

The game of Rugby town



28 September 1857 - Letter from Dublin (186) to Regent Park - London, redirected at Rugby - Warwickshire

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1 - ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF RUGBY

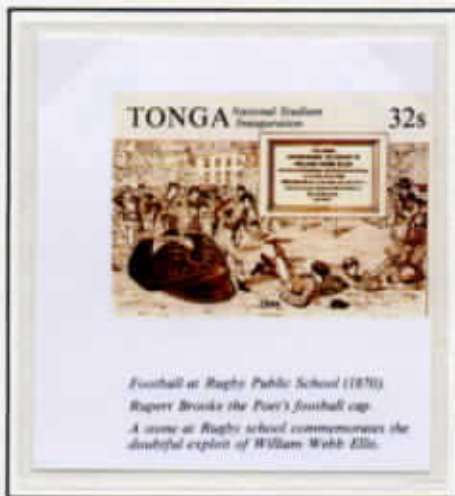
1.1 - The games in ancient times

The game of Rugby owes its birth to the Public School of the City of Rugby, where, according to the story, or rather the legend, one day in 1823, during the daily football game among students, a certain William WEBB ELLIS, went against the rules then in place, took the ball with his hands and began running toward the line at the end of the field, thus originating one of the essential and distinctive characteristics of the game of rugby.

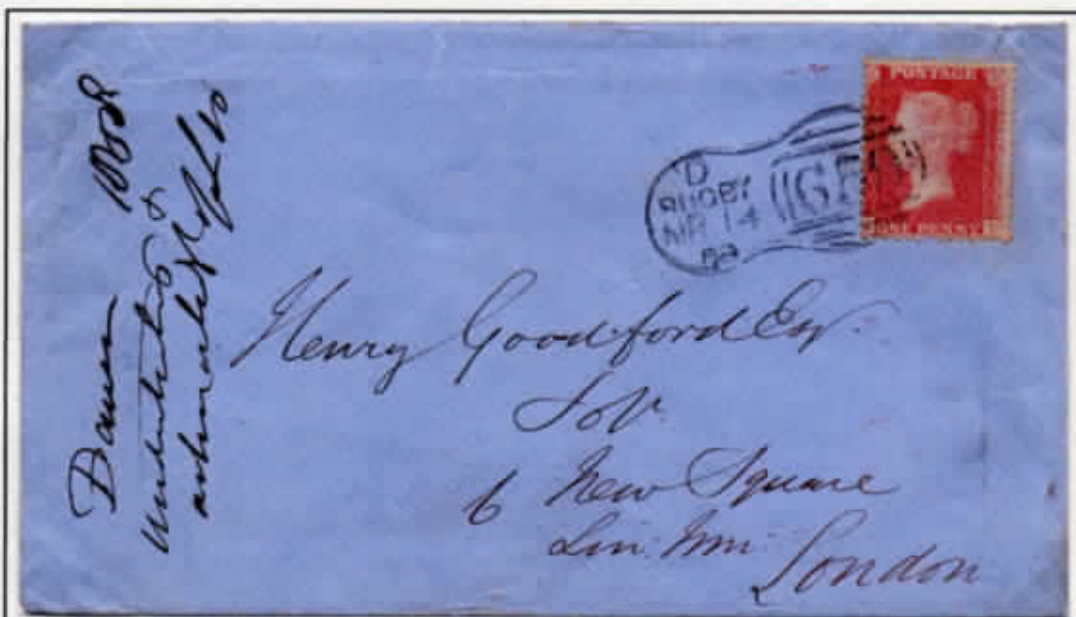
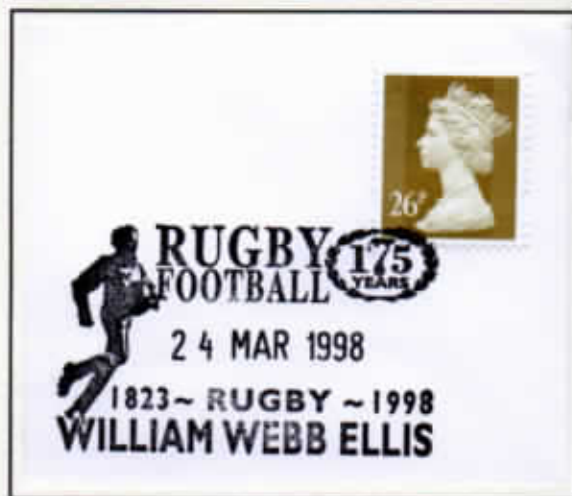


City of Rugby - The birthplace of Rugby - Football

Proof of color



Specimen Rugby Public School



Rugby 1858 - "Shoe" postmark

William Webb Ellis

In fact, the origins of the game of rugby are very old. In Greece the "Episkirios" was practiced, which consisted of passing the ball between two teams of three players each. In Rome, the ball game was called "Harpastum", and it was the favorite pastime of roman legionaries, who introduced it around the entire "known" world.



"Episkirios"



"Harpastum"



Ball games were spontaneously born in all latitudes, in faraway countries. In ancient times, Silla, one of three Kingdoms of Korea, had a ball game called "Chuk-Guk", very similar in form to contemporary football.



"Chuk-Guk"

Among them, the closest to modern ball games come from Central America, where the Mayans and the Aztecs practiced the "Tlachtli" and the "Pok-Ta-Pok".



Chichenitza - Field of play



"Pok-Ta-Pok"



"Tlachtli"

In more recent times, Florentine Soccer, with its rules and limitation of 27 players per team, divided into various groups, "datori arretrati", "datori avanzati", "sconciatori" and "innanzi", is the game that has influenced rugby the most.



Century XV - "Florentine Soccer"

By contrast, Soule and Football were games played furiously, without rules, time limits, or number of participants. Usually these competitions became true battles between villages, and whoever managed to take the ball to the adversary town plaza was the winner.



"Florentine Soccer"
Century XVI

"Soule"
Century XIX



"Football" - 1827

"Football" - 1890

Proof of color

1.2 - Football - Rugby

As time passed, a faint rule softened these games with a cleaner division between the "football" played with feet (especially at the schools in Oxford), and the one played prevalently with hands Football-Rugby", for the name of the city where it was played.

1807 - Mileage mark "Oxford 57" addressed to Rugby - Warwickshire




1830 - Circular mileage mark "Rugby with 83 erased"




June 1886 - "The Rules" written by the International Football Association Board

RUGBY FOOT BALL SHOES.



NORMAN & BENNETT,
144 HIGH ST.,
BOSTON.



Tan Calf Foot Ball Bals., Hand Sewed Welt - - -	\$2.75 to \$3.00
Genuine Kangaroo Foot Ball Bals., Hand Sewed Welt - - -	3.00 to 3.25
Tan Calf Foot Ball Bals., Machine Made - - -	2.25 to 2.50
Kangaroo Calf Foot Ball Bals., Machine Made - - -	2.00 to 2.25

SEND FOR SAMPLES.

(Photocopy address side)



Rugby Foot-Ball Shoes
Norman & Bennett Boston

In the autumn of 1863 representatives of various Public Schools met in Cambridge for to check the feasibility of a single regulation for the game of Football, the majority is in favor of a version that prefers the use of the feet compared to rugby version that allows the use of hands.

1863 - "Football Association"

Proof of color



Proof of color



How was logical to expect, representatives of the Rugby school, were retire. In a subsequent meeting in London on 26 October 1863, was set up the Football Association, the Federation of English Football Club.

Molnár Lajos: Athletikai gyakorlóok c. időéből - 1878
Football (Rugbi)

LEVELEZŐLAP

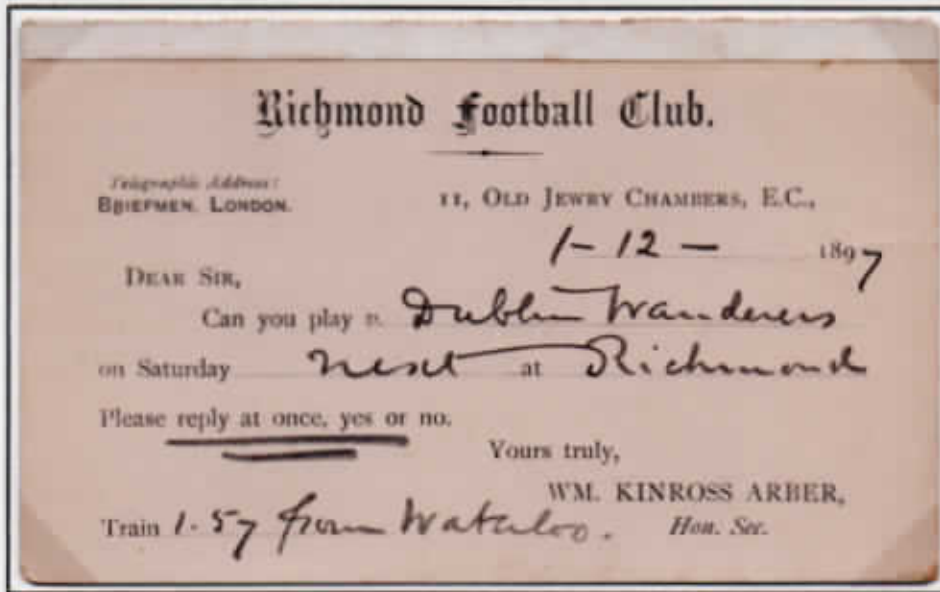
A POSTAI IRÁNYÍTÓSZÁMOT SZÍVESKEDJÉK FELÍRNI!

Feladó: _____

MSZ 430-63

After several meetings to study a set of common rules, the representatives of the clubs that practiced the different systems of the game arrived at a definite division, and in 1871 Rugby had its first federation: the "Rugby Football Union".

1897 Richmond Football Club - Convocation for the match with Dublin Wanderers Football Club



(Photocopy address side)



Richmond Football Club is one of the 8 founding club to have formed the Rugby Football Union in 1871.

1897 Great Britain - Postal Stationery printed to private order



Print on paper reunion



1971 Great Britain - Centenary of "Rugby Football Union"

The Rugby Union, besides drafting a set of rules, limited the number of players to 15 per team and substituted the round ball with an oval, since it was easier to pass when running and harder to control with feet.



1908 - "Rugby Players"
 Painting by Henri Rousseau

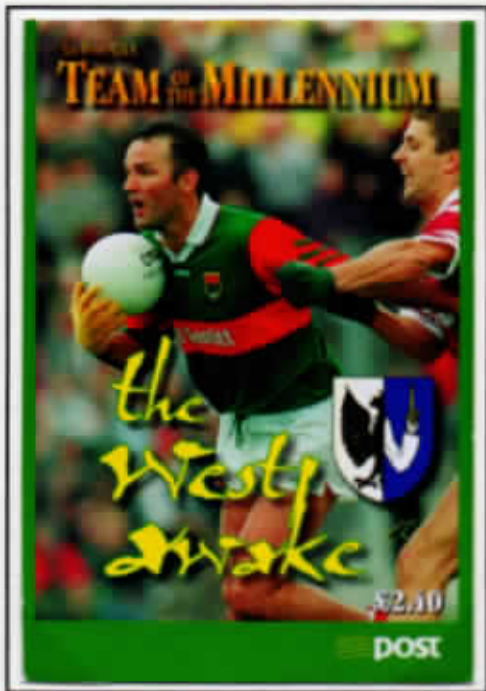


"Football game"

1.3 - Around the world

In reality, the rules were not set in stone and some things would be changed to better adapt the game to the characteristics of a certain nation. Thus were born the Gaelic Football in Ireland and in Australia the Australian Football and, the maximum expression of professional sport, the American Football.

Gaelic Football



Adhesive Stamps Booklet - Eire



Australian Football



Stamps with printing written in red moved upwards

Fancy Cancel from Genesee Depot - Wisconsin



American Football

1929 Michigan - Wisconsin Football game

This universality of players, has allowed rugby to be added to the program of the main athletic events, disputed in several continents.



Malaysia
XVIth Commonwealth Games



Turin 1937 Stadium Mussolini - "Littoriali dello Sport" Rugby competitions



New Caledonia 8th South Pacific Games

Proof of luxury



Morocco
IXth Mediterranean Games



Papua New Guinea
9th South Pacific Games

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みほん

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In Asia, rugby is a very popular game, especially in Japan, its chief proponent there.

