



URUGUAY v USA, March 22, 2013
USA v URUGUAY, March 29, 2013

**RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015
QUALIFIERS**

PRESS PACK



Welcome from the Chairman

On behalf of Rugby World Cup Limited and the International Rugby Board it is my great pleasure to introduce this Rugby World Cup 2015 qualification process media guide. I hope that you find the information useful.

Rugby is growing all over the world and there are now more than 6.6 million men, women and children participating in a sport that continues to break new frontiers and bring people together through the character-building values of solidarity, passion and respect.

It is because of the tremendous commercial success of our showcase Rugby World Cup that this growth has been made possible and sustainable.

The commercial revenues generated by recent events has enabled the IRB to invest unprecedented funds in Rugby worldwide with more than GBP 150 million pumped into development, tournaments and training over the past four years.

The road to Rugby World Cup may be about winning and it is delivering eight teams to join the 12 automatic qualifiers who will compete for the sport's biggest prize, the Webb Ellis Cup, but above all it is about participation, friendship and camaraderie and spreading Rugby's values around the globe. Therefore, every player in this process is a champion.

Over the three-year qualification period, more than 3,000 players from 82 nations across all six IRB regions are participating in 203 matches in a process that involves well-established and popular regional tournaments. There have already been a few surprises along the way and I am sure that there will be more on what is a fascinating journey.

Preparation for England 2015 is advanced and on track and I am confident that the event, the eighth chapter in the remarkable Rugby World Cup story, will be a resounding success bringing together fans from throughout Europe and around the world for what promises to be a unique celebration of English culture and Rugby's values.

In 2014, working in partnership with the England Rugby 2015 organising body, we will make several more key decisions that will lay the foundations for an exceptional tournament, including the ticketing strategy.

Rugby World Cup is a magical tournament that crosses political divides, brings people together, creates history and England 2015 will be no different and I hope to welcome you to an event that promises to be special for all who attend.

Bernard Lapasset

Chairman, Rugby World Cup Limited and International Rugby Board

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IRB MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 21, 2014

Webb Ellis Cup on show as USA and Uruguay aim for RWC

- Winner will qualify for England 2015 as Americas 2
- Iconic trophy on display in stadium both legs
- Global qualification process reaching climax

The second Americas qualifier for Rugby World Cup 2015 in England will be known at the end of the month after home and away fixtures between CONSUR champions Uruguay and NACRA runners-up USA.

The iconic Webb Ellis Cup will be present for both legs in Montevideo on March 22 and in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 29 to add a little gold dust to what promises to be an epic contest and one of the most eagerly anticipated events on the 2014 Rugby calendar.

The winner on aggregate over the two legs will take the position of Americas 2 at RWC 2015 and will take up their place in Pool B along with South Africa, Samoa, Scotland and the qualifier from Asia. **The beaten team's hopes of qualifying for Rugby's showcase event will remain alive**, but they will need to do it the hard way, entering the repechage tournament for the final place along with runners-up from other regions.

The Americas 1 place was secured last year by Canada following a two-leg, home-and-away battle with USA in South Carolina and Toronto. The Canucks will feature in Pool D with France, Ireland, Italy and the Europe 2 qualifier.

On paper, the Eagles carry a slight advantage into the tie. Currently, they sit in 18th position in the IRB World Rankings, two places ahead of the Uruguayans.

IRB Director Bob Latham, who will attend the matches, **said:** "We are getting down to the nerve-jangling stages of Rugby World Cup qualification. **There isn't much between these** teams and all the players know that the opportunities for making it to England in 2015 are fast running out."

"There is certainly no shortage of motivation for these matches. We can expect two highly motivated, well-prepared and passionate sides to take the field in front of large crowds. It is this sort of occasion that players relish and spectators look forward to most and I for one am looking forward to it immensely."

"We have noticed Rugby continuing to go from strength to strength in the Americas. Matches like this serve to reinforce that growth as we seek to reach out to more players and fans than ever before."

"This growth is testament to IRB's commitment to grow the Game beyond its traditional heartlands and the hard work of the Member Unions themselves in conjunction with CONSUR and NACRA."

