

# Touch of the World

## The International Touch Fraternity's Newsletter

Edition Number 10 - August 2003

#### **EDITORIAL**



Well the World Cup has come and gone as well as the South Pacific Championships. It was an exciting time for all the participants at the World Cup and the hospitality of the Japanese people was second to

Many countries found the hype of an expensive tour unfounded with the games being played away from Tokyo in a Regional centre. The facilities of the Region were good and the venue conveniently located.

There is a wrap up of the event later on in this issue and all teams need to be congratulated for their effort and time in attending the tournament.

Australia proved they are worthy World Champions by wining all divisions and commiserations go to New Zealand who having defeated Australia in the senior divisions in the rounds, were magnanimous in defeat.

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Some disappointing aspects of the Australian's behaviour throughout the event marred their great come from behind win in some of the divisions.

The South Pacific Games in Suva, Fiji was the venue for the South Pacific Championships. A full account of how each country performed can be found later in the newsletter.

Hosts Fiji won both the Mens and Mixed divisions and the overall Championship Trophy after beating Favourite Papua New Guinea in the Mens and Cook Islands in the Mixed.

A forum of South Pacific Island Countries formed an organising Committee to expand on the idea of regular international competition amongst the Island Countries. The result being that a Tournament will be held every two years in the Region complementing the Asian and European Championships played in other Regions of the Touch world.

The next South Pacific Island Nations Championships will be held in Apia, Samoa in 2005 and preparations are well under way for this to be a successful arena for the Island nations to compete against each other and get exposure to affordable International Touch.

The FIT World All Schools is the next event on the International Touch Calender. This tournament is being held in Brisbane 10/12th October this year and several International teams have already entered. For further information concerning this event please contact Peter Bell on phone 617 3820 1444 or e.mail him at pbell3@eq.edu.au

The Fifth European Championships follow the Schools and they are scheduled 10/11th July 2004 in Jersey. Teams outside of Europe wishing to participate can obtain an invitation from the Organising Committee or contact me on cary@austouch.com.au Such teams are only accepted under special conditions attached to tournament.

## ASSEMBLY GENERAL **MEETING**

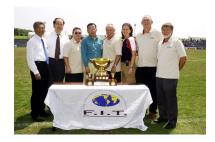
The Assembly General Meeting was held in conjunction with the World Cup in Japan and the election of officials for the ensuing four year term was conducted at this meeting.

The previous Executive was returned namely, myself President, Tracey Malloy as Vice President, Trevor Richards as Treasurer and Bill Ker as Secretary General. I hope we can move the Federation forward during our term in office.

The question of Membership and a new Constitution were topics that were discussed and need to be a priority for the Federation to progress. Drafts of the documents are being prepared for distribution to the members and feedback mechanisms will be in place before any final document if prepared for

Another item that proved difficult to assess was the venue for the next World Cup in 2007. As most "touchies" already know South Africa will be hosting the event at the famous wine growing and University region of Stellanbosch. Countries expecting to attend are already making plans for the Championships

## WOLRD CUP 2003 KUMAGAYA, JAPAN



The SARS virus, the world social and economic environment, lack of time to obtain visas all contributed to only nine countries arriving in Japan for the Fifth World Cup. Despite this the event was a huge success and all teams are eagerly awaiting the 2007 championships in South Africa.

#### **AUSTRALIA**

The defending World Champions were under enormous pressure throughout the rounds of the competition especially when they drew 3-3 with New Zealand in the mens, lost 5-6 to NZ and drew 4-4 with South Africa in the mens 30's then lost 6-7 and 3-5 to NZ in the mens 35's.



With the senior division finals being played first it appeared that they could be struggling after the first two finals if NZ won, especially as the next final was the Mixed where NZ were the defending champions.

As it turned out, Australian came out blazing in the mens 35 final and it was all over bar the shouting at half time. They went on to win the game 8-2 in a complete reversal of form.

MVP was Stephen McIntyre.

The over 30's was different affair at full time when the scores were locked at 3-3. The drop off was as exciting any segment of play the tournament had experienced. With an ounce of skill and good luck the Aussie got the first touchdown in extra time and won 4-3. MVP was Robbie Brien.

