

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A New Era for Rugby 7s in India: Franchise-Based League Set to Launch in Mumbai on June 1, 2025

Mumbai, 4th April 2025: Rugby India, the National Governing Body for the sport in India, in partnership with GMR Sports, proudly presents the **Rugby Premier League (RPL)**—the world's first franchise-based Rugby 7s league. The tournament will take place in **Mumbai at the Brihanmumbai Kreedha Ani Lalitkala Prarthisthan Andheri Sports Complex (Mumbai Football Arena, MFA) from June 1 to June 15, 2025.**

Editorial Synopsis

- **Exclusive Window:** A dedicated window has been created on the **global Rugby 7s calendar**, ensuring the participation of the sport's biggest stars.
- **Elite Talent:** RPL will feature the **best global Rugby 7s players** alongside India's finest rugby talent, with **34 matches played over 15 days**.
- The league will be broadcast live on **Star Sports** and **JioHotstar**.
- **City-Based Franchises:** Six teams will represent major Indian cities—**Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bhubaneswar**.

Star-Studded International Lineup

RPL will welcome **30 marquee international players** from powerhouse Rugby 7s nations, including Argentina, South Africa, Kenya, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Spain, Fiji, USA, and Ireland. Some of the biggest names in the sport include:

- Perry Baker, USA - 2X World Rugby 7s player of the year, 3X Olympian
- Rosko Speckman, South Africa - 2 X Olympian - 2X Bronze
- Harry McNulty, Ireland - 2X Olympian + 2X Rugby World Cup Medalist
- Terry Kennedy, Ireland - World Rugby 7s Player of the year 2022, World Series Top Try Scorer 2022 and 2024
- Patrick Odongo, Kenya - Represented Kenya at the Paris Olympics
- Jordan Conroy, Ireland - 2 X Olympian, World Rugby Sevens Series and RWC7s Medalist
- Alex Davis, Great Britain - England 7s, Olympian
- Lucas Lacamp, USA - Olympian
- Tone Ng Shiu - New Zealand – Olympian, 2019 NZ Rugby 7s Player of the Year, Bronze, 2022 Commonwealth Games
- Aaron Cummings, USA - Olympian
- Scott Curry, New Zealand - 4 time New Zealand 7s player of the year, 3X Commonwealth games medalist, Silver 2021 Olympics, 6 X World Rugby Sevens Series Champion & RWC 7s Gold
- Lucian Gonzalez - Argentina - Bronze 2024 Paris Olympics, World Sevens Series Champs 2023, HSBC World Svns Dream Team
- Santiago Mare - Argentina - Bronze 2024 Paris Olympics, World Sevens Series Champs 2023

- Joaquim Pellandini - Argentina - Bronze 2024 Paris Olympics, World Sevens Series Champs 2023
- Matteo Grazziano - Argentina - Bronze 2024 Paris Olympics, World Sevens Series Champs 2023
- Mattias Osadczuk - Argentina - Bronze 2024 Paris Olympics, World Sevens Series Champs 2023, HSBC World Svns Dream Team
- Akuila Rokolisoa, New Zealand- Olympian, Gold, RWC 7s 2018, Bronze, 2022 Commonwealth Games
- Alejandro Laforga - Spain - Olympian. Active player on the Spanish National 7s Team on the Series. Spain World Ranking - #2
- Pol Pla - Spain - Olympian. Active player on the Spanish National 7s Team on the Series. Spain World Ranking - #2
- Manuel Moreno - Spain- Olympian. Active player on the Spanish National 7s Team on the Series. Spain World Ranking - #2
- Joseva Talacolo - Fiji - Oceania Games Champions 2021, Common Wealth Games Silver 2022, RWC Gold 2022, 2024 Olympics Silver
- Iowane Teba - Fiji - 2024 Olympics Silver, World Series Dubai, Singapore & Toulouse Gold
- Terio Veilawai -Fiji - 2024 Olympic Silver, World Series Singapore, Dubai, Hong Kong Gold
- Filipe Sauturaga - Fiji - 2022 Commonwealth Games Silver , 2024 Olympic Games Silver, RWC Gold
- Joji Nasova - Fiji - 2024 Olympic Games Silver, Dubai 7s Gold
- Regan Ware, New Zealand – Olympian, Bronze – 2022 Commonwealth Games, Silver, RWC 7s
- Waisea Nacuqu-Fiji - 2020 Olympic Games Gold, 2024 Olympic Games Silver, World Series Gold 2018 & 2019, 2022 Commonwealth Games Silver, RWC Gold
- Henry Hutchison - Australia- 3X Olympian, 2015 World Rugby Rookie of the Year
- Maurice Longbottom - Australia - 2X Olympian
- James Turner - Australia-Olympian

Additionally, **18 international players** from Canada, Hong Kong, and Germany will feature, enhancing the league's competitive depth.