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“Rugby World Cup is the pinnacle of our sport, and through the global qualification process there is a clear pathway and opportunity for every IRB Member Union to play at that level.”

About Rugby World Cup:

In total, the Rugby World Cup features 82 nations. The qualifiers comprise some 203 matches, made up of around 3,000 players across six continents, including the strategic markets of Brazil, Russia, India and China as well as USA, Canada and Mexico.

Rugby participation has increased by 18 per cent since RWC 2007 owing to IRB investment that comes from RWC finances, the positive effect of being included in the programme for the **Olympic Games 2016 and the global reach of the Game's flagship tournament.**

Rugby World Cup provides an international stage to promote Rugby and generates 95 per cent of the revenue the IRB invests in achieving its strategic goals, including growing the global Game. Therefore the success of the tournament is vital for achieving the IRB strategic goals.

England was awarded RWC 2015 as it offers a mature Rugby market which is likely to generate strong spectator numbers and significant financial returns. Large iconic venues, an experienced Host Union, the UK major event infrastructure and a prime commercial Rugby market provide an ideal platform to host the Rugby World Cup.

This tournament also offers an important opportunity to continue the development of RWC tournament planning and delivery models and opportunities to grow the game across Europe.

Looking further ahead, growing the Game is a key consideration for RWC 2019 in Japan. Asia is a critical market for future growth and Japan is the traditional leader of Rugby in Asia. The JRFU has made significant professional developments in recent years and is well-placed to host such an important event.

A successful tournament in Japan has the potential to generate significant interest in the Game in Asia and ignite a lucrative commercial Rugby market. With 60 per cent of the global population **and 80 per cent of the world's youth living in Asia, this interest could have a considerable impact** on the development of global Rugby.

Awarding RWC 2019 to Japan 10 years prior to delivery provides an adequate time scale, if used properly, to prepare the framework to host the tournament in a developing market.

The scale of Rugby World Cup and the importance of using RWC tournaments to achieve wider strategic goals of key stakeholders demand a clear strategic approach for each tournament. These must integrate the IRB goals with those of other key stakeholders, providing a framework for decision making and measuring success.



Putting the world into the Rugby World Cup

As the 2015 qualification process continues, RWC gives the chance for 80 teams to compete in this truly global event

How does the qualification process work?

Mexico hosted Jamaica on 24 March, 2012, in a Test match that symbolised all that is exciting about the modern Game. By now we know that neither of those particular teams will be playing at the next Rugby World Cup in England but the fact is both had the opportunity to do so. With the right development structure in place at home, they can now aspire to playing the Game at the highest level.

While the opening ceremony is still more than two years away, Rugby World Cup 2015 is on track to be a great success. In total, RWC qualifiers feature 82 nations. The qualifiers comprise some 203 matches, featuring around 3,000 players across six continents, including the important markets of Brazil, Russia, India and China as well as USA and Mexico.

Rugby participation has increased by 18 per cent since RWC 2007 thanks to a combination of IRB investment resulting from the financial success of RWC, the positive effect of being included in the programme for the Olympic Games 2016 and the global reach of the Game's **flagship** tournament. The fact all IRB Member Unions have a pathway towards the top has given every side a knowledge of its place in global rankings and, more importantly, a clear vision as to how to move onwards and upwards.

RWC provides an international stage to promote the Game and it generates 92 per cent of the revenue the IRB invests in achieving its strategic goals, including growing the global Game. **Therefore the success of the tournament is vital for achieving the IRB's strategic goals.**

The scale of RWC and the importance of using RWC tournaments to achieve wider strategic goals of key stakeholders demand a clear strategic approach for each tournament. These must integrate the IRB goals with those of other key stakeholders, providing a framework for decision-making and measuring success.

As far as RWC 2015 is concerned, qualification is split into regional tournaments with eight places ultimately up for grabs. **See below for details on how the IRB funds the global Game.**

"The qualifying teams did themselves proud at Rugby World Cup 2011 and we are committed to improving further the competitiveness of the qualifier process off the back of that success," said IRB Chief Executive Brett Gosper.

