

Asian 5 Nations Press Releases 2011

Contents

NOTE: Press Releases are in chronological order

- 1) HSBC Extends Commitment to Asian Rugby with HSBC Asian 5 Nations Renewal and New HSBC Asian Sevens Series – Page 2
- 2) RUGBY LEGENDS JONAH LOMU AND JOHN KIRWAN LAUNCH
2011 HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR Page 4
- 3) HSBC PENGUINS SPREAD THE WORD OF RUGBY Page 7
- 4) SRI LANKA FACE UAE IN HSBC ASIAN 5 NATIONS OPENER Page 10
- 5) HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR EMBRACES COLOMBO Page 13
- 6) HONG KONG HOST JAPAN IN HSBC ASIAN 5 NATIONS Page 17
- 7) KIRWAN INSPIRES YOUNGSTERS AS HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR RETURNS TO HONG KONG Page 19
- 8) KIRWAN, HADDEN TAKE HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR TO SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BANGPOO Page 22
- 9) 'WOW' FACTOR AS SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE KIDS WATCH THAILAND ... AND CELEBRITIES Page 26
- 10) KIRWAN, HADDEN LIFT KIDS IN DUBAI AS HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR GOES INDOORS Page 29

Wednesday, 19 Jan 2011

HSBC Extends Commitment to Asian Rugby with HSBC Asian 5 Nations Renewal and New HSBC Asian Sevens Series

HSBC and Asian Rugby Football Union (ARFU) today announced the continuation of their partnership in support of the HSBC Asian 5 Nations (HSBC A5N), Asia's premier fifteen aside rugby competition. HSBC and ARFU also today announced the inception of a new rugby property, the HSBC Asian Sevens Series. Both sponsorships will run for the next three years from 2011 – 2013.

Speaking on today's double announcement, Mark McCombe, CEO of HSBC Hong Kong said, "Today is another important day for HSBC as we cement our commitment to developing rugby in Asia through both the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and the HSBC Asian Sevens Series. The HSBC Asian 5 Nations has grown massively since its inception and is increasing in popularity around the region. By investing in the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series, in addition to the HSBC Sevens World Series, we aim to encourage more people to become involved with rugby union through the shortened form of the game in the build up to the 2016 Olympic Games."

Alongside the HSBC A5N, the HSBC Asian Sevens will extend ARFU's international rugby footprint from April through November each season. The 2011 HSBC A5N Top 5 will again be held on consecutive weekends from 23 April to 21 May. Although identified by the elite Top 5 competition, HSBC A5N offers international competition or development support for all eligible ARFU unions. Outside of the Top 5, the tournament features five divisions, (up from four in 2010), offering test match rugby for 25 ARFU teams this season.

The HSBC Asian Sevens Series consists of four events in 2011, with two ranking events, the Shanghai and Borneo Sevens, staged in September 2011. Two other events will be held in Thailand and India next year. The ARFU international window for sevens competition runs from September through November. The rankings will be used to determine eligible spots for invitations to HSBC Sevens World Series tournaments including the Hong Kong Sevens, as well as potentially serving as qualifiers for multi-sport competitions such as the Asian and Olympic Games.

One constant for the coming years will be the commitment by both HSBC and ARFU to introducing rugby to new audiences through a Coaching Tour. This concept, first launched last year in conjunction with the HSBC Penguins International Coaching Academy, offered youth rugby clinics for over 3,000 youth across 10 countries in 2010. HSBC and ARFU are committed to growing this programme in the year ahead.

Giles Morgan, Group Head of Sponsorship for HSBC Holdings, explained the reason the bank continues to invest in rugby. "Quite simply, rugby union works for HSBC in terms of enabling HSBC to communicate directly with so many target customers in key regions around the world. Rugby union shares many of the same values as HSBC as the world's local bank – bringing together people from different cultures and communities with a shared passion, and it has proved to be a successful fit for our business.

"At the heart of every HSBC sponsorship is a commitment to the local community and the HSBC Asian 5 Nations in particular has a major community programme integrated with the sponsorship. To ensure a legacy, as well as coaching children, adults involved in this year's coaching tour will be trained to IRB Level One enabling them to continue teaching youngsters to play the game in future years. It is the biggest investment in the growth of the sport of its kind in Asia."

HSBC and Rugby

HSBC is a long-term investor in rugby in Asia and around the world. As well as being the title sponsor of the Sevens World Series, Asian 5 Nations and new Asian Sevens Series, the bank is the Principal Partner of the British and Irish Lions, who will play for the first time in Hong Kong in 2013 en route to Australia. HSBC is also the title sponsor of the Waratahs Super 15 team, the Penguin International Coaching Academy and the Cobra 10s tournament in Malaysia.

Asian Rugby Football Union (ARFU)

AFRU was founded in 1968 and today has member unions ranging from Kazakhstan in the north to Indonesia in the south and Lebanon in the west to Guam in the east. ARFU is the sanctioning body for the HSBC Asian Five Nations, which every four years acts as the qualifying event for the Rugby World Cup, and the Asian Sevens Series, which will be held for the first time in 2011.