With NZ defending the Mixed title and Australia defeating them in a hard contest during the rounds, this game was critical to any hope NZ had of winning the World Cup.

Any team with a legend of the calibre of Peter Walters was going to be difficult to defeat, but the Aussie did this against all the odds and with the final scoreline reading 6-5 they won the Mixed and the World Cup for Australia. Their score of 28-0 against Singapore was the highest score of the tournament. MVP was Benji Marshall who also won the Player of the Series Award



Australia's dominance in the womens division was stamped on the competition with an emphatic 9-2 win over New Zealand in their first encounter. This was followed up with a 5-3 win in the second round and a 4-2 win in the final. They remain undefeated in 45 World Cup appearances since 1988.

MVP was Bo de la Cruz who also won the Player of the Series Award.

Pride was on the line in the final match of the tournament. A drawn game in the rounds and again at full time saw Shane Frederiksen score in extra time to give Australia victory and a clean sweep of the five divisions. MVP was Shane Frederiksen.

## NEW ZEALAND

Second in the World Champions point tally, NZ were far from disgraced. They played a red-hot Aussie outfit on the day of the finals and were unlucky not to have sealed several victories. The manner in which they accepted defeat was an example that all sportsmen could follow.



The 35's suffered only one defeat in the tournament and that was the final. They scored 106 touchdowns at an average of 13.25 per game with only 19 being scored against them, an average of 2.25. MVP was Michael MacGregor.

Extra time was required in the 30's with NZ losing 3-4. The team scored 101 touchdowns with only 22 against. Jason Tomai starred for the team with the highest number of touchdowns at 11 and was also voted their MVP.

the Mixed division the In defending champions were beaten in the preliminary rounds but the cunning of their captain Koppe Irihei and players like Peter Walters, George Albert-Jehnke, Sharlene Banister and Tui Kalene, they were never going to be easy to defeat in the final. With the game going down to the wire they succumbed 5-6 to the Aussies. At an average of 15.75 per game they scored 126 touchdowns with only 23 scored against them. MVP was Peter Walters.

The brightest note for the Womens team was the 22 touchdowns scored by Monica Hardegger, which was the highest, scored by any player at this years World Cup. They were outclassed by the Aussie who was still smarting from their loss to them in the Test match in Hamilton two years ago. MVP was Faith Dickson



In the mens final the result could have gone either way when the drop off got down to three on three. It was unfortunate but they lost 4-5 and were far from outclassed. The closeness of NZ and Australia in the mens was reflected in the for and against for each team. The Aussie's recorded a 98-12 F&A while NZ recorded 96-13. MVP was Chris Wall who also was named Player of the Series.

## SOUTH AFRICA

Finishing sixth at the World Cup in 1999 South Africa improved by three placings to come in third in 2003.



Losing the semi final to Australian in the 30's set up a chance for the bronze medal play off. A one side affair saw them defeat the United States 11-1 to win the medal. Best performance throughout the rounds was a 12-2 win against Japan.

MVP was Labeeb Levy who scored 9 touchdowns (the highest for South Africa) and also achieved the Player of the Series Award.

In the mixed division they were soundly beaten by New Zealand then defeated 2-6 by Japan in the bronze medal play off. Their best wins were 6-1 against Singapore and 8-5 against Thailand. MVP was James Boyes.

The women followed a similar path to the mixed being defeated soundly by NZ in the semis but fortunately got the better of Singapore in the bronze medal play off winning 6-3. The round game against Japan produced the highest score for a South African womens team at any World Cup defeating them 17-0. Aisha Arnold not only was the highest scorer for South Africa with 10 touchdowns for the tournament but she was also their MVP.

This victory set the scene for the mens team who lost 1-17 to Australia in the semis but defeated Japan 8-5 for the bronze medal. There round game against Wales resulted in a 21-1 victory which was the highest win recorded by any South African team at World Cup. The MVP was Andrew Cook.

#### JAPAN

Besides Australia and New Zealand the host nation Japan was the only other nation to provide teams in all five division. This speaks well for the development of the sport in that country and a great credit to their officials and administration.

