INTRODUCTIONS

The 2013 Rugby League World Cup promises to be the best tournament in the history of the game and this introductory brochure is intended to give you a flavour of what the competition will offer its stakeholders.

The World Cup has a proud place in the history of Rugby League. Instituted after World War II, the first competition was held in France with Great Britain emerging victorious. Since then there have been 12 World Cups with Australia dominating the record books with nine wins, however, New Zealand are the current holders after winning for the first time in 2008.

A total of 14 nations will be competing for Rugby League’s greatest prize at venues across England and Wales. Twelve of those nations are already known but, for two countries, there is a golden opportunity to step up to Rugby League’s top table and enhance their own standing.

I hope that the enclosed information will whet your appetite and give you a taste of an occasion that will sit perfectly within the UK’s much celebrated ’Golden Decade of Sport’.

Richard Lewis  Deputy Chairman of the RLIF and Chairman of the RFL

The RFL are proud hosts of the 2013 Rugby League World Cup and intend to stage the best World Cup to date. Our aim is to deliver a tournament that will leave a lasting legacy for the sport in the UK and internationally as well as for the communities that will host the tournament.

The tournament will play host to 14 nations and be broadcast in over 120 countries, reaching a worldwide audience in excess of 20 million. Meanwhile, we expect the 28 matches of the tournament to attract in excess of 300,000 people to witness the highly competitive action live.

Matches will be played in venues across England and Wales and we will be seeking enthusiastic host towns and cities who will work with us to bring the tournament to life through Rugby League’s well established strengths in connecting with communities. It is estimated that the hosting of the tournament could bring in excess of £155 million of economic benefit to regions and, as importantly, key social and community benefits through the tournament and associated activities.

There is considerable work ahead of us but we can look forward with enthusiasm and confidence that working with our partners we can stage the best World Cup ever.

We look forward to welcoming the World to England and Wales in 2013.

Nigel Wood  Chief Executive of the RFL
HISTORY OF THE RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP

The first World Cup took place in 1954 with France, who had initially lobbied for the event, hosting a four team tournament that also included Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain. Great Britain emerged victorious with a 16-12 win over their hosts in the final at the Parc des Princes.

The next five World Cups, through until 1972, featured the same four nations with Australia and Great Britain dominating within varied formats.

In 1975 Great Britain became Wales and England to make a five team tournament held throughout the year but it reverted to type in 1977 when Australia pipped Great Britain 13-12 at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

A new format was initiated in 1985 with five nations, including Papua New Guinea, competing on a home and away league basis over a three year period. The final, played at Eden Park in Auckland, attracted over 47,000 with Australia beating the Kiwis 25-12.

The 2000 World Cup featured 16 nations with Lebanon taking part for the first time and Russia, Ireland, Scotland and the Cook Islands stepping up to the main event. The Emerging Nations competition was also repeated with Japan, Italy and Canada all taking their bow in an international Rugby League event.

The 2008 World Cup moved Down Under with 10 nations involved. New Zealand upset the odds and won the trophy for the first time after an epic final against Australia at Brisbane’s Suncorp Stadium.

NUMBER OF WINS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Wins</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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YEAR | VENUE | RESULT
--- | --- | ---
1954 | France | Great Britain 16-12 France
1957 | Australia | Australia won league format
1960 | Great Britain | Great Britain won league format
1968 | Australia/New Zealand | Australia 20-2 France
1970 | Great Britain | Australia 12-7 Great Britain
1972 | France | Great Britain 10-10 Australia (GB won the tournament with better league record than Australia)
1975 | Worldwide | Australia won league format
1977 | Australia/New Zealand | Australia 13-12 Great Britain
1985-88 | Worldwide | Australia 25-12 New Zealand
1989-92 | Worldwide | Australia 10-6 Great Britain
1995 | Great Britain | Australia 16-8 England
2000 | Great Britain/France | Australia 40-12 New Zealand
2008 | Australia | New Zealand 34-20 Australia

WORLD CUP FACTFILE

In 1954 the Great Britain team, led by Scotsman Dave Valentine, became the first British side in any sport to lift the World Cup.
THE RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION

The Rugby League International Federation (RLIF) is responsible for the Laws of the Game, the development, organisation and governance of Rugby League internationally and for the sport’s major international tournament, the Rugby League World Cup.