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抽せん日 1月15日 お年玉のお渡し 1月20日-7月19日
番号部分を取り取らずに郵便局へお持ちください。



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Japan - Postal Stationery "Specimen" not cut

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Besides Japan, the game is also played in South Korea, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, and China, where it was brought by the British colonizers at the beginning of the XXth Century.



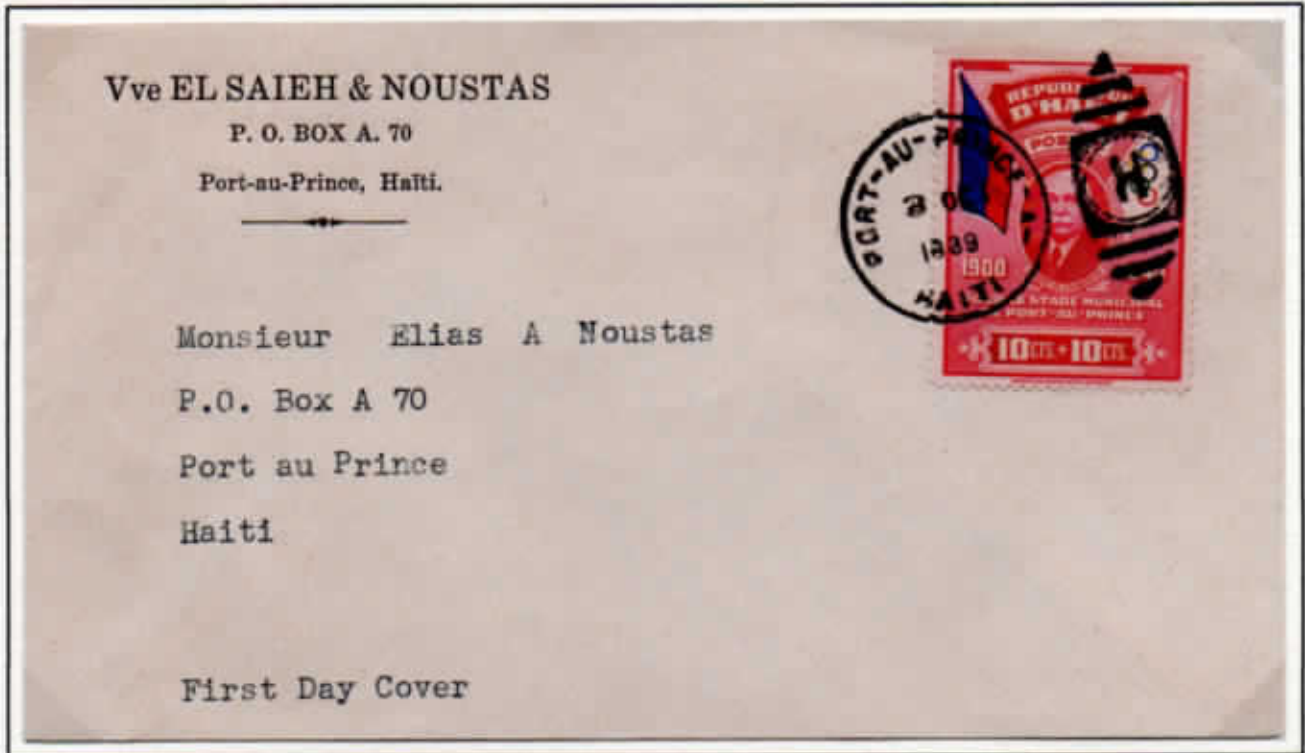
1953 - Japan - 8th National athletic meeting



1963 - South Korea - 44th National sporting meeting

1.4 - The rugby to the Olympic Games

The Olympics was resurrected in modern time by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who has done revived the idea of the ancient Olympic Games in Olympia and founded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894.



Baron Pierre de Coubertin



Olympia Stadium



Olympia



Greece - Postal Stationery

Olympia

The first games were held in Athens in 1896 but did not include Rugby. Rugby was added to the Olympic Program for the second Olympiad in Paris during the World Exhibition of 1900.

1896 - Athens



1900 - Olympic stamp
Surcharged "A" and "M"
Metallic Value - Gold Value

1900 - Paris World Exposition Postal franchise of the Organising Committee

To honor this initial diffusion, the new game is inserted of the program of the 1900 Olympic games in Paris. This first Olympic title, played at the Velodrome Municipal Vincennes.



1900 - Paris Exposition - Annexe Exposition "Vincennes"

Three National Olympic Committees each entered a team at the 1900 games. They were France, Germany and Great Britain. The German and British teams were not national teams in the current sense of the word, but represented by clubs, Mosley Wanderers RFC played for Britain, while the Frankfurt Fussball Club represented Germany.



Mosley Wanderers RFC



Paris Exposition
Post Office "Iena"

Paris, 14 October 1900
France - Germany 27-17

France won the gold, beating Germany and Great Britain. The final round robin match, between Germany and Britain was never played, as the teams were unable to stay in Paris until the scheduled match date.



Paris Exposition - Post Office "Presse"

Paris, 28 October 1900, France - Great Britain 27-8

Again in the 1908 London Games, rugby players managed to stay on the fabulous Olympic stage; however, only two teams took part in it : Australasia (representing Australia and new Zealand), the brilliant winner, and Great Britain (represented by the Cornwall Rugby Football Union team)

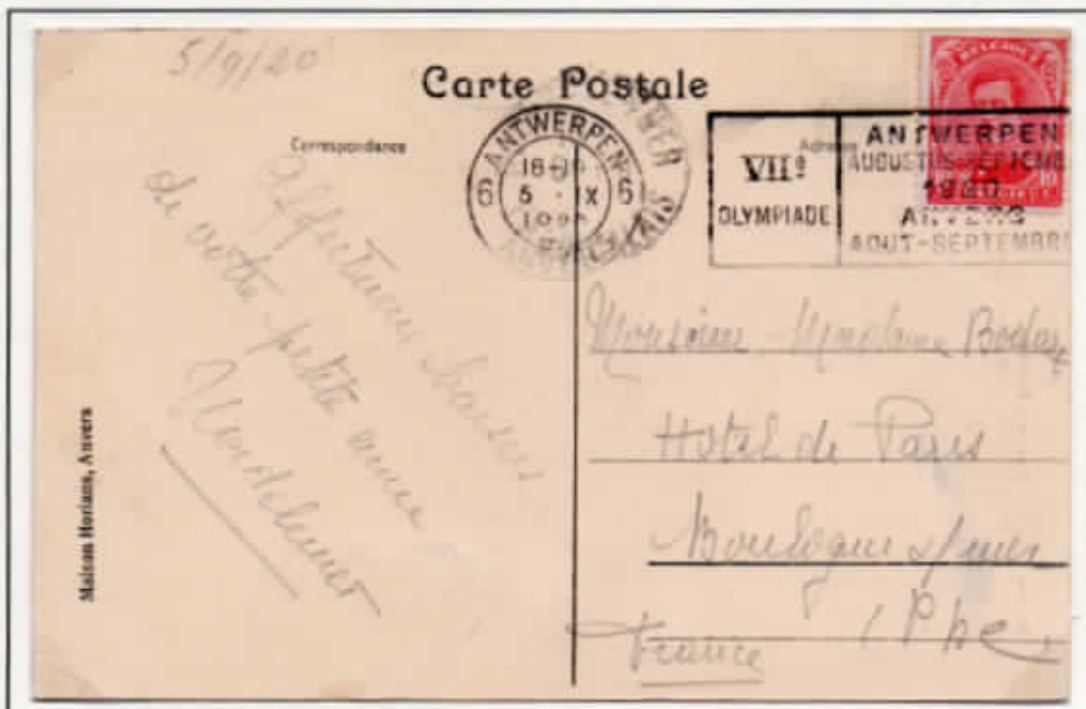
1908 - London, Franco - British Exhibition



IVth Olympic Games - London 1908.

Cornwall
 Rugby Football Union

In the 1920 games in Anversa, there were also two teams: France and the United States of America, who, in spite of having a team that consisted of American Football players, were able to defeat France in the only game played.



VIIth Olympic Games - Anvers 5 September 1920, United States of America - France 8-0

Finally in 1924, a small Olympic tournament which culminated in a final, bearing a semblance of credibility, was held at the Colombes Stadium in Paris. Once again, the United States managed to defeat the incredulous French. In reality, these Olympic tournaments were poorly represented. Nonetheless the Olympic gold was competed for and awarded, with glory and fame accorded the rugby players.



VIII^e Olympic Games
- Paris 1924 -



Romania to Paris in 1924 winning the bronze medal in the rugby tournament.

1924 - Paris, Olympic Games - Postal stationery stamped on comande



Colombes - Olympic Stadium on May 4, 1924, opening match France - Romania 61-3



South Africa - New Zealand

The IOC removed the Rugby following the Paris Games, but the Rugby was again a protagonist in the Olympics. In protest at a tour of South Africa by the New Zealand "All Blacks Team" early in the 1976, 28 countries boycotted the Summer Olympics in Montreal, after their demand to have New Zealand excluded was not met. The South Africa, which been banned from the Olympics since 1964 because of its apartheid politics. Rugby Union not being an Olympic sport, the IOC declined to exclude New Zealand.



2009 - 121st IOC Session in Copenhagen

The Rugby in version, Sevens is now recognized as an Olympic sport and will make its debut in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro summer Olympics. This follows a vote by the executive board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to include the sport. That decision was backed at the 121st IOC Session in Copenhagen on October 9, 2009.



2016 - Rio de Janeiro Rugby Sevens Women New Zealand Silver medal

This first Olympic Rugby Sevens was won by the Fiji Islands (men) and Australia (Women).



2016 - Rio de Janeiro Rugby Sevens

2 - RULES OF THE GAME

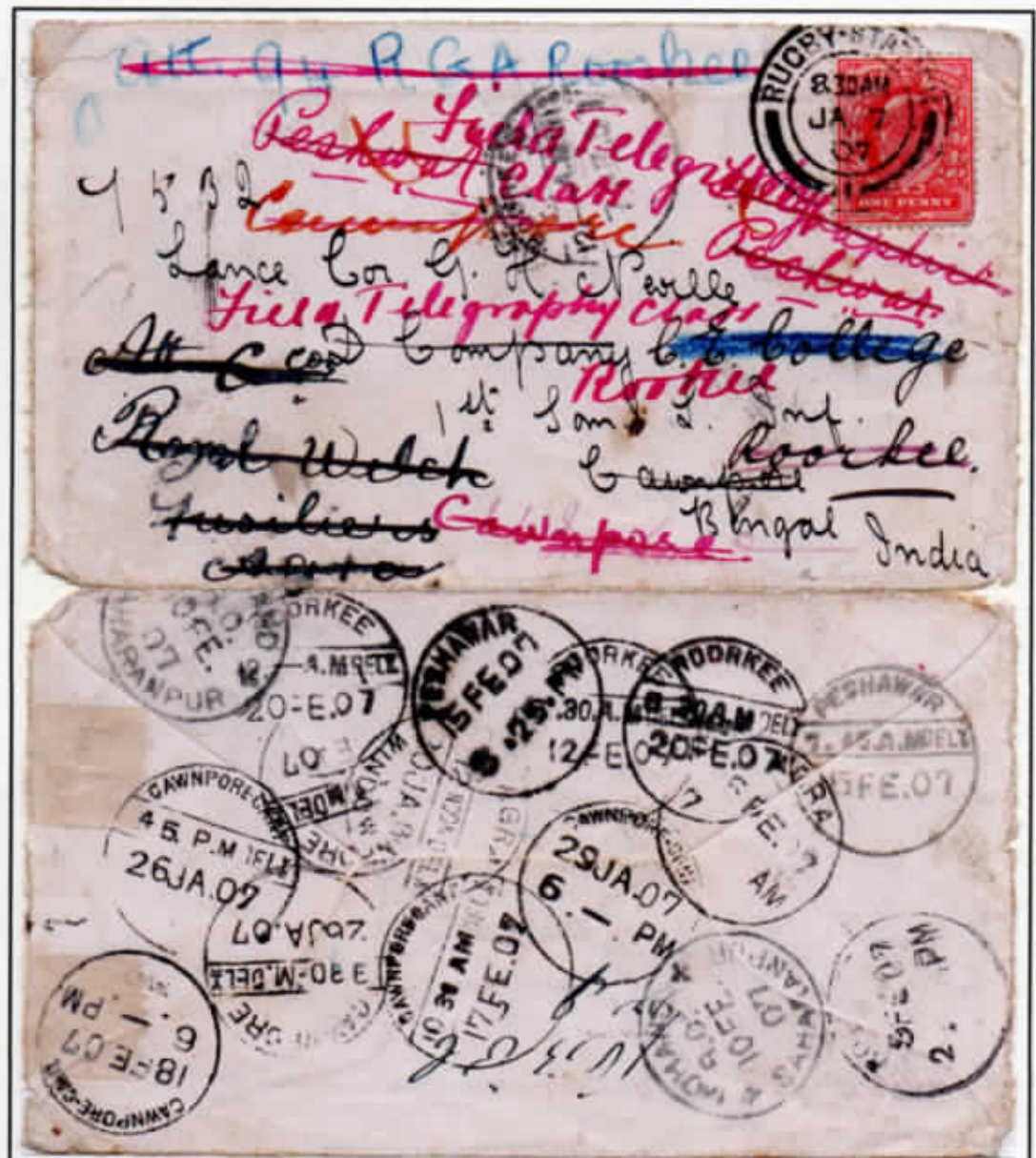
2.1 - The spirit of game

The paternity of modern rugby, as well as gesture of revolutionary W. W. Ellis, is due to Thomas Arnold who appointed Director of Rugby School in 1829, said a vigorous steering methods of education then in force, placing the utmost highlighted the fundamental importance of sport in educating youth.