Finishing ninth in 1999 Japan has improved their place in the World ranking to fourth in 2003. the 35's played well but were outclassed with their closest game being against Singapore losing 2-8, finishing fourth in this division. MVP was Nariaki Matsuyaua.

In the mens 30's they finished fifth with their best performance being against the USA losing 2-3 and 1-

2. Takao Tsuji was their MVP for the tournament.



Japan's best result of the World Cup was in the mixed division where they won the bronze medal defeating South Africa 6-2 in the play off. During the rounds they lost 3-5 to South Africa but recorded good victories against Singapore, USA and Thailand. The MVP was Yoshio Hagino who also scored 6 touchdowns the highest for Japan in the mixed division.

The women lacked any experience at this level but performed to the best of their ability throughout the whole tournament.

They finished fifth with their best result a 0-7 loss to South Africa. Exposure to more international competition will see this young side perform to a much higher standard and credit must go to them for their "never give up" attitude. MVP was Atko Nakagawa.

In the mens division Japan were defeated in the bronze medal play off 5-8 by South Africa. They recorded good victories 8-1 against Scotland, 14-0 against Wales during the preliminary rounds. The MVP was Jun Uchikawa.

### **SINGAPORE**

By fielding a team in the mens 35's division, Singapore enabled this category to form part of the 2003 World Cup Championships. Made up mainly of the National over 40's team, Singapore did extremely well to take out the bronze medal by defeating Japan 10-3 in the play off.

They had twice beaten Japan in the preliminary rounds and were

confident of repeating the dose in the play off. Darren Blakely was the standout player for Singapore winning the MVP for his team and being the highest scorer for Singapore with 10 touchdowns. He followed this up by being named the Player of the Series in the 35's division.



The mixed teams contested the Shield series winning the semi final against Thailand 6-2 but losing the shield final 4-8 to the United States. The MVP was Matthew Etchapare who played extremely well throughout the event and who scored the only two touchdowns in their game against the then world champions New Zealand.

In the Womens division Singapore recorded wins against Japan 15-0 and 10-1 before losing 3-6 to South Africa in the bronze medal playoff. Like the Japanese team this side was a very young outfit but capably led by that evergreen stalwart Maureen Thomson. Maureen was the highest scorer in her team with 8 touchdowns and also won the teams MVP award.

Singapore finished twelfth in the Champions Trophy in 1999 and improved their ranking to fifth as a result of their performance at the 2003 World Cup. A great effort and well done.

## UNITED STATES of **AMERICA**

The USA finished equal 12th in 1999 and improved their position in the world ranking to 6th at the end of the 2003 World Cup.

The mens 30's had close victories over Japan in the round games and lost significantly to New Zealand in the semi finals.

Their bronze medal play off was all one way traffic against them by a far more experienced South African team who won 11-1. Mark Sloan was the star of the tem winning their MVP award and topping the scoring list with four touchdowns.

America had never taken female players to a World Cup before and when they were displayed to the audience on stage at the finals function there was an immediate push to have them return in force in the future.

The women formed part of the mixed team who defeated Singapore and Thailand and drew with South Africa.

They were placed fifth after the round games and contested the shield series defeating Singapore 8-4 in the final to win the World cup Shield event. Phil Adams was the "stand out" player scoring 13 touchdowns (the highest for his team) and being named the MVP in the mixed for USA.

#### SCOTLAND

Also finishing equal twelfth in 1999, Scotland improved to finish seventh this year. The bought only a Mens open team to the Cup and although very inexperienced at a higher International level they played with passion and preformed credibly.

They contested the Shield final against "old enemies" Wales and won 8-4 reversing their European Championships result where Wales defeated them 4-0.

Best for Scotland was their captain Gordon McEwen and their "import" Scott McLeod who was named MVP for the team. "Wining the Shield will help in the development of the representative scene back home" stated "Gogs McEwen" at the presentation function.

The "rookies" of International competition, this was Thailand's first appearance at a World Cup. Although having competed at the Asian Championships the year earlier their step up to this level of competition was an "eye-opener".

