

Rugby 7s Global Popularity Reaches U.S., Glendale

by Michael Husson

Writer for and on behalf of the City of Glendale

Rugby 7s, the quicker variation of traditional 15-a-side rugby union, is on the fast track to popularity in the United States. Long enjoyed by the rest of the world, 24 nations compete annually in tournaments in nine countries in the *HSBC Sevens World Series*. The *USA Sevens* tournament in Las Vegas has grown to be the largest rugby event in North America, drawing more than 60,000 fans over three days in February. The debut of rugby 7s at the 2016 *Summer Olympics* in Rio de Janeiro should serve as the tipping point for the sport stateside.

Back in Glendale, *Raptors* Head Coach Andre Snyman, himself a former 7s star for his native South Africa's national team, has already moved on from Glendale's stinging one-point loss in the *Pacific Rugby Premier-*

ship (the top U.S. rugby 15s competition) final in May, and is looking forward to the *Raptors* 7s summer tournament season. "We're already practicing with the focus of finishing strong at all three qualifiers," says Snyman. Glendale will compete regionally at *Dick's Sporting Goods Park* in Commerce City on June 21, in Kansas City, Mo. on July 12, and in Omaha, Neb. on July 26. The top two clubs will move on to the national *Men's Club 7s Championship* tournament Aug. 9 and 10, site to be determined.

Snyman joined the Glendale staff in 2011 in time to coach the 7s squad and has since assumed head coaching duties of the 15s side (PRP), in addition to a recent appointment as the *USA Men's Eagles Sevens* defense coach.

7s rugby is played seven-a-side on the same size field as 15s (approximately 100



Breaking through the defense, Glendale Raptor Preston Bryant powers up the pitch against eventual tournament champions, the Collegiate All-Americans.



Brett Willis of the Glendale Raptors reaches over his opponent to win possession in the 2013 Serevi RugbyTown Sevens.

Photos by Seth McConnell

qualifying tournament, making for a dramatic day of stops and starts, 15-minute bursts of energy followed by short periods of recovery.

Last year, the Raptors went into the third regional qualifier needing to come out on top to advance to the national championships in Pittsburgh. They ran off five straight wins, including three versus clubs

who had beaten Glendale earlier in the season. The final was against crosstown rival the *Denver Barbarians*, also needing the win to advance. The Barbos squeaked by on a late try, 14-17, ending the Raptors' club season but not their 7s summer.

Glendale has hosted August's annual *Serevi RugbyTown Sevens* international invitational tournament since 2012, and the Raptors have fielded a team each year. In 2013, the Raptors went 2-1 in pool play, and beat the *Northeast Rugby Union* and *French Armed Forces* to advance to the Cup Final, but fell to the *USA All-Americans* collegiate all-star squad. It was, however, the top finish for a club team in SRS history and a jumping-off point for this season.

The 2014 *Serevi RugbyTown Sevens*, Aug. 15-17, promises to be the best yet. Seventeen teams from eight countries will be competing for the winner-take-all \$10,000 purse, including four national teams looking to break onto rugby's big stage. All five U.S. military branches will participate again, as will the 2012 champion *USA Falcons*, made up from the *USA Men's Eagles* player pool, and the aforementioned *USA All-Americans*.

The Saturday beerfest will take place again this year. "Bruises and Brews" will feature unlimited tastings from 15 craft breweries (mostly local) and three Colorado distilleries, all adjacent to the rugby action for a perfect view with your perfect

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meters — or 109 yards — from goal-line to goal-line) in seven-minute halves (one-minute halftimes). Snyman knows, "You need to be very fit, fast and skilled. If you're lacking any skill on offense or defense, you'll stand out and the other team will take advantage of that." The Raptors may play up to six matches in each regional

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Colorado Athletic Club Fitness Tips

Top 5 Fitness Trends

by Amy Thompson

National Director of Personal Training Services, Colorado Athletic Club

Want to make sure the fitness program you choose this year will be around for a while? These top five fitness trends of 2014 are here to stay, and are about to make your workouts more exciting.

