



# BERMUDA RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

P.O. BOX HM 1909  
HAMILTON HM HX  
BERMUDA

February 2009

Dear BRFU Patrons

Unfortunately you have not heard from the BRFU for some time. As you know, the BRFU has been without a Patron's secretary for quite a while and this position was being filled by the Chairman, Dave Worsfold. As I expect most of you know, Dave and his family moved back to the UK in 2008 leaving the position open again. I have agreed to take on the role.

Most of the names on past Patron's lists look familiar to me and in fact I could probably trace some of my current aches and pains back to them! For those of you that don't know me, I played rugby in Bermuda starting in the original mini rugby programme in about 1975. I played for Mariners RFC in the 1980s and represented Bermuda at both National level and in the early days of the World Rugby Classic. In addition to my new responsibility as Patron Secretary, I am very involved in coaching/managing the current BRFU mini rugby programme as well as the Warwick Academy school team.

As you well know, the rugby community in Bermuda is relatively small so it is important to keep past players and other rugby supporters close to the sport through ongoing involvement, especially when that ongoing involvement includes financial support for the BRFU and its activities. Thus, I hope you will accept an apology from us for the lack of communication recently and continue to support the BRFU as a Patron. If so, would you kindly indicate your intent by return e-mail. Patron's dues remain the same at \$200 and cheques can be mailed to the BRFU, P.O. Box 1909, Hamilton, HM HX. Alternatively you can make a direct deposit to the BRFU account at the Bank of Bermuda, account number: 010-261626-001 statement comment: Patron – your name.

Included for your information is the schedule for all remaining matches in the 2008/2009 season. Also included is a summary of the 2008/2009 BRFU activities covering all levels of rugby in Bermuda. I think you will agree there are a number of exciting initiatives underway in the BRFU.

Thanks to those of you that have already paid Patron dues when registering as a player for the current season and thank you for all of your support in the past and we hope you will continue to support the BRFU in the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Blee  
BRFU Patrons Secretary



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## BRFU 2009 Schedule

Day	Date	Location	Competition	Time	Game
Sunday	February 15	NSC	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	1:00 pm	Mariners v Police
Sunday	February 15	NSC	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	3:30 pm	Teachers v Renegades
Sunday	February 22	TBA	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	1:00 pm	Mariners v Teachers
Sunday	February 22	TBA	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	3:30 pm	Police v Renegades
Friday	February 27	BAA	Second Team round robin	6:30 pm	Various
Sunday	March 1	NSC	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	1:00 pm	Teachers v Police
Sunday	March 1	NSC	League 4 <sup>th</sup> Rnd	3:30 pm	Mariners v Renegades
Friday	March 6	NSC	Onions v Limeys	5:30 pm	U10, U12, Ladies, Mens
Sunday	March 8	NSC	Renegades Founders Day	1:00 pm	Renegades 2 <sup>nd</sup> XV v Renegades Old Boys
Sunday	March 8	NSC	Renegades Founders Day	3:30 pm	Renegades 1st XV v BRFU Select
Saturday	March 14	NSC	Conyers BER / CAY Youth Cup	12:00 pm – 3:00 pm	U10, U12 & U14 Round Robin Matches
Sunday	March 15	NSC	Conyers BER / CAY Youth Cup	12:00 pm – 3:00 pm	U10, U12 & U14 international Matches
Friday	March 20	BAA	2nd Team Cup	6:30 pm & 8:00 pm	Semi finals Draw to be announced
Sunday	March 22	NSC	Nicol Shield	1:00 pm & 3:30 pm	Semi finals Draw to be announced
Sunday	March 29	TBA	Nicol Shield, Robin Hood, Scully Cup	1:00 pm start	Finals
Thursday	April 23	UK	U11, U12 teams travel to Bath Mini Festival		
Saturday	April 25	TBA	BRFU Awards Dinner		Details to be announced
Saturday	July 4	Cayman	U19 Caribbean Championships		July 4 – July 11
	May/June	TBA	Mixed Touch League		Details to be announced

One important item to note is the annual Easter 7's competition has been cancelled this year due to a lack of overseas interest and lack of volunteers needed to organize and run this competition. The BRFU hopes to reinstate this event next year.