Strengthening Indian Rugby

The league will also feature **30 Indian players** selected from an auction pool of 71, providing them with a historic platform to compete alongside international legends.

Top-Class Coaching

Some of the most **renowned rugby coaches in the world** will coach the RPL teams:

- **Mike Friday** (USA 7s Head Coach)
- **Ben Gollings** (England 7s Legend, Fiji 7s Head Coach)
- **DJ Forbes** (New Zealand 7s Icon)

- **Tomasi Cama** (Fiji 7s Great)
- **Paco Hernandez** (Spain 7s Coach)
- **Tim Walsh** (Australia Women's 7s Head Coach)

Speaking on this path breaking development, Mr Rahul Bose, President of Rugby India, said:

'This is a league that's been six years in the making, but we wanted to do everything right. The first extraordinary development came thanks to World Rugby, who gave us a 15 day window in which no international rugby 7s would be played anywhere in the world. This made the best global rugby players available to us. From there to partnering with GMR Sports and creating the best conditions for both the international players as well as our Indian players; choosing some of the most intelligent, committed team owners and getting a top class broadcast partner in JioStar, it's been a helluva ride. Rugby 7s is one of the most attractive television sports in modern history. Welcome, India and the world, to the Rugby Premier League.'

Mr. Satyam Trivedi, CEO, GMR Sports, added:

"The Rugby Premier League marks a pivotal moment in our mission to elevate rugby in India. By showcasing a vibrant mix of international and Indian talent, and with the unwavering support of our franchise owners, this league is poised to redefine the future of the sport. We believe that the RPL will not only captivate a wider audience but also provide Indian players with invaluable opportunities to compete alongside the world's best, thereby raising the standard of rugby in our country. As rugby continues to grow as an Olympic sport, GMR Group is excited to contribute to its holistic development in India."

Sanjog Gupta, CEO-Sports, JioStar, added:

"At JioStar, we are revolutionizing the universe of sports entertainment by delivering compelling, fan-centric experiences. We are leveraging the combined power of Star Sports's brand of story-telling, JioHotstar's technological prowess, and the universality of our integrated platforms. Our diversified portfolio of sporting properties seeks to serve audiences at scale as well as niche segments of fans, which can grow to be significant. The Rugby Premier League in the fast-growing Rugby 7s format offers the opportunity to attract new audience segments and also offer existing audiences a compelling, new proposition to develop an affiliation for."

About Rugby India

Awarded the Best Sports Federation - Development, by FICCI at the 2025 Indian Sports Awards, Rugby India is the official national sports body for Rugby Union in India. It is affiliated to World Rugby, Asia Rugby, IOA, and is recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sport, (MYAS). It is responsible for the growth and development of the sport across India.

About GMR Sports

Founded in 2008, GMR Sports represents the sports sector of the GMR Group. It is driven by a mission to connect people, nurture talent, and establish sports as a powerful unifying platform both within India and globally. Committed to becoming a respected and influential brand in the sports industry, GMR Sports embarked on its journey with cricket, chosen for its widespread appeal as the ideal starting point for the Group's first-ever sports venture.

The journey began with the Delhi Capitals, the city's first-ever cricket franchise and the sole representative of India's national capital in the IPL. As part of its mission to broaden its impact, GMR Sports soon diversified its portfolio, adding sports that resonate deeply with the Indian community. The company now owns UP Yoddhas in the Pro Kabaddi League and Telugu Yoddhas in the Ultimate Kho Kho League, additionally, has recently ventured into the league by acquiring rights to the Rugby Premier League, reinforcing its dedication to supporting regional talent and promoting indigenous sports. Expanding its global footprint, GMR Sports now holds franchises in international markets, including Dubai Capitals in ILT20, Pretoria Capitals in SA20, Seattle Orcas in Major League Cricket (US), and Hampshire County Cricket Club in England. Through these initiatives, GMR Sports continues to strengthen its presence on the world stage.

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