

Canada Makes Key Changes Ahead of Zimbabwe Match

Written by Press Release
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Canadian under 20 men's coach Mike Shelley has made the selections for the final pool match of the Junior World Rugby Trophy, being held in Tbilisi, Georgia.



Photo courtesy of IRB.com

With two games in four days and some injuries to contend with, there has been some changes in the squad that will revitalize the team, that is at the bottom of Pool B with two losses to Georgia (38-9) and Japan (30-15).

Clayton Meeres, the UK based outside centre for the past two games suffered a broken jaw against the Japanese and was ruled out of selection contention. He is replaced by Victoria's Mike Fuailefau.

"Clayton has been very impressive and has another year to go at this age grade and will definitely be a name to follow in Canadian rugby," offered Shelley on losing Meeres.

Prop Graeme Mahar is back into a starting role at tight-head, recovering from a slight ankle injury. Other new faces into the lineup include Victoria's John Humphries getting the nod in the second row.

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Duncan's Patrick Kay will start at fullback for the first time in the tournament, while Dylan Mundy is called to the replacements bench for his first call into the team.

Following the disappointing loss to Japan - that saw Canada take a 5-0 lead off a Jeff Hassler try in the opening moments, Shelley says the focus has been on decision making and playing with more precision.

"We are looking for a bit more responsibility in terms of when to keep hold of the ball and when to try to offload it," he explained. "We're going to tighten that area right up.

"It's a development process developing skill - whether we can increase the skill level in four days I don't know we can certainly increase our percentage play in terms of when to pass and when not to pass."

Team Captain, No. 8 Tyler Adron of Brantford, knows the pressure is on to finish the round robin portion of the tournament with a win over Zimbabwe.

"Every game is the most important when you are coming up to it and this is the most important now," says the McMaster University player. "We've got to win and do it for ourselves especially now.

"We know how we can play when we do play well but we have to stretch it out for eighty full minutes."

Evan Olmstead - a flanker who plays at Capilano RFC in West Vancouver, says the tournament has been a great experience, and he points to the long training camp as a real positive in team development.

"I think that 18 days of training camp was perfect really," said Olmstead. "It gave everyone a chance to get to know each other. We're really tight. We joke, we laugh, we're good friends."

Canada play Zimbabwe 2:00 PM Local kick-off time - which is 6:00 AM EST - 3:00 AM PST. This game is NOT streamed on the IRB website. Rugby Canada will endeavour to get scoring information as it becomes available.

The Canadian U20 men's team is supported in part by the funding efforts of the Canadian Rugby Foundation. If you would like to help support young rugby players in their development consider donating to the CRF - visit www.canadianrugbyfoundation.ca .

Canadian Team Selection vs Zimbabwe

1. Scott Macleod - Cowichan RFC (Cowichan, BC)
2. Andrew Cho - Calgary Saracens RFC /University of Calgary (Calgary, AB)
3. Graeme Mahar - Balmy Beach RFC / University of Guelph (Toronto, ON)

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4. John Humphries Castaway Wanderers / Western University (Victoria, BC)
5. Cameron Pierce - Kelowna Crows / University of Victoria (Kelowna, BC)
6. Evan Olmstead - Capilano RFC (West Vancouver, BC)
7. Matt Kelly - Toronto Scottish RFC / Queen's University (Toronto, ON)
8. Tyler Ardron - Brantford RFC / McMaster University (Brantford, ON)
9. Andrew Ferguson - Oakville Crusaders RFC / McMaster University (Oakville, ON)
10. Carlin Hamstra - Cowichan RFC / University of British Columbia (Cowichan, BC)
11. Jeff Hassler - Foothills Lions RFC / University of Saskatchewan (Calgary, AB)
12. Patrick Parfrey - Swilers RFC / Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John's, NFLD)
13. Michael Fuailefau - Castaway Wanderers RFC / University of Victoria (Victoria, BC)
14. Kurtis Appeldoorn - Abbotsford RFC / University of Fraser Valley (Abbotsford, BC)
15. Patrick Kay Cowichan RFC (Cowichan, BC)

Replacements

16. Casey Cavers - Cowichan RFC / University of Victoria (Cowichan, BC)
17. Jordan Power - Dogs RFC / Memorial University of Newfoundland (St. John's, NFLD)
18. Brandon Tennant - Montreal Irish, (Montreal, PQ)
19. Cameron Stones Ajax Wanderers RFC / McMaster University (Ajax, ON)
20. Dustin Dobravsky - Shawnigan Lake School / University of Victoria (Regina, SK)
21. Lucien Nel - Cowichan RFC / University of Victoria (Cowichan, BC)
22. Dylan Mundy Oshawa Vikings RFC / Brock University (Oshawa, ON)