CHULA VISTA, Calif. – It's been a very busy week at the Olympic Training Center (OTC) with 34 athletes in the Men's Eagles Sevens extended camp.

USA Rugby announced earlier this month the 16 men's players that are in the 2013 Residency Program. An additional 15 players joined the training group this week, with three others training for the month of January at the OTC.

Besides selecting the 12 players for the Wellington 7s, Men's Eagles Sevens Head Coach Alex Magleby's objectives are to increase competition, continue to connect with the wider player pool, test progress for those already identified, and see if they are ready to challenge for a spot on the Series.

"We have been able to check off these boxes each day. We have work ahead this week and next, but are on track. It's been good to reconnect with many of the players in the extended camp, to see how they have progressed, and to meet a few new faces. We have had a handful of quality sessions," explained Magleby.

The extended group has had a few combined training sessions, but there has been plenty of time for separate sessions for the residency players who are gearing up for the Series.

As part of the Olympic Development Program (ODP) several coaches have also had the opportunity to spend quality time at the OTC. These included Olympic Development Academy (ODA) Coaches Evan Haigh (Serevi Seattle), Aaron Manheimer (Serevi Chicago), James Walker (Tiger Rugby) as well as Tony Pacheco (All American 7s Coach), Dave Williams (National 15s Strength & Conditioning Coach) and Mike Tolkin (USA 15s Head Coach).

"It is an interactive process with these coaches, and I think everyone is improving, including the national staff, because of the dialogue," said Magleby.

James Walker, who is also Belmont Shore RFC President, said: “It’s great having a look at all the potential talent coming in, and very good for these players to get an insight into the professional setup. On the coaching side, we’re working with Alex Magleby to standardize our terminology and drills to lessen the learning curve when moving from an ODA to the Eagles.”

The three players that aren’t in the Residency Program, but that are training for the month at the OTC include Gabe Adler (23), Nick Schwieger (22) and Madison Hughes (20). These three roommates come from very different rugby backgrounds.

“I grew up in England and played rugby since I was 7 years old,” said Hughes, a High School All-American and USA u20 star. “What a great experience, to train with all the best rugby players in the country. To be able to focus on rugby 24/7 is a very unique position.”

Hughes is only a sophomore, and was not only a part of the Dartmouth College 7s team that won the CRC tournament in 2012, but named MVP.

Also from Dartmouth, but on the opposite end of the rugby experience spectrum, is Schwieger who just completed his 8th day of rugby. The Dartmouth running back signed a contract with the St. Louis Rams following the 2012 NFL draft, but was cut in late August. Schwieger is one of many talented cross-over athletes who are well suited to rugby sevens.

“It’s definitely different and an adjustment, but in some ways the angles transfer in the same way from football to rugby. The same goes for defense. It’s been great to learn from the Eagles and get that experience,” said Schwieger.

Adler comes from a basketball and football background. He won Gold for basketball at the 2005 Maccabiah Games, and was on track to play football at Santa Monica College or NYU, but decided to join the Israeli Special Forces.

“This is a superb environment and I’m excited about the rugby world. So many quality people are involved, and it’s very competitive on the field,” enthused Adler.

The next step for these players is the team announcement for the next leg of the HSBC 7s World Series, which takes place in Wellington, New Zealand, from February 1st – 2nd. Following that, Las Vegas will host the extremely popular 5th round of the Series.

“It's been fun to coach this camp," said Magleby. "I'm looking forward to watching the players develop as they return to the ODAs, their colleges, and clubs. Many of them will be playing for either the Falcons, an ODA, or their club at the Las Vegas Invitational.”

USA Men's Eagles Sevens | Extended Camp
Gabe Adler
Michael Garvey
Dean Gericke
Kellen Gordon
Kyle Hitt
Madison Hughes
Elliot Joses
Hunter Leland
Rocco Mauer
Zach Pangelinan
Nick Schwieger
Tyler Spitz
Alex Taefu
Pila Taufa
Keone Tawata
Peter Tiberio
Dustin Umeda
Taylor Welch

USA Men's Eagles Sevens | 2013 Athletes in Residence
Nate Augspurger
Andrew Durutalo
Nick Edwards
Tai Enosa
Jack Halalilo
Matt Hawkins
Colin Hawley
Luke Hume

Carlin Isles
Folau Niua
Blaine Scully
Shalom Suniula
Mike Teo
Zack Test
Brett Thompson
Maka Unufe