The objects of the Rugby League International Federation are to foster, develop, extend, govern and administer the game of Rugby League throughout the world and to bring together the Members, Affiliates, Associate Members, Honorary Members and others for the purpose of achieving the above.

The RLIF is governed by an Executive Board, consisting of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and up to three further directors. The Australian Rugby League, New Zealand Rugby League and Rugby Football League each appoint a director, with the Asia Pacific Confederation and Rugby League European Federation each entitled to appoint a director to the Board. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are elected by the Executive Board.

Colin Love AM, has been the Chairman of the Rugby League International Federation since 2002 and was Chairman of the Australian Rugby League (ARL) from 1999 to 2010.

Colin, who acquired his law degree at Sydney University, began his association with Rugby League when he was involved with contract negotiations for players in the late 1970s. He was retained as the league’s solicitor soon afterwards.

In January 2007, Colin received an Order of Australia medal for his contribution to both the sport of Rugby League and to sports law.

Richard joined the RFL in 2002, since when the organisation has grown to become widely acknowledged as one of the most efficient and professionally managed governing bodies in the United Kingdom.

In 2009, Richard was appointed Chairman of Sport England, a role he successfully combines with his position at the RFL and his roles as Deputy Chairman of the Rugby League International Federation and Chairman of the Rugby League European Federation.

Prior to his career in Rugby League, Richard was a Davis Cup player and international tennis coach of Grand Slam champions who worked at the Lawn Tennis Association from 1988 to 2000. In 1996 Richard was Team Manager when Great Britain won a silver medal at the Atlanta Olympics.

Scott is a former police officer who established his own company Matrix Security Group in 1993, of which he is CEO. Scott is the Chairman of the NZRL and has been a board member since 2008. His governance experience includes involvement in equestrian sport as the chairman of Eventing NZ during which time he led a restructuring process in the sport. He is also widely experienced in business and community organisations.

In 2010 he was elected to the board of the RLIF.

David has been the Chief Executive Officer of the National Rugby League (NRL) since February 2002. David has also been the Secretary of the Rugby League International Federation since its inception in 1998.

He was voted the New South Wales Sports Administrator of the Year in 2002. In 2006 he was voted the Australian Sports Administrator of the year at the Confederation of Australian Sport Awards. In 2010 he was named Chairman of the Australian Sports Commission.
HOST TOWNS & CITIES


Critical to the successful delivery of the tournament will be the selection of appropriate host venues across the British Isles. The RFL will be initiating a selection process to determine these host venues early in 2011.

Sally Bolton, RFL Director of Projects and Planning, commented: “We will work with regional partners and invite towns and cities to tender for individual matches and parcels of matches within the tournament schedule.

“In addition to inviting areas to tender for the matches we will also invite towns and cities to tender to host the 14 team camps, including hotels plus training and rehabilitation facilities.”

The selection process will take place during the first half of 2011 with successful venues and camp locations due to be announced in the autumn of that year. A detailed set of criteria for hosting matches and team camps will be produced by the RFL for the process.

“In addition to demonstrating that they have a stadium and/or team camp venues that meet the criteria, towns and cities will be asked to demonstrate how they will use their possible World Cup opportunity to bring the tournament alive within their locality and contribute to the overall feel of the tournament,” added Bolton.

“We will also be looking for innovative proposals for the use of the tournament to further social and community benefit such that the hosting of the tournament can leave lasting legacy benefits for both the sport of Rugby League and the areas that host the event.”

“With two years to prepare, we envisage many host towns and cities scheduling a programme of ancillary events, activities and programmes to complement the matches taking place.”

WHICHEVER TOWNS AND CITIES ARE CHOSEN TO HOST THE 2013 RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP, EACH WILL PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN CREATING THE BIGGEST AND BEST EVENT IN THE SPORT’S HISTORY.

THE 2013 WORLD CUP WILL FEATURE 14 NATIONS COMPETING OVER A FIVE WEEK PERIOD TO DETERMINE THE WORLD CHAMPIONS.