"This qualifying structure gives opportunities to all our unions to play in a competitive global IRB tournament and create a benchmark for them within the context of the IRB World Rankings. In the process, we are also bringing Rugby to new commercial markets so we can create a more attractive and marketable event in itself, which in turn helps with global participation rates through IRB investment."

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“It is important that through this process, ambitious unions can take ownership of their own development and aspire towards breaking through to the next level,” added Gosper.

England was awarded RWC 2015 as it offers a mature Rugby market which is likely to generate strong spectator numbers and significant commercial returns. Large iconic venues, an experienced host Union, the UK major event infrastructure and a prime commercial Rugby market provide an ideal platform to host the Rugby World Cup. This tournament also offers an important opportunity to continue the development of RWC tournament planning and delivery models and opportunities to grow the Game in England and Europe.

Looking further ahead, growing the Game is a key consideration for RWC 2019 in Japan. Asia is a critical market for future growth and Japan is the traditional leader of Rugby in Asia. The JRFU has made significant professional developments in recent years and is well-placed to host such an important event.

A successful tournament in Japan has the potential to generate significant interest in the Game in Asia and ignite a lucrative commercial Rugby market. With 60 per cent of the global population **and 80 per cent of the world's youth living in Asia, this interest** could have a considerable impact on the development of global Rugby. Awarding RWC 2019 to Japan 10 years prior to delivery provides an adequate time scale, if used properly, to prepare the framework to host the tournament in a developing market.

RWC 2015 QUALIFICATION PROCESS

Africa (one slot, one repechage)

The Confederation Africaine de Rugby (CAR) Tournament (Division 1A, 1B and 1C) is the regional qualification tournament with the provision for teams to earn promotion through the tiers. The winner of Division 1A in 2014 will qualify for RWC 2015 as Africa 1. The runner-up will take a place at the repechage tournament.

Americas (two slots, one repechage)

North America Caribbean Rugby Association (NACRA)

NACRA's 2012 senior men's tournament was included in the qualification process with the winner being included in the CONSUR A Tournament.

Meanwhile, Canada beat USA over two legs and qualify as Americas 1. USA face winner of the CONSUR A 2013 tournament, Uruguay, to determine Americas 2. The loser of that will play in the repechage tournament.

Confederacion Sudamericana de Rugby (CONSUR)

CONSUR A and B tournaments were included in the qualification process. The winner of the CONSUR A 2013 tournament, Uruguay, will play off against the loser of the NACRA play-off, USA. The winner of this match will qualify for RWC 2015 as Americas 2. The loser will play in the repechage tournament.

Asia (one slot, one repechage)

The Asian Rugby Football Union (ARFU) HSBC Asian 5 Nations (A5N) Division Three competition in 2012 was included in the process and a play-off between the winner of the A5N Division Two

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and the A5N Division Three was introduced in 2012 to determine which team would be promoted to the A5N Division 1 in 2013. The winner of the A5N in May 2014 will qualify for RWC 2015 as Asia while the runner-up will play in the repechage tournament.

Europe (two slots, one repechage)

The European Nations Cup (ENC) 2012-2014 is the regional qualification tournament. Play-off matches are included in the process in order to allow all the teams from all the ENC divisions to progress through the process with a chance to qualify for RWC 2015.

The winner and runner-up of the ENC Division 1A, Georgia and Romania, qualified for RWC 2015 as Europe 1 and 2. The team ranked third, Russia, will play off against the team that progressed from the lower divisions through the play-off system and the winner of that match will qualify for the repechage tournament.

Oceania (one slot)

The Oceania Cup 2013 is the regional qualification tournament and it took place recently in Papua New Guinea. The winners of the Oceania Cup, Cook Islands, will play off against Fiji in June and the winner will qualify for RWC 2015 as Oceania 1.

The IRB's strategy is:

- Protect and promote Rugby, its values, spirit and ethos
- Increase global participation
- Drive player welfare best practice
- Maximise the value of all RWC/IRB properties
- Increase sustainability and competitiveness of International Rugby
- Optimise Olympic participation
- Provide strong and effective leadership

"The IRB is committed to growing the Game beyond its traditional heartlands and to increasing global participation rates yet further," said RWCL Chairman Bernard Lapasset.

