

Coach's Corner

The 2000 MARFU Women's Campaign ended at ITTs in Tampa. We came within two points of our goals: beating the NRU; finishing at least second; and playing in the finals. Overall, the year was highly successful as we again finished third in the nation. The players performed magnificently and the Team Management (Assistant Coach, Selectors, and, especially, the Administrators) contributed to our overall success.

The season began in July with an Invitational Camp held in Doylestown, PA. I asked Anita Pease to assist in coaching and she accepted the position of Backline Coach. Her presence has been invaluable this year. Approximately 35 players participated in the camp and became the core of the 2000 MARFU Team. Additional players were added to the roster after the camp for the following reasons:

- recovery from injury (which had prevented them from participating in the camp);
- importation from other Territorial Sides (players from other Territories who became eligible for MARFU upon moving to the area);
- a change in the eligibility requirements established by the Women's National Team (U-23s players were not eligible for MARFU until

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2000 Women's Club Report

By Elaine Recchiuti, MARFU Women's Club Chair

MARFU Women's Club Matrix: Continued efforts to divide and organize the Women's Senior Clubs in MARFU met considerable resistance again this year.

Consensus building has brought us to a compromise for the playoff structure for Spring 2001. Given the standings for the last four years, the VRU # 1 has agreed to a playoff against the PRU #3 team for the fourth spot in the MARFU playoffs. Both the Brats and Nova have agreed to the match up, which will take place in Richmond on March 24, 2001. The Women's Club Championship will be decided on April 7- 8, 2001 in Philadelphia.

By 2002, a to-be-determined matrix will be in place for the standings. We have formed a representative committee, whose task over the winter is to divide the teams up and probably place the matrix over two seasons.

Teams that do not want to be considered will not be mandated to participate. The deadline for this structure will be **February 15, 2001**.

Committee members are: Julie Comer (BRATS); Nancy Fitz (Furies); Kam Kelly (Norfolk); Melissa Holland (NOVA); Kristin MacCarthy (EPRU); Carmita Signes (Stingers); and myself.

Team standings for 2001 are:

- #1-Washington**
- #2-Stingers**
- #3-Philly**
- #4-TBA**

USA Rugby Announces Plans for Women's 2001 National Team

After finishing their recent international season with a win over arch-rivals Canada, the Women's National Team is already focused on 2001 and some innovative preparations are set for early in the new year.

The program will invite up to 80

of the USA's best players to a selection camp in February, where three squads will train together and compete.

"We need to give the players more high-level games and the camp will be a chance to see who is comfortable when faced with more

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2001 National Team, con't.

pace and pressure,” said head coach Martin Gallagher. “It is our way of looking at the players in a different environment than usual. They will be drafted into one of the three teams so there will be a balance in the style, power and knowledge of each team.”

The four-day camp will see players involved in skills and fitness sessions each morning, with team trainings in the afternoons and short, 30-minute matches in the evenings, Gallagher explained.

“Coaches will be asked to change players

“This next season is when we need to build up our depth and lay foundations for the 2002 World Cup.”

*—Martin Gallagher
National Team Coach*

as and when needed,” he added. “It is not about winning these scrimmages, it’s about seeing the elite in difficult circumstances. This next season is

when we need to build up our depth and lay foundations for the 2002 World Cup.”

Invites to the San Diego camp/tournament will go to the Eagles current squad, and the in-form players at the All-Star Tournament in Tampa where Gallagher was scouting personally. However, the February camp is not the final word on selections for 01’s international season. The women’s national team will also have scouts at the club playoffs later in the Spring.

Another significant step in the program’s preparations is the confirmation of Tam Breckenridge
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- Martin Gallagher was appointed National Coach); and
- a need to expand the player pool at a specific position (scrumhalf) based upon player performance.

The MARFU Women played one match against the NRU in August in Sea Girt, NJ. Many of our players were unavailable due to injury and other reasons – including players incurring costs of travel to the match – so we approached the match as a selection vehicle and accepted that all players would get an opportunity to play and show their potential. MARFU lost this match 24-19, in part due to our decision to play everyone, which altered the team dynamic at halftime. MARFU led

the match until the end and the final whistle blew with MARFU camped-out within the NRU 22-meter line and attacking. Many players demonstrated their ability to play at this level and the match helped identify the side for the ITTs.