All these reforms have been immortalized in Thomas Hughes' book "Tom Brown's School Days". Since then, this system has been copied around the world, so Arnold is effectively the father of secondary education.

This type of "Sportman" forged by the Public School arrives in the most remote corners of the world reaching below the game of Rugby to land in the five continents to follow the British Imperial expansion.



1907 - Several times re-directed cover from Rugby, England to Cawnpore Bengal-India, re-directed to the Royal Welch Fusiliers at Agra, to Peshawar and finally to Roorkee.

The game of rugby, however, did not lose its popularity and continued to increase in importance, so that today it is practiced in almost all the world. In addition to the game, were founded several cities, to which was given the name of Rugby.



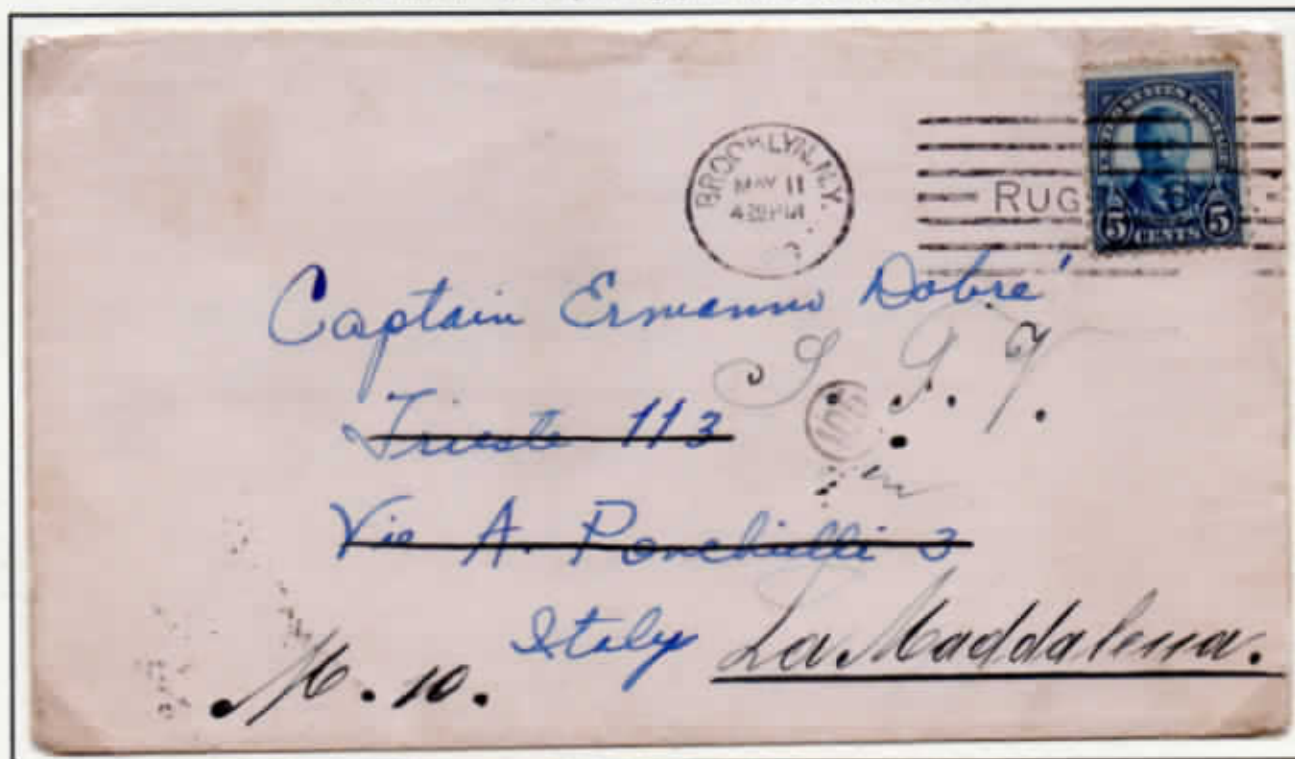
USA - Stamps "Pre-Cancels"
Rugby North Dakota



1930 USA - The City of Rugby in Colorado



1882 Canada - The city of Rugby in Ontario Simcoe County



1936 USA - Brooklyn "Rugby Station"

(Photocopy address side)

The third time and 'one of the traditions of the world of rugby. Old as the rugby itself. After a battle as a rugby match, often create stable and strong friendships between players, who until a few minutes earlier were fighting, always sporting.

Great Britain - Aerogramme



STADIWM Y MILENIWM · CAERDYDD

MAE STADIWM NEWYDD Y MILENIWM YM MHARC YR ARFAU, CAERDYDD, YN GAMP ARUTHROL O IAN EI BENSARNIAETH AT BEIRIANNEG, A GALL DDAL 72.500 O WYLWYR AR GYFER GEMAU A CHYNGHERDDAU MAWR.

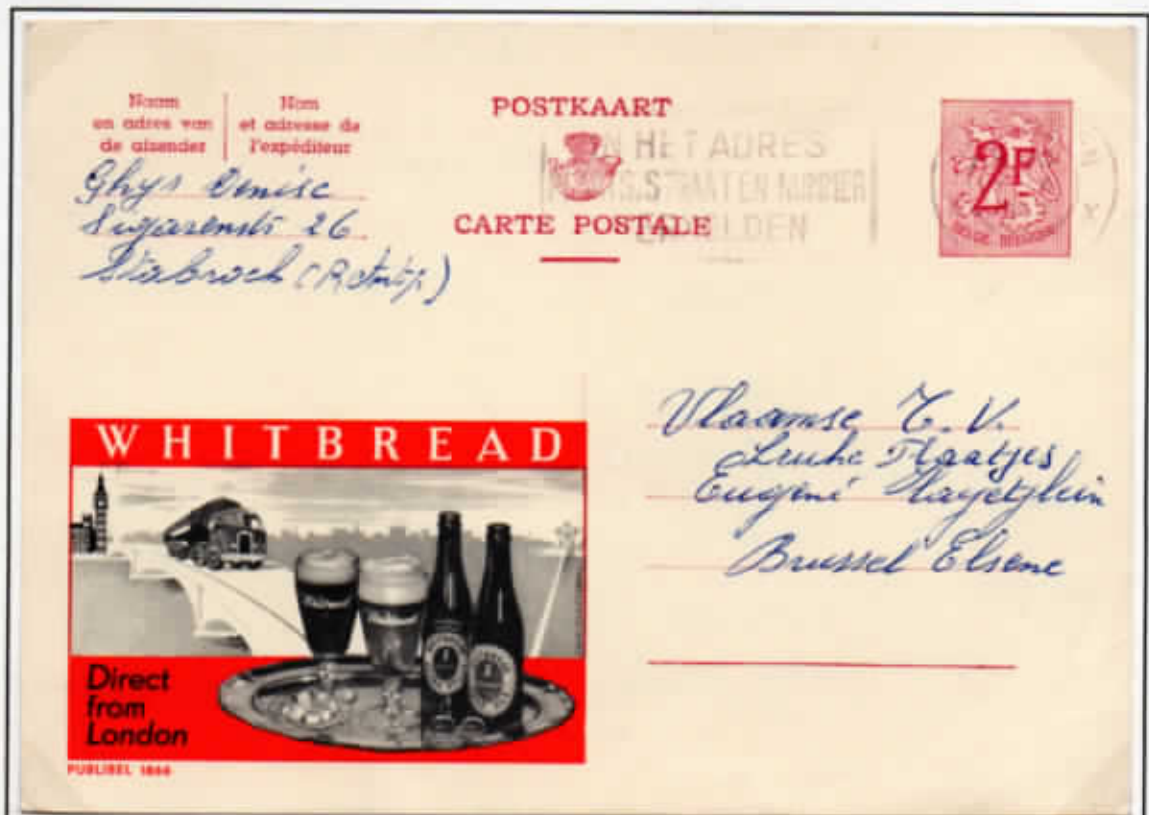
THE NEW MILLENNIUM STADIUM AT CARDIFF ARMS PARK IS AN OVERWHELMING FEAT OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING, WITH THE CAPACITY FOR 72,500 SPECTATORS AT MAJOR SPORTS AND MUSIC EVENTS.

MILLENNIUM STADIUM · CARDIFF

Amstel Beer



It takes place after the game and it does bring together all players of both teams, in a public space, where they can offer amicably to drink (beer of excellent quality), to eat and talk quietly among friends, obviously the fans can also participate in the "third time" along with players and technical staff of their respective teams The "third time" contains in itself a basic principle of rugby the sportsmanship.



2.2 - Purpose of the game

The purpose of the game is for two teams of fifteen players each, playing fairly, according to the rules, and in the spirit of the sport, to score as many points as possible, taking, passing, or kicking the ball.



"There is no sport without Fair Play"



Proofs of color



"Proof of artist - Violet" signed by the author of the stamp Raoul Serres

The field consists of a rectangle of 100 m. x 68 m., where there are traced the following lines: the half field line, the 22 meters lines, the goal lines, and the goal areas.



Stamps Booklet - Great Britain

Cardiff - Arms Park

On the middle of the goal lines there are located the characteristic arches with the H shape, made of two poles that pretend to extend endlessly, united by a horizontal pole.



St. Denis - Paris - Stade de France



Jean Giraudoux



According to a now classic definition by writer Jean Giraudoux, "a rugby team is based on fifteen players: eight strong and active (in the front); two light and crafty (in the middle); four tall and fast (in the three quarters), and one that is an example of coolness and cold blood (in the extreme)".



"Rugby is a dynamic and male-like game's"

The real director of the team is the "middle opening", who, with his quick eye and tactile skill, must immediately guess toward which side the "three quarters" should be, in order to carry the offensive move to a positive end.



1947 Romania - Registered letter sent to USA with the fiscal stamp

Proof of luxury



"Middle opening"



1956 - French stamp overprint in CFA francs, to be used in the French Department of Reunion

2.3 - Score

There are four ways to score points: try, the conversion, penalty goal, and the dropped-goal. The try is achieved when a player squeezes the ball into the adversary area. The try is worth five points and it allows the players who scored the try to attempt a conversion kick at goal which, if successful, is worth two points.



Try



Cancellation Postage-Paid



Conversion kick at goal

The referee validated the try

Stamps Booklet - Japan

On the occasion of mayor international event, to help referee make decision, on board the field was entered a second referee with the Television Match Official (TMO). The TMO can only be used in the situation where the referee is unsure whether a try or goal attempt has been scored, or in the event of foul play in-goal.





Neil Jenkins - King of footballers - Idol of Welsh rugby



Dropped-goal



Adhesive stamp

(Photocopy address side)

Australia - Postal Stationery



The dropped-goal is a rebound kick executed during an action, and this applies three points.



