



Sport History

Rugby Sevens

Origins and the sport today:

The inventor of rugby sevens is believed to be Ned HAIG, a rugby-playing butcher's apprentice. In 1883, Melrose Rugby Football Club in Scotland was looking to raise money and HAIG proposed cutting team members and reducing playing time, enabling more matches on a single day – the Melrose Sevens is still a prestigious tournament.

Interest in the sport developed quickly, with early matches reported in Nelson, New Zealand. By 1921, international club tournaments were held in England and Buenos Aires, Argentina, while the Middlesex Sevens and Rosslyn Park School Sevens in England were founded in 1926 and 1937 respectively.

In 1973, the Scottish Rugby Union celebrated its centenary by hosting the first international sevens tournament, with England beating Ireland in the final. But a major stepping stone towards global recognition was the establishment of the Hong Kong Sevens in 1976. Today, the HSBC Sevens Series takes the sport around the world, to the likes of Dubai, Cape Town, Las Vegas and Vancouver. With its own World Cup, sevens has become a major sporting player in terms of attendance and global TV coverage.

Rugby sevens at the Commonwealth Games:

Rugby sevens is one of 10 core sports at the Commonwealth Games, meaning it has to be included in the program. The other nine are: aquatics (diving and swimming), athletics, badminton, boxing, hockey, lawn bowls, netball, squash and weightlifting.

The men's rugby sevens has been part of the Commonwealth Games since Kuala Lumpur 1998. In those five competitions, New Zealand won four consecutive gold medals, before finally being defeated in the gold medal match of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games – South Africa won 17-12 at Ibrox Stadium.

Fiji has won two Commonwealth Games silvers and one bronze, Australia one silver and two bronze, South Africa one gold and two bronze, and England one silver.

Made a core sport by the Commonwealth Games Federation in 2010, several famous faces from the world of rugby have graced sevens at the Games. New Zealander Jonah LOMU was man of the match in the Kuala Lumpur 1998 final, while the likes of Australians David CAMPESE and Tevita KURIDRANI, New Zealander Mils MULIAINA, and England's Henry PAUL and Danny CARE have also appeared at the Commonwealth Games.

Gold Coast 2018 is hosting a women's rugby sevens event for the first time, with both men's and women's competitions making Olympic debuts at the Rio 2016 Games.

Rugby sevens in Australia:

While Australia has always been a strong competitor in the sevens arena, the men's team has struggled to secure major titles. Two defeats in World Cup finals (1993, 2001), a silver at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games, and a quarterfinal exit at Rio 2016 (Olympics) tell a tale of unfulfilled potential.

Famous Australian names in the sport include James STANNARD, who competed at Rio 2016 and won the 2010 Australian Sevens Player of the Year award. He previously played Super Rugby for the Brumbies and Western Force. Jarryd HAYNE, who has played rugby union, rugby league and American football, also hit the headlines in 2016 when



Robina Stadium (ROB)

Rugby Sevens



he made his sevens rugby debut for Fiji. However, after being selected for the initial 23-member training squad for the Olympics, he missed the final cut.

The Australian women's sevens team has been a major success story, winning the inaugural Sevens World Cup in 2009, as well as taking gold at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Names such as Charlotte CASLICK, Ellia GREEN and Emma TONEGATO are taking the game's popularity to new heights.

Head coach Tim WALSH is also a high-profile rugby name – he is a former captain of the men's Australian sevens team.