



Bournemouth Sevens.

Due to the cancellation of the tournament in Marbella this year we entered a squad into the Bournemouth 7s. This was only the second year of this tournament so it was uncharted territory for WHM.

With a number of our regulars unavailable through injury or domestic interference our stalwarts of Howard Graham, James Reilly and Adam Bishop were joined by James "Shorty" Short (sound familiar) for his second Marauders appearance and Justin James from Llanelli making his debut.

The infamous Bunny Burenivalu brought along some fellow British Army colleagues to make up the rest of the squad namely Max Tu Baka, Peter Rokomatu, Able Asesea and Jojo Galodamu.

As always at this type of tournament you never know who is going to turn up given that the rugby season proper has come to a close. As well as our regular adversaries of Samurai, Wailers and Scorpions the standard was very high especially from the Stash All Stars which consisted of mainly London Irish squad members including the Armitage brothers.

Saturday saw us in a pool with Navy Sharks, St Marys Silver Backs and Church 7s the antipodean contingent from the famous rugby/night club from South West London. With 5 British Army in our side this added some bite following the recent Army v Navy match at Twickenham.

Despite some early nerves and some big defensive hits from the Sharks, Marauders ran out comfortable winners 35 – 5 with Justin James putting in a strong first appearance. Next up were the Silver Backs who caught us cold and played some strong keep ball 7s to go in at half time 12 – 0 up. A few poignant words from Howie Graham refocused the lads and we controlled the second half to win 22 – 12.

The last game of the day was a physical encounter against Church however a strong performance from James Reilly and Adam Bishop saw us home as comfortable winners.

So to Sunday and the quarter finals which due to some strange seeding (or no seeding) on Saturday pitched us against Samurai Barracuda. Probably the least said about this game the better. Suffice to say we never got going and the more we tried to force the game the worse things got. Not to take anything away from Samurai who turned in a ruthless performance to inflict what I believe to be the worst defeat in Marauders history 52 – 7.

On the positive side our newly formed Marauders Academy went all the way through to the semi final in their competition and showed some promising signs for the future and the sun shone all weekend.

Next stop Rome and it doesn't get any easier.