Seattle – Serevi Rugby today officially announced its Elite Academy Series of rugby training camps, the first session of which will feature long-time New Zealand All Blacks coach Gordon Tietjens, alongside Serevi Rugby co-founder Waisale Serevi. Often regarded as the most successful rugby sevens coach in the world, Tietjens has trained 36 players who went on to become All Blacks XVs, including Christian Cullen, Jonah Lomu and Joe Rokocoko, and has won nine of the twelve IRB Sevens World Series. With Serevi and Tietjens running the Elite Academy's inaugural session, Serevi Rugby is offering promising rugby players a limited opportunity to train with rugby sevens' most celebrated player and coach.

"When you combine these two rugby minds and resumes, there simply is no higher ground in the sport of rugby sevens," said Serevi Rugby Director of Coaching Evan Haigh, who will oversee all of the Academy's planning and logistics. "Elite training from two legends of the game in the summer shadow of Mt. Rainier – this is rugby nirvana. These players are in for a real treat."

Targeted at elite young players on the cusp of professional and international careers, the August 21 to 28 session will prepare participants for the demands of international and elite play. Serevi intends that this ongoing Elite Academy series will help drive the next wave of professional and international rugby talent in North America and around the world.

Serevi will organize the camp around the principles that made him the "King of Sevens" over a 21-year international career: speed, fitness, split-second decision making, and grace under pressure. Serevi and Tietjens will drill decision-making and refine participants' ability to operate in space. The Academy will also focus on off-pitch elements such as nutrition, recovery, conditioning and game analysis. Working under two oft-lauded leaders of rugby, participants will experience the demands required to compete in the sport at elite, international and professional levels.

Haigh, as a player and coach, has guided the Old Puget Sound Beach's sevens squad back to the top of USA Sevens. Haigh is credited with helping Beach once again be considered one of the top rugby programs in North America. The club rose to further distinction this year, winning its fifth sevens championship and playing in the 2011 Super League semi-finals against

eventual champion San Francisco Golden Gate. Haigh and the Academy will also bring in a coaching staff of current and former Pacific Island and US elite-level players to support Serevi and Tietjens.

During his tenure as captain of his squad, Serevi led Fiji to two Rugby Sevens World Cup Championships. Serevi leads by example and coaches with equal focus on skills and character. Tietjens, who will be actively involved in the Academy for part of the five on-field days, is widely regarded as an expert in spotting and honing hidden talent, and has produced some of the world's most successful rugby players. He is also known for his emphasis on fitness, as well as running vigorous training sessions while simultaneously developing team spirit.

This initial Elite Academy session will run from August 21 to 28, 2011 at the Starfire Sports Complex just outside Seattle, Washington. Participants will stay together at a nearby Hilton Homewood Suites hotel. The USD $1,895 price will include all training sessions, lodging and meals, but will exclude airfare to and from Seattle. Serevi intends to offer a limited number of full and partial scholarships to this initial session for qualified players who might otherwise not be able to attend. More details on these scholarships will be available at a later date. Players interested in attending the Academy can visit www.serevirugby.com or contact Haigh at evan@serevirugby.com
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About Serevi Rugby

Headquartered in Seattle, Wash., Serevi Rugby is a company focused on promoting the sport of rugby worldwide and developing it more broadly in the United States. Serevi Rugby offers fun and impactful youth camps, high-quality coach and training programs, and national academies for high-performance athletes. More information is available at www.serevirugby.com .