**2020 CIRU REVIEW (January to December 2020) by BK**

**A COVID-19 Disrupted Season in Review**

**January / February:**

Planning: confirm 2020 CIRU Calendar details – internal competitions, major events - U16 College & Raro 7s, touring teams – U13 Collaroy. Finalize details of the CIRU Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. Paul Jonson & Bruce Cook looking to visit in March 2020 re. Governance.

**February 8th – 19th:** Oceania Educators Talemo Waqa & Tihrani visit to conduct training workshops (coaches, referees, medic, strength & conditioning trainers, management) to empower the locals. This was a shared resource with all sporting codes invited to attend. Rugby numbers were limited due to in-season league however we do need to identify a key time of the year (February or June) for the Educators to visit to upskill the rugby masses.

**March / April:**

**March 9th – 11th:** BK visits Atiu with CISNOC led-delegation to check on facilities for the proposed Manea Multi-Sports Games (Atiu) in October 2020.

By the end of March, due to COVID-19, Ministry of Health (“MOH”) ban the playing of any contact sport.

**May / June:**

**1st May:** MOH approval given to train/play Quick Rip 7s so a plan was set to run a Rising Stars – Rarotonga Primary Schools Quick Rip 7s Tournament at Arorangi Field on Wednesday 8th July 2020 (Boys & Girls). The schools were advised, school participation confirmed, training sessions organized so the RDOs could commence training asap.

Meetings are held with the Rarotonga Clubs re. 2020 season start.

**July:**

* **Wednesday 8th:** Rising Stars – Rarotonga Primary Schools Quick Rip 7s Tournament held at Arorangi Field. 36 teams participated (17 Girls teams), over 400 active participants.
* **Saturday 11th:** Town v Country matches to kick-start the 2020 Rugby 15s season.
* **Friday 24th & Saturday 25th:** Rarotonga Club 15s season kicks-off: 4x Senior A Grades, U19 Town v Country, Rugby 10s U16 Town v Country and U14 Rugby 15s (4 clubs), U12s & U10s Quick Rip (4 clubs) all the games being played at one venue each.

**August / September:**

* **August:** the Rarotonga Club 15s season continues.
* **Saturday 5th September:** Rarotonga Club 15s Semi Finals commence.
* **Saturday 19th September:** Rarotonga Club 15s Grand Finals – Senior A extra time thriller won by the Panthers (v Eels), U19s & U16s won by Country, U14 won by Town, U12s won by Avatiu & U10s won by Cowboys.

**October:**

**Saturday 3rd – 17th:** inaugural Cook Islands Games, multi-sports event with 23 codes & traditional games, over 4,000 athletes & officials played over the 2 weeks of competition. Rugby 7s Tournament is played from Thursday 15th to Saturday 17th October with total 19x participating teams with following medal placings: MENS (10x teams): Gold – Pukapuka, Silver – Aitutaki & Bronze – Atiu. WOMENS (4x teams): Atiu, Aitutaki & Mauke. U17s(5x teams): Atiu, Mauke & Pukapuka. Overall Manea Games competition winner Mauke. CISNOC organized this awesome 2020 event with the next CI Games to be held in August 2022.

**November:**

**Friday(s) 13th, 20th & 27th:** inaugural Tri Nations 15s Series between CI, Fiji & Samoa. Match #1: CI 15 – 10 Fiji, Match #2: Samoa 22 – 21 Fiji and Match #3: Samoa 28 – 20 CI. Final placings: Samoa, Ci & Fiji. A good opportunity to unify our communities and build regional capacity.

**December:**

* **Tuesday 1st:** U13 Rarotonga Primary Schools Championships held at Ngatangiia Field. 14x teams participated with the winners being: U13 Boys Nukutere College (v Runner-up Arorangi) and U13 Girls: Papaaroa College (v Nikao School).
* **Friday 4th & Saturday 5th:** RARO 7s Tournament at BCI Stadium. 21x teams participated; 12x Mens, 5x Womens & 4x U17 Mens. Winners as follows: Mens: Panthers (v Pukapuka), Womens: Avatiu (v Atiu) and U17 Mens: Bears (v Panthers). Awesome event organized by Jessie Sword and especially pleased to see an increase in the Womens teams.
* **INTERNATIONAL: Saturday 19th - U18 World School 7s Tournament (Mens & Womens)** played in Auckland/NZ. The Women won 4 of their 5 matches and defeated NZ Maori 24 – 10 in the Bowl Final. The Men played 5 matches but lost 4, drawing 12-all with NZ Maori. This was the only international event that we attended in 2020 and with covid-quarantine restrictions all players were NZ-based. Meitaki ma’ata to CIRU-NZ for organizing the teams.

**CONCLUSION:**

In March 2020, all sport was put on “hold” due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In May we received Ministry of Health approval to resume playing contact sport so thank you to all who worked extra hard to deliver our rugby programs at all levels into the Primary Schools, Colleges, Clubs and regional too.

During this time of uncertainty, it gave us time to strengthen our internal competition(s) and this was achieved with two major regional events being created notably: October - Manea Games 7s (multi-sports) and in November – Tri Nations 15s Series. These new 2 regional events will now be part of the CIRU calendar as we look to have purposeful and meaningful competition that builds local capacity.

**## Please refer to the 2020 Summary Event & Participation Numbers attached.**

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to our challenging 2020 Season – this year was a test of our resilience and ability to work together as a community, to pause, reset and adapt during these times of trouble.

**“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. “ ## 2 Corinthians 4:17**

Meitaki maa’ata & God bless always,

Ben Koteka

CIRU – Rugby Development Manager