
Colonia Condesa
44-39
06100 México D.F.
mexrugby@prodigy.net.mx

Tel y Fax: 52-76-

52-76-

@mail:



Federación Mexicana de Rugby A.C.

A) THE LEGAL STRUCTURE

MEXICAN RUGBY HAD ALWAYS KEPT ITS DISTANCE WITH THE OFFICIAL MEXICAN SPORT AUTHORITIES. THIS TIME IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT IF WE WANTED TO BUILD A LASTING STRUCTURE, WE HAD TO BE THE OFFICIAL BODY GOVERNING AND DEVELOPING RUGBY IN MEXICO, RECOGNISED NOT ONLY BY THE MEXICAN SPORT AUTHORITIES BUT ALSO BY THE I.R.B.

IT HAS BEEN A LONG ROAD, BUT AFTER 4 YEARS OF LEGAL WORK OUR UNION IS NOW THE MEXICAN RUGBY FEDERATION.

WE HAD TO MAKE NUMEROUS MODIFICATIONS TO OUR CHARTER, PUT PRESSURE ON THE TEAMS SO THAT THEY EVOLVED INTO LEGALLY CONTITUTED CLUBS, GET ALL THE PAPERWORK DONE, CALL A GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND GET EVERYBODY TO VOTE THOSE CHANGES INTO EFFECT. WE ARE NOW IN EXCELLENT TERMS WITH THE MEXICAN SPORT CONFEDERATION, THE MEXICAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AND WERE GLAD TO HEAR MR. MIKE MILLER, DURING HIS BRIEF VISIT TO MEXICO CITY, TWO MONTHS AGO, CONFIRM OUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE I.R.B.

B) THE PHISICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

A LITTLE OFFICE IN MEXICO'S DOWNTOWN AREA, WITH A COMPUTER, FAX AND TELEPHONE PROMPTLY BECAME, DOÑA MARY'S (OUR VALIANT HALF TIME SECRETARY) KINGDOM.

A SITE IN INTERNET, FISCAL REGISTER, INVOICES, BANK ACOUNT, AN EXTERNAL ACOUNTANT OUR LEGAL ADVISOR, AND ALL THE SIGNS WERE THERE: WE EXISTED IN A TANGIBLE WAY. NOW WE COULD BEGIN WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT: "SELLING" RUGBY IN A CROWDED SPORT MARKETPLACE, AND ATTRACTING THE BIGGEST AMOUNT OF PERSONS TO PRACTICE OUR FANTASTIC SPORT.

2- "SELLING" RUGBY

BEEING A CONVERT, AND A RUGBY PLAYER AND FAN SINCE I WAS FOURTEEN, HELPED A LOT AT THIS STAGE. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE ONLY THING YOU NEED TO DO TO ATTRACT A YOUNG KID TO RUGBY IS TO SHOW HIM RUGBY ON T.V., TAKE HIM TO A PUBLIC PLAYING FIELD WITH HIS FRIENDS AND PLAY WITH HIM FOR TEN MINUTES. HE WILL BE EFECTIVELY INOCULATED 80% OF THE TIME.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT RUGBY DOESN'T EXIST IN MEXICAN OPEN TELEVISION, AND THE ORDINARY SCHEDULE FOR A RUGBY MATCH ON FOX OR ESPN, THE SPORT CHANNELS AVAILABLE IN MEXICAN CABLE T.V. IS AROUND THREE A.M. IN THE MORNING.

IN ADDITION TO THIS, IT WAS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE TO BUY A RUGBY SHIRT OR A RUGBY BALL IN MEXICO, AND ALTHOUGH YOU CAN PRACTICE WITH AN AMERICAN FOOTBALL BALL, IT

Villahermosa No. 21-B
44-38
Colonia Condesa
44-39
06100 México D.F.
mexrugby@prodigy.net.mx

Tel y Fax: 52-76-

52-76-

@mail:



Federación Mexicana de Rugby A.C.