"We have made huge progress in that area in recent years but we are not finished yet. Rugby is a sport that continues to grow and we will ensure that happens. RWC is the Game's **showpiece, its** pinnacle and its flagship tournament. As such, it is right that every national team on Earth has the opportunity to play in it.

"The pathway we provide towards that goal gives all ambitious Unions – no matter how competitive they are today – a clear understanding of what needs to happen to make that dream a reality for tomorrow," he said.



Where Will the Americas 2 Qualifier Play?

Whether Uruguay or USA, qualifies as Americas 2 for RWC 2015 they are in for great matches in Pool B. Playing 1995 and 2007 winners South Africa, Scotland and Samoa, as well as the Asia qualifier will not be an easy task but the venues selected for those games will take them to world-class stadia in Leeds, Brighton and London as well as the Rugby heartland of Gloucester.

Americas 1 Fixtures and Venues

Sep 20 v Samoa, Brighton Community Stadium
Sep 27 v Scotland, Elland Road, Leeds
Oct 7 v South Africa, Olympic Stadium, London
Oct 11 v Asia 1, Kingsholm, Gloucester

Brighton Community Stadium (30,750)

This stunning addition to the Sussex landscape is situated in Falmer is a short hop on the train from Brighton and Hove. Constructed at a cost of £93 million, the ground has won plaudits for its semi-circular stand roofs and tubular supporting steelwork from both fans of sport and architecture. Built to replace the local soccer team's Goldstone Ground, it is spacious and comfortable, with luxurious padded seats. Capacity will be increased to more than 30,000 by the time the Rugby World Cup rolls around.

Elland Road (37,914)

Leeds may be a hotbed of rugby league but Elland Road's famously feisty old-school atmosphere makes it perfect for the passion and noise of a Rugby World Cup fixture. The code has been played here before – in 1992 more than 14,000 turned up to watch the newly readmitted South Africans beat a North of England XV. And while it may retain its historic charm, the venue has great vantage points and may undergo further developments between now and 2015.

Olympic Stadium (54,000)

The newest and third largest stadium in England enjoyed a spectacular start to life as a sports venue, when a worldwide audience of 900 million saw the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games. As a centrepiece of the Olympic Park in London's east end, the stadium hosted the athletics events in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Built for £500 million, the stadium has lighting pads on every seat, allowing complex light shows to be displayed. Set to host major athletics events in 2013 and 2017, the permanent future of the stadium is unclear. Local Rugby, football and cricket teams have all expressed an interest in making it their home.

Kingsholm (16,500)

Gloucester's ground has an enviable history when it comes to international Rugby. Kingsholm hosted its first Test way back in 1900, when Billy Bancroft led Wales to a 13-3 win over England. Kingsholm didn't host another international for 91 years and when it did, 12,000 fans watched world champions New Zealand score eight tries as they cruised past the USA 46-6 in RWC 1991 thanks to a hat-trick from full back Terry Wright. It was later the venue for a 2000 Rugby League World Cup match between New Zealand and Lebanon. Home to Aviva Premiership side Gloucester, Kingsholm is widely regarded as the noisiest crowd in the league, largely due to the boisterous inhabitants of The Shed stand, which was redeveloped in 2007, increasing the total capacity to 16,500.



Webb Ellis Cup

Early in 1987, a few months before the inaugural Rugby World Cup kicked off in Auckland and Sydney, the Webb Ellis Cup, a beautifully crafted trophy, stood in the vaults of the royal jewelers, Garrards, in Regent Street, London.

The cup, made in 1906 by the Garrard and Co. silversmiths was a reproduction of a trophy believed to have been made in around 1740 by one of the leading artisans of the time, Paul de Lamerie, a Huguenot silversmith. Made of sterling silver, gilded in gold, the cup is adorned by a satyr head on one of the two cast scroll handles, while the other is decorated with a nymph head. The decorative pieces include a bearded mask, lion mask and vine.