Adhesive stamp



Referee



Infractions and fault are penalized through penalty kicks, which can be struck in several ways, placed and dropped, in which the ball must be passed between the poles over the horizontal pole. If successful it is worth three points.



Penalty goal



2.4 - Fundamental characteristics

Other fundamental characteristics are found in the rules of the game.

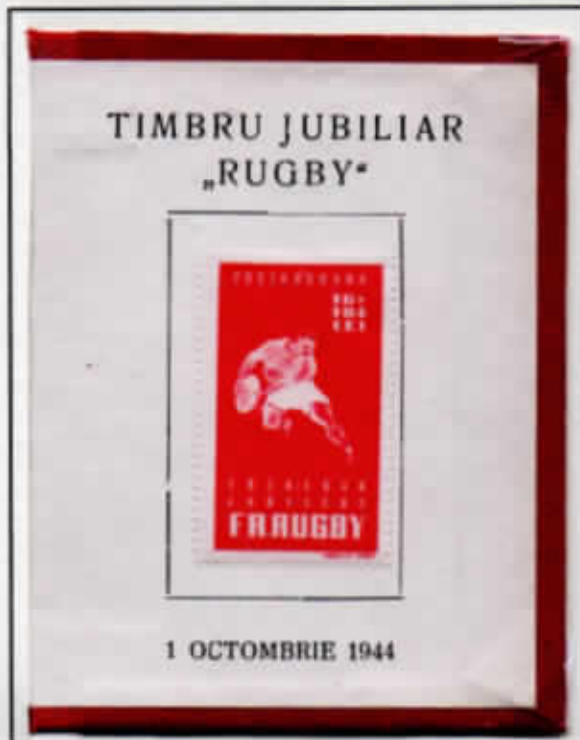


The "Offside", no player can be located in front of the teammate in possession of the ball, who must pass the ball backwards. Passing the ball forward with the hands is not allowed; it can only be passed with the feet.

1944 - Folder with stamp commemorating the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Romanian Federation of Rugby.



Perforated vertical moved



Specimen



During the game, taking the ball can be accomplished through individual or collective actions, just as side remittance, also called "line-out", and "scrum".



Line-out



Adhesive stamp



"Crouch, Bind, Set"

Scrum



In 2013 the International Rugby Board (IRB) introduced the new rule that the referee expresses the commands to the scrum in this sequence, "Crouch, Bind, Set".





Rules allow interrupting the adversary's actions by clinging to him in the tackle, who, to avoid incurring the "held" fault, must release the ball even if it is to the advantage of the adversary.



Tackle



Stamps Booklet - Great Britain

3 - ANGLO-SAXON PREDOMINANCE

3.1 - The Rugby Unions

Rugby is essentially a British game, which means challenge with a traditional and conservative spirit. The guardianship of this spirit is entrusted to the International Rugby Board, which is not precisely an international federation, but rather a moral authority with the responsibility of establishing and interpreting the rules of the game, programming the calendar of international meets and tournaments. Until recently, among the duties of the I.R.B. was also the defense of the amateur status of players. In 2015 the International Rugby Board (IRB) has changed its name in the most significant "Rugby World".



1987 - Agen, International Rugby Board Meeting

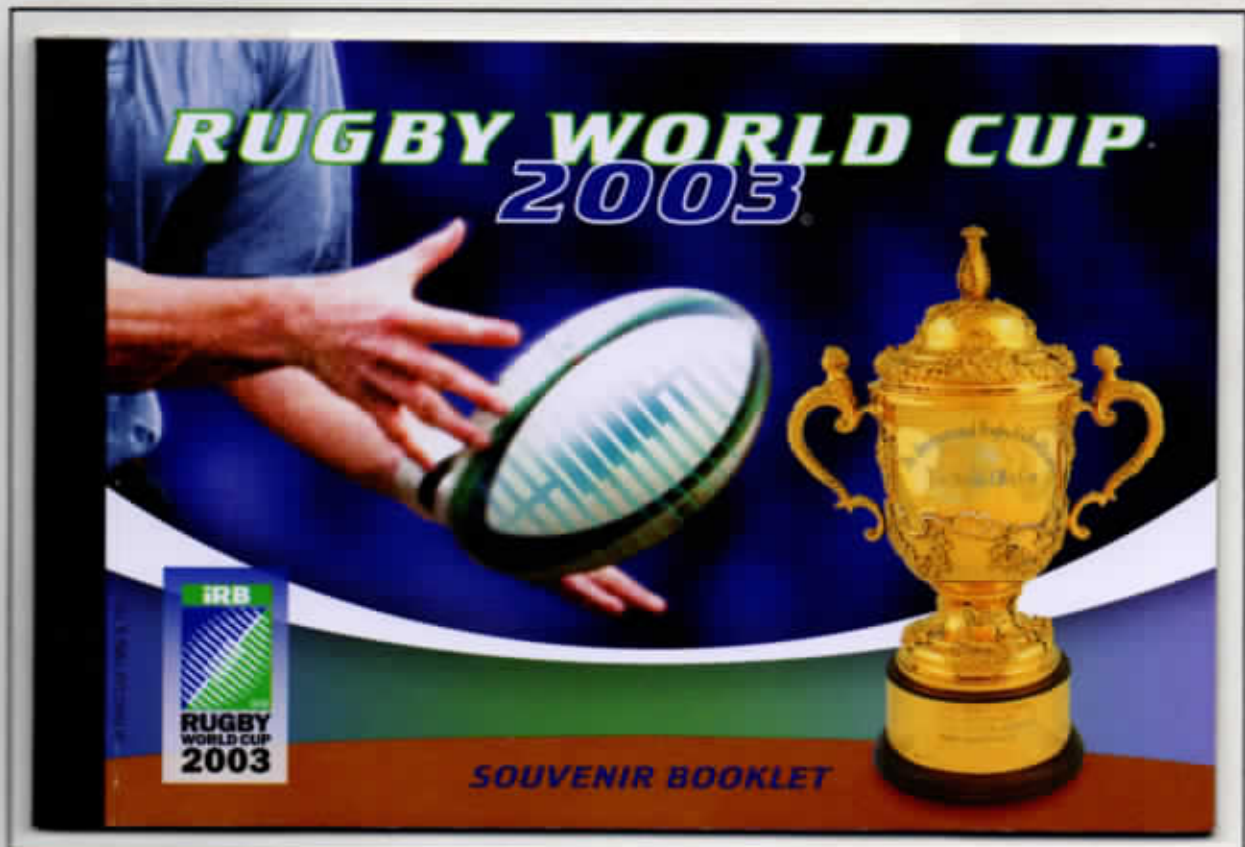


1999 - Buenos Aires, Congress "IRB"

However, after the great success of the "Rugby World Cup", the amateurs are disappearing, abetted by the entry in the field of television and sponsors, in light of its imminent professionalism.



Rugby World & Post - Official Magazine of International Rugby Board



Among the Anglo-Saxon Rugby Unions that are part of the International Board, the British Rugby Union has a place of pre-eminence. Founded in 1871, it was simply called "Rugby Union" without the addition of other words that could only limit its action. It is the Rugby Union with its authority and prestige the one that guides in practice the worldwide movement of rugby.

Moving the printing of colours



Yellow



Brown



Blue

Centenary of Rugby Union



Ireland - England



England - New Zealand

England - World Champion 2003



There are three other Rugby Unions in British territory.

In 1871, the Scottish Rugby Union was leader along with England of the first Test Match in the history of rugby. The match, with the "Calcutta Cup" race, a trophy that still today belongs to the winner of the annual challenge, was settled in favor of the Scottish, who make this historic event their point of honor on every occasion.

(Photocopy address side)

Great Britain - Aerogramme

By air mail
Par avion
Aerogramme
Töörn'n phost-adhair / Ultra-adhair

Great Britain Postage 1

The Scottish Team v. England in the first ever International in 1871. Note the 'long johns'.



The Venue: Raeburn Place, Edinburgh.
The Score: Scotland 1 Goal, 1 try, England 1 try.



Original Scottish cap and badge dating from 1871.



An aerogramme should not contain any enclosure/Na cuir rud 'sam bith taobh a stigh de'n litir seo

Photograph of Murrayfield, courtesy of Kwik-Fit
Photograph of First Scottish Team, Raeburn Place and First Cap and Badge, courtesy of the Scottish Rugby Union

Photograph of the Calcutta Cup, courtesy of the Rugby Football Union

Photographs of Ned Haig and The Greenyards, courtesy of Melrose Rugby Football Club

Designed by Don Burston & Associates
Printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Limited for the British Post Office

Postcode



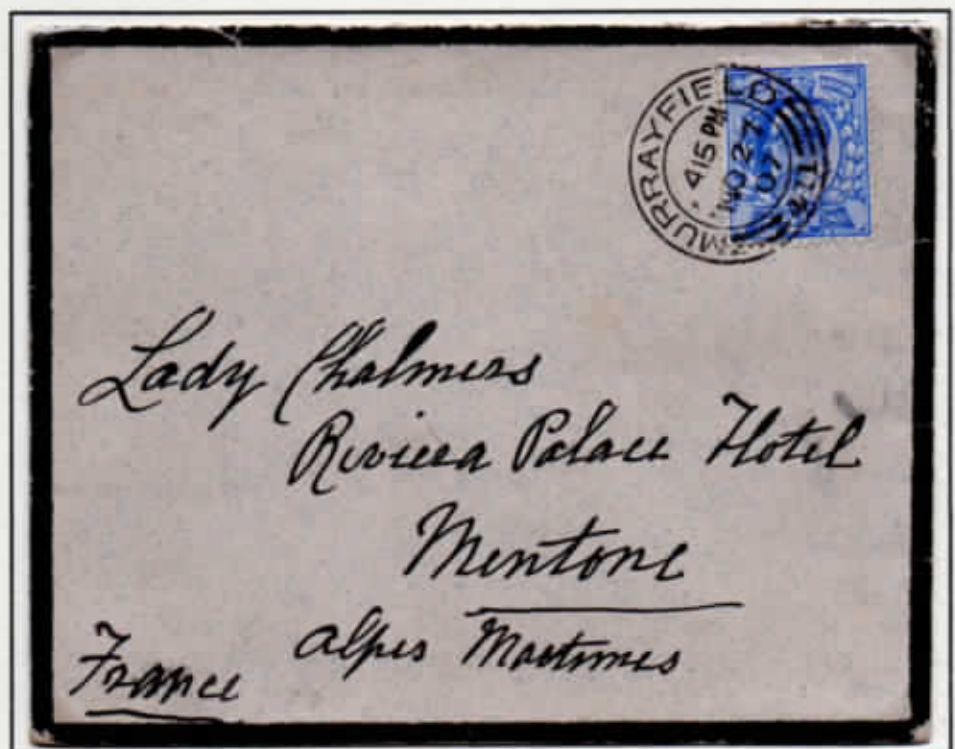
TO OPEN SLIT HERE YOU SHOULD ALWAYS GRAB AN AER

The Scottish Rugby Union was the first federation to possess a proper playground, Inverleith from 1897 and subsequently in Murrayfield, Edinburgh's historic district, where in 1925 was built the "Murrayfield Stadium", which even today after several renovations is the headquarters of the SRU and is the field of all matches of the Scottish National Rugby Union Team.

1871 - Edinburgh, first match
Scotland - England



1907 - Murrayfield



The third British Rugby Union is the "Welsh Rugby Union", born a few years after the others, in 1880, although no less authoritarian and jealous of its own autonomy. The Welsh are so proud of their rugby that they considered the Arms Park of Cardiff the birthplace of world rugby.



Welsh Rugby Union



Samoa - Wales



All Blacks - Wales



Cardiff - Arms Park

Great Britain - Aerogramme

South Africa - Postal Stationery

(Photocopy address side)



The Irish Rugby Football Union was founded in 1879, and today as well as yesterday, it probably represents a unique example of improvement in the sport field, of insurmountable political boundaries. Indeed, this politically divided country is represented in the rugby fields exceptionally united in one homogenous entity by players from the Eire and North Ireland.