IS NOT THE REAL THING AND YOU ARE FINALLY GOING TO END UP PLAYING FOOTBALL INSTEAD OF RUGBY....

A) THE AIRING OF RUGBY ON T.V.

FOR THE PART OF RUGBY TRANSMISSION ON MEXICAN OPEN T.V. THE SITUATION IS STILL THE SAME, BUT WE HAD THE LUCK OF GETTING AN INDEPENDANT T.V. PRODUCER, "A&M SPORTS", INTERESTED ON FILMING OUR REGULAR LEAGUE MATCHES. THIS MATERIAL IS TRANSMITTED REGULARLY BY A SPECIAL SPORTS SKY CHANNEL, AND BY P.C.T.V. THE REGIONAL CABLE TELEVISION NETWORK IN MEXICO.

THIS PLUS THE FACT THAT RUGBY IS BECOMING MORE AVAILABLE ON FOX, ESPN AND THE FRENCH CHANNEL TV5, HAS HELPED US TREMENDOUSLY. IN ADDITION, OUR INTERNET SITE, THOUGH UNSTISFACTORILY UPDATED, HAS PROVED A VALUABLE LINK WITH ALL THE INTERESTED PERSONS, ALLOWING US TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM AND OFFERING THEM A PLAYING POSSIBILITY.

B- BALLS AND SHIRTS...

THE NEXT TASK WAS TO GET RUGBY BALLS AND UNIFORMS AVAILABLE TO MEXICAN WOULD-BE PLAYERS.

THE STORY WITH THE RUGBY BALLS IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW THE BIG MODERN GLOBALIZED ECONOMY IS STAMPING THE OLD AGE SMALL CRAFTMANSHIP. THE STORY IS WORTH HEARING:

"ONCE UPON A TIME MEXICO WAS A LEADING MANUFACTURER OF FOOTBALL, BASEBALL, AMERICAN FOOTBALL, VOLLEYBALL, AND WHATEEVER TYPE OF PLAYING BALLS YOU WANTED. WE SET OUR COURSE ON FINDING A FOOTBALL MANUFACTURER IN MEXICO WILLING TO "BEND" A LITTLE HIS PRODUCTION LINE IN ORDER TO PRODUCE OVAL BALLS. NOT ONE HAD SURVIVED THE TOUGH ASIAN COMPETITION. WE FINALLY FOUND A CRAFTMAN IN A REMOTE PEASANT VILLAGE IN THE STATE OF GUERRERO THAT WAS WILLING TO HAND-MAKE OUR PRODUCT. WE SENT SAMPLES IN THREE DIFERENT OCASIONS, EVEN SENT SOME MONEY IN ADVANCE FOR "DON PEPE" TO BUY THE NECESSARY MATERIAL. WE NEVER HEARD OF HIM ANYMORE, OUR ONLY WISH IS THAT THE TEQUILA HE BOUGHT WITH OUR ADVANCE MONEY DIDN'T GIVE HIM TOO MUCH OF A HEADACHE.

FROM THERE WE WENT TO A BIG INTERNATIONAL COMPANY NAMED "VOIT", CURIOUSLY IT IS OWNED BY VERY MODERN, VERY ENTERPRISING YOUNG MEXICAN BUSINESSMEN. THEIR GENERAL DIRECTOR WAS INSTANTLY THRILLED BY THE NEW PRODUCT THEY COULD MANUFACTURE, AS THEY HAVE PLANS TO ENTER THE ARGENTINIAN MARKET. IN A WEEK WE HAD 200 SPLENDID NEWLY MADE RUGBY BALLS IN MEXICO. THE BALLS WHERE DESIGNED IN MEXICO CITY, THE PLANS SENT BY INTERNET, PRODUCED IN THE "VOIT" PLANT IN PAKISTAN,

Villahermosa No. 21-B
44-38
Colonia Condesa
44-39
06100 México D.F.
mexrugby@prodigy.net.mx

Tel y Fax: 52-76-

52-76-

@mail:



Federación Mexicana de Rugby A.C.