The cup was selected by the Chairman of the 1987 RWC Organising Committee, John Kendall-Carpenter and his colleague Bob Weighill, who was the Honorary Secretary of the International Rugby Board. Both felt that a Victorian, not Georgian, piece of silverware would be appropriate. The craftsmanship of the period and the beauty of the trophy would have to project the past into the present. The remaining members of that inaugural Rugby World Cup organising committee Ronnie Dawson of Ireland, Keith Rowlands of Wales, Bob Stuart of New Zealand, Ross Turnbull of Australia and the RWC Directors Dick Littlejohn of New Zealand and Nick Shehadie of Australia all agreed that this was the cup that would become one of the iconic symbols of sport.

The committee decided that the cup should be engraved 'The Webb Ellis Cup' after the Victorian schoolboy William Webb Ellis who, legend has it, in a fine disregard for the rules of association football, picked up the ball and ran with it, thus creating the Game of Rugby.

The cup commenced its march towards legend on May 22, 1987 with the RWC opening match New Zealand v Italy and acquired immortality on June 20, 1987 at Eden Park, when New Zealand captain David Kirk hoisted it in triumph above his head. Since then, the trophy has travelled the world over. It was touched by royalty and aboriginal bushmen, by maori warriors and French farmers, by African children and Canadian Mounties. It acquired personality and more significantly a symbolic value at the hands of winning captains and players. In 1995, it was given iconic status by the then South African President, Nelson Mandela, who presented it to his winning captain Francois Pienaar. Most recently, New Zealand captain Richie McCaw lifted it in front of an adoring home crowd in Eden Park after the final of RWC 2011.

The cup stands at 472mm and weighs 4.5kg.



Financing the Global Game Regional Investment Highlights

Overview

The IRB's mission statement is to grow the global family. Over the past decade Rugby participation has grown from three million to more than 6.6 million men, women and children participating in the Game across 119 Member Unions affiliated to the IRB. The driving force behind the unprecedented growth is the phenomenal success of the Rugby World Cup, which has generated the revenues for the IRB to invest in the Game.

With participation at an all-time high, in 2013 the IRB announced a further round of record investment in the Game for the period 2013-2016, to drive forward standards on and off the pitch. A core investment of approximately £184m across four years (or £46m per annum) eclipses the previous cycle's £150m by 23 per cent and is made possible by the commercial and financial success and brand strength of Rugby World Cup.

Within this investment, the IRB continues its commitment to increasing competitiveness of the elite international Game via the third phase of its Strategic Investment Programme, which sees a renewed £44m investment over four years.

Investment highlights in year one include: increased funding for player welfare programmes including anti-corruption module *Keep Rugby Onside*; new development programmes *IRB Leading Rugby* and *IRB Impact Beyond*; the continued success of mass-participation programme *IRB Get Into Rugby*; expansion of the IRB Women's Sevens World Series; increased major market funding for Brazil; and a record 35 countries benefitting from subsidised men's Fifteens (cross-region) international fixtures.

IRB Chairman Bernard Lapasset said: "Rugby continues to grow across every continent despite the challenging global economic climate and the IRB is committed to ensuring that the sport, through its two disciplines of Fifteens and Sevens, has the foundations from which to further prosper and reach out to new markets and participants, while keeping our base strong"

New Union Strategic Development Programme developed

The IRB Development staff completed 35 major reviews of Unions in the past 12 months and as a result, we have developed a clear insight of Unions and the issues impacting on them. This will lead to the introduction of a new Union Strategic Development Programme to provide training and targeted support to Member Unions in developing their Rugby plans and programmes. The key elements of the programme will cover strategic planning, governance, leadership, technical and financial expertise and support.

Who are the regions?

There are now more than 6.6 million men, women and children playing the Game globally within the six IRB regional associations:

- Asia: Asian Rugby Football Union (ARFU) 16 Full Member Unions, seven Associate Member Unions

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- Africa: Confédération Africaine de Rugby (CAR), 16 Full Member Unions, seven Associate Member Unions
- Europe: Fédération Internationale de Rugby Amateur – Association Européenne de Rugby (FIRA-AER), 38 Full Member Unions, two Associate Member Unions
- North America: North America Caribbean Rugby Association (NACRA), 11 Full Member Unions, two Associate Member Unions
- Oceania: Federation of Oceania Rugby Unions (FORU), 12 Full Member Unions
- South America: Confederacion Sudamericana de Rugby (CONSUR), eight Member Unions

What is the level of IRB's support of the regions?