Argentina - Ireland



Ireland - Australia



100 * Anniversary Irish Rugby Football Union



2007 - Rugby World Cup



Johnny Sexton 2018 World Rugby Player of the year



1991 Dublin - Lansdowne Road Stadium

The Hong Kong "Rugby Sevens"



1993 - Edinburgh (GB)
World Cup
"Rugby Sevens"



Centenary of "Rugby Sevens"

In reality, the government of the Rugby Union was not always accepted by the other Anglo-Saxon Rugby Unions, and there were several splittings as a consequence. In Scotland, "Rugby Sevens" was played since 1883. In 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Rugby sevens was admitted to the Olympic Games and to establish the participating nations, Olympic qualifying tournaments are organised.



2016 - Montecarlo "Rugby Sevens" Olympic qualifying tournament

In Wales however, because of the refusal by the Rugby Union to officialize the reimbursement of players' expenses, some clubs founded the "Rugby League" at the beginning of the century, which promoted professionalism and, in order to differentiate itself from the classical rugby, reduced the number of players to thirteen in each team.

New Zealand "Rugby League"



Centenary of
"Rugby League"



3.2 - Following the Empire

Moving away from the British Islands, fair recognition must be given to the South African Rugby. Officially born in 1889 with the creation of the "South African Rugby Board", the game was brilliantly adapted to the stamina of white residents and in a short time it became the main sport in the country.



South African Rugby Union



Transvaal Rugby Football Union



South Africa winner World Cup - 1995



South Africa - France



New Zealand - South Africa



South Africa - Australia

The most important competition in South Africa is the "Province Championship", by which, since 1891 the "Currie Cup" is assigned to the winner province.



Perforated "Currie"

1911 - Liverpool Donald Currie & C. - Castle Shipping Line

The gold trophy was presented for the first time by Sir Donald Currie, President of the Castle Shipping Line, to the provincial team that had obtained the best result in the matches against the British Islands Teams that were performing 19 match in South African provinces.



Western Province Rugby Football Union



1906 - 2011, Evolution of South Africa's famous Springboks emblem

In Australia, rugby is so rooted in the aggressive character of its population, that it facilitates the creation of various games with an oval ball: the Australian Football, played in an oval field, The Professional Rugby with 13 players, and the traditional Rugby with 15 players.



To remove stamps from backing, bend backing paper near corner of stamp, and peel from corner.



If you hand address letters or cards, look for the postcode squares  and the post office preferred symbol  when next buying envelopes.

Adhesive Stamps Booklet - Australia

Australian Football League



Rugby League



Australian Rugby Football Union

The current "Australian Rugby Football Union" was born in 1875 under the name of "Southern Rugby Football Union" and today, loyal to the original idea, it defends rugby with dynamism and courage from the assault of professionalism.



Centenary of Australian Rugby Union Test Matches - The national team is nicknamed the Wallabies

The "New Zealand Rugby Union" is the most representative Rugby Union overseas, and this is mainly due to its national representation, the All Blacks, who from time to time have been described as invincibles, the missionaries of rugby and finally the World Champions.



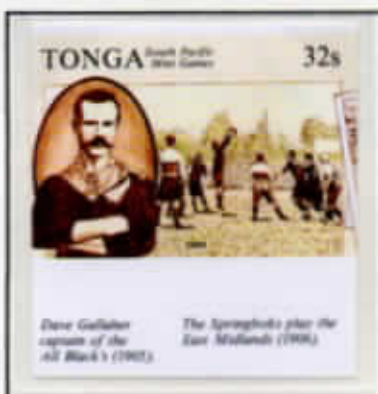
"The Haka"



Before any Test Match, the All Blacks perform the Haka, a ritual war dance of the Maori of New Zealand. Leading the dance there is always a player of Maori heritage.



And such is the fascination with the black t-shirts all over the rugby world, that it is a matter of pride and great honor to measure against those invincible interpreters of rugby.



Specimen

Dave Gallaher - 1905
Captain of the All-Blacks



"The invincibles"

The 1924-25 New Zealand rugby team which toured the United Kingdom, Ireland, France and Canada



The great "Fullback" Maori
George Nepia



100 Years - New Zealand Test Match 1903-2003

But if it is true that dominates on all the legendary names of the All Blacks is also true that considerable importance have also tournées representative of other major national and international selections created from time to time with the best players of the moment as the Lions and Barbarians.



France - Argentina

Postage - Paid



The "Barbarians"

Private Post DHL - New Zealand



2005 - New Zealand - Lions Series



3.3 - " The Championship Trophy "

The maximum expression of European rugby is surely been the "Tournament of the Five Nations", traditional appointment at the beginning of the year, with matches between le four Anglo-Saxon Rugby Unions and the French Rugby Federation.



Scotland - Triple Crown and Grand Slam 1990



Wales - France



Scotland - Ireland



Scotland - Wales

The characteristic of this tournament, which has been held since 1883 (even though the number of participant team was not always the same), is that it does not exist in an official classification and each match, no matter how animated and important it might be, is final by itself, the classifications are established by the newspapers.



1910 - First "Tournament of the Five Nations"



Scotland - Grand Slam and Triple Crown 1984

Specimen



1926 - Wavell Wakefield captain of England & Ernie Crowford captain of Ireland



1980 - Scotland - France



England - Grand Slam 1991

After dreaming for years of confronting the elite of European rugby in stadiums considered true and proper sport "temples", in the tournament of the year 2000, the Italian nation made its entrance in the prestigious tournament of the "Five Nations", which now has become the "Six Nations."



Rome - Flaminio Stadium, Italy - England



Saint Denis - Stade de France, France - Italy



Rome - Flaminio Stadium, Italy - Wales



Rome - Flaminio Stadium, Italy - Ireland



Rome - Flaminio Stadium, Italy - Scotland

3.4 - The Pacific Islands Rugby Unions

In the South Pacific nations are most representative in the archipelagos of islands, Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. The rugby arrives in these islands to the start of the last century and in 1913 was founded the Fiji Rugby Union. The Fiji Islands have been able to present in 1952 and in 1954 a national representative able to defeat two times the national Australian Team.

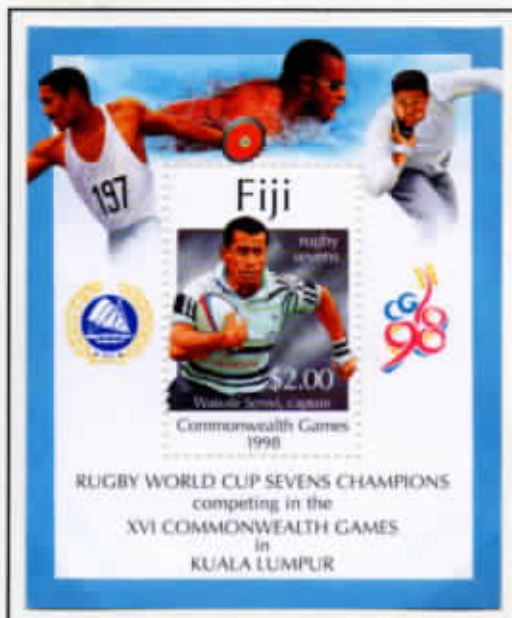


Especially in the Rugby Sevens, Fijians are a world power and graduates are World Champions twice.

The "Cibe"



The "Cibe" is a war dance, generally performed before battle or after battle, it came to prominence when it was performed by the national rugby team before each match.

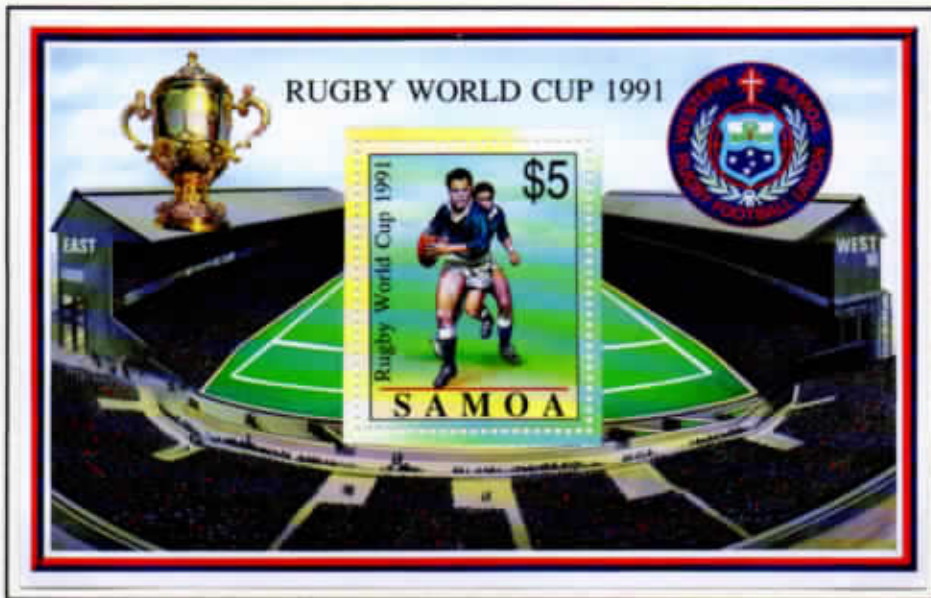


Waisale Serevi - Captain Fiji Team
"Rugby World Cup Sevens Champions"



60th Anniversary Fiji Rugby Union

Rugby is very popular in Samoa and the national team nicknamed the Manu Samoa, is consistently competitive against teams from vastly more populous nations. The Samoa Rugby Football Union was formed in 1924, from 1924 to 1997 they were known as Western Samoa and have competed at every Rugby World Cup since 1991.



1991 - Rugby World Cup



1995 - Rugby World Cup



Manu
"Siva Tau"

The Manu "Siva Tau" is a Samoan war dance, performed by the Samoa's sporting teams before each match.



1999 - Rugby World Cup



Samoa Rugby Football Union
Management



Adhesive stamp



Michael Jones - Rugby player

With the advent of professionalism they have been unable to compete with richer nations. They play fewer Tests and lose by greater margins. More of their top players play in New Zealand, Australia, Japan or Europe and may not always be available.



Jesse Sayolu
American Football player

Rugby is the national sport also of Tonga and as in the rest of Polynesia is a way of life. Tonga Rugby Football Union was founded in 1923 and its national participated at the last World Cup Rugby.

Specimen



Sioni Mafi - 1970 Captain of Tonga

Though Tongans are passionate rugby followers, the small population base means that internationally, Tongan rugby continually struggles.



Western Samoa

In almost all the Pacific Islands to play rugby.



Tokelau



Cook Island - 1985 - South Pacific Mini Games



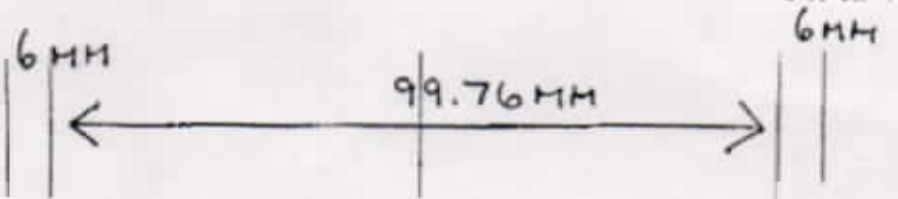
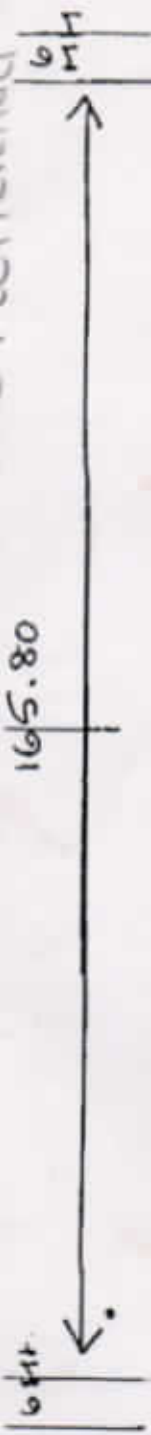
Tonga Rugby Football Union

Specimen



Original artwork for definitive stamp

DEAR DAN:
 HERE WE ARE W/ ROUGHS. HOPE YOU LIKE THEM. WILL BE PENCIL
 SHADED W/ WATER COLOR TINT. BACK GROUND WILL PROBABLY BE
 JUST WHITE OR PALE GREEN W/ SILHOUETTE OF COCONUT TREES.
 UNIFORMS ARE IN ACCORDANCE W/ TONGA "SEA EAGLES" PAC. CHAMP
 IONS. I HAVE MADE THIS SET A TRIBUTE TO THEM + ALL FIGURES ARE
 TONGAN TEAM I SUGGEST A BLUE BORDER + LETTERING TO CONTRAST



George B
 WORLD CUP RUGBY
 KINGDOM OF TONGA

Tonga - preparatory drawing for commemorating the 1995 Rugby World Cup

The national team (Ikale Tahi) has performed quite well on the international stage. Tonga has competed at four Rugby World Cups, the first being in 1987, and its best result thus far was in 1995 when it reached the first round.

