

New Zealanders stake early claim as Bangkok sevens kick into full swing

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» The 18th Bangkok rugby sevens got into full swing yesterday at the Police Stadium with plenty of exciting, fast-flowing rugby from a colourful array of international and local teams.

Establishing themselves as firm favourites to lift the main Cup was the powerful NZ4Nations side, following three comfortable victories in which they did not concede a point.

The accomplished New Zealanders from the Auckland area demolished Thonburi University 62-0, outplayed Pattaya Panthers 52-0 and finished the day with a 55-0 pounding of Mahasarakham University.

The Kiwi outfit has a strong pedigree with the core of the side coming from the Grammar-Carlton team which has won the Bangkok Sevens on the last three occasions.

Another visiting side which impressed with some lively rugby featuring neat passing and quick running were the Hong Kong Lions who defeated Thai Police 23-5 and then went on to dispose of

the Bangkok Japanese in convincing fashion. Arguably the best performing local side were the Royal Thai Police, who won all three of their games in some style, beginning with a 47-5 defeat of Olymp from Kazakhstan.

Showing great pace, the Police went on to beat Chiang Mai Suas 31-0 and Parinya Professionals 43-0.

Another Thai team performing well were Shambhala, an exciting young team from several local universities, specialising in rugby sevens. The speedy side defeated IPE Samut Sakhon 40-0, before turning in an impressive performance to upset the Lloyd McDermott team from Australia 33-7.

Lloyd McDermott had earlier eased past IPE Samut Sakhon 48-0.

One trophy has already been claimed, with the Womens Plate final being won by Chulalongkorn University following a 29-19 victory over a gallant Bangkok IPE side. Both teams played with great enthusiasm and displayed a lot of promise.

Play commences today at 8.30 am and continues throughout the

day, culminating in the respective finals in the afternoon.

The Check Inn 99 Womens Cup final kicks off at 2.56pm and will be followed by finals for the Air Astana Shield, Tenderloins Bowl, Baker Tilly Thailand Plate and the Colonels Cup.

It should be a great day of entertaining rugby and spectators are welcome.

Food and refreshments are available at the Police Stadium ground which is located close to the Rama Gardens Hotel on Vibhavadi-Rangsit Road.