



**Jardine Fleming
Unit Trusts**

WOMEN'S RUGBY



HONG KONG 1997

Hong Kong Invitation Women's Rugby Sevens

Arabian Gulf • Australia • Canada • England • Fiji • Holland • Hong Kong • Japan • New Zealand • Scotland • Singapore • USA

ABERDEEN STADIUM

MARCH 15-16, 1997

Souvenir programme



WOMEN'S RUGBY



Welcome message from the HKIWRS Chairwoman

On behalf of everyone on the HKIWRS committee may I extend a warm welcome to players and spectators attending the inaugural Hong Kong Invitation Women's Rugby Sevens.

A year ago the concept of hosting an international sevens tournament seemed a daunting task to the HKIWRS committee. However, with hard work and a lot of dedication the preparation has finally come to an end and we can now look forward to two days of action-packed sevens rugby.

Twelve nations will be participating in this event which will consist of two pools. No preliminary grading has been undertaken for the inaugural year of the tournament enabling all competing teams an equal opportunity to head for the bowl, plate and cup competitions.

Singapore, Fiji and Hong Kong enter into the international arena for the first time and we wish them luck. No doubt we will see some exciting games from the newcomers as well as from the established rugby nations that are competing.

1997 is an historic year for Hong Kong and it gives me great pleasure to host the inaugural HKIWRS tournament at this memorable time. I hope this event will become part of the sevens tradition that is synonymous with Hong Kong.

I would like to thank the HKRFU for its wonderful support over the past year and for allowing us the opportunity to host this tournament. Thanks also to our sponsors and in particular to Jardine Fleming Unit Trusts for making the event possible.

And finally, my gratitude goes to the committee, all avid rugby players, for their ceaseless enthusiasm and dedication to the tournament. You will have a chance to see the committee in action in an exhibition game on Sunday 16th March against a combined development team representing China and Hong Kong.

I hope that you all enjoy the tournament and will return again next year.

Maria Allan

Maria Allan
Chairwoman
HKIWRS





Women Rock Hong Kong Rugby



*A*t this time of year Hong Kong goes Sevens crazy, and no more fitting a stage could be found to host the world's first ever international rugby sevens tournament for women. And, although rugby is still relatively new to the women of Hong Kong, most of the players first muddied their boots in the sevens tradition.

The Hong Kong Invitation Women's Rugby Sevens (HKIWRS) is a reflection of the speed at which the sport for women has taken off in the territory. From proposal to kick off, the event has come together in just 15 months — that's quite an achievement in a place where women's rugby only started seven years ago.

Once the domain of expatriate men, rugby in Hong Kong has recently branched out to welcome players from all walks of society through its development programmes, including local players, women and children. Full-contact women's rugby started informally in 1990 when former tackle players living in the territory along with local players from the thriving touch rugby league started training together once a week. Great fun was had by all, the only problem being that there was no opposition.

*B*RING ON THE BOYS

To add some spice to the players' lives, local schoolboy teams fielded sides against the women during the 1991-92 season. Though the games were friendly, in that there was no league structure, there was a certain amount of honour at stake for both sexes.

By the 1992-93 season, the ranks of female players had swelled sufficiently to warrant a league of their own. The first league was formed of seven-a-side teams, mainly because there were still relatively few players. That first season the ladies divided up to form seven teams and started recruiting players at every opportunity — in bars, at work, co-opting friends and flatmates. With the support of the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union (HKRFU), the league got off to a flying start with the teams playing all their matches on a dedicated pitch each Saturday.





Photos courtesy of Maire Semple

GOING PUBLIC

Buoyed by the addition of two new teams to the league for the 1993-94 season, women's rugby moved from strength to strength, overcoming hurdles including preconceptions from the men in the game. Impressed by the ladies efforts, the HKRFU granted the women's games the opening slot on the same pitches as the men's leagues. Apprehensive at the prospect of playing in front of larger and more critical crowds, and at the same time thrilled to be taken seriously, the women soon transformed the spectators from sceptic bystanders expecting half an hour's comic entertainment to avid supporters rooting for their clubs.

With the arrival of yet more teams in the third season, it was time to split into two divisions. Still playing seven-a-side rugby, the first division consisted of experienced teams, while the second was filled with development teams, including schoolgirls. In only its third 'official' year, women's rugby was being taken seriously. So seriously, in fact, that for the first time in the history of the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens a women's demonstration game was scheduled on the Saturday morning. It was a huge hit and has been a popular addition to the renowned Sevens tournament ever since.

The 1995-96 season saw enough players to launch a 10-a-side league, in addition to the second division where sevens was still the game. This move towards a game that allows forwards to shine as well backs was overwhelmingly welcomed by Hong Kong women. So much so, that by the end of the season Hong Kong saw the formation of its first ever national women's 15-a-side team and a successful tour to play club sides in Japan.

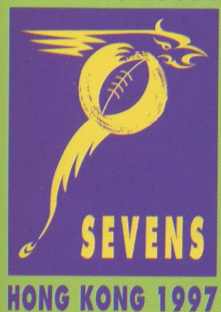
Today the first division still plays 10s rugby, mainly due to the relatively small number of players. However, with a pool of more than 200 players, that is constantly growing who knows what the future will bring for women's rugby in Hong Kong.