4 - THE LATIN ANTAGONISTS

4.1 - The "Coqs" of France

France is the only nation capable of worrying the Anglo-Saxon supremacy because of its game and organization. Recognizing such merits, the International Rugby Board has allowed France since 1978 to participate in its meetings.



"Proof of artist - Brown" signed by the author of the stamp Rooul Serres



Proof of color



Baron Pierre de Coubertin posing as players Rugby

Introduced to France in 1872 by a group of British students, rugby had Baron Pierre de Coubertin as its main supporter. He was also the referee during the first official final for the designation of the Champion of France title, played and won by the Racing Club of France in 1892.



Paris 1936
Racing Club de France
Postcard of convocation
for a Championship match.

RECOMMANDÉ



CHRISTINE René
Rue de la Roche du gne
73800 ARBIN

Paris 1993 - Final of the French Rugby Championship



As time passed, rugby spread widely, including in overseas territories and possessions in the South Pacific, so much so that it became in a short time a national sport. Today, with thousands of clubs, France represents the leader of continental rugby.



"Proof of artist - Black" signed by the autor of the stamp Jacques Combet



Reunion

Overseas region of France



Wallis and Futuna

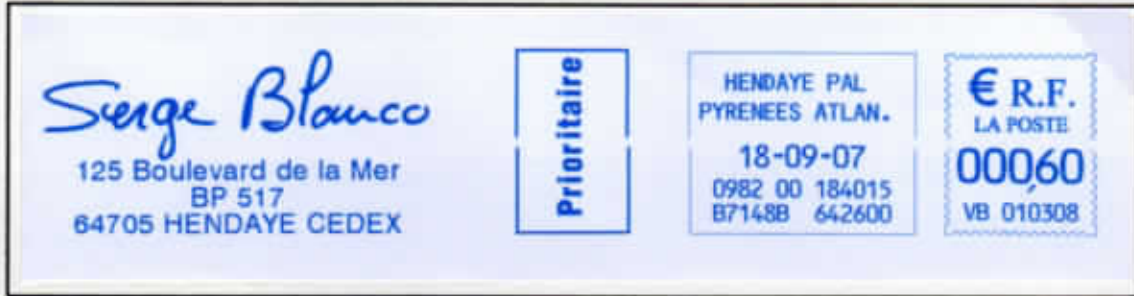


New Caledonia

In France, the popularity of rugby players is notable and the names of its most popular champions command the same fascination as the champions of more popular sports.

Andre Boniface was the silkiest of French centres whose international career stretched over 13 seasons.

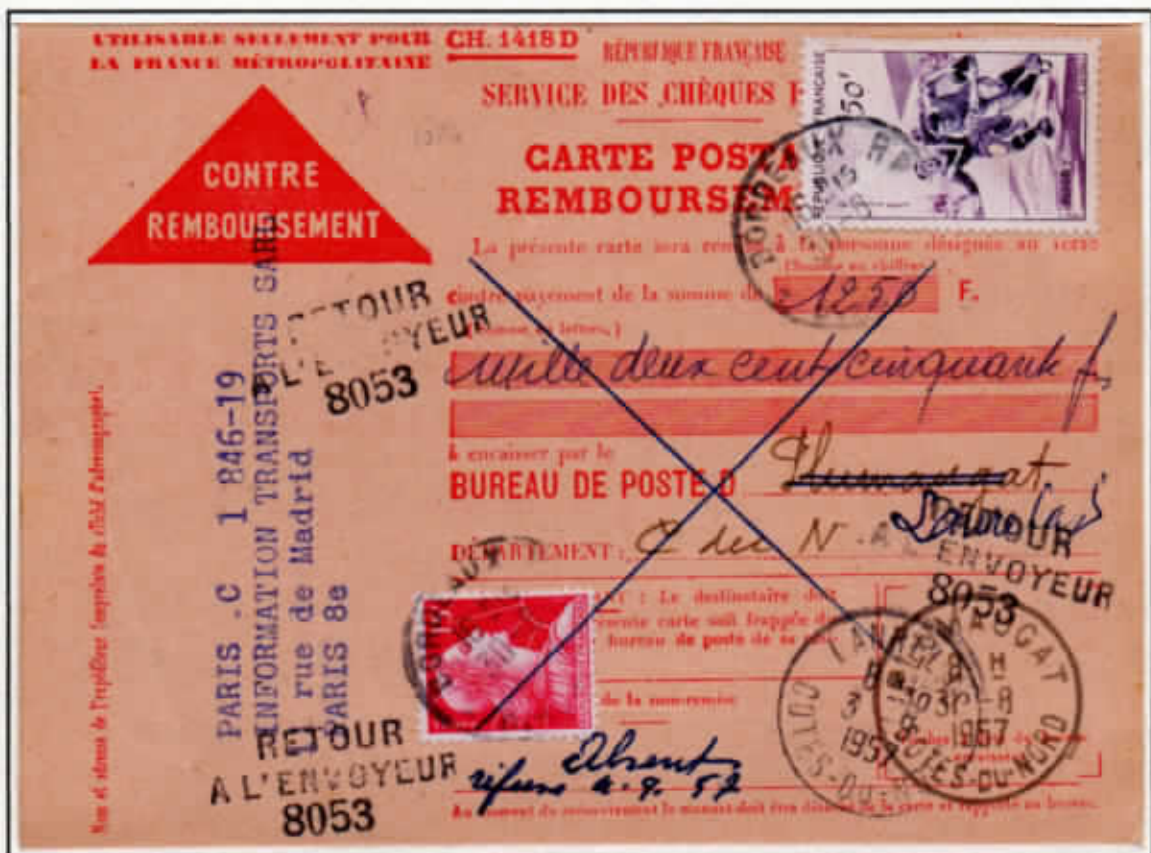
The rugbymen "Andrè Boniface" uses sports clothing Soleillant



Groupe "Serge Blanco"

Blanco is considered one of France's greatest players and also one of the best fullbacks in rugby history.

Moreover, rugby has acquired its own importance, to the degree that rugby tournaments are always included in sport events organized at regional festivities and fairs.



4.2 - The F.I.R.A. - Association of European Rugby

In 1931, the excessive power of managers from the International Board caused the interruption of athletic relationships between France and the British Islands. Then in Turin, during the International University Games in 1933, the idea of an International Federation took place, in order to contra rest the Anglo-Saxon hegemony.



1933 - V^a International University Games in Turin, constituent meeting of F.I.R.A.

In 1934 the "Federation International de Rugby Amateur" (FIRA) was formed at the instigation of the French. It included the national teams of Italy, France, Spain, Catalonia, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Germany.



1967 - Zagreb
25^a Congress F.I.R.A.



1997 Dubrovnik
58^a Congress F.I.R.A.



1934 - 1994
60th Anniversary of F.I.R.A.

In the circles of F.I.R.A., after France, which is the inspiring nation, Italy plays a role of pre-eminence. Italian rugby began in 1909, after these first steps, in 1928 i was united with the consitution of the Italian Rugby Federation.

Italian Rugby Federation



After years of physical, psychological, and organizational subjugation to the French and Anglo-Saxons, the Italian national representative, participating in all edition of World Cup, was finally able to establish it own game.

Italian National Team at Rugby World Cup 1995

(Photocopy address side)



South Africa - Postal Stationery



Italy -South Africa



Argentina - Italy

Romania is also one of the leading countries of F.I.R.A., the Rugby Romanian Federation, born in 1914, has always been active in the ruling and athletic fields.



30^o Anniversary Romanian Rugby Federation

In the international arena, Romanian rugby made its entry conquering the bronze medal during the Olympic games in Paris in 1924, an important accomplishment as this was the first Olympic medal ever won by Romania.



Paris 1924 - Olympic Rugby Tournament

Since 1969, F.I.R.A. organized annual youth tournament (for athletes under 19-20-21 years of age), which by virtue of the participation of national teams, was considered the Junior World Championship.



1987 - Germany, FIRA Under 19 Championship



1988 - Yugoslavia, FIRA Under 19 Championship



1990 - Italy, FIRA Under 19 Championship



1997 - Argentina
FIRA Under 19 Championship

In 1999 it changed its name to "FIRA - Association of European Rugby" (FIRA-A.E.R.), to promote and rule over Rugby Union in the European area and to run the Junior World Championship. FIRA-A.E.R. organised both the under-19 and under-21 World Championships until IRB folded them into the under-20 Junior World Championship and Junior World Trophy in 2008.

4.3 - "European Nations Championship"

The "Federation International de Rugby Amateur" immediately after its establishment decided to organise a competition similar to a European Championship. A first tournament was disputed in 1936 as a "demonstration sport" at the Summer Olympics in Berlin with the participation of France, Germany, Italy and Romania.



Berlin 1936 - Games of the XI Olympiad



He followed a second tournament expanded to six teams in Paris during the International Exhibition of 1937.



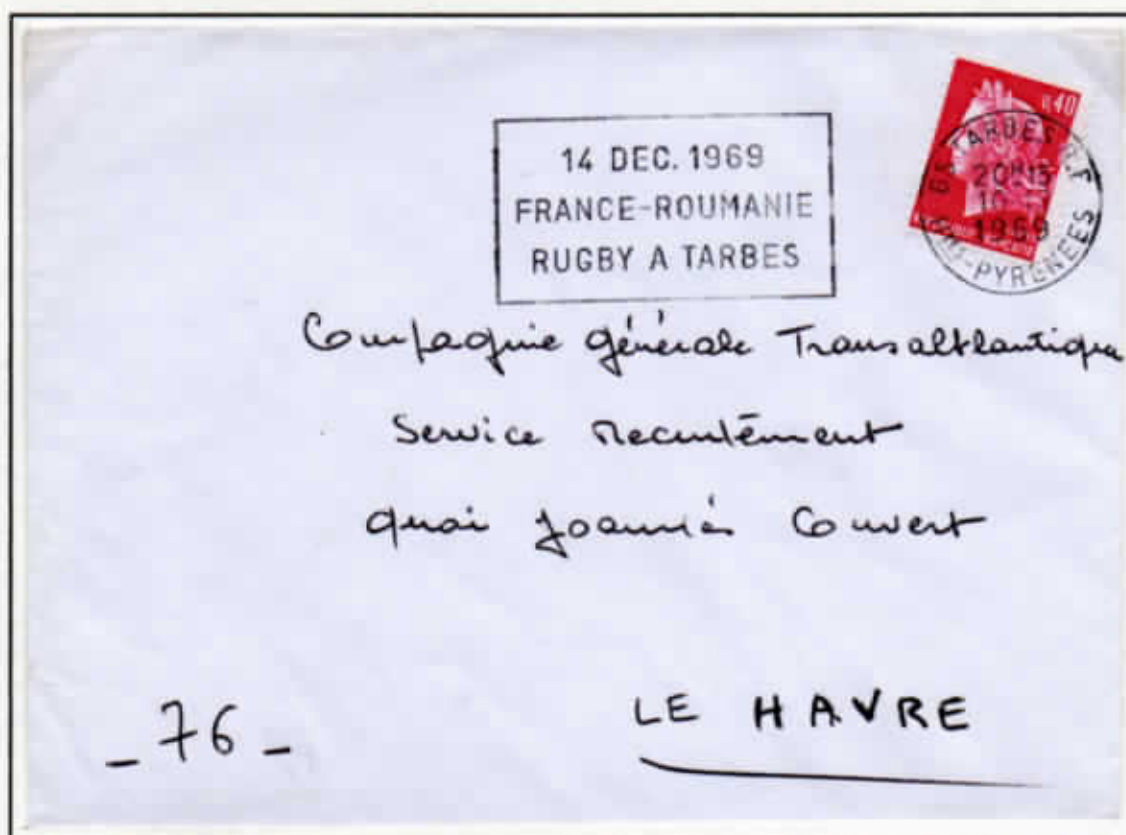
Paris 1937 - International Exhibition

During the 9^a Congress of FIRA in 1951 once again the idea of a "European Nations Championship" is made with the dispute of the "European Cup" and took place for two years in 1952 in Paris and 1954 in Rome with the formula to elimination.