THE TOURNAMENT FORMAT

COMPETING NATIONS ARE SPLIT INTO FOUR GROUPS. EACH COUNTRY PLAYS THREE MATCHES IN EACH GROUP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP A</th>
<th>GROUP B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Samoa</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>GROUP C*</th>
<th>GROUP D*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td>European qualifier</td>
<td>Atlantic qualifier</td>
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</tbody>
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*In Groups C & D, the countries play the other nations in their group and also one team from the opposite group as indicated below (either C or D).

Scotland v Atlantic qualifier
Tonga v Cook Islands
Wales v European qualifier

WORLD CUP FACTFILE

AUSTRALIA’S 1957 WORLD CUP HERO BRIAN CARLSON WAS NOT ATTACHED TO ANY CLUB WHEN HE LIFTED THE TROPHY. THE QUEENSLAND SIDE HE PLAYED FOR DISMISSED HIM WHEN HE OPTED TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA IN THE TOURNAMENT.
AUSTRALIA

Rugby League in Australia was formed during the 1907 season with the formation of the New South Wales Rugby League in Sydney. The success of this league was largely down to one man, the legendary Dally Messenger, who starred in the 1907 ‘All Golds’ tour of Great Britain, when he defected from the Australian Rugby Union Association to join the newly formed league. Since then, Rugby League has been considered one of the premier sports in Australia.

Australia made their first impact on the International Rugby League scene in 1908, when ‘The Kangaroos’, captained by Messenger toured Great Britain for the very first time to play against the Northern Union. They played their first ever International Test against a Northern Union representative side, which finished 22 all.

The Kangaroos are the most successful team in Rugby League World Cup history. They have appeared in all 13 World Cups contested, winning nine of them. Such has been their dominance of the sport that they have only failed to make the final in one World Cup, in the very first tournament played in 1954.

Having lost the title of World Cup winners to local rivals New Zealand for the first time since 1975 in the last World Cup in 2008, the Australians will be keen to regain the title they held a stranglehold on for over 30 years. With players such as Greg Inglis, Jonathan Thurston and Luke Lewis at their disposal, the Australians are sure to mount a tough challenge for the title.

WORLD CUPS PLAYED

13

COOK ISLANDS

The Cook Islands, a collection of fifteen small islands in the Pacific Ocean between French Polynesia and American Samoa, burst onto the International Rugby League scene in 1995 when they won the Emerging Nations World Cup with a 22-6 victory over Ireland in the final at Gigg Lane, Bury.

Five years later the Cook Islanders stepped up to the main event and took part in the 2000 Rugby League World Cup. They performed valiantly in defeats against New Zealand and Wales and notched their first point in a draw with Lebanon.

The game took a foothold in 1979 with a match between a country team and a town team and the first international match was played against Niue in the 1986 Pacific Cup. The domestic Rugby League season currently involves seven clubs, six on the main island of Rarotonga and one side on the outer island of Aitutaki, and runs from February to May.

The success of their 2009 Pacific Cup campaign in defeating the established national teams of Samoa and Fiji before meeting Papua New Guinea in the final, booked the Cook Islanders a berth in the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.

WORLD CUPS PLAYED

1
2000
ENGLAND

England enjoy a unique position within Rugby League history having given birth to the sport in 1895 when disillusioned clubs from the North of England rebelled against their southern counterparts to form their own breakaway league. It became known as the Northern Union, predecessor to the modern day Rugby Football League.

With Rugby League spreading around the world during the 1905-1907 period, England, under the team banner of Great Britain, played host to the famous New Zealand 'All Golds' touring side in 1907 and then to the first ever Australian touring side in 1908. In 1910, England then embarked on their first ever Rugby League tour, playing numerous games in both New Zealand and Australia.


England have produced some of the greatest Rugby League players of all time, including the uncompromising forward Malcolm Reilly, Ellery Hanley, widely regarded as one of the toughest competitors ever to play the game and the legendary Harold Wagstaff, who led Huddersfield to an unprecedented four titles during the 1915 season.

FIJI

The nation of Fiji is a compilation of more than 332 islands of which 110 are permanently inhabited. The two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu account for 87% of Fiji’s population. Fiji made their tentative steps into the world of International Rugby League in 1992 when they played their first ever Rugby League match against Western Samoa, a game they lost 32-18. In the same year Fiji recorded their biggest ever victory over the Cook Islands.