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## BRFU Activities Report 2008/2009 Season

Our BRFU Board member responsible for Public Relations, Gary Brady, does a great job of providing weekly write-ups that have made the newspapers. We are in the process of getting an area on our web site dedicated to his articles so they can be viewed by those that miss them. It also gives us the opportunity to post them before the articles hit the news stands.

### Men's Rugby

In Men's rugby this season we've increased the number of rounds from three to four. It was felt the players were not getting enough games under their belts to give them the experiences that can only be obtained from matches. Two rounds were completed before Christmas and the 3<sup>rd</sup> round was played in January. Current standings are as follows:

Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points*
Teachers	9	7	0	2	32
Renegades	9	6	0	3	25
Mariners	9	4	0	5	19
Police	9	1	0	8	1

\* includes impact of bonus point system

Tom Healy has accepted a Caribbean squad invitation and recently competed in the 7's circuit in South America for the West Indies. Tom's ticket was funded by the BRFU for this event. There were 2 groups of players considered for the West Indies Squad. They played in 2 separate venues, and now Tom is awaiting final squad selection to see if he's make the cut for the Hong Kong 7's. Competition for places has been extremely hard, as the game has grown in the Caribbean of late.

The following link has tons of good photos: <http://www.rugbybahamas.com/nawira-2008/>

### Ladies Rugby

The Women's section competed in their first ever 7's international matches by competing in the NAWIRA IRB 7's. They played very well in the tournament and came through with plaudits from opposition players. Winning a match was just reward for their efforts. BRFU President, Peter Borland traveled with the squad and came back full of admiration for their efforts.

### Bermuda National Team Activities

National Team Coach, Lawrence Bird has provided the following update regarding Bermuda's participation in the NAWIRA IRB 7's played in October 2008:

Bermuda started in group A, one of 3 groups in the day 1 preliminary round, with Mexico and the USA. With the top 2 teams to qualify for the next round's group on day 2 and the USA arguably the tournament favourites, our first game against Mexico was crucial. After a very



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tough game, Bermuda came out on top with a 10-5 win with tries by Jack Ellison and Tom Edwards.

The game against the USA was predictably tough and Bermuda played extremely well with self-belief and determination. At 10 minutes into the 14 minute game, the USA only led by one score. Eventually, the USA managed to get a grip of the game and we lost 0-31. USA then beat Mexico comfortably to win the group and eliminate Mexico to the Plate competition. That meant we finished 2nd in the group and we qualified for the next round's group with Cayman and Canada on day 2.

Again, the first two teams would go through and we had to play Cayman first, which was another "do or die" game with Canada expected to be as difficult as the USA, both sides fielding professional players who regularly play the world 7s circuit. We came out winners against Cayman after a slow start and a 17-0 score. 2 tries from Bobby Hurdle and 1 from Jack Ellison sealed Cayman's fate.

Cayman then lost to Canada and then we lost heavily to Canada. Nevertheless, coming 2nd in the group meant we qualified for the semi-final with a re-match against the USA who had won their group. Canada then met Guyana in the other semi-final.

With the 2 finalists to qualify for the finals in Dubai in March 2009, it was all to play for. Sadly, Bermuda never picked themselves up to the levels they had performed at the previous day and the USA weren't going to make any mistakes, beating Bermuda comfortably for a final spot against Canada who beat Guyana comfortably too.

Bermuda then went into the 3rd place play-off against Guyana for, effectively, the Caribbean Championship final and title. Guyana, with several West Indies players in their side, took an early lead and never looked back. Whilst Bermuda had the potential to be technically the best 7s team, insufficient possession and a lack of attacking options meant a heavy defeat in the end. Many coaching lessons were learned in that last game and we'll have them next time!

All in all, a very successful trip with considerable improvement in our position in the Caribbean in addition to which Jack Ellison and Tom Healy were selected for the initial West Indies squad with a view to making the final selection for the squad to compete in the Hong Kong 7s in March 2009."

## **Bermuda Youth program**

The Bermuda Youth Program continues to gain momentum. The Youth team is training hard and we have 2 incoming squads to help them prepare for the U19 Caribbean Championships which will take place from July 4 – 11, 2009 in Cayman. This will be another first for a Bermuda team! They are holding a golf tournament on April 18th to raise funds. Book your place to avoid disappointment. Last year the event was well supported by all of the clubs and local community.



