



THE PAST

EVEN though there were early games of rugby being played in Sydney in the 1820s, it was not until 1864 that the first rugby club in Australia – Sydney University – was established. By 1874 enough clubs had been set up to create a Southern Rugby Union competition. Later a Northern Rugby Union was set up. In 1903, Australia and New Zealand played a test match in Sydney, which was the beginning of intense rivalry between the two nations. The first Australian representative team went on tour in 1908 visiting the United Kingdom, Ireland and North America. It was during this tour that the nickname Wallabies eventuated after the British newspapers started to call the Australian team the Rabbits. This was seen to be an unsuitable name and the alternative stuck. In that same tour the Wallabies were crowned gold medal rugby champions at the Olympic Games in London. By 1949, the future of Rugby Union in Australia was cemented when an administrative body formed. The Australian Rugby Football Union became responsible for all aspects of the game throughout Australia which has meant that it has gone from strength to strength over the years.

THE STRIP

IT WASN'T until 1928 that the traditional Australian colours of green and gold were adopted for Australian rugby representative teams. Before this the Wallabies wore the jersey of the state team where games were played, with the Australian coat of arms replacing the state's logo. The first truly Australian jersey was emerald green, but this changed in 1961 when a gold jersey was used to prevent a clash with the South African colours. The gold has remained the prominent colour ever since.

WHERE'S WALLY?

AS THE youngest member of the squad, James O'Connor has the job of looking after the team mascot Wally – a stuffed toy wallaby. It is James' duty to protect and guard the mascot.



THE WALLABIES

IT'S game on for the Australian team at the 2011 Rugby World Cup. After months of preparation the Wallabies have started their group matches and hopefully will progress to the knockout

stage of the competition. As our team participates in their seventh Rugby World Cup, we hope they repeat their performances in 1991 and 1999 when they were crowned champions.

GAMES SCHEDULE

THE Wallabies have begun their campaign in New Zealand starting with their four pool matches. Hopefully they will complete this stage of the tournament in first or second position and progress into the next round. The following is the schedule of the Wallabies' matches:

Game 1: Sunday, September 11 Wallabies 32 def Italy 6 at North Harbour, Auckland

Game 2: Saturday, September 17 vs Ireland at Eden Park, Auckland

Game 3: Friday, September 23 vs USA at Wellington Stadium, Wellington

Game 4: Saturday, October 1 vs Russia at Trafalgar Park, Nelson

THE PLAYERS

AUSTRALIAN Rugby Union has named a 30-man squad charged with taking on the other nations in the World Cup throughout September and October. The squad is made up entirely of players from home-based clubs. James Horwill will captain the team as coach Robbie Deans and his assistants guide the players in their quest to win the Webb Ellis Cup.

PLAYER	POSITION	AGE	CAPS	CLUB
Saia Faingaa	Hooker	24	13	Reds
Stephen Moore	Hooker	28	58	Brumbies
Tatafu Polota-Nau	Hooker	26	25	Waratahs
Ben Alexander	Prop	26	27	Brumbies
Sekope Kepu	Prop	25	6	Waratahs
Salesi Ma'aфу	Prop	28	10	Brumbies
James Slipper	Prop	22	14	Reds
James Horwill (c)	Lock	26	26	Reds
Nathan Sharpe	Lock	33	94	Force
Rob Simmons	Lock	22	14	Reds
Dan Vickerman	Lock	32	56	Waratahs
Rocky Elsom	Flanker	28	67	Brumbies
Scott Higginbotham	Flanker	25	4	Reds
David Pocock	Flanker	23	32	Force
Radike Samo	Flanker	35	6	Reds
Ben McCalman	Number 8	23	12	Force
Wycliff Palu	Number 8	29	36	Waratahs
Luke Burgess	Scrum Half	28	32	Waratahs
Will Genia	Scrum Half	23	25	Reds
Nick Phipps	Scrum Half	22	2	Rebels
Berrick Barnes	Fly-half	25	31	Waratahs
Quade Cooper	Fly-half	23	26	Reds
Adam Ashley-Cooper	Centre	27	54	Brumbies
Anthony Faingaa	Centre	24	5	Reds
Rob Horne	Centre	22	6	Waratah
Pat McCabe	Centre	23	4	Brumbies
Digby Ioane	Wing	26	14	Reds
Drew Mitchell	Wing	27	55	Waratahs
James O'Connor	Wing	21	29	Force
Kurtley Beale	Fullback	22	17	Waratahs

A 'cap' is the term given for the number of times a player is selected to play in an international side. Former captain George Gregan is Australia's as well as the world's most capped player in the history of rugby with 139 caps.

PHOTO: AAP

TOMORROW: ROLLIN' RUGBY Part 9