HK Society for the Protection of Children

Founded in 1926, the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children (HKSPC) is a Hong Kong-based charity with 27 centres across Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. HKSPC cares for children from newborn to 16-year-olds providing a stimulating environment in which to educate them and nurture their growth and development.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour

HSBC and ARFU are once again running a multi-country grassroots coaching tour that runs parallel to the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and also alongside the HSBC Asian Sevens Series later this year. Led by Japan coach John Kirwan, former Scotland coach Frank Hadden and the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy, the programme will involve thousands of children, many of whom will be taught rugby for the first time. The programme will also leave a legacy through the donation of rugby kit and equipment to youngsters across Asia, as well as a Coach Education programme which ensures rugby can continue to be taught in coming years.



23 March 2011

RUGBY LEGENDS JONAH LOMU AND JOHN KIRWAN LAUNCH

2011 HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR

New Zealand rugby legends Jonah Lomu and John Kirwan were the star attractions as this year's 15-stop HSBC ARFU (Asian Rugby Football Union) Rugby Coaching Tour launched in Hong Kong on Wednesday, 23 March 2011.

The Coaching Tour will engage thousands of children in Asia and introduce them to rugby, while HSBC will provide coach education, kit and equipment to ensure a sustainable legacy is left within each community.

From April to June, the Coaching Tour will visit many of the host venues for this year's HSBC Asian 5 Nations tournament, including Top Five competitors Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Hong Kong, UAE and Japan, as well as Korea and Thailand, which will host Divisions I and II respectively. The tour is set to visit Macau in June.

Following activities over the summer, clinics will then be held in host nations on the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series starting with China and Malaysia in September, then Thailand in October and India in November.

Peter Wong, Chief Executive of HSBC Asia-Pacific, said: "The Coaching Tour will sit hand in hand with our title sponsorship of the HSBC Asian 5 Nations - Asia's leading international rugby tournament - and the newly formed HSBC Asian Sevens Series. We have a longstanding commitment to working with ARFU to help grow the sport in the region and this is a clear illustration of that commitment."

Lomu and Kirwan headed a coaching clinic for youngsters from the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children (HKSPC) and the Qingdao Sharks Rugby Football Club from China.

Lomu was a popular figure upon his return to the SAR, where the giant winger burst onto the international stage in the 1994 Hong Kong Sevens before establishing himself as rugby's biggest superstar with 37 tries in 63 tests, including 15 in two Rugby World Cups, a record that still stands today.

"It has been an amazing day and very rewarding. The HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour is a great initiative and I'm honoured to be part of this year's launch," said 35-year-old Lomu, HSBC's special guest for the day.

"Rugby is a fantastic way of introducing many important values and life skills such as team work, healthy living and communication, so it is a really positive thing that kids have embraced rugby so quickly."

Kirwan, an HSBC Rugby Ambassador, will take an active role in this year's HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour alongside former Scotland coach Frank Hadden. Kirwan will also be bidding to lead Japan to a fourth successive HSBC Asian 5 Nations title, a campaign that starts with an away match against Hong Kong next month.

"In initiating this year's coaching tour, HSBC and ARFU are taking another important stride in growing the game throughout the region. As a coach and as an ambassador for HSBC and for the game, I am passionate about the development of rugby at all levels. This coaching tour, which starts at the grassroots

of the game and will also involve working with some of the divisional Asian 5 Nations teams as we move throughout the region, is a fantastic example of this in action and I'm delighted to be involved," Kirwan said.

"As well as developing existing young rugby players across the continent, the tour will focus on introducing rugby to children who may otherwise not have seen or played the game. Taking the sport to brand new audiences and enabling and inspiring more children to play the game will be a huge marker of success for me," added the former winger, who scored 35 tries in 63 tests for New Zealand.

"ARFU is delighted to again partner with HSBC in support of the development of Rugby at the grassroots level in Asia," said Trevor Gregory, Vice President of ARFU. "Events like today's coaching clinic and the ongoing HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour around the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and HSBC Asian Sevens Series will go a long way towards introducing new players to the game in the coming years."

Mark McCombe, CEO of HSBC Hong Kong, said: "Through this coaching tour, HSBC is dedicated to creating a rugby legacy in Hong Kong and throughout Asia. It is fantastic that two international rugby legends were able to help us launch the initiative today in Hong Kong and help inspire what we hope will be the next generation of HSBC Asian 5 Nations and HSBC Asian Sevens Series players."

HSBC has a historical relationship with HKSPC through ARFU and the HSBC Asian 5 Nations. In 2011, the relationship is being broadened to include a summer of rugby clinics provided by HSBC staff volunteers who will be trained as rugby coaches by the HSBC Penguins Coaching Academy.

Shinko Wong, Social Worker of HKSPC, said: "The children had a fantastic time. Jonah Lomu, John Kirwan and the HSBC Penguins gave them a great introduction to the game today and we're looking forward to continuing this momentum throughout the programme of summer clinics."