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## **Youth, Midi and Mini programs**

Mini Rugby comprises junior rugby from the U6 group to the U10 group. Midi rugby includes the U12 group and U14 play under the youth rules. In preparation for the first junior tour in 2007, our junior program decided to adopt the playing rules and regulations of the (England) RFU and we continue to use them as our guide.

Our 2008/9 program kicked off in late November following the Rugby Classic. Momentum continues to build and we are now over 200 registered players. We intentionally keep the cost low (\$10) but between the registration fees, donations from parents and our 4 shirt sponsors (ACE, CD&P, Arch Re and KPMG), we are able cover the costs of the program, which includes a jersey to keep for all registered players.

Following a successful tour of U11s in 2007 to the UK, we took two teams (U12 and U10) to Cayman in May 2008. It is amazing how much the level of play increases from our normal Sunday games to an international match in a very short time frame with focused training. On both tours, the coaches have been overwhelmed by the skill and commitment exhibited by the young players.

We are now gearing up for a return tour by Cayman in March 2009 explained more below.

In addition, following the very successful tour to play in the Chobham Mini Festival in October 2007, we have been invited to send an U11 and U12 team to the Bath Mini Festival in late April. We expect this will be a great experience for our players, especially the U12s who will play at the Rec, Bath's premiership field.

One recent and exciting development has been the increase in interest in the U14 level. Despite the increase in numbers in the junior program over the past few years, this group has always suffered from low numbers and did not have enough players last year to make two teams. Due to the flow through from U12, numbers are up this year (26 before Christmas) and now due to the prospect of a Bermuda cap, numbers have swelled to 40, including an influx of players from Chris Naylor's Sandys Middle School team.

One final junior rugby note. The 2008 Onions v Limeys matches were led off with the first ever mini Onions (dubbed the shallots – defined as “a bunch of little onions”) v Limeys match. As with the men's and ladies matches, the junior match was not lacking in intensity! We are now gearing up for the 2009 version where we hope to play U10 and U12 matches.

## **Conyers BER/CAY Youth Challenge Cup**

Following the successful visit of two Bermuda sides to Cayman in May 2008, the two unions started discussing the possibility of a longer term commitment to play each other. The culmination of these discussions is the Conyers BER/CAY Youth Challenge Cup. This is a five year agreement starting in March 2009 with Conyers Dill & Pearman agreeing to act as lead sponsor for the event. In March 2009, Cayman are bringing 3 teams to Bermuda, an U10, U12 and U14. Bermuda will field two or three teams in each age group on the Saturday and play a



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round robin. Sunday will see representative games in each age group. Our young players could really use your support on both days!!

## **Schools Rugby**

The same crazy people who run the junior programs and organize tours for 9 – 12 year olds are also behind the beginnings of a resurgence in schools rugby. At the moment, we have school rugby programs in 5 middle schools and three primary schools. The middle schools include Sandys, TNT, Warwick Academy, Somersfield Academy and Saltus. The middle schools started playing inter-school matches in December and will continue into March 2009. The primary schools will start playing inter-school matches in January.

## **IRB Coaching Course**

In November 2008, the BRFU organized an IRB Coaching Course which was taught by an IRB certified instructor from the USA. The course covered both Level 1 and Level 2 certifications. 13 people took in the Level 1 course and 7 people took the Level 2 course. The same courses were offered in 2007 as well.

## **Visit of NAWIRA Caribbean Development Officer**

Scott Harland is the Caribbean development officer for the North America and West Indies Rugby Association under which Bermuda falls. Scott made a short visit to Bermuda in December and was able to meet with the several BRFU committee members and junior development coaches. He also attended a mini rugby training session. He was very impressed by the organization and enthusiasm of coaches and players and is hoping to come back later in the winter to conduct some “train the coaches” workshops.

While Scott was here, he held a one-day introduction to refereeing course for anyone interested in getting into refereeing. The course was attended by 11 people (a mix of men and ladies). This was a great opportunity and hopefully when Scott comes back we can do it again.

## **Useful links relating to local rugby**

BRFU site: [www.bermudarfu.com](http://www.bermudarfu.com)

BRFU mini rugby site: [www.rugby.bermudasports.bm](http://www.rugby.bermudasports.bm)

North America West Indies site: [www.nawira.com](http://www.nawira.com)

Island Stats: [www.islandstats.com](http://www.islandstats.com)

Bermuda Sports Network: [www.bermudasportsnetwork.com](http://www.bermudasportsnetwork.com)