We anticipated playing the South in a match in Charlotte in early November, but logistical considerations made this match impossible. Instead, we held a practice in DC which nearly all of the players destined to be selected to the ITTs attended. This practice was highly successful and critical to the development of the side as we were able to instill and finalize an overall strategy for Tampa. This strategy included; keeping the ball in hand; instilling a high

quality defense; and attacking opponents’ defense on the inside using the “tin can” attack (a method of opening up defenses using players entering the line from depth).

We added MA Sorenson to the Coaching Staff at ITTs to assist with the front row. We again faced-off against the NRU, and played to the limits of our ability. We led the match 13-10 heading into injury time and lost at the final whistle on a questionable call. The referee allowed a try when the ball was clearly held-up off of the ground. The final score was NRU 15, MARFU 13 (3 tries v. 2 tries, 1 penalty). In all fairness to the NRU, we failed to clear the ball from our own 22 towards the end and they played a
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as assistant coach for 2001. Her primary focus will be on forwards play and she will work with Gallagher on selections.

“Our main weakness is the relative inexperience of the pack in high level matches,” said the former Eagle. “But as evidenced by the game-by-game improvements made in Canada, combined with the aggressive long-range competition plan, this should not be a concern for long. The American forwards are adept pupils of the game and excellent athletes.”

In what may prove to be the program’s most ambitious season to date, the Eagles plan to play 3 or 4 internationals in July, 2001 and will undertake a Fall tour of the United Kingdom, while also arranging fixtures for an ‘A’ team.

The team’s preparations aren’t free, and the Eagles have launched a significant fundraising effort to keep pace with the fully funded England and New Zealand teams. By joining Syndicate 2002, the team continues to look for rugby people to help the USA maintain its high world ranking. Donations to the Syndicate will help reduce player expenses between now and the World Cup. ■

For further details on the 2001 Women’s National Team and the 2002 World Cup, see:

www.usarugby.org/wnt/

MARFU Gets New Assistant Coach

In the next year, Anita Pease plans bring a wealth of rugby experience to the MARFU back line as the team’s new assistant coach.

Anita has been involved in coaching since 1997, serving as head coach for the George Washington University Women, as an assistant to the MARFU U-23 Women’s Side, and as assistant coach for the Maryland Stingers Women’s Club team before accepting her latest position as MARFU assistant coach.

She is also an accomplished rugby player, proving wrong the old adage “Those who can’t, teach.” Anita played for the Stingers from 1988 – 1996, taking a brief respite to play for the New Orleans Halfmoons in 1997. She returned to the Stingers in 1998, and played with them until last year. She has been on one select-side team or another consistently for the last decade, playing for the U.S. Women’s National 7s Team for the past three years.

The MARFU team welcomes Anita and her rugby knowledge. In the words of MARFU head coach Brett Burdick, “Anita’s presence has been invaluable this year,” especially during preparations for the 2000 ITTs. The entire team looks forward to working with her in the future. ■

MARFU Women’s Team Support Staff

Brett Burdick, Coach
Anita Pease, Assistant Coach
Elaine Recchiuti, Club Chair
Julie Comer, Manager
Joanne Corriera, PRU Selector
Marnie, Selector
XXXX, Selector
Sara Bennington, Writer

MARFU Club Spring Schedules

Chesapeake

March 10	Morris
March 17	Monmouth/Washington
March 24	Blackwater
March 31 - April 1	Ruggerfest
April 4	Off
April 14	Chesapeake Old Boys (Easter)
April 21	BRATS
April 28	Off
May 5	Ithaca
May 12	Rites of Spring
May 19	Erie Tournament

Maryland

March 18	Penn State
March 31 - April 1	Ruggerfest
April 7 - 8	MARFU
April 14	Off (Easter)
April 28	NOVA
May 5	Washington
May 19	New York