Children from the HKSPC will be given the opportunity to attend Hong Kong-based Asian 5 Nations fixtures and be involved in clinics and as mascots on matchdays. This matchday activity will be extended to all of the children involved in the programme within each country visited.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour 2011

March 23	Hong Kong
April 21 & 23	Colombo, Sri Lanka
April 21	Almaty, Kazakhstan
April 28	Hong Kong
May 5	Bangkok, Thailand
May 12 & 13	Dubai, UAE
May 19	Hong Kong
May 19 & 21	Tokyo, Japan
May 30	Incheon/Seoul, Korea

Exact dates to be confirmed:

June	Macau
July	Hong Kong
September	Shanghai, China
September	Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia
October	Pattaya, Thailand
November	Goa, India

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com



25 March 2011

HSBC PENGUINS SPREAD THE WORD OF RUGBY

Dean Herewini's role as a coach with the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy has led the former Hong Kong national team prop to run clinics in Hong Kong this week with the likes of All Blacks legends Jonah Lomu and John Kirwan and former England captain Lawrence Dallaglio.

However, as excited as he gets to rub shoulders with legends of the game, the current Malaysia coach – who will also play a big role in this year's HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour – saves most of his enthusiasm for his students.

Since last Sunday, Herewini and the HSBC Penguins have completed a whirlwind tour of clinics for groups from Rwanda, South Africa, New Zealand, China and Hong Kong, with venues ranging from Sandy Bay and Sai Kung to Happy Valley and Hong Kong Football Club.

"It's a big week of classes here, most of which are conducted by the academy coaches, but we get the players and sometimes the ex-international players involved for the bigger sessions," says Herewini, a self-described 'rugby nomad' whose 15-year stint in Asia has seen him play for Hong Kong and also work in Indonesia and Malaysia, where he's in his third year as national 15-a-side coach.

"Our players will come to play in the Hong Kong Tens and watch the Sevens, but when they leave, they often say their best memory is 'I coached 120 kids' or 'I coached 60 kids', all of diverse ages and abilities. To watch a kid running and chasing a ball is almost more exciting than watching a tournament," adds the New Zealander, who helped Malaysia win promotion to Division I of the HSBC Asian 5 Nations in 2009.

This year, the HSBC Penguins contingent who travelled to Hong Kong numbered about 90, including a first team – under the guidance of former Scotland coach Frank Hadden – who reached the semi-finals of the GFI Hong Kong Tens and a more social King Penguins selection who competed in the Kowloon RugbyFest.

However, for Herewini, coaching comes first and he has played an active role since meeting Craig Brown, the club's current Chief Executive, soon after the Penguin academy was formalised following an investment by HSBC in 2004. The academy's first official outing was in Hong Kong that same year when coaching sessions catered for elite Chinese players aged 17 to 23, Hong Kong University students and a 'coach the coaches' session.

"The Penguins travel to various places around the world – from Mexico to Kuala Lumpur, you name it – but mainly to places that need more development," Herewini says.

"One of my nomadic reasons for coming to Asia was to play a bit of rugby in Hong Kong and head back to New Zealand, but instead I found great opportunities for me in terms of rugby development. It's a big thing in Asia but there's still a long way to go and I stayed because there's so much opportunity.

"I'm a volunteer, but I would do it day in, day out, just to watch the kids coming through, especially the local kids, because that's where you future is. It's just a passion we all have.

"We're often coaching kids from the age of six through to university students. That sums up the philosophy of what we're trying to do – we're basically trying to spread the gospel of rugby around the region."

Herewini believes the HSBC Penguins – a club founded in 1959 – may be unique in the world of rugby, both in terms of its breadth of countries toured and also in the professionalism and depth of its coaching academy.

“Many touring teams who travel to tournaments are also organising coaching clinics off the back of their appearances, which I think is wonderful,” he says.

“From an HSBC Penguins perspective, we have a curriculum, where we’ll go and run courses under guidelines set by the IRB and the Scottish and English Rugby Unions. We’ll send coaches to these countries – like Rwanda, Malaysia – as an ongoing process. I haven’t heard of any other club outside of HSBC Penguins doing such things, but that’s probably why it has such a fantastic name.”

Herewini helped Lomu and Kirwan, an HSBC ambassador, launch this year’s HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour on Wednesday and the HSBC Penguins – alongside the likes of Kirwan and Hadden – will next stage coaching clinics in Sri Lanka and Kazakhstan before both teams play their opening Top Five matches on April 23.

The tour will then visit Top Five competitors Hong Kong, UAE and Japan, as well as Korea and Thailand, which will host Divisions I and II respectively. Following activities in Macau and Hong Kong over the summer, clinics will be held in host nations on the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series starting with China and Malaysia in September, then Thailand in October and India in November.

“With HSBC’s sponsorship, the coaching tour can bring in great coaches like Frank Hadden who did it last year and spent a lot of time on the road with the HSBC Asian 5 Nations. For me to be involved in clinics with Frank, it’s a wonderful thing and it allows me to learn and then teach my academy guys within the Penguins,” Herewini says.

“Being involved with John Kirwan is just phenomenal. You saw what he could do as a player in the Rugby World Cup in 1987 and you’ve seen what he did as coach with Italy and what he’s doing with Japan. People will thrive to go to a John Kirwan coaching clinic. It’s great to have these guys on board.”