The IRB, working in close partnership with regional associations and IRB regional staff, invests significant resources to develop and expand Rugby globally. The IRB supports an extensive range of initiatives including training, education and administration programmes operated by our Member Unions and regions.

Here are the priorities:

- The IRB ensures that all regions have a robust and dynamic strategic plan in place to maximize the benefit of global growth and appetite for participation.
- Create new partnerships with national Olympic associations and Unions in each region to maximize the benefit of Olympic Games inclusion ahead of Rugby Sevens Olympic Games debut in Rio de Janeiro 2016.
- Ensure growth at both elite and **community Rugby levels and in particular in women's Rugby guided by the IRB Women's Rugby Plan.**
- Administer and promote strategic competitions to increase global competitiveness.
- Provide support, resources and programmes to our member Unions and allow them to grow the Game globally.

Region by region

ASIA

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £10.1 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions, including HSBC Asian 5 Nations, ARFU Senior Women's Fifteens, ARFU Men's and Women's Sevens Series and Asia-Pacific Women's Sevens, ARFU Men's Junior Fifteens.

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes Asia hosting of the IRB Junior World Rugby Trophy (Hong Kong), three legs of the HSBC Sevens World Series (Dubai, Hong Kong and Tokyo), two legs of the IRB Women's Sevens World Series (Dubai, Guang Zhou) and the Asian Games (Korea) while Nanjing in China will host the 2014 Youth Olympic Games.

Investment Highlights: With the formation of the UAERA and a strengthening of Rugby in West Asia, the Game is really on the rise throughout the Middle East. Dubai is really the epicentre of that progress with the IRB assisting in the funding of the Emirates Airline Cup of Nations tournament, which took place at the world-class The Sevens Rugby Ground in late 2011 involving the UAE, Brazil, Hong Kong and Kenya in a very successful event that was televised live around the world. Progress is also being made in India and China – two exciting markets that offer

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plenty of potential growth – as well as Asia's more traditionally strong nations, including Japan, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan and Korea.

AFRICA

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £7.8 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions, including **CAR Africa Cup, CAR Men's and Women's Sevens, CAR Under 19s.**

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes Africa hosting one leg of the HSBC Sevens World Series (South Africa) and the 2014 African Youth Games (Botswana).

Investment Highlights: For Africa, investment has been focused on strategy and ensuring the right operational plans and competition models are in place throughout the region. This three-pronged approach will ensure Africa is in the best possible position to optimise the benefits of **Rugby's Olympic** inclusion and will provide the blueprint for accelerated growth in both existing and emerging Rugby markets throughout the continent.

EUROPE

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £27.3 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions, including IRB Nations Cup, IRB Tbilisi Cup, FIRA-AER European Nations Cup and Women's European Trophy, FIRA-AER Men's Sevens Series and Women's Sevens European Championship, FIRA-AER Men's U20s, U19s and U18s

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes Europe hosting the IRB Women's Rugby World Cup 2014 (France), two legs of the HSBC Sevens World Series (Glasgow, London) and one leg of the IRB Women's Sevens World Series (Amsterdam), while Russia was also the host for the IRB Rugby World Cup Sevens 2013, France hosted the IRB Junior World Championship 2013 and Scotland will host the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Investment Highlights: With 40 Member Unions and around 56 per cent of the world's playing population but only 11 per cent of its population, Europe remains the Game's biggest region. But that's not to say it isn't still growing. The IRB Training and Education Support scheme (TES) has supported many regional and national initiatives across Europe with around 2,000 coaches and 500 match officials having recently completed courses, figures that doubled the previous numbers.

NORTH AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £12.8 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions: IRB America's Rugby Championship, Canadian Rugby Championship, NACRA Men's Fifteens, NACRA Men's and Women's Sevens, NACRA Men's Under 19s.

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes North America hosting one pool of the IRB Pacific Nations Cup (USA/Canada), one leg of the HSBC Sevens World Series (Las Vegas), one leg of the IRB Women's Sevens World Series (Atlanta) and the 2014 CACSO Games (Mexico).

