

Step 1 Useful for U20s

Written by

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Everybody loves a victory but sometimes there are other considerations.

USA U20s Head Coach Scott Lawrence needed to see all his players, and that was more important than beating the Irish Exiles.

The Exiles came into Wednesday's game in Ealing, a suburb of London, with players who had several age-grade international veterans in their squad. And yet, the Americans surprised them with three tries in the first half in what ended up a victory for the Exiles at 18-15.

"We wanted to see different guys in different combinations," said Lawrence. "The need to test guys overrode any other considerations."

And the verdict?

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“Some guys learned a hard lesson in the importance of keeping possession in the international game,” Lawrence said, quietly. “We were not careful with the football in the second half, and we paid for it.”

Lawrence used every player except Paris Hollis, the Life prop, who is recovering from a shoulder issue. Hollis, said Lawrence, would be available for selection against Samoa in the Junior World Rugby Trophy opener May 24.

Every other player got some playing time, and that was crucial, said Lawrence.

And of those, perhaps the most impressive was flanker Alec Gletzer. Several players played well, and certainly Will Magie set up a try and scored two, but Getzler was mentioned by several observers.

“Alec is new to the game and he’s coming along,” said former USA loose forward Lawrence. “He has an impressive work rate, broke the gain line several times, and made a bunch of positive tackles. So, yes Alec had a good game.”

So did the rest of the team. It wasn’t the result they wanted, but it was a start, a good start for some, and a harsh lesson for some others.