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com



19 April 2011

SRI LANKA FACE UAE IN HSBC ASIAN 5 NATIONS OPENER

Sri Lanka will open their campaign in this year's HSBC Asian 5 Nations, the continent's leading 15-a-side national team rugby competition, with a home game against the UAE in Colombo on Saturday, April 23. A large crowd is expected for Sri Lanka's first-ever Top Five match, which kicks off at the Ceylonese Rugby and Football Club (CR&FC) at 4.00pm.

Kazakhstan will host Hong Kong in the other Top Five match on the same day, while holders Japan have a bye for the first week.

Sri Lanka's other home games will be against Hong Kong on May 7 and Japan – who will play in this year's Rugby World Cup – on May 21. The team will travel to Almaty to play Kazakhstan on May 14.

HSBC is a long-term supporter of rugby in Asia and is committed to promoting competitive rugby in Sri Lanka, with a view to aiding the nation's goal of qualifying for the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

Nick Nicolaou, Chief Executive Officer HSBC Sri Lanka and Maldives and a rugby player himself, was proud to be involved in HSBC's title sponsorship of the Asian 5 Nations as Sri Lanka make their debut in the Top Five.

"We are happy to sponsor a game that helps support our vision and values, and bring the brand to life through the excitement and shared passion of rugby," Nicolaou said.

"Being the world's local bank, HSBC recognises how rugby can help bring people from different backgrounds, communities and cultures together. We are committed to helping this long-term goal by growing rugby in Sri Lanka from its current standing to the highest level."

The bank's own rugby team includes Sri Lanka representative Ashean Karthelis, while Zulker Hameed, Anojan Balasunderam, Zaliqee Jaayah, Azmil Omar and Ashoka Gunawardane all represent prestigious clubs in Colombo.

On Thursday, the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour will hold a clinic at the SOS Children's Village in Piliyandala, outside Colombo, before staging sessions the following day with a host of emerging rugby schools in the capital at the CR&FC.

"Apart from sponsoring the Asian 5 Nations and the CR&FC rugby team in Sri Lanka for the third consecutive year, HSBC has shown great enthusiasm in this sport," said Sriyan Cooray, Chief Technology and Services Officer of HSBC, who formerly represented Sri Lanka at the world-famous Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament.

"We are very much committed to the development of rugby and keen to see that it reaches its pinnacle. At the same time, we're very excited about developing rugby from the grassroots and local youngsters will benefit greatly from the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour."

The HSBC Asian 5 Nations offers an opportunity for national teams to play regular competitive rugby at the top level, with an underlying commitment to growing participation in countries and territories across Asia.

The tournament is made up of six divisions with 25 countries taking part, and each year one team is promoted and one team is relegated from each division. The Top 5 competing countries compete for the prestigious title of HSBC Asian 5 Nations champions.

HSBC is a long-term investor in rugby in Asia and around the world. As well as being the title sponsor of the Sevens World Series, Asian 5 Nations and new Asian Sevens Series, the bank is the Principal Partner of the British and Irish Lions. HSBC is also the title sponsor of the Waratahs Super 15 team in Australia, the Penguin International Coaching Academy and the Cobra 10s tournament in Malaysia.

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com



21 April 2011

HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR EMBRACES COLOMBO

Frank Hadden hopes to have inspired a host of new rugby enthusiasts in Sri Lanka after the former Scotland coach spearheaded a clinic at an SOS Children's Village outside Colombo on Thursday in the latest leg of the HSBC ARFU (Asian Rugby Football Union) Rugby Coaching Tour.

The coaching clinic in Piliyandala featured 25 boys and six girls from the ages of 11 to 18, who also came from the country's four other SOS Children's Villages in Nuwara Eliya, Galle, Anuradhapura and Monaragala. There were also three youngsters from Jaffna, where another SOS community is being built.

"I have been looking forward to this trip ever since I presented the Sri Lankans with their Division I trophy in Singapore last year," said Hadden, who coached Scotland from 2005 to 2009.

"They love rugby here and although a lot of the kids hadn't played before, they showed natural ability and an appetite for some of the game's essentials like teamwork. And most importantly, they enjoyed themselves.

"The SOS Children's Village is an inspiring set-up and it's amazing what they're doing for the kids. I know a lot of them are also excited about going to watch Saturday's game, so let's hope Sri Lanka can win."

Many of the youngsters will attend and act as mascots at Sri Lanka's opening HSBC Asian 5 Nations match against the UAE on Saturday.

The game kicks off at 4.00pm at the Ceylonese Rugby and Football Club (CR&FC), where a large crowd is expected as the rugby-mad country embraces its debut in the Top Five of the continent's premier 15-a-side national team competition.

Hadden and Japan coach John Kirwan will lead this year's HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour, with support from the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy. Hadden spearheaded last year's inaugural Coaching Tour through Asia and admitted Sri Lanka was high on his wish list for this year's schedule.