The ‘Bati’, as they are known, made their first World Cup appearance in 1995 when they were placed in the same group as Australia and England. After defeating fellow group members South Africa, the Fijians suffered two heavy defeats to Australia and England and failed to progress through the tournament. The 2008 World Cup saw Fiji make a huge impression on the sport as they reached the semi-final stage beating both France and Ireland before again suffering at the hands of Australia.

FRANCE

The catalyst for the birth of Rugby League in France was a match played in Paris between England and Australia in 1933. The Australians won easily in front of over 5,000 but the seed had been sown and was further cultivated by angry French Rugby Union players protesting against ‘Les Bleus’ suspension from the Five Nations. As a result they formed the ‘Ligue Francaise de Rugby a XIII’ in 1934 and, within five years, there were 155 clubs.

In 1954 France hosted the first ever Rugby World Cup and proceeded to reach the final where they lost 16-12 to Great Britain. Since then the French have taken part in every World Cup and repeated their second place finish in 1968 after losing to Australia 20-2 in the Final. In 1995 they finished bottom of their pool after defeats against Wales and Samoa. Five years later they beat Samoa and South Africa to book a place in the last eight where they were beaten by New Zealand in 2008. The French have a strong Rugby League culture, with Catalans Dragons playing in the Engage Super League and Toulouse joining the Co-operative Championship.
New Zealand

The sport of Rugby League sprang to life in New Zealand through the years of 1906 and 1907.

After breaking away from the control of New Zealand Rugby Union, one of the most famous names in Rugby League history, the great Albert Baskerville, organised the very first Rugby League tour in history, where his New Zealand side travelled to Great Britain to play against the Northern Union in 1907.

That New Zealand side, which also included Australian legend Dally Messenger, played their first ever International Test match against Wales while on tour. Wales won in a nail biting 9-8 victory against the Kiwi side of the time, who have gone down in history as the ‘All Golds’.

After their defeat to Wales, New Zealand went on to play a three-test series against a Northern Union representative side and won the series 2-1, with Messenger scoring vital points in their two victorious tests. The ‘All Golds’ tour is regarded by many as being one of the key factors in helping aid the growth and popularity of Rugby League during those fledgling years both in Britain and Australia and played a large role in the sport being as strong as it is today.

New Zealand’s have only managed to win the World Cup once, in the most recent tournament in 2008, which is disappointing for them as they have appeared in all 13 World Cups. As they go into the 2013 World Cup as defending champions with top-class players such as Benji Marshall, Nathan Fein and Shaun Kenny-Dowall at their disposal, the Kiwis will be determined to retain the title it has taken them so long to earn.

Ireland

Rugby League in Ireland first took root in 1989 with the formation of the Dublin Blues club side who soon developed an excellent reputation for providing touring amateur sides with competitive fixtures.

A burgeoning domestic competition began to take shape with clubs established right across the Republic and Northern Ireland and the reputation of the Irish ‘Wolfhounds’ national side continued to grow with an eighth place finish in the 1996 Super League World Nines.

A growing number of players made themselves available though the grandparent rule and standards continued to progress leading to the Wolfhounds taking part in the 2000 World Cup where they topped their group before eventually losing to England 26-16 in the last eight.

The domestic game soon evolved with the establishment of an Elite League and regional conferences designed to encourage the development of new club sides.

The 2008 World Cup saw Ireland once again top their group after a victory over Samoa and a narrow defeat to Tonga but Fiji eventually put paid to their hopes of progression to the last four with a 32-14 win in the semi-final eliminator.

WORLD CUP FACTFILE

Andrew Farrar played just once for Australia in the 1988 World Cup Final against New Zealand in Auckland. He later turned out for Wigan.

World Cups Played


1514
### Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is the only nation to boast Rugby League as its national sport. Introduced by Australian miners and soldiers in the 1930s and 1940s, the game quickly took root in the national psyche and a governing body was founded in 1949.

Over the next three decades Rugby League developed rapidly with growing numbers of participants and spectators and their national team entered the test arena in 1975 with a 40-12 defeat against Great Britain in the capital Port Moresby. A year previously PNG had joined the embryonic Rugby League International Federation.

Papua New Guinea took its bow in the Rugby League World Cup in the 1985-88 tournament and has competed, with pride and no little success, at every World Cup event since then.