Competing in the mixed division they recorded a good victory over Singapore in the rounds by lost to them in the Shield semi final. Other close games were a narrow loss 5-8 to South Africa and 5-9 to bronze medallist Japan.

James Teamo was the leading scorer with 13 touchdowns and also won the MVP award for his team. At their first appearance, they attained a world ranking of eighth. Well done Thailand.

## WALES

Also finishing equal eighth in the Championship Trophy, the Welsh team improved their ranking by one position from 1999.

Bringing largely an inexperienced mens team they struggled in many of their games especially losing in the rounds to arch rivals Scotland and then being defeated again by them in the Shield final. The trip was worth it in terms of rep development for the future and they have promised a better showing and a reverse result against Scotland in Jersey next year. MVP was Mike Nicholas.



Played as part of the South Pacific Games held in Suva in July the South Pacific Championships was an exciting time for the eight Island countries that attended. Host

Fiji was the early favourites but judging by the preliminary rounds results they were "outsiders" by the time the finals came around.

The impressive component of this tournament was the attendance of two new countries to International Touch, Tahiti and Tuvalu, both wanting to join the Federation and becoming involved in ongoing development in their own country.

The progression of this event on an bi-annual basis received strong support from all those attending and in order to enhance the development within the Islands group strict residency qualifications were imposed along the same lines as the SPG Charter.

#### FLH

Fiji played in both the mens and mixed divisions. They skipped to a 3-0 lead against Papua New Guinea in the opening mens match and looked certain to go on with it. PNG had other ideas and came back to eventually win the game in a thrilling finish 7-6.

The remaining round games were won easily with Samoa being the only opposition before the finals series. The final series were played under a preliminary semis and finals format with a grand final to determine the winner.

PNG repeated the losing dose to Fiji in the first semis defeating them 6-5 and after Fiji won against Samoa in the next stage they again met in the grand final. After being undefeated throughout the tournament PNG went into the finals as hot favourites. In a fast a furious game Fiji defeated PNG 6-5, thus giving the host team the first South Pacific Open Mens title.



In the mixed division Fiji lost twice to Cook Islands, 4-5 and 4-8 before meeting them again in the grand final. Taking a lead from the start Fiji never looked in danger of losing until the last few minutes when Cook Islands put on a last burst and scored two touchdowns to bring the score to 9-8.



However time beat them and Fiji ran out winners of the first ever Mixed Division of the South Pacific Championships. The overall South Pacific Champions Trophy was won by Fiji with a total of 18 out of a possible 18 points and all teams are looking forward to Samoa in 2005 for the next titles.

#### PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PNG were very unlucky in the mens final having already beaten Fiji on two occasions. They scored am average 11.8 touchdowns per game whilst conceding only 4.7. Along the way they recorded the highest score of the tournament that being 22-0 against Tahiti.

The grand final was a fast game and either side had opportunities to secure victory. Unfortunately the only game they lost was 5-6 to Fiji in the final. Rick Seeto should be proud of his teams effort.



The PNG mixed team had lost two games and had only defeated Samoa 6-3 before they came up against the undefeated Cook Island. In a game that showed PNG could go all the way to the finals, the scores were locked at 7 all at full time. With renewed enthusiasm the PNG team defeated Niue 8-6 in the semi final but failed 5-8 to Fiji in the preliminary final eventually finishing third in the competition.

The combined effort of the mens and mixed teams saw Papua New Guinea come in second of the points table in the South pacific Champions Trophy.

#### SAMOA

Samoa finished third in the Champions Trophy. After finishing third, two points ahead of Cook Islands in the 1999 World Cup, it appeared "on paper" that Samoa were the team to beat at this event.



The mens team started strongly defeating Niue and Tonga before falling in a heap against a red hot PNG side losing 5-10. They met Tuvalu in the semis finals and accounted for them 10-5 but could not match the strong and fast Fiji side in the preliminary final going down 2-11.

Finishing fourth in the mixed they won one game and lost three before defeating Niue in the play off for fourth.