"Last year, one of the most amazing things was finding rugby thriving in countries you wouldn't expect and this year I'm really looking forward to going back to some of these places as well as going for the first time to the likes of Sri Lanka," Hadden said.

"The Sri Lanka team really impressed me last year. They played a very sophisticated brand of rugby and back then I had no idea they had such a long tradition of rugby and the fact they have 100,000 players, which is more than twice as many as there are in Scotland. Perhaps it was no surprise that they played so well last year. I'm confident they'll do well again this time."

To follow up on Hadden's clinic in Piliyandala, HSBC is providing coach education, kit and equipment to the SOS Children's Village and will do so at every stop on the Coaching Tour to ensure a sustainable legacy in each community.

Nick Nicolaou, CEO of HSBC Sri Lanka and Maldives, said: “HSBC has been a long-term supporter of rugby in Sri Lanka and we’re excited to invest in grassroots development with the SOS Children’s Village and introduce rugby to many youngsters who had not experienced this great game before.

“HSBC is dedicated to creating a rugby legacy in Sri Lanka and across Asia through this Coaching Tour and hopefully we can help inspire the next generation of HSBC Asian 5 Nations players.”

The HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour continues its activities in Colombo on Friday at the CR&FC where Hadden will lead a coaching clinic for 70 schoolchildren, comprising 10 from each of seven emerging rugby schools – Lumbini Vidyalaya, C.W.W. Kannangara Vidyalaya, Science College, Royal College Panadura, Hindu College, S.D.S. Jayasinghe Vidyalaya and St John’s College.

The Coaching Tour’s activities in the capital began on Wednesday, when Hadden helped train local HSBC staff volunteers – including several from the bank’s rugby team – as rugby coaches. Many will continue to help coach rugby in the SOS Children’s Village in Piliyandala (TBC).

HSBC has a long-standing relationship with the SOS Children’s Villages globally and this year’s Coaching Tour will also visit similar communities in Kazakhstan – one of Sri Lanka’s Top Five competitors – and Korea and Thailand, which will host Divisions I and II respectively.

The Coaching Tour will also visit Hong Kong and UAE among the Top Five nations, although activity in Japan is still to be confirmed after their scheduled home match against Sri Lanka in late May was moved to Colombo in light of the country’s recent tragedies.

Following summer activities in Macau and Hong Kong, from August onwards the Coaching Tour will organise clinics in the four host nations on the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series – China, Malaysia, Thailand and India.

The Coaching Tour launched in March in Hong Kong, where Kirwan and fellow New Zealand legend Jonah Lomu led coaching clinics for youngsters from the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children (HKSPC) and the Qingdao Sharks Rugby Football Club from China.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour 2011

March 23	Hong Kong
April 20-23	Colombo, Sri Lanka
April 28-30	Hong Kong
May 5-7	Bangkok, Thailand
May 11-13	Dubai, UAE
May 12-14	Almaty, Kazakhstan
May 19-21	Hong Kong
May 19-21	Colombo, Sri Lanka
June 2-4	Incheon/Seoul, Korea
June 23-25	Jakarta, Indonesia

Dates to be confirmed:

May	Macau
July	Hong Kong
August	Shanghai, China
September	Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia
October	Pattaya, Thailand
November	Goa, India
November	Singapore
November	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com/HSBC_Coaching



25 April 2011

HONG KONG HOST JAPAN IN HSBC ASIAN 5 NATIONS

Hong Kong host holders Japan this Saturday in the second week of the HSBC Asian 5 Nations, the continent's premier 15-a-side national team rugby competition. The match kicks off at Hong Kong Football Club at 4.00pm and entry is free.

UAE host Kazakhstan in Abu Dhabi on Friday in this week's other fixture, while Top Five first-timers Sri Lanka have a bye.

Hong Kong have the toughest task as they face Japan, who last week had a bye and instead travelled to the SAR early as they begin their quest for a fourth successive HSBC Asian 5 Nations, while also preparing for this year's Rugby World Cup.

Hong Kong began their campaign last week with a trip to Almaty, where they won 23-10 against Kazakhstan, runners-up to Japan in last year's HSBC Asian 5 Nations.

John Kirwan has stated that his Japan side will be fully motivated as they seek to continue their 100 per cent record in the competition since it began in 2008.

Kirwan, a star for New Zealand as they won the World Cup in 1987, will also be active this Thursday with the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour, which will stage clinics for youngsters from the Tai Hang Tung Rugby Club and the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children during the week.

Former Scotland coach Frank Hadden, the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy and players from Hong Kong and Japan will all be involved in the sessions.

Mark McCombe, CEO of HSBC Hong Kong, said: "HSBC is looking forward to Hong Kong's first home match in the 2011 HSBC Asian 5 Nations and we know there will be a big, enthusiastic crowd cheering them on. HSBC has added some entertainment for the match at Hong Kong Football Club including a live jazz band and a large array of attractions for youngsters and families.

"It's part of our investment in the game as we seek to introduce more and more people in the SAR to the game of rugby.

"As such, we're excited about the ongoing grassroots work being done by the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour including the ongoing relationship with the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children. We're also delighted that Japan coach John Kirwan, who's also an HSBC rugby ambassador, is so actively involved in the programme," McCombe added.