In 2008 the Kumuls, named after the Papua New Guinean bird of paradise, almost upset the odds by beating England but eventually lost 32-22 and finished bottom of a ‘group of death’ that also included Australia and New Zealand.

### Samoa

Samoa has been competing on the International Rugby League stage for over two decades and took its bow in 1988 when it was known as Western Samoa before reverting to Samoa in 1997. It was in the Rugby League World Cups of 1995, 2000 and 2008 that Samoa established themselves.

In their first game in ’95 Western Samoa announced their arrival in style with a 56-10 demolition of France in Cardiff and, despite losing to Wales in their second group game, exited the tournament with their heads held high.

Despite defeat against Ireland, victories over the Maoris and Scotland in the 2000 World Cup propelled Samoa into the quarter-finals where they crashed out to eventual winners Australia 66-10. Eight years later the Samoans finished bottom of their group table on points difference after another defeat to the Irish and a sole win against Tonga.

### Scotland

Scotland played their first International test against Celtic neighbours Ireland in 1995, in a narrowly fought 26-22 defeat. ‘The Bravehearts’, as they are nicknamed, are the youngest of the British Isles’ constituent Rugby League teams and have developed a keen rivalry with their Irish opponents.

The first ever Rugby League Test match, played between a Northern Union representative side and a team of Other Nationalities, saw two Scottish players grace the pitch with George Frater capturing the victorious Other Nationalities team. Rugby League then made its first appearance in Scotland in 1909 when a game between the Northern Union representative side and a touring Australian side was played at Glasgow’s Celtic Park.

The Scots progressed to the top level of international competition in 2000 when they made their first appearance at a World Cup. They did lose all three pool games, against Ireland, Samoa and Aotearoa Maori however they competed admirably with their biggest defeat by just 12 points. In 2008 Scotland returned to the World Cup where they upset Fiji in a surprise 18-16 victory before losing to Tonga in the seventh place play-off game.

### World Cup Factfile

The 1970 Australian squad featured the only clergyman to have ever played International Rugby League. Father John Coutes, a Roman Catholic Priest, crossed the line on five occasions in the tournament to finish as top try scorer.
TONGA

The South Pacific archipelago of Tonga, known as the Friendly Islands after the reception given to Captain James Cook in 1773, took up the sport of Rugby League in 1986. Within two years a domestic competition had been formed which now boasts seventeen clubs and over 2,000 players across the three main islands of Tongatapu, Vava’u and Ha’apai.

On the international scene the Tongans have been making waves for over two decades but lost their first match 40-30 against Samoa in 1988. Tonga very nearly crashed onto the World Cup stage in spectacular style. In the 1995 Rugby League World Cup they ran New Zealand agonisingly close in their opening pool match at Warrington losing 25-24. Two days later a 28-28 draw with Papua New Guinea left them a respectable second in their pool.

Five years later in the 2000 World Cup they once again started brightly with a 66-18 demolition of South Africa before defeats to Papua New Guinea and France saw them exit the tournament.

Eight years later in Australia the Mate Ma’a Tonga, as they are nicknamed, started their World Cup campaign with a bang after pipping Ireland 22-20 but a 20-12 defeat to Samoa in Penrith finished their chances of progression. They eventually clinched seventh position after a 48-0 play-off win over Scotland.

WALES

Wales is one of the longest standing teams in Rugby League history having played their first Test match against the famous New Zealand ‘All Golds’ touring side in 1908, where they defeated the tourists by a single point to notch their first ever Test match victory.

However, the history of Welsh Rugby League arguably goes back even further to the first ever Test match, which was played in 1904 between England and Other Nationalities, of which 10 of the 12 man squad were of Welsh nationality.

Wales has a proven record in producing players of the highest calibre and three of their players have been honoured with a place in the Rugby League Hall of Fame. Those players are Billy Boston, Wigan’s all-time record try scorer with a magnificent record of 478 tries in 488 games, Jim Sullivan, all-time record appearance and points scored for Wigan and Gus Risman, who led minnows Workington Town to Challenge Cup glory in 1952, aged 41.

Wales have an impressive history within European competition having won the European Cup on six occasions and have competed in the event since its inception in 1935. Wales have appeared at the World Cup on three occasions reaching the semi-finals in 1995 and 2000.