#### **COOK ISLANDS**

Only taking a mixed team to the championships was going to make it difficult for Cook Islands to win the Champions Trophy. None the less they finished fourth as a result of the sterling performance the mixed team put in.

Going through the rounds and semis they fell at the last hurdle going down in the grand final 8-9 to a raging Fiji team. Mark Brown and his team should be proud of the effort his players put in and maybe the structure of the final format worked against his team in the end with many of the player appearing leg weary in the last game.

## TUVALU

One of the new breed of Touch nations to become involved on the International scene. A small island group north of Fiji, Tuvalu have travelled to Fiji to play touch against the locals on several occasions and as one observer remarked "they have copied they bad habits"



In saying that they must have also copied some good ones too. Playing in the mens division they won their first three games and appeared to want to go one better on day two against archrivals Fiji.

Unfortunately Fiji had other ideas and defeated them soundly 11-1. Fitness and lack of intense level competition then took control and Tuvalu never recovered losing their remaking four games and finishing a credible fourth in the mens and fifth overall.

#### NIUE

For a nation with vast international exposure the team from Niue was young and very inexperienced. With requirements of eligibility being that you have to be a resident of the country for the past five years (SPG Charter) the teams suffered from a lack depth and mature experienced players.



Former representative players were mostly ineligible thus causing a requirement for future SPINTC to have only a two-year residency requirement.

The mens and mixed teams both finished fifth and were sixth overall in the Championship trophy. A worthy effort from such a young group.

#### **TONGA**



Tonga finished seventh in the Championship trophy having only a mens team competing. They finished sixth in their division having recorded wins over Niue and Tahiti.

Despite a lack of experience the team still preformed credibly and all the players should be proud of their efforts.

#### **TAHITI**



The courage and bravery of the band of men just can't be described on paper. A group of Rugby men having a go at playing Touch was "stuff" movies are made out of.

A quick course in the Rules by referee's Director Tony Cooper and the Tahitians were ready to take on the world. Scoring just over an average of one (1) touchdown per game they conceded and average of 15.5 yet still came back for more.

Their coach Charles Tauziet and liaison manager Sebastian Depoux continual motivation had these raging bulls lined up ready to go at the commencement of each game and to their credit they played to the end. Whilst not winning a game they won the crowd and hearts of all the fair maiden on Fiji.

## **WORLD CLUBS AND ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS**



The Federation of International Touch are holding the inaugural World Clubs Championships in conjunction with the Asian Championships scheduled for the weekend of 2/4th July 2004.

For clubs to be eligible for the World Titles they must compete in regular competition in the district or provinces in the country where they are affiliated. Great teams like Parramatta in NSW, Brisbane City in Queensland and Galaxy in Auckland are all being issued with invitation to attend and compete for the title of the World best. With respect to the Asian Titles only an Asian based club can win this event.

Please e.mail this on to all the addresses in your address book to provide as wide a circulation as possible

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

## <u>2003</u>

28th June / 12th July	South Pacific Games	Suva	Fiji
26 <sup>th</sup> July	Scottish Nationals Finals	Edinburgh	Scotland
9 <sup>th</sup> August	Wales Club Championships	Pontyclun, RCT	Wales
10 <sup>th</sup> August	Welsh National Open	Cardiff Quins	Wales
23 <sup>rd</sup> August	Jersey 'Open' Touch	Jersey R.F.C	Jersey
24 <sup>th</sup> August	Jersey Beach Touch	St Ouens Bay	Jersey
17/20 September	Australian Youth C'ships	Coffs Harbour	Australia
29 <sup>th</sup> September	PNG National Championships	Rabaul	PNG
10/11/12 <sup>th</sup> October	FIT Second World Schools Championships	Brisbane	Australia
30 Oct/1st Nov.	Australia Cup	Adelaide	Australia

## <u>2004</u>

20/26th January	Australian Youth (20's) Tour	TBA	New Zealamd
13/16th March	ATA Nationals (Opens/20's)	Coffs Harbour	Australia
18/21st March	Australian Nationals (Seniors)	Coffs Harbour	Australia
3/4 <sup>th</sup> July	Asian Touch Championships	Singapore	Singapore
2/4 <sup>th</sup> July	FIT Inaugural World Club Championships	Singapore	Singapore
10/11th July	FIT Fifth European C'ships	Jersey	Jersey
22/25 September	Australian Youth Championships	Coffs Harbour	Australia
Sept/October	Australian All Schools (15's)	TBA	Australia
28/30th October	Australia Cup	TBA	Australia