1954 - Roma "European Cup"

Only in 1966 the FIRA organized a new European tournament renamed "Nations Cup", structured on multiple mechanisms divisions with promotion and relegation. The competition changed the name in 1973, becoming "European Nations Championship - FIRA Cup" and ends in 1997.



1969 - Tarbes, France - Romania for "Nations Cup"



1980 - Romania - France

The competition and changed name in 1973, becoming "European Nations Championship - FIRA Cup", the latest edition of this championship was the only Italian victory in 1997.



1982 - Romania - France



1988 - Romania - Spain



1982 - 1983 Romania winner of the "European Nations Championship - FIRA Cup"

Since 2000, the FIRA-A.E.R. return the top-level competition. The renamed "European Nations Championship" absent France and Italy, engaged in the Six Nations, the tournament (1st Division) sees today protagonists Romania, Portugal, Georgia and Russia.

Romanian Rugby Federation



Georgian Rugby National team

Federação Portuguesa de Rugby
Qualifying Rugby World Cup 2007



The Russia in the "European Nations Championship - FIRA Cup"

The 1st Division of the European Nations Cup " is supplemented by Germany and Spain



Deutscher Rugby-Verband

The European Nations Cup is split into 7 divisions with 5 or 6 teams in each. The divisions play on a two-year cycle with the teams playing each other both home and away.



Belgian Rugby Federation - Division "2A"



Dutch Rugby Union - Division "2B"



Federació Andorrana de Rugby
Division "3A"



Dansk Rugby Union - Division "3B"

4.4 - Rugby Unions in the Americas

The first Rugby Union in the Americas is certainly l'Argentina, the game having been brought to South America by the British and Irish settlers. It was 26 years later, in 1899, that four clubs in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires got together to form the River Plate Rugby Football Union.



The first rugby match in Argentina played in 1874



"Club Atletico Lomas"
Founding member of "Unión Argentina de Rugby"



"Unión Argentina de Rugby"

Unión de Rugby
de Buenos Aires
"Champion 1998"



The sport requested an affiliation with the Argentine Olympic Committee, who advised them to add Argentina to their name and so they became the Union Argentina de Rugby on 29 November 1951.



Argentina - Private Mail "OCA"



Argentina played its first international rugby match in 1910 against a touring British Isles team. It is today considered one of the top rugby nations in the world and the best in the Americas, and has competed at every Rugby World Cup staged since the first in 1987.



1993 - Argentina South American Champion



Pumas - Springboks (World Champion)

However, Argentina is currently the only national team tier one that has no regular competition, such as the Six Nations and the Tri Nations. The Argentina national team, referred to as the Pumas, are several times World Juniors Champions (Pumitas) and countless times South American Champions.



"Los Pumitas"
Junior World Champion 1996



Hugo Porta, idol of the fans in Argentina



Argentina - Australia (World Champion)

Rugby was introduced into the United States by British immigrants in the mid -19th century. The sport of rugby in the United States has always had a close relationship with the sport of American Football. Rugby, Soccer and hybrid games had always been played between American Universities.



"Northern California Rugby Federation"



The Canadian national team have competed in every World Cup since the first tournament held in 1987.



Pan American
Qualifying for the 1999 Italy - Canada
"Rugby World Cup"

(Photocopy address side)



"Union de Rugby del Uruguay"



The Unión de Rugby del Uruguay was founded in 1951 and became an official affiliate of the International Rugby Board. The popularity of rugby union virtually took off after the national side qualified for the 1999 Rugby World Cup and the subsequent 2003 World Cup.



Uruguay - 11 * South American Championship



South Africa - Postal Stationery

5 - FINALLY THE RUGBY WORLD CUP

5.1 - The All Blacks first winners

In 1987 the birth of the "Rugby World Cup" finally allowed rugby to leave the golden cage in which it had lived since its creation, and catapult into the world of show sport, losing its image as a pure amateur sport (as the conservatives of the International Rugby Board maintained), yet making great steps toward the future.



Australia - Postal Stationery

The "Webb Ellis Cup"



1897 - Rugby Post Office

This first edition of the World Cup was contested in the Southern hemisphere, in the two countries that have contributed the most to the development of the game: Australia and New Zealand.

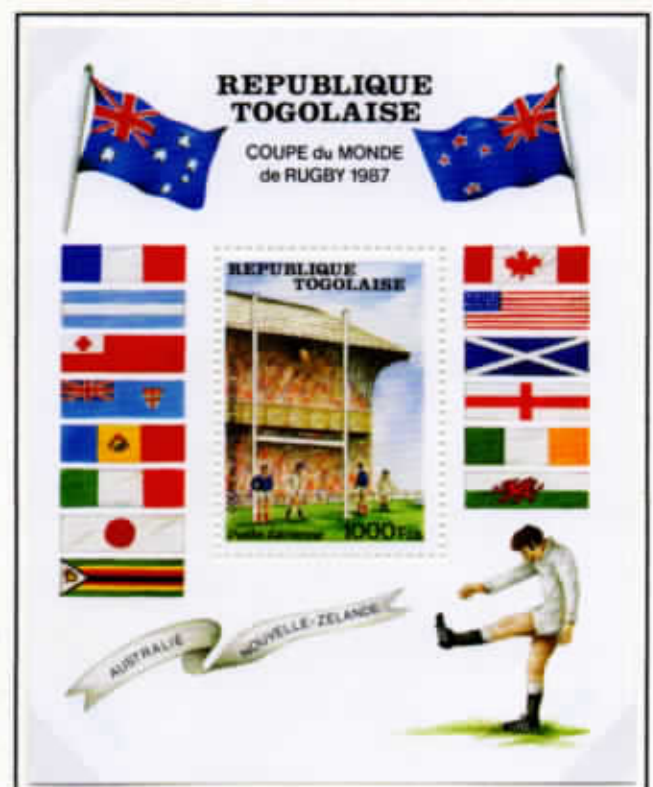


Auckland 22/05/87 - Inaugural match New Zealand - Italy

In Australia and New Zealand, sites of this first exhibition, sixteen national teams were invited, representing almost all the rugby movement worldwide, with the exception of South Africa unable to compete because of the international sports boycott due to apartheid, the USSR were to be invited but they refused the invitation on political grounds, allegedly due to the continued IRB membership of South Africa.



The flags of participating nations





Qualification match Romania - France

The inaugural tournament, which was not only necessary but also absolutely essential in changing the traditional environment of rugby after years and years of immobility, saw the triumph of the New Zealanders All Blacks, who in the final at Eden Park in Auckland, beat the surprising "Coqs" of France.



Auckland 20 Juin 1987
New Zealand - France 29:9

Proof of luxury

The 2011 Rugby World Cup will be the seventh Rugby World Cup, a quadrennial international rugby union competition inaugurated in 1987. The International Rugby Board (IRB) selected New Zealand as the host country in preference to Japan and South Africa.



The tournament was won by New Zealand, who defeated France 8–7 in the final. The defending champions, South Africa, were eliminated by Australia 11–9 in the quarter-finals.



New Zealand - The "Webb Ellis Cup" in Motionstamp HDR 3D

The "Webb Ellis Cup" has been presented to the winning team every four years since the inaugural tournament in 1987.



Finally... after 24 years, the All Blacks are the "World Champions of Rugby Union again !!



"Bravo et Merci" for the national team of France

In 2015, the Rugby World Cup returns to Europe and the English Rugby Union to host for the second time the "Webb Ellis Cup", with some matches in Wales.



The English team, however, is eliminated quickly in the first elimination round.



In the final match played in the Twickenham stadium are the All Blacks who triumph, winning the match with Australian Wallabies for 32 to 17.



The All Blacks are the first team to win three times (two consecutive) the Rugby World Cup.



5.2 - The "Wallabies" twice World Champions

During the second edition, the first eight nations which qualified in the first edition, and the first two which classified from the four qualified continental groups, were admitted to the final phase.



"All Blacks" World Champions Holders



In Europe, this qualification tournament was held in Veneto and saw the clean affirmation of Italy over Romania.

Great Britain - Aerogramme

Rugby World Cup 1991 - The four elimination groups, with the schedule of games played at Murrayfield - Scotland.

(Photocopy address side)

RUGBY WORLD CUP 1991

The Rugby World Cup was inaugurated in 1987.
 Holders: New Zealand

Games at Murrayfield
 5 October: Scotland v. Japan
 9 October: Scotland v. Zimbabwe
 12 October: Scotland v. Ireland
 19 October: Quarter Final
 26 October: Semi-Final

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 New Zealand 2 England 3 Italy 4 USA | <p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Scotland 6 Ireland 7 Zimbabwe 8 Japan | <p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Wales 10 Australia 11 Western Samoa 12 Argentina | <p>Group 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 France 14 Fiji 15 Canada 16 Romania |
|--|--|---|---|



By air mail
 Par avion
 Aerogramme



Great Britain
 Postage

Team in photo-adress / Lini-adress



Organizing Committee of the "Rugby World Cup 1991"

Organized in conjunction with the Rugby Unions of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and France, the "Rugby World Cup 1991" was an extraordinary success, enabling through television the validation of rugby as a worldwide discipline.



3/10/91 Twickenham Inaugural Match: England - New Zealand



Qualifying round, Romania - France

Advertising for the match France - Fiji in Grenoble



Specimen Cancellation type SECAP



The "Famous Grouse" Finest Scotch Whisky - Official Sponsors "Rugby World Cup 1991"



Grenoble Qualifying round, France - Fiji



Paris
Quarter-finals
France - England

The deserving winner of this second world tournament was Australia, which put an end to the English rugby players' dream of keeping the Webb Ellis Cup in Twickenham, and it was given yet again to the Australian continent for another four years, waiting to be challenged in 1995 in South Africa.



The magnificent
Murrayfield Stadium.

Murrayfield Semifinal, Scotland - England



2/11/91 Twickenham Final, England - Australia 6:12



The Australian national team after the ill-fated adventure in South Africa "Rugby World Cup 1995", where he was eliminated in the quarter-finals of the English team, became the first nation to win the World Cup twice in 1991 and 1999.

Pretoria - Postmark computerized



"Rugby World Cup 1995" South Africa

The fourth "Rugby World Cup 1999" was the first to be held in Rugby Union's professional era, was hosted by Wales, with some matches also played in England, France, Scotland and Ireland.



Cardiff, Wales - Organizing Committee of the "Rugby World Cup 1999"



The centrepiece venue for the tournament was the Millennium Stadium, built on the site of the old National Stadium at Cardiff Arms Park.

1/10/99 Cardiff Millennium Stadium
Inaugural Match: Wales - Argentina



France used five venues, the most of any nation, including the French national stadium, Stade de France, which hosted the 1998 FIFA World Cup.



Toulouse - Match Canada - Namibia



Saint Denis - Match South Africa - England

Beating in the final at Millennium Stadium in Cardiff the France 35:12, as Australia became the first nation to win the World Cup twice.



5.3 - The revenge of South Africa

After their government's political system of "Apartheid" had finally ended, in 1995 the third edition of the Rugby World Cup was disputed in South Africa.



The qualification for the final phase began in 1992, with the participation of all national federations, even those where rugby was still in a developmental stage.



Andorra - Classification Round



Stamps Booklet - South Africa



To reaffirm the prophetic poster that appeared on the embankments during the 1991 finals "remember that you shall not be champions if you do not beat the Springboks" in Johannesburg, in an Ellis Park covered with flags of the new South Africa, the South African players bit the resistance of the New Zealanders "All Blacks", winning the "Webb Ellis Cup."



Ellis Park - Johannesburg



On 24 June 1995 a South African Airways Boeing 747-244B swooped across a crowded Ellis Park Stadium at the Rugby World Cup final between South Africa and New Zealand, in the stenciled underside of the plane read "Good Luck Bokke" in a message of support for, the Springboks.



South Africa
Rugby World Champions 1995

Ellis Park Final:
South Africa - New Zealand
15:12



South Africa - Rugby World Champions 1995



Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela, presented the William Webb Ellis Cup to South African captain Francois Pienaar to the delight of the capacity crowd at Ellis Park in Johannesburg on 24 June 1995.