With Welsh legend Iestyn Harris pulling the coaching strings and former Rugby Union player Gareth Thomas returning to International competition, Wales will be looking to repeat the performances of 1995 and 2000 in 2013 and return to the top tier of Rugby League.
The 2013 Rugby League World Cup will feature 14 nations. Twelve nations, namely Australia, New Zealand, England, France, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Tonga, Fiji and Samoa have already booked their places in the tournament.

The remaining two berths will be filled with nations winning the European and Atlantic qualifying groups due to take place in October 2011. Held on a round robin basis, the Atlantic group will feature Jamaica, South Africa and USA while the European group will include Italy, Lebanon, Russia and Serbia.

**European Qualifying Group**

**ITALY**
Rugby League enjoyed a vibrant domestic scene in Italy during the 1950's and 60's and as a result of the game's popularity, an Italian national team played their first Rugby League match in 1951, which saw them narrowly lose to close neighbours France. Under the Federazione Italiana Rugby League the sport's popularity has continued to grow since then and the Italian national team won the RLEF European Shield in 2008 and 2009, moving up to the European Cup in 2009 where they lost to Scotland and Lebanon before beating Serbia. They shocked the Rugby League fraternity with a 13-6 defeat of Wales in October 2010.

**LEBANON**
Lebanese Rugby League first made its mark in 1997, when the Lebanese side played in the World 7s in Sydney, followed by the Cedars’ first international series in 1998, against Japan in Tokyo. The World Cup in 2000 proved to be a real catalyst to launch the sport within Lebanon and now the Lebanese Rugby League Federation runs the seven-team Bank of Beirut Rugby League Championship as well as a burgeoning youth and representative programme.

**RUSSIA**
Rugby League has been prominent within Russia since 1991 when, under the guise of the former USSR, they played their first Test against France. They lost 26-6 and it wasn’t until 1994 that the national side, known as the Bears, notched their first international victory, defeating USA. The USA were also the visitors for the first international game to be played in Russia in 2002, a game the Russians won 54-10. In 1995, Russia competed in the Emerging Nations Tournament, where they again defeated America, this time in a narrow 28-26 victory. The Bears made the step up to elite level when they competed in the 2000 World Cup against Fiji, Australia and England but the level of opposition proved beyond them.

**SERBIA**
Serbia has been one of Continental Europe’s leading nations since the sport, which actually started in the old Yugoslavia in the 1950’s, was reintroduced to the Balkan nation in 2001. The national team played its first full international in 2003 when the Serbians were given a ruthless introduction to international rugby, beaten 102-0 by Lebanon. Despite this early setback, under the stewardship of the Serbian Rugby League Federation the game has continually grown throughout Serbia over the last decade and the country now has a five team domestic competition, a university competition and a vibrant youth league.
World Cup Factfile

A total of 15 nations have taken part in the Rugby League World Cup (New Zealand, Australia, England (or GB), Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands, Lebanon, South Africa and Russia). A further six nations have competed in the Emerging Nations Tournaments (Moldova, Morocco, Italy, Japan, Canada and the USA). In addition Aotearoa Maori of New Zealand and a GB Barla XIII have also taken part.

Atlantic Qualifying Group

Jamaica
Rugby League has been played in the Reggae nation since 2004, when the Jamaican Rugby League Association was founded. Following on from the creation of a national governing body, the country’s first domestic league competition kicked-off in 2005, a competition which has expanded to six teams, as well as a university presence and a high school championship.

South Africa
Rugby League laid its roots in South Africa during the 1960’s, when the national team played against Great Britain and then in a two match series against Australia, losing all games by wide margins. During that same era, the greatest South African player of all time and Hall of Fame inductee Tom Van Vollenhoven, was enjoying a glittering career with British side St Helens. The Rhinos appeared at both the 1995 and 2000 World Cups but failed to make an impact on the global scene, suffering from heavy defeats in both competitions. 2013 would give them the opportunity to make amends for their previous poor showings.

USA
The Tomahawks made their first impact on the international scene in 1954 when they lost 31-0 to France and they have been competing sporadically ever since. They competed in the Emerging Nations tournament in 2000 and secured a third place finish after defeating Morocco and North American rivals Canada. In 2008, the USA came within two games of making the progression to the top level of international competition, losing a World Cup qualifying semi-final game against Samoa.