



## INFORMATION PAGE

Week of August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011

### 1 THE PICTURE

No stories came in of strange playing surfaces or unusual fields that you've played on, so I'll share a story of my own.

In the weeks before a snow-rugby tournament in Regina, Saskatchewan one January, the region had gone through weeks of warm days, then cold nights. Each the surface of the deep snow would melt a little, then freeze at night. Add in a few snowfalls, and the result was a hard 15cm (6inch) crust on top of .8m (3 ft) of snow. The little jackrabbit backs could race along at full speed on the crust as anyone with a proper appetite crashed through, stumbling forward like a badly animated Godzilla.

Blake Morden (pictured above-definitely in the "crashes through the snow" category) stomped forward to make a tackle and on his last step shockingly did NOT break through (an unusually thick spot of crust), so he sprang forward like a murderous, if slightly bewildered, bullfrog. He was surprised by his unexpected velocity, but not as much as the poor youngster that received, instead of the usual slow-speed, clumsy grapple that is tackling in snow rugby, a high impact collision that drove both of them so deep into the snow that only boots emerged. The youngster decided to go get a hot chocolate and for Blake's penance he had to play with the opposition as a replacement.

I used to love diving for tries in snow rugby, until that year in Regina, when I didn't even dent the crust on one particular swannish dive. Like landing in a parking lot. I dropped the ball but the ref awarded a penalty try against the ground for being unsportsmanlike.

I'd still welcome any tales of yours!

### 2 IRB PASSPORT.COM

*For those that have not checked out IRB Passport.com, I recommend that you give it a go. Below is more information from the IRB on this resource:*

IRB Passport is the system by which the IRB registers and accredits everyone involved in the Game - from online users through to accredited coaches and referees.

We've now launched a new discussion forum with the aim of providing a platform for everyone involved in IRB Training and Education to come together to ask, chat, help each other and share ideas.

Naturally we're hoping that our Trainers and Educators can play a key role in helping the forums to gain momentum. Please do visit the forum to see if anyone has raised an issue you can help with, and do feel free to start a discussion yourself.

There are also dedicated private Trainer and Educator forums, where we invite you to share ideas and discuss your roles. These forums can only be seen by accredited IRB Trainers and Educators.

Remember - if you're already registered on an IRB Passport site, as most of you are (Rugby Ready, Laws of the Game, Player Welfare or Passport itself) you don't need to register again. One login gives you access to all these online resources.

Visit the forums now at [www.irbpassport.com/forums](http://www.irbpassport.com/forums)

If you have any technical problems accessing the new site please email [help@irbpassport.com](mailto:help@irbpassport.com) where our dedicated support team will be happy to help.

### **3 NACRA STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE AND AGM**

The North America Caribbean Rugby Association held a Strategic Planning workshop and Annual General Meeting in Miami over the weekend (forcing all involved to track the USA-Canada match through Twitter updates).

Representatives from NACRA's member Unions spent two days developing a multi-year strategic plan for the region, building on the lessons and accomplishments from the 2008-11 Plan. Once the new Strategic Plan document has been completed and approved I'll make it available.

The meeting was attended by reps from two new NACRA Associate Member countries- Curacao and Turks & Caicos Islands. Congratulations to both of them on their rapid growth and best wishes for continued progress.

Kit Nascimento announced that he will be retiring as the head of the Guyana Rugby Union, so this would be his last NACRA AGM. Kit has been involved in leading and organizing rugby before the drop-kick was invented, and has served as an Executive member, President or Chair of many rugby organizations, including NAWIRA, West Indies Rugby Union, and has been the region's representative to the IRB Council. He was also a key promoter, fundraiser and manager of the West Indies 7s team.

While Kit might be passing the mantle over to new leadership in Guyana, I hope and anticipate that he will continue in his support and dedication to progressing the sport that he so clearly loves.

The AGM determined the NACRA Executive Committee: Bob Latham-Chair (USA), Pearse Higgins (Canada), Miguel Carner (Mexico), and the category C members elected their representatives- George Nicholson (Barbados) and Dennis Dwyer (Bermuda). Pearse announced that he was resigning his post as the region's representative to the IRB, a role which he has performed with intelligence and careful consideration according to all involved, including Mark Egan, IRB Head of Development and Performance, who attended the planning workshop and AGM. Bob Latham was elected to replace Pearse as the Region's representative to the IRB Council.

### **4 HOW THE GAME HAS CHANGED!**

With the recent tri-nations taking place I went looking for some older Bledisloe Cup matches to watch on-line. I found a link on Youtube to a 1984 match between NZ and Australia at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH4cB4-cEAM&feature=related>. The lost possession as feet knocked the ball about at rucks reminded me of how we used to practice lifting our feet over the ball as all the forwards cleared over the ruck (the

attitude of the day was that a forward waiting in the backs had better be injured). Check out the chaotic nature of the old scrums and lineouts!

