

Buffalo Can-Am 7s:

Buffalo Old Boys

by Lex Maccubbin

Buffalo, NY
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The host Buffalo Old Boys won the Cup championship of the Buffalo Can-Am Sevens with an 8-6 win over the Toronto Scottish in the final.

Lockport (NY) captured the Plate championship with a 28-12 win over the Buffalo Old Boys B-side and the Toronto Lions won the Bowl title, beating Genesee (NY) 30-13.

Friendship Festival

The Buffalo Can-Am Sevens is part of the week-long Friendship Festival, held yearly in Buffalo, New York and Fort Erie, Ontario. The Festival celebrates both Canada Day and the Fourth of July, providing a wide range of entertainment and special events.

Twelve sides competed in the Can-Am and were divided into four pools for the round-robin competition.

Preliminaries

The two finalists breezed through their round-robin games as Buffalo beat Blackhorse (38-0) and Toronto Scottish II (28-6) and the Toronto Scottish topped Genesee (30-0) and Buffalo Old Boys B (12-4). The

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other pools were won by the Niagara (Ontario) Wasps and Fredonia (NY).

Semifinals

Everyone agreed that the two best teams reached the Cup final. The Toronto Scottish played well in the round-robin and then ground out a 10-0 semifinal win over Fredonia. The Scottish side played aggressive defense and displayed excellent ball control and movement.

The Buffalo Old Boys entertained the home crowd with a dazzling display of scoring and tenacious defense. In their semifinal, they rolled over last year's runner-up, the Niagara (ON) Wasps, 26-4.

Final

The final started with both teams probing for weaknesses and stifling each other's offense with bone-crushing tackles.

With four minutes gone, Buffalo exploded for a try using a play that had been successful throughout the tournament. From a set scrum, scrumhalf Chuck Mosey broke to the weakside and dashed down the sideline. His forwards followed and he dished to Ed Lawrence who charged to the line. As the cover defense approached, Lawrence fed the ball back inside to the trailing Tim Lucca for the try. Lucca missed the conversion, 4-0.

Late in the half, Lucca was in-goal for what appeared to be Buffalo's second try only to be pushed over the end line. The half ended with Buffalo leading 4-0.

Second Half

The hard tackling continued in the second half but after a long struggle Lucca dashed through the Scottish defense to score his second try. Once again the conversion failed and Buffalo held an 8-0 lead with four minutes remaining.

The Scottish went on an all-out attack and finally scored late in the match when Rodney Dunlop bulled over for a try. The conversion by Dave Moore was dead on and the score stood at 8-6 with little time left.

Buffalo sent the ball deep on the kickoff and chased it with three forwards. The pressure paid off as the Scottish were forced into touch and before the game could be restarted, referee Jim McCann signaled fulltime. The Old Boys had won the Cup.

Buffalo OB		Toronto Scottish
Lawrence	1	Hanchard
Penman	2	MacGregor
Day	3	Dunlop
Mosey	4	Moore
Lucca	5	McMillan
Hann	6	Bollard
Nashwinter	7	Thompson

Referee: Jim McMann (Ontario)

Postscript

In only its second year, the Buffalo Can-Am Sevens is striving to become a top tournament. The elements are there: a good setting in Delaware Park, community support, an association with the Friendship Festival and a core of hardworking Buffalo Old Boys.

Special thanks are due to Steve Day and the referees. Their efforts were greatly appreciated. Teams planning to attend next year's tournament can contact:

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Opinion

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To the credit of the National Collegiate Committee, collegiate rugby continues to reduce the age of participating players, directing it even closer to mainstream college sports. As it is, the two teams that reached the National Collegiate Championship had average ages of 21. The All-American team that competed in June had an average age of 22.

National Convenor of Selectors and Eagle Manager Ed Schram speculates that, "The National Conference All-Star Championship (NCACs) was played several levels higher than the Junior ITTs, with younger players..." and that, "...If the U.S.A. were to field an U-21s or U-23s team, 85%-100% of the players would be collegiate." For reasons of structural efficiencies and