The HKIWRS tournament is the Hong Kong team's first foray into the full international rugby arena. We wish them and all the visitors a competitive and enjoyable event.

Red Rugby

To promote the development of rugby in mainland China, Hong Kong's DeA Rugby Club with the support of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, Meads Capital Partners and H.Y.C.B Holdings has established links with the Guangzhou Agricultural University. Each week the club Coach travels across the border to train women players. Up to 12 ladies attend each session and the response has been outstanding from the women who are both keen and athletic, but struggle to understand the concept of the game due to a lack of exposure to real match environments.

In the middle of February 1997 this development program finally bore fruit when the Hong Kong Women's Colts team travelled to China to play a few matches. The initiative does not stop here. Future plans are also under way to further increase the exposure of the game by inviting the University Students to participate in the Hong Kong league.



Pool A

Japan
Holland
Australia
England
Canada
New Zealand



Pool B

Fiji
Singapore
USA
Scotland
Arabian Gulf
Hong Kong

Saturday 15th March

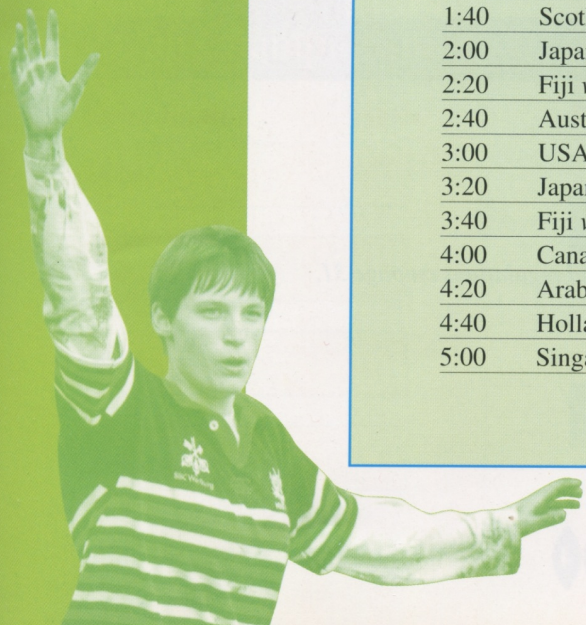
9:00	Japan vs New Zealand
9:20	Fiji vs Hong Kong
9:40	Australia vs England
10:00	USA vs Scotland
10:20	Holland vs Canada
10:40	Singapore vs Arabian Gulf
11:00	Australia vs New Zealand
11:20	USA vs Hong Kong
11:40	Holland vs England
12:00	LUNCH
12:20	Singapore vs Scotland
12:40	Japan vs Canada
1:00	Fiji vs Arabian Gulf
1:20	England vs New Zealand
1:40	Scotland vs Hong Kong
2:00	Japan vs Holland
2:20	Fiji vs Singapore
2:40	Australia vs Canada
3:00	USA vs Arabian Gulf
3:20	Japan vs England
3:40	Fiji vs Scotland
4:00	Canada vs New Zealand
4:20	Arabian Gulf vs Hong Kong
4:40	Holland vs Australia
5:00	Singapore vs USA

Sunday 16th March

9:00	England vs Canada
9:20	Scotland vs Arabian Gulf
9:40	Japan vs Australia
10:00	Fiji vs USA
10:20	Holland vs New Zealand
10:40	Singapore vs Hong Kong
11:00	Mini rugby
11:30	HKIWRS committee vs HK/China development team
12:30	LUNCH
1:00	Bowl Semi Final 1
1:20	Bowl Semi Final 2
1:40	Plate Semi Final 1
2:00	Plate Semi Final 2
2:20	Cup Semi Final 1
2:40	Cup Semi Final 2

Finals

3:30	Bowl Final
4:00	Plate Final
4:30	Cup Final
5:00	Presentation Ceremony





ScoreSheet

SCORESHEET

Pool A

	Japan	Holland	Australia	England	Canada	New Zealand	F	A	Pts
Japan		0-41	7-46	12-41	5-36	0-54	27 17	218 170	0
Holland	41-0		0-43	0-29	0-31	0-38	41	141 103	3
Australia	46-7	43-0		7-10	24-5	0-29	120 74	51 44	9 6
England	41-12	29-0	10-7		10-5	0-26	90 80	50 45	12 9
Canada	36-5	31-0	5-24	5-10		0-41	77 72	80 70	6
New Zealand	54-0	38-0	29-0	26-0	41-0		188 150	0 0	15 12

Pool B

	Fiji	Singapore	USA	Scotland	Arabian Gulf	Hong Kong	F	A	Pts
3 Fiji		53-0	0-29	12-12	15-17	5-12	85	120 94	4 4
6 Singapore	0-53		0-53	0-44	0-42	0-41	0	233 192	0
1 USA	29-0	53-0		26-5	43-0	10-7	161 132	12 12	15 12
3 Scotland	12-12	44-0	5-26		43-0	5-26	109 66	64	7 4
0 Arabian Gulf	17-15	42-0	0-43	0-43		5-21	64	122 79	6
2 Hong Kong	12-5	41-0	7-10	26-5	21-5		107 66	25	9

Scoring Win 3 points
Draw 1 point

For more details, see tournament rules and regulations on page 31.