## 5 IRB PARTNERSHIP WITH TEAMER

*If you're registered on-line with the IRB then you've probably already received this announcement about the IRB's partnership Teamer.net. In some unions and clubs texting is a vital means of communication. Maybe Teamer.net can help!*

### **Dear Rugby Coach,**

Organising and notifying team events, gathering player availability, and general team admin can be a real drag on time and resources. It doesn't have to be a hassle however, and we would like to introduce you to a great tool to help you save time and make your life as a coach easier.

Teamer.net is an online team management service, it's completely free to use, and that includes FREE text messaging to your team. Teamer.net is now solving the problems of more than 50,000 team organisers every week (that's more than 800,000 players), saving team organisers hours every week as well as completely eliminating the costs of contacting their teams. Teamer has just launched the service in Canada.

*This is why you should give Teamer a try:*

- There is no charge to use Teamer (that's old fashioned free, no catch - it's sponsor funded)
- Notify players of events with unlimited free txts/emails
- Player availability responses (sms or e-mail) are captured in one place on your teampage
- One-click-cancellation of an event from web/mobile to players' phones and e-mail addresses
- Attendance tracking - Players attendance at training and events is recorded automatically after each event
- Appoint co-organisers - share the burden across the coaching team
- Private and secure team pages - includes player profiles, match reports, photo gallery and team blog
- This is the website - [www.teamer.net](http://www.teamer.net) where there is a 2 minute demo . The guys at Teamer operate a help desk 20 hours a day, so if you have any questions, you can contact them at [help@teamer.net](mailto:help@teamer.net)

## 6 USA RUGBY PARTNERSHIP WITH SPORTS AUTHORITY

Sports Authority and USA Rugby are excited to announce a new program that will launch on August 2 aimed at enabling educators to encourage their kids to pick up the ball and run with it. The "Ball for All Schools" program provides educators with a FREE Rookie Rugby ball and access to great resources like lesson plans, instructional videos and much more in order to introduce the newest Olympic sport to their students. USA Rugby CEO Nigel Melville praises the partnership, "This is an exciting initiative for the development of the game of rugby across America. It will provide thousands of children the opportunity to experience the latest Olympic sport of rugby for the very first time."

Educators can sign up for the program and receive their ball and free Rookie Rugby resources by visiting <http://ballforallschools.usarugby.org/>

## **ABOUT THE 'BALL FOR ALL SCHOOLS' PROGRAM**

Any educator can get involved with the Ball for All Schools program; all you need is basic information to verify a relationship with a school and submit that information at <http://ballforallschools.usarugby.org/>. A Rookie Rugby ball will ship almost immediately after registration.

This program was made possible through the generosity of Sports Authority, who will supply rugby balls to educators that enrol in the Ball for All Schools program.

### **\$25 DISCOUNT AT SPORTS AUTHORITY**

Members of USA Rugby will receive special discounts and coupons from Sports Authority. A percentage of purchases made with those special coupons will go into a fund to replenish the supply of rugby balls for the program. To take advantage of one of these special discounts immediately print the attached coupon for \$25 off your next purchase at Sports Authority.

### **WHAT IS ROOKIE RUGBY?**

Rookie Rugby is a safe non-contact version of the game developed by USA Rugby designed for students of all ages. All that is required to play is a rugby ball and space to run.

USA Rugby offers a plethora of easy-to-understand drills, resources, and games that any educator can include in their unit plans, lesson plans, and curriculum.

The sport of rugby, at all levels, encourages fitness, inclusion, camaraderie and most of all enjoyment. All players can run, pass, and score. By the nature of the game, rugby encourages selflessness, communication, cooperation and respect.

### **WHY RUGBY?**

Rugby is the embodiment of Olympism. Tolerance, solidarity, respect for others, fair play, equality, non-discrimination, taking part, friendship and character development are inherent in the sport that will once again take the Olympic stage in Rio 2016.

Sports Authority and USA Rugby are dedicated to help Team USA vie for Olympic gold in those games, and today's youth are tomorrow's rugby Olympians.

A study by the World's Sporting Goods Manufacturers stated that kids are three to four times more likely to play a sport they learned in P.E. As such, implementing Rookie Rugby in schools allows students to understand the game and introduce them to an Olympic sport they may want to pursue.

For more detailed information about the program please contact Ian Jaray at [youth@usarugby.org](mailto:youth@usarugby.org) or 303-539-0300 (x 105).

**Actively yours**

*Scott Harland*

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[www.nacrugby.com](http://www.nacrugby.com)



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