## <u>2005</u>

19/23 January	FIT Second Youth World Cup	TBA	Australia
19/22nd March	Australian Nationals	TBA	Australia
	(Opens/20's)		
24/26th March	Australian Nationals (Seniors)	TBA	Australia
June	Asian Touch Championships		Singapore
July	FIT Second South Pacific	Apia	Samoa
	Championships		
21/24 September	Australian Youth	Coffs Harbour	Australia
G (0 1	Championships		
Sept/October	Australian All Schools (15's)	TBA	Australia
October	FIT Third World Schools	TBA	TBA
	Championships		
27/29th October	Australia Cup	TBA	Australia
11/13 November	Trans Tasman Test Series	South Island	New Zealand
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## **2006**

18/21st March	Australian Nationals	TBA	Australia
	(Opens/20's)		
23/25th March	Australian Nationals	TBA	Australia
	(Seniors)		
June	Asian Touch Championships		Singapore
June / July	FIT Sixth European C'ships	TBA	TBA
20/23 September	Australian Youth	Coffs Harbour	Australia
	Championships		
Sept/October	Australian All Schools (15's)	TBA	Australia
Sept/Oct	FIT Second World Clubs	TBA	TBA
26/28th October	Australia Cup	TBA	Australia

## **2007**

Jan/Feb	FIT Master World Cup	Stellenbosch	South Africa
Jan/Feb	FIT Opens World	Stellenbosch	South Africa
17/20th March	Australian Nationals	TBA	Australia
22/24th March	(Opens/20's) Australian Nationals (Seniors)	TBA	Australia
June	FIT Third South Pacific	Apia	Samoa
19/22 September	Championships Australian Youth Championships	Coffs Harbour	Australia
Sept/October	Australian All Schools (15's)	TBA	Australia
October	FIT Fourth World Schools	TBA	TBA
1/3 November	Championships Australia Cup	TBA	Australia

If you wish to have any Touch event listed here then please provide details and it will be published in the following issues.

## Touch Web Sites

Federation International Touch www.internationaltouch.com.au

Australia Touch Association www.austouch.com.au

Chile – Santiago Touch Rugby Club www.atamericas.com/touch

Richmond Touch Rugby (England) www.touchrugby.com

Dallas Touch Association www.dallastouch.com

St. Helens Touch - England www.st-helens-touch-rugby.co.uk

England www.touchrugby.com

France www.multimania.com/touchrugbyfr

Fiji Touch www.teivovo.com

New Zealand Touch www.touchnz.co.nz

Canterbury NZ www.touchcanterbury.co.nz

Japan Touch www.jp-touch.com

Paradise Touch (USA)
<a href="https://www.macatwork.com/paradisetouch/aboutus.ht">www.macatwork.com/paradisetouch/aboutus.ht</a>
<a href="mailto:m">m</a>

Portugal Beach Touch Rugby www.bdj3.pt

Rhondda Cynon Taff Touch www.rcttouch.co.uk

San Diego www.sandiegotouch.com

Scottish Touch www.scottishtouch.co.uk Touch Singapore www.touchsingapore.org

South Africa www.touchrugby.co.za

Welsh Touch (see below also) www.walestouch.org.uk

USA Touch www.usfit.com

ACT Touch www.acttouch.com.au

NSW Touch www.nswtouch.com.au

Queensland touch www.qldtouch.com.au

Touch SA www.touch-sa.asn.au

Victoria Touch www.victouch.com.au

Western Australia Touch www.watouch.com.au



I wish to thank <u>Michael Braodbent's Photo</u> <u>Gallery</u> for allowing FIT to use his pic in this newsletter - <u>www.sportingimages.com.au</u>

And Alfred Peckham from Fiji for the pic from the South Pacific Championships