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Investment Highlights: NACRA is a strategically important region for the IRB. In the USA, Rugby is the fastest growing team sport, while both USA and Canada have experienced significant **benefits of Rugby Sevens' Olympic Games inclusion with greater access to their respective National Olympic Committees.** Live NBC network coverage of Rugby World Cup 2011 boosted awareness and appeal in the US, where more than 500,000 children have participated in the Rookie Rugby programme. In Canada, the event returned to network television achieving record TV figures.

The IRB provides significant support for all 11 Member Unions in the NACRA Region, including **assistance for Canada and USA's November Tests in Europe. The IRB's Major Markets Fund has stimulated growth in Unions such as Mexico.**

OCEANIA

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £17 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions: IRB Pacific Nations Cup, IRB Pacific Rugby Cup, FORU Oceania Cup, FORU Oceania Under 19s Championship, FORU Oceania Sevens Championship.

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes Oceania hosting the IRB Junior World Championship 2014 (New Zealand) and two legs of the HSBC Sevens World Series (Gold Coast, Wellington)

SOUTH AMERICA

The total IRB direct investment* forecast for 2013-16 is £7.4 million.

Direct investment includes IRB-subsidised competitions: **CONSUR Senior Men's Fifteens, CONSUR Men's and Women's Sevens, CONSUR Under 19s Championship.**

Additional indirect investment in 2014 includes South America hosting one leg of the IRB **Women's Sevens World Series (Sao Paulo) and the South American Games (Chile),** while Chile was also the host for the IRB Junior World Rugby Trophy 2013 and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil will host the 2016 Olympic Games.

Investment Highlights: CONSUR is already looking towards Rio 2016 as Rugby makes its long-awaited return to the Olympic Games programme. The regional Sevens tournament took place in the iconic Brazilian city in 2012 and 2013. That regional Sevens tournament featured Guatamala and Ecuador for the first time in an event that also includes an eight-**team women's section.**

The UAR High Performance Programme continues to go from strength to strength, providing high **level equipment and facilities for Argentina's elite players. Argentina's inclusion in the revamped Rugby Championship** is a hugely exciting development for Rugby in South America.

*Investment via development, tournament and strategic initiatives (high performance) investment programmes.



About England Rugby 2015 Ltd

England Rugby 2015 (ER 2015) is the tournament organiser for Rugby World Cup 2015 and is responsible for the delivery of Rugby World Cup 2015, working in partnership with tournament owner, Rugby World Cup Limited (RWCL).

ER 2015 has set out its vision for Rugby World Cup 2015, outlining the tournament as a celebration of Rugby and its unique values, exciting and inspiring our nation and the world to play and support the Game. The tournament vision is underpinned by a clear promise – to welcome the world to Rugby, and to England.

In 2015, it is expected that more than 400,000 international visitors will travel to the UK for Rugby World Cup, highlighting the huge global interest in the tournament while allowing England to showcase its towns, cities and tourist attractions. The 48 games of Rugby will be hosted in 13 venues across the England and in Cardiff, giving a vast number of local communities access to the tournament, the Game and its core values.

Join the Front Row:

For all the latest Rugby World Cup 2015 news and information, including details on tickets and how to volunteer, Join The Front Row - and receive the official tournament newsletter. Sign up at www.rugbyworldcup.com/frontrow.

Media enquiries:

For more information on ER 2015 contact Communications Manager Laura Brown laurabrown@er2015.com / +44 (0) 754 560 2718.

Register with ER 2015 press office here: http://www.sotic.co.uk/england_2015.php.

Rugby World Cup 2015 Match Venues and Capacities:

Brighton Community Stadium, Brighton & Hove – 30,750

Manchester City Stadium, Manchester – 47,800

Elland Road, Leeds – 37,914

Kingsholm Stadium, Gloucester – 16,115

Leicester City Stadium, Leicester – 32,312

Millennium Stadium, Cardiff – 74,154

Olympic Stadium, London – 54,000

Sandy Park, Exeter – 12,300

Stadium MK, Milton Keynes – 30,717

St James' Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne – 52,409

Twickenham Stadium, London – 81,605

Villa Park, Birmingham – 42,785

Wembley Stadium, London – 90,256

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