March 10	Norfolk
March 17	Philadelphia
March 24	Blue Ridge Challenge
Match	
March 31- April 1	Ruggerfest
April 7 - 8	MARFU (TBD)
April 14	Off (Easter)
April 21	Washington
April 28	Maryland

NOVA

Philadelphia

March 17	NOVA
March 24	New York
March 31 - April 1	Ruggerfest
April 7 - 8	MARFU
April 14	Off (Easter)
April 21	Maryland
April 28	Washington
May 5	Beantown

March 17	Monmouth/Chesapeake
March 24	Norfolk
March 31 - April 1	Ruggerfest
April 7 - 8	MARFU
April 14	Off (Easter)
April 21	NOVA
April 28	Philadelphia
May 5	Maryland

Washington

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fine match. Both teams are quite evenly matched, and NRU won deservedly. I am not sure that we could have performed better. The players should be commended for their efforts and for dominating the match. Only the final score, for which I accept responsibility, went against us.

In our second match MARFU took on the West. This match resulted in a MARFU win 21-9 (3T,3C v. 3P). The match went entirely as the coaching and management staff expected, with the West coming out hard but predictably fading under the pressure MARFU was able to sustain. It was a bit of an anticlimax to the weekend that could have been.

The ITT match was MARFU's third consecutive loss to the NRU. However, the COMBINED point total we lost by over these three matches amounts to only 10 points! (Cumulative scores: 8-5 at the

All of the MARFU players who traveled to ITTs (again paying for the airfare at their own expense) had an opportunity to play in a match. In addition, the National Women's Team selection staff individually recognized the efforts of 16 MARFU players. I fully expect most of these players to be selected to the National Pool.

The MARFU Women's 2001 Campaign will kickoff in the Spring. We expect that there will be a MARFU South and MARFU North Player's Camp (open camp) held to identify available talent and to provide the players (and Club Coaches who attend) with instruction in the style of play we intend to implement in 2001. The Camps will be open to all

Women's Players (collegiate and club) and will be designed to give players an idea of what is needed to excel at this level.

I have enjoyed this past year and look forward to a successful 2001. Thanks.

Brett Burdick
MARFU Women's Coach

USA RUGBY 2001 EVENT VENUES

Collegiate Women Division I Sweet 16	April 21-22, 2001	Orlando, FL
Club Men Division II Sweet 16	May 12-13, 2001	Fort Worth, TX / New Haven, CT
Club Women Division I Sweet 16	May 12-13, 2001	Fort Worth, TX / New Haven, CT
Boys High School Championships	May 18-19, 2001	Ohio State Univ., Columbus, OH
Club Men Division I Championships	June 2-3, 2001	Pittsburgh, PA
Club Men Division II Championships	June 2-3, 2001	Rockford, IL
Club Men Division III Championships	June 2-3, 2001	Rockford, IL.
Club 7's Men Nat'l Championships	August 11-12, 2001	Conshohocken, PA
Club 7's Women Nat'l Championships	August 11-12, 2001	Conshohocken, PA
ITT 7's Men and Women	August 25-26, 2001	Palo Alto, CA

These remaining venues have yet to be determined, but will be announced as each are secured.

Collegiate Men Division I Sweet 16	April 21-22, 2001
Collegiate Men Division II Elite 8	April 21-22, 2001
Collegiate Championships Men Division I and II	May 5-6, 2001
Collegiate Championships Women Division I and II	May 5-6, 2001
Club Men Division I Sweet 16	May 12-13, 2001
Club Women Division I National Championships	June 2-3, 2001
Rugby Super League Championships	TBA
ITT 15's Men and Women	Nov. 31-Dec. 2, 2001

Comments, Thoughts, Ideas?

In an effort to keep the MARFU team more connected and “in the know,” we are trying to send out a newsletter every couple of months with information relevant to MARFU and USA Rugby. In the future, we may try to incorporate graphics, logos, pictures, etc. Please send your ideas, news, and comments to Sara Bennington at heed30@hotmail.com. While your comments are appreciated, there are no guarantees they’ll be incorporated.