The HSBC Asian 5 Nations comprises the Top Five and a further five four-team divisions, with promotion and relegation for the top and bottom sides in each.

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com



28 April 2011

KIRWAN INSPIRES YOUNGSTERS AS HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR RETURNS TO HONG KONG

Japan coach John Kirwan showed his passion for the development of rugby in Asia as he taught aspiring local youngsters the finer points of the game in an HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour clinic at Hong Kong Football Club on Thursday.

The 1987 Rugby World Cup winner teamed up with former Scotland coach Frank Hadden and Malaysia coach Dean Herewini, representing the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy, to form an all-star coaching unit who put youngsters from local schools and mini rugby clubs through their paces.

“I believe that there is huge potential for rugby in Asia so it’s great for me to work with local kids and get them enthused about the game. It’s really good for me to give back to the game as well, as I have got a lot out of it,” said Kirwan, who is contributing to the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour while leading Japan around the continent as they bid for a fourth straight HSBC Asian 5 Nations title.

The former New Zealand winger, who has been in Hong Kong for over a week, launched this year’s HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour in Hong Kong in March along with fellow All Blacks legend Jonah Lomu.

Having had a bye in the opening week of Top Five action, Kirwan and Japan arrived in Hong Kong early to prepare for their HSBC Asian 5 Nations opener against Hong Kong, a match Kirwan is looking forward to.

“It is a welcome break to do this type of coaching two days before our match, where we’ve got a big job to do,” Kirwan continued.

“We see Japan as representing Asia, so the HSBC Asian 5 Nations is really important for us and also a chance for us to start building for the World Cup. It is also key that we provide inspiration and act as role models to the youngsters coming through at the grassroots level like the schools represented here today. We have spent time focusing not only on skills but on the values of rugby – teamwork, sportsmanship, loyalty and discipline. And we aim to inspire on the pitch on Saturday as well.”

Jonny Hamp, Head of Rugby Sponsorship - Asia, said: “HSBC is teaming up with ARFU to encourage more youngsters to take up the game of rugby through the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour and it’s rewarding to see how this is already achieving its goals.

“HSBC sponsors every level of rugby from grassroots coaching to world-class competitions and teams, so it’s important to us that the coaching clinics we’ve had today continue around Asia as we look to grow the popularity of this great sport around the region.”

The Coaching Tour continues its activities on Saturday with a clinic for the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children (HKSPC), which also participated in the launch in March. This is part of an ongoing relationship with the charity which will include a summer programme of weekly coaching activity in July and August.

Last week, Hadden took the lead as the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour introduced rugby to over 30 youngsters from the five SOS Children's Villages in Sri Lanka as well as 45 children from five local schools.

Next week, Kirwan will again be involved as the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour conducts sessions in Thailand as the country hosts the four Division II games as well as Japan's Top Five clash with Kazakhstan.

Following further activity in UAE, Macau and Hong Kong, from August onwards the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour will organise clinics to support the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series which incorporates China, Malaysia, Thailand and India.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour 2011

March 23	Hong Kong
April 20-23	Colombo, Sri Lanka
April 28-30	Hong Kong
May 5-7	Bangkok, Thailand
May 11-13	Dubai, UAE
May 19-21	Hong Kong
May 19-21	Colombo, Sri Lanka
June 2-4	Incheon/Seoul, Korea

To be confirmed:

May	Macau
June	Indonesia
July	Hong Kong
August	China
Sep/Nov	Malaysia
November	India
Nov/Dec	Singapore

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com/HSBC_Coaching



5 MAY 2011

KIRWAN, HADDEN TAKE HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR TO SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BANGPOO

New Zealand rugby legend John Kirwan took time out from coaching his World Cup-bound Japan side to lead a lively coaching clinic for over 100 youngsters at the SOS Children's Village Bangpoo as part of the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour's six-day series of activities in and around Bangkok this week.

Frank Hadden, coach of Scotland from 2005 to 2009, was another inspirational figure as he made his second trip to an SOS Children's Village in three weeks.

Malaysia coach Dean Herewini represented the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy in Bangpoo, where the all-star coaching trio introduced the game to 56 boys and 44 girls and left a legacy by providing kit, equipment and coach education.

Kirwan's Japan side are in Bangkok preparing for Saturday's HSBC Asian 5 Nations Top Five clash with Kazakhstan, which kicks off at 7.00pm and follows the Division II final between Thailand and Chinese Taipei at 4.00pm.

The former winger jumped at the chance to promote the game to a new audience as part of the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour's activity this week, which ranges from coaching sessions for local schools and youth rugby clubs to IRB-certified referee coaching courses for match officials from across Asia.

"I've been amazed at the SOS Children's Village here in Bangpoo and what an inspiring environment it is for the kids, so we hope we've added to that by introducing them to this great game as part of the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour," said Kirwan, a star when New Zealand won the Rugby World Cup in 1987.

"I've spent most of my life playing and coaching professional rugby, so it's really rewarding for me to be able to give something back to the game. It's important to grow the game from the grassroots and I think rugby will grow in Thailand as the kids are naturally athletic and seem to enjoy their sports."