AND FLOWN THROUGH LOS ANGELES TO MEXICO'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. THE COST WAS HALF WHAT "DON PEPE" WANTED TO CHARGE US...."

THE STORY OF THE SHIRTS IS MORE OR LESS THE SAME, WITH THE RESULT THAT IN COLABORATION WITH "DEPORTEX" A LEADING MEXICAN SPORT TEXTILE MANUFACTURER WE DEVELOPED A RESISTANT AND FRESH SYNTHETIC FABRIC, THAT YOU CAN DYE EASILY IN ANY UNIFORM PATTERN YOU DESIRE. THE FIRST YEAR WE SOLD MORE THAN 150 FULL RUGBY UNIFORMS.

CONCLUSIONS

AFTER THREE AND HALF YEARS, MEXICAN RUGBY HAS MADE QUITE A COME BACK, WE NOW HAVE:

9 REGULAR MAJOR TEAMS

4 JUNIOR TEAMS AND

5 WOMEN TEAMS

ABOUT 35 KIDS BETWEEN 9 AND 12 GATHER EVERY SATURDAY TO PLAY RUGBY

RUGBY IS NOT ONLY PLAYED IN MEXICO CITY, BUT HAS SPREAD TO THE CITIES OF GUANAJUATO, CELAYA, CORDOBA AND GUADALAJARA, AND FOR NEXT SEASON WE HAVE PROMISING YOUNG PRE-TEAMS IN: PUEBLA, OAXACA, MONTERREY, MERIDA AND CANCUN.

WE ARE TRYING TO GET THE MAGNIFICENT I.R.B. PROGRAMM "RUGBY WORLD", THE NEXT SIX NATIONS TOURNAMENT AND THE NEXT RUGBY WORLD CUP INTO OPEN MEXICAN TELEVISION, BUT MOST IMPORTANT OFF ALL WE WANT TO BUILD OUR NATIONAL RUGBY CENTER, NEARBY MEXICO, SO WE HAVE AVAILABLE GRASSY FIELDS TO PLAY RUGBY. GRASS IS QUITE SCARCE IN A 22 MILLION PEOPLE CITY PERCHED IN THE MOUNTAINS.

FOR ALL OF THIS TO BECOME A REALITY WE WILL NEED TO CHANGE GEARS IN OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMM: WE WILL ABSOLUTELY NEED AT LEAST A RETRIBUTED FULL TIME MANAGER IF WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE ENORMOUS WORKLOAD THAT ALL THIS DEVELOPMENT WILL BRING. WE KNOW WE CAN COUNT ON ALL OUR FRIENDS FROM NAWIRA TO HELP US. FINALLY I WOULD LIKE TO THANK TOM JONES FOR ALL HIS FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT, WITHOUT WHICH, MUCH OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

FEDERACION MEXICANA DE RUGBY

Villahermosa No. 21-B

44-38

Colonia Condesa

44-39

06100 México D.F.

mexrugby@prodigy.net.mx

Tel y Fax: 52-76-

52-76-

@mail:



Federación Mexicana de Rugby A.C.

MIGUEL CARNER-PRESIDENT
PABLO SEPTIEN- DEVELOPMENT VICEPRESIDENT
EUGENIO ABURTO - TECHNICAL VICEPRESIDENT
PASCALE MONIER - WOMEN'S RUGBY
FRANCISCO ECHEGUREN - MEDIA COMISSIONER
CARLOS DE LA CRUZ - DISCIPLINARY COMISSIONER
ROD DAVIES - REFEREEING COMISSIONER
JAMIE JHONSTON - NATIONAL TEAM MANAGER
DIEGO GOMEZ - NATIONAL TEAM COACH
ENRIQUE GOMEZ - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
FRANCISCO GUERRERO/ALBERT HERNANDEZ/HERNAN BARBIERI - KIDS RUGBY

Villahermosa No. 21-B
44-38
Colonia Condesa
44-39
06100 México D.F.
mexrugby@prodigy.net.mx

Tel y Fax: 52-76-
52-76-

@mail: