

Emerging Nations Training Camp V + Test Euro Champ Tournament



Women's 7's Rugby

Thurs. 01 – Mon. 05 April 2010



ZÁNKAI CENTRUM



TEAM AUSTRIA'S ENTC V EXPERIENCE REPORT



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Interest in Rugby still has a long way to go in almost every country in Europe and for Women's Rugby even longer. ENTC V was an opportunity for young and ambitious players from various nations - some of whom have only had Women's Teams for a few years - to grow, to develop and to come together to learn, exchange knowledge and to play. Following 3 days of intensive training sessions, all of the rugby energy and fever boils over into a Test European Championship. This year's tournament Champion is Hungary! But in actuality, each and every player, coach and referee leaves the ENTC a winner; and the biggest winner of all is Women's Rugby Development!

ENTC V took place from 1 to 5 April 2010 in Zánka, Hungary. As in the previous year, the Youth Centre on Lake Balaton was the perfect venue for hosting 9 Emerging Rugby Nations and 12 teams. The entire camp consisted of about 180 players, coaches, referees and supporters. The upgrades to the housing, stadium and pitch improved the atmosphere and value of this ideal 'all-in-one' venue and would be even more of a perfect location for a European Championship.

This year's participating women's rugby nations were: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Poland. Austria, Czech Republic and Poland each had two teams and made up the Barbarian sides and for the Barbarian final 5 players from each team were nominated.

The Programme

As usual, the training camp kicked off on Thursday and kept us all busy till Saturday lunchtime at which point we all rewarded ourselves with an afternoon at the Lake Balaton to physically and mentally prepare ourselves for the Test European Tournament day on Sunday. Everyone cooperated and stuck to the very tightly knit rugby programme. It was great to be able to rely on the perfect organisation!

The training sessions

Thanks to the renewed IRB support this year two rugby coach experts were at our disposal: LJ Adams worked with the players and Graham Smith worked with the coaches and both exceeded expectations. LJ introduced and explained a wide range of rugby exercises to not only support the beginners but also to encourage advanced rugby players to coach their team mates. The trainings were conducted in two intensive sessions per day, one before and one after lunch. The training days ended with friendly matches between the nations to give them the opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills.

Skills

This year's training focused on basic skills like ball handling, tackling in 7s, body position, scrums, line outs, footwork, off-load skills and basic defence and attack patterns. In addition to this, the concept of individual or special skills versus team skills was emphasised, giving specific position players in 7s Rugby attention to their individual skills, such as the hooker, scrum-half or line out player roles. In the case of some exercises, such as the scrum, we were shown how not to do it and this had a great impact on learning and remembering the correct form and way.



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Evening film sessions

Every evening after dinner we concluded our fully packed learning day with the majority of participants watching women's games and identifying and recognising individual skills, defence and attack patterns and little mistakes of the rugby players performing in the matches. LJ's and Graham's presentation styles were great; just remember the 3 speeds of rugby: feet, hands and mind!

Referee & Coach training

Coach and referee educators ran IRB Level 1 7s training sessions in parallel to the player training sessions on the pitch. The experienced referees were guided by Philippe Marguin on detailed Rugby situations such as Mauls and Scrums. The new referees had the opportunity to put their training to practice and whistle their first games.

The coaches of the participating nations were trained by Graham Smith following the IRB 7s training programme and the newly released IRB Sevens Manual and Workbook. This was good preparation for taking coaches to the next level with their teams. The pre coursework for Graham's course got coaches reassessing their team goals and aims and thinking about their players and teams in advance and preparing coaches to do their best for their teams. The main concentration throughout the course is on the importance of everything being about the players and the team.

The tournament

After 3 days of spring warmth and sunshine match day was cool and cloudy – perfect Rugby weather. Twelve teams participated in the tournament and the tight game schedule was ahead of time throughout the entire day. The 3 Barbarian teams, made up of development players for their nations, each got to play 2 games each as the official tenth team of the tournament. The Barbarians truly displayed their openness to practise what they had learned. They impressed the expert coaches and supporters observing the games.

The champion of the tournament was Hungary, followed by Poland, Czech Republic, Austria and Finland. All games were played in a friendly atmosphere, the final game between Hungary and Poland constituted the first 'highlight' of the day. After the finals an 'All Stars' Team was selected and announced: a team picked by the Coach Experts and Tournament Organisers identifying and giving recognition to one player from each nation that demonstrated exceptional skill and talent and rugby spirit! Then the All Stars Team played a friendly match against the Test Euro Champion, Hungary! What an exciting game as usual!

Not only the Champions, but all teams were applauded at the final banquet at the end of tournament day. A great third half where the rugby party celebrations were enjoyed by all!

All team Captains were presented with a lovely package from the Hungarian Rugby Union.



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THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Thanks to everyone who made this possible! Most of all to the players and their enthusiasm without whom none of it would ever have materialised over the years!

Thanks to Zanka for their great staff and fabulous facilities and services! Three cheers for Angyal Balázs for his support, cooperation and wonderful, on-site organisation!

Many thanks again to the Referee Expert Phillippe Marguin for his valuable input and encouragement, to the Coach Experts Graham Smith and LJ Adams for the great work with the girls and the coaches!

Thanks to Douglas Langley for not only providing us with IRB support but for coming to see ENTC for himself and witness the progress and development that his support has facilitated. And thanks for the "All Stars" team kit from the IRB as well! Thanks to Susan Carty for giving all the nations and their women's representatives a chance to meet her in person and to hear their voices. I hope everyone will keep in touch and trust that Susan is working in the best interest of the woman's game and representing us and being our voice all over the world.

Thanks to Renée Carmine-Jones for the organising and initiating the ENTC for and with the Emerging Nations, with its beginnings as a small test project with Ferenc Gyolcsos, the Hungarian National Team Coach, which has now become an important fixture in the National Team calendars of many nations and players and coaches to which everyone looks forward to every year.

Thanks again to Czaba Priskin who has proven once again to be an amazing tournament director and co-organiser that can even manage to keep everyone from all different nations and backgrounds on schedule and make it look so easy!

And than you over and over again to the players from all the participating nations and to the spirit that they bring with them and share at ENTCS and the Test Euros!

Yours in Rugby,
TEAM AUSTRIA

Valuable Links:

<http://picasaweb.google.hu/petervtopen/VENTCTesztEuropaBajnoksag#>

<http://picasaweb.google.hu/110758613343280220208/ENTCVBalazsAngyal#>

<http://ladiesrugby.heavensgame.com/site/2010/04/06/hungarian-women-successful-in-7s/>

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