The youngsters from the SOS Children's Village will be invited to watch Thailand's clash with Chinese Taipei, when two will act as mascots for the game.

Hadden watched Thailand play in last year's HSBC Asian 5 Nations and also Wednesday's 37-24 win over India at the National Stadium. The Scot believes the children will benefit from watching their national team play in their Division II decider, which follows the third place playoff between India and Iran at 2.00pm.

The children will be familiar with several of the players on show as Thailand winger Chaithawat Ruangan and centre Nutthapong Kettibunnayawat assisted at the SOS clinic along with two of their Chinese Taipei opponents on Saturday, second rower Cheng Cheng-hung and winger Cheng Chi-kong. Iran coach Wayne Marsters and tight-head prop James Farad also helped out.

"Two weeks ago, I was inspired by the SOS Children's Village outside Colombo and today in Bangpoo we've again had a really special clinic, with amazing enthusiasm," said Hadden, who spearheaded the inaugural Coaching Tour last year.

“Now the kids can look forward to watching Thailand on Saturday, which will help them retain this enthusiasm. I watched Thailand give a good account of themselves in Division II in India last year and I’m happy to be watching them again live this year.”

The HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour’s schedule this week also includes two sessions for children and coaches at Vajiravudh College and a clinic on Saturday morning for 100 kids from the Bangkok Lions and Bangkok Japan.

Hadden and ARFU coaching staff also conducted a coach education course for HSBC employees, who helped as assistant coaches during the SOS Children’s Village clinic and will continue to offer their time and skills to ensure the children benefit from ongoing rugby training.

Matthew Lobner, CEO of HSBC Thailand, said: “The HSBC Asian 5 Nations is a wonderful opportunity for the world’s local bank to engage with the local community in Thailand. Today we introduced over 100 youngsters from the SOS Children’s Village to rugby for the first time and many of them will watch Thailand compete in the HSBC Asian 5 Nations on Saturday.

“With the coach education programme that HSBC and ARFU (Asian Rugby Football Union) are currently running throughout Asia, and the donation of rugby kit and equipment, we really hope to help inspire a new generation of children to play and enjoy watching rugby.”

Next week the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour heads to Dubai and will run activities in and around Division IV matches and the Top Five clash between UAE and Japan.

Following the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and ongoing summer activity in Hong Kong, from August onwards the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour will organise clinics to support the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series which incorporates China, Malaysia, Thailand and India.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour 2011

March 23	Hong Kong
April 20-23	Colombo, Sri Lanka
April 28-30	Hong Kong
May 5-7	Bangkok, Thailand
May 11-13	Dubai, UAE
May 19-21	Hong Kong
May 19-21	Colombo, Sri Lanka
June 2-4	Incheon/Seoul, Korea

Dates to be confirmed:

May	Macau
June	Indonesia
July	Hong Kong
August	China
Sep/Nov	Malaysia
November	India
Nov/Dec	Singapore

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com/HSBC_Coaching



7 MAY 2011

'WOW' FACTOR AS SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE KIDS WATCH THAILAND ... AND CELEBRITIES

'Wow' Areerat, 12, was the luckiest member of an 80-strong group of children and staff from the SOS Children's Village Bangpoo who watched Thailand play Chinese Taipei in the HSBC Asian 5 Nations Division II final, although the hosts eventually lost 22-10.

The youngsters were invited to watch the match at the National Stadium following a coaching clinic they enjoyed on Thursday morning as part of the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour's six-day series of activities in and around Bangkok.

'Wow' was chosen as the mascot to escort Thailand captain Tanyavit Kuasint as he led his team onto the pitch, while Ub-ib' Jedsada, also 12, was the mascot for the Chinese Taipei team.

"I actually chose to lead out Thailand. It was exciting to look up and see all my friends in the stands. I've watched the national football team on TV before, but this is the first time I've ever seen a Thailand team play live," said 'Wow', who lapped up the action, screaming and yelling through the game.

Her excitement hit fever pitch when some of her favourite actors then appeared in celebrity touch-rugby matches also involving the Thailand women's rugby team, as the crowds awaited the 7.00pm clash between Japan and Kazakhstan, the first Top Five match to be played in a neutral venue.

"I've played sports like volleyball before, but Thursday was the first time I've ever played rugby. I really enjoyed the passing. It was then fun to watch a proper game today, especially as I also got to see some of my favourite actors," she added.

'Wow' was among 44 girls and 56 boys inspired on Thursday by an all-star coaching team including Japan boss John Kirwan, who took a day off from coaching his World Cup-bound side to visit Bangpoo.

Dean Herewini of the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy, Frank Hadden, coach of Scotland from 2005 to 2009, and ARFU Development Officer Ismail Kadir, a former Singapore international, all introduced the basics of rugby in a lively session.

Herewini believes the SOS youngsters who watched their national team will be further encouraged to embrace the game.

'This is really great for the kids to watch their national team at the National Stadium, especially as they also got to watch the Thailand women's team and the famous actors,' Herewini said.

"The kids can start to see that rugby offers great opportunities, so that one day they may not only watch at the National Stadium but even play at the National Stadium."

The HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour's visit to the SOS Children's Village Bangpoo left a legacy by providing kit, equipment and coach education. Iran coach Wayne Marsters and tight-head prop James Farad, and Chinese Taipei players Cheng Cheng-hung and Cheng Chi-kong were also part of the international coaching contingent.

This week's HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour's activities in and around Bangkok also included Tuesday and Friday clinics for students and coaches at Vajiravudh College, a Saturday morning session for 100 kids from the Bangkok Lions and Bangkok Japanese rugby clubs, plus IRB-certified referee coaching courses for match officials from across Asia, which conclude on Sunday.

The HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour heads next week to Dubai, which hosts Division IV matches on Wednesday and Saturday and the Top Five clash between UAE and Japan on Saturday evening.

Following the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and ongoing summer activity in Hong Kong, the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour will organise clinics from August onwards to support the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series which will feature events in China, Malaysia, Thailand and India.

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com/HSBC_Coaching



13 MAY 2011

KIRWAN, HADDEN LIFT KIDS IN DUBAI AS HSBC ARFU RUGBY COACHING TOUR GOES INDOORS

Japan coach John Kirwan joined former Scotland boss Frank Hadden in leading clinics for 50 schoolchildren on Thursday morning as the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour continued its four-day series of activities in Dubai.

Kirwan has enjoyed the highs of rugby, finishing as the joint-top try scorer as New Zealand won the first Rugby World Cup in 1987 and coaching Japan at France 2007.

However, the former winger showed his enthusiasm for spreading the game at the grassroots level when he and Hadden gave youngsters from Al Shafie Primary School and Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Secondary School a taste of world-class coaching at Al Safa Sports Hall, a day before his Japan side took on the UAE in their televised HSBC Asian 5 Nations clash.

“It’s very hot here at this time of year, so we’ve coached the kids indoors and this version of the game seems very popular. They responded well to the drills we developed for them and seem to have a genuine appetite for the game,” said Kirwan, who in March launched this year’s HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour with fellow All Blacks legend Jonah Lomu in Hong Kong.

“Rugby in the UAE has traditionally been spearheaded by expatriates, so it has been rewarding to help the game grow in local schools and communities with the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour, which is dedicated to developing the game at all levels, all across Asia.”

Japan are playing the UAE for the first time since the creation of the new national association, having enjoyed home wins over the former Arabian Gulf in HSBC Asian 5 Nations matches in 2008 and last year.

As Kirwan returned his attention to his ‘Brave Blossoms’, Hadden led a clinic on Friday morning for U-14 players at the Dubai Exiles Rugby Football Club.

“I came to Dubai last year with the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour and I really liked what I saw, so it’s great to come again to witness the continued enthusiasm for this great game of ours,” said Hadden, who coached Scotland from 2005 to 2009.

“There is real potential for growth here, especially in the Arab community and we are delighted to try to assist with development at all levels.”

Hadden spearheaded the inaugural HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour last year following his four-year stint with Scotland and this year he has been again been leading the bulk of activity along with Ismail Kadir, Development Officer for ARFU (Asian Rugby Football Union) and a former Singapore centre.

The Tour’s activity in the UAE started on Tuesday with a session for Al Marif Secondary School for Boys in Rashidiya, Deira, while Hadden and Kadir conducted a teachers’ workshop in Salahuddin Sports Hall in Bur Dubai on Wednesday.

Dean Herewini, representing the HSBC Penguin International Coaching Academy, was part of the coaching staff for Thursday's sessions and was part of Friday's clinic for the Dubai Exiles youngsters.

Division IV is also being held at The Sevens this week and on Friday evening the third place playoff between Uzbekistan and Jordan and the final between Lebanon and Qatar both kick off at 6.00pm before the UAE host Japan at 8.00pm.

Abdulfattah Sharaf, CEO of HSBC UAE, said: "Today we were delighted to see the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour continue its widespread activities in the UAE for the week, and we're happy that it returned to build on its excellent work here in Dubai last year.

"The HSBC Asian 5 Nations enables the world's local bank to engage with the local community and at the same time, the coaching programme is designed to inspire the next generation of rugby players."

Following the HSBC Asian 5 Nations and ongoing summer activity in Hong Kong, from August onwards the HSBC ARFU Rugby Coaching Tour will organise clinics to support the new HSBC Asian Sevens Series which will feature events in China, Malaysia, Thailand and India.

HSBC ARFU Coaching Tour 2011

March 23	Hong Kong
April 20-23	Colombo, Sri Lanka
April 28-30	Hong Kong
May 3-8	Bangkok, Thailand
May 10-13	Dubai, UAE
May 19-21	Hong Kong
May 19-21	Colombo, Sri Lanka
June 2-4	Incheon/Seoul, Korea

Dates to be confirmed:

May	Macau
June	Indonesia
July	Hong Kong
August	China
Sep/Nov	Malaysia
November	India
Nov/Dec	Singapore

For further details, visit: www.asian5nations.com/HSBC_Coaching