1. **High Intensity Training.** This workout has enjoyed a massive surge in popularity over the past year. By alternating short, high-energy intervals with recovery intervals done at a light to moderate pace, H.I.T. Training is designed to get your heart pumping while scorching a massive amount of calories in less time. H.I.T. workouts are also praised for increasing metabolism and being an accessible workout for all. Find your inner athlete and get faster results from your precious time. Check out the Colorado



Amy Thompson

Athletic Club online schedule for H.I.T. class times and stop by a club today for a complimentary class.

2. **Bodyweight Training.** Using only the weight of your own body as resistance, a huge draw of this workout is that you can do it at any time, any place as there is no need for equipment. Not limited to just tedious reps of squats, lunges, push-ups and pull-ups, this trend allows people to get back to the basics with fitness. All of Colorado Athletic Clubs' functional training areas are outfitted with TRX Suspension Training. Use this modality to add resistance or assistance to various bodyweight exercises.

3. **Small Group Training.** Gain strength in small numbers. Fitness centers are increasingly offering more group training options, which at Colorado Athletic Club includes programs like H.I.T. Training, TRX, ViPR, FitExpress and more. Small group training offers an affordable way to work out with an experienced and knowledgeable personal trainer. These classes are results-based and offer pre- and post- testing. Other perks of small group training are the social aspect and structure. By having a class you attend two or three times weekly with the same trainer and people, you develop a fun workout habit.

4. **Yoga.** There's a reason why there are so many different types of yoga classes on the market — Colorado Athletic Club offers Hot Yoga, Vinyasa, Kids' Yoga and Yoga Sculpt, to name a few — people just can't get enough of it! One reason for this might be that yoga constantly reinvents itself with so many different forms of the practice, so things never get stale. In addition to yoga's physical benefits, yoga provides a host of positive effects on mental wellness to strengthen and energize you from the inside out.

5. **Fitness for Older Adults.** Fitness programs geared toward those of retirement age are continuously growing in number. As millions of baby boomers enter their

senior years, they are looking to stay healthy and active with exercises that are safe and age-appropriate. Colorado Athletic Club offers many programs and classes that accommodate the variety of interests and abilities of older adults, including water exercise, functional training and other low-impact workouts.

We all seek time-efficient, cost-effective ways to achieve our health and wellness goals. Colorado Athletic Club offers exceptional coaching, encouraging camaraderie and premier facilities, making it easy for fitness to be a part of your lifestyle.

May Furry Scurry Draws 12,000 People, 5,000 Dogs

The 2014 *Furry Scurry* drew a crowd of nearly 12,000 people and 5,000 dogs to *Wash Park* in May, raising nearly \$1 million (and counting) for programs and services to help homeless pets at the *Dumb Friends League*. "We're so proud to be part of such a compassionate, pet-friendly community," said Bob Rohde, president and CEO, of the event. "The work we do wouldn't be possible without such generous local support of our mission and programs that help homeless pets in need." Information: 303-751-5772.



Information: 303-751-5772.

Doggie Do: Families and friends gathered in record numbers for this year's Furry Scurry in Washington Park.

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pour. This year, attendees may purchase larger pours in order to explore the stadium and enjoy the live music up close.

Friday will conclude Serevi's youth camp in the morning and lead in to the tournament's kickoff and a *Friday Afternoon Club* with discounted admission before 3 p.m.

Sunday debuts "A Taste of Glendale," where more than 10 local eateries will offer meals priced at \$5 or less. Diners will be able to enjoy the tournament's playoffs from the *Festival Plaza* overlooking the rugby pitch.

In addition to the cash prize, the Serevi

RugbyTown Sevens champion will receive an automatic bid to the 2014 *Bayleys Fiji Coral Coast Sevens*, in the homeland of Serevi founder and rugby legend Waisale Serevi, the "King of 7s."

Rugby 7s, a variation of the game invented more than 100 years ago, appears tailor-made for the modern sports fan's tastes. From New Zealand to Hong Kong, the newest Olympic sport has never been hotter, and Glendale and the entire Denver metro area are in for a treat this summer as the Raptors pursue a national championship, and national recognition in the three-day celebration known as the Serevi RugbyTown Sevens.

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