Francois Pienaar

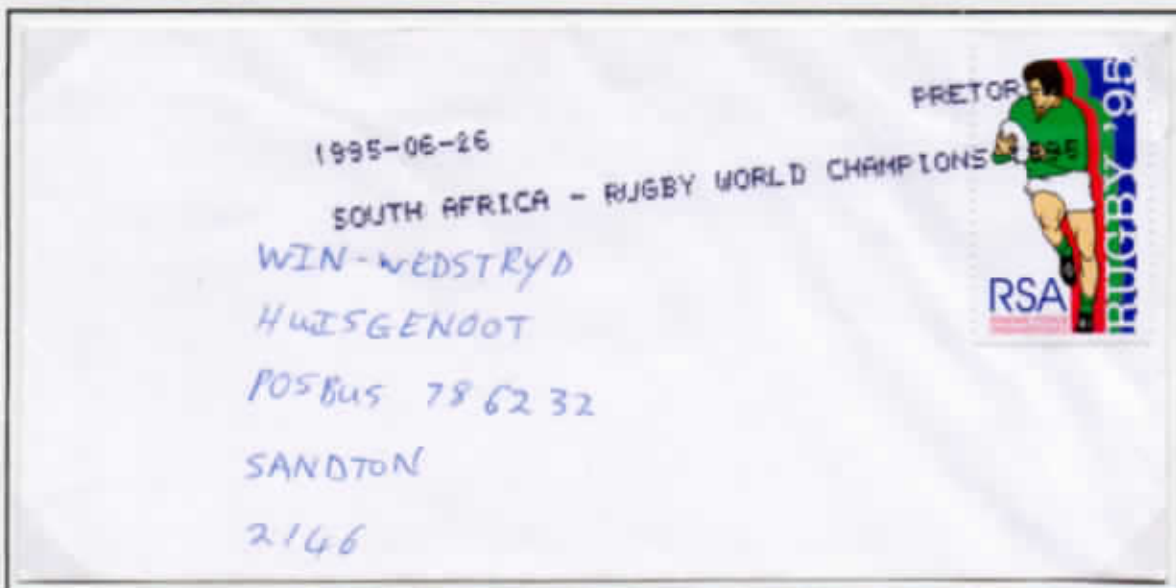


South Africa - Rugby World Champions 1995

Postmark computerized



The South African fans with the "William Webb Ellis Cup"



The qualifying tournaments were broken up into regional associations - Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.



Classification Round
Romania - Russia

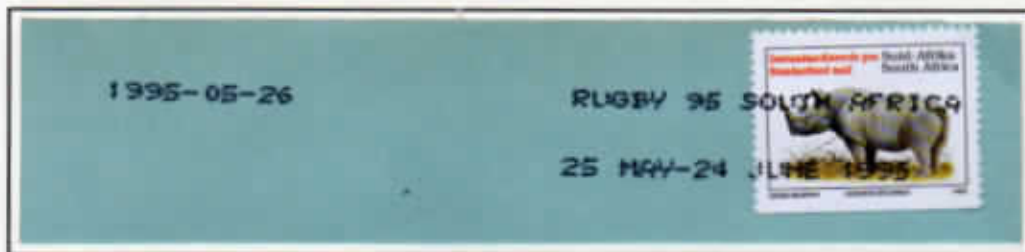


Argentina qualified for the 1995 Rugby World Cup

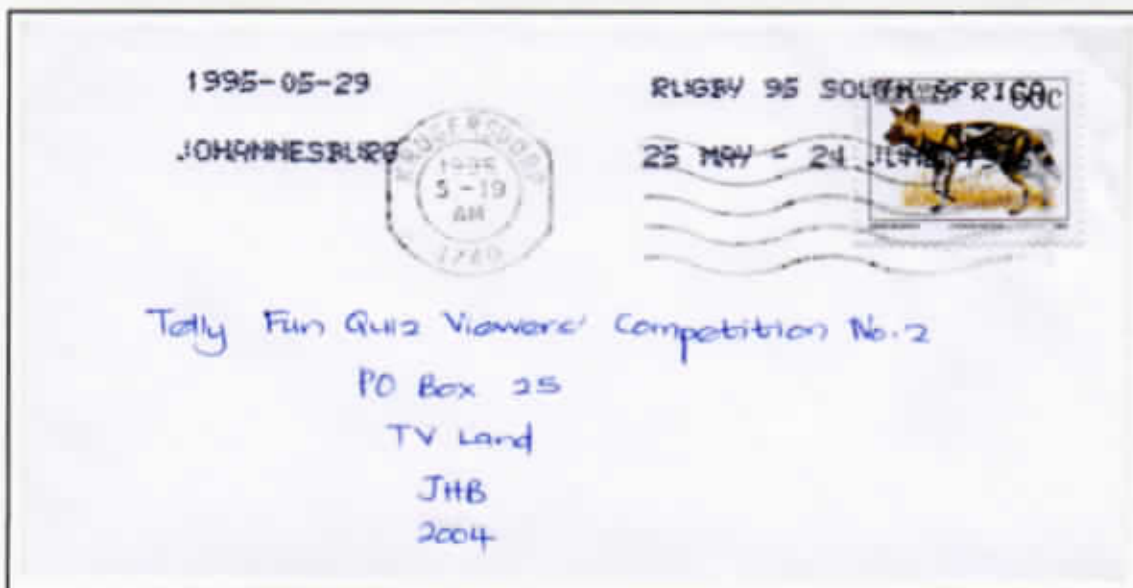


The 1995 tournament was the first Rugby World Cup that was being hosted by just the one country, and thus, all the venues are within the one country.

South Africa
Rugby '95
Postmark
computerized



In total 9 stadiums were used for the World Cup, most being owned by the domestic rugby unions, and the majority of the venues were upgraded prior to the tournament.



In 1999 South Africa suffered their first ever Rugby World Cup loss when they were defeated by Australia in their semi-final; they went on to defeat the All Blacks in the third-fourth play-off match. The worst ever South African performance at a Rugby World Cup was in 2003 when they lost a pool game to England, and then were knocked out of the tournament by the All Blacks in their quarter-final.



Twickenham, Semifinal Rugby World Cup 1999,
South Africa - Australia 21:27



Australia Rugby World Cup 2003

The 2007 Rugby World Cup was the sixth Rugby World Cup, a quadrennial International Rugby Union World Championship inaugurated in 1987.

Argentina qualified for the 2007 Rugby World Cup



The 2007 competition was hosted by France, with matches also being held in Wales and Scotland. South Africa claimed their second title by defeating champions England fifteen points to six.



France, World Cup 2007 - Postal Stationery sold only as a supplement to the newspaper "Le Monde"



Adhesive stamp with private overprint



Twenty nations competed for the Webb Ellis Cup in the tournament, which was hosted by France from 7 September to 20 October 2007.



V62084

Adhesive stamps with private overprint

V620847

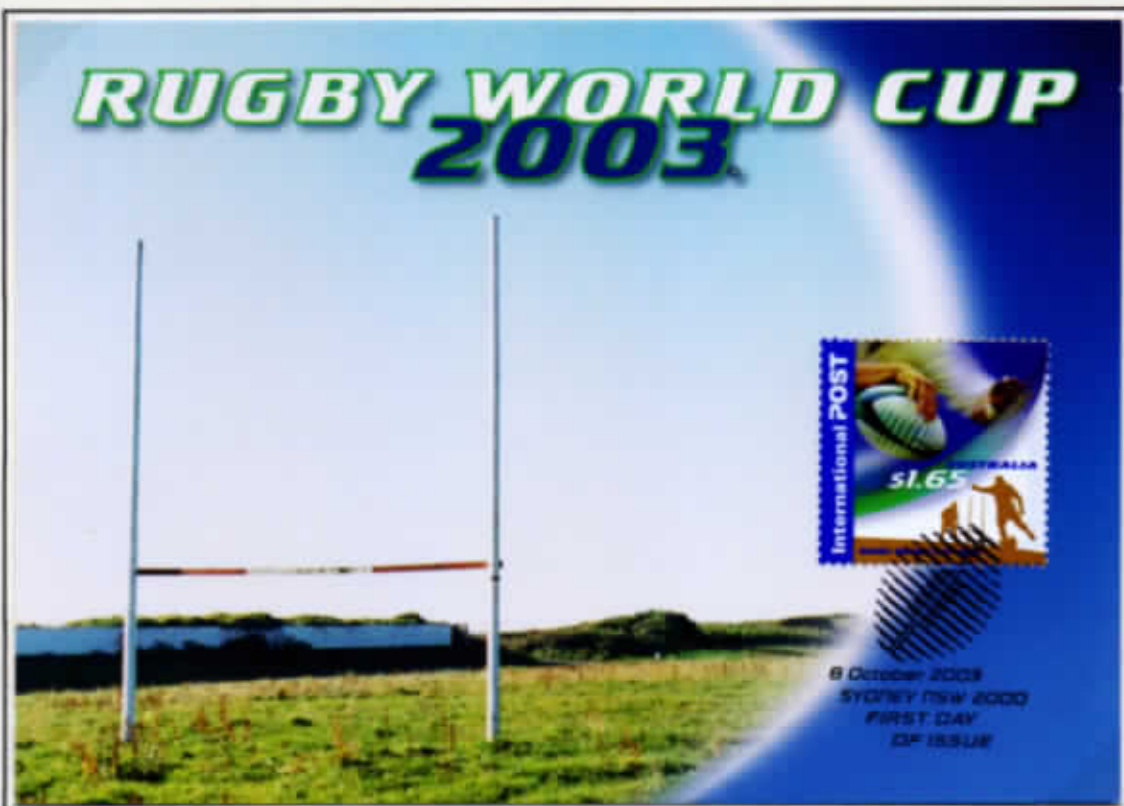


5.4 - England winners !

The 2003 Rugby World Cup was the fifth Rugby Union World Cup, originally planned to be co-hosted by Australia and New Zealand, all games were shifted to Australia following a contractual dispute over ground signage rights between the New Zealand Rugby Football Union and Rugby World Cup Limited.

Germany - Heidelberg
Rugby World Cup Round 2000

Australia - Postal Stationery



(Photocopy address side)





England have won the Rugby World Cup, beating Australia 20-17 in a game which is already entering the history books as one of the country's great moments of sporting triumph. The final, in Sydney, was won just 26 seconds from the end of the match, with a breathtaking drop goal by Newcastle fly-half and youngest member of the squad, Jonny Wilkinson.



22/11/03 Sydney
Final: Australia - England 17:20

WORLD CHAMPIONS 22 NOVEMBER 2003
TELETRA STADIUM SYDNEY

Congratulations to the World Champions

ENGLAND WINNERS!

World Champions 2003
Royal Mail Mini Stamps

	Trevor Woodman Position Prop Age 27 Points scored 0 Caps 5		Ben Kay Position Lock Age 27 Points scored 0 Caps 6		Matt Dawson Position Scrum-half Age 31 Points scored 5 Caps 5		Will Greenwood Position Centre Age 31 Points scored 25 Caps 6
	Steve Thompson Position Hooker Age 25 Points scored 5 Caps 6		Richard Hill Position Flanker Age 30 Points scored 0 Caps 3		Jonny Wilkinson Position Fly-half Age 24 Points scored 113 Caps 6		Jason Robinson Position Wing Age 29 Points scored 20 Caps 7
	Phil Vickery Position Prop Age 27 Points scored 5 Caps 7		Neil Back Position Flanker Age 34 Points scored 10 Caps 6		Ben Cohen Position Wing Age 25 Points scored 10 Caps 6		Josh Lewsey Position Full-back Age 26 Points scored 25 Caps 5
	Martin Johnson Position Lock Age 33 Points scored 0 Caps 7		Lawrence Dallaglio Position No 8 Age 31 Points scored 5 Caps 7		Mike Tindal Position Centre Age 25 Points scored 5 Caps 6	Replacements 17 Jason Leonard 19 Lewis Moody 21 Mike Catt 22 Iain Balshaw	

Royal Mail - England Winners I Presentation Pack

England's World Cup-Winning team 22 november 2003

In England there were large demonstrations of joy of the English fans, even the post office celebrated this great result by issuing four stamps issued in a block, also distributed in special packaging.



Royal Mail - England Winners I Presentation Pack