England Saxons won their 7th Churchill Cup Saturday by beating Canada 37-6, and it will be their last, as this weekend marks the end of the nine-year-old tournament.

Born out of England's 2001 tour of North America, the Churchill Cup was named after Winston Churchill, a hero to all English and Canadian people, and an honorary US citizen for his role in helping lead the allie during World War II.

When England took basically a 2nd side to the USA and Canada in 2001, while most of their top players toured with the British & Irish Lions, everyone reveled in the more competitive games the tour provided.

Maybe, then, a new event could pit the USA and Canada against an England side (later dubbed England A, and then the England Saxons). After a three-tournament event in 2003, more teams were added. Held in the USA and Canada most years, the Churchill Cup did its job, and provided international competition, for a trophy, when both the USA and Canada sorely needed it.

The model has now been adopted by the International Rugby Board for the Nations Cup and

the Pacific Nations Cup.

But things have changed, and the Churchill Cup is no more. Canada and USA have been included in the new IRB strategic investment tournaments and tours schedule and have confirmed June inbound home tests against Tier 1 opposition in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2018.

They also have a full November test match program against other Tier 2 unions in Europe, and the Americas Rugby Championship, which will provide both unions with a highly competitive and relevant international match schedule for their elite players.

This has has led to a joint decision taken by the RFU, USA Rugby and Rugby Canada, in consultation with the IRB to end the Churchill Cup agreement.

RFU Business Operations Director Paul Vaughan and a member of the Churchill Cup Executive, said: “The Churchill Cup has provided what we had all hoped for – regular international competition for USA and Canada in a showpiece event, which has been hosted in 17 venues and included 13 participating nations since 2003. It has also given refereeing and coaching opportunities for all three unions and ultimately strengthened the relationship between us. We would like to thank all those who have made the Churchill Cup a success, including previous sponsors Barclays and our broadcast partners Sky Sports.

“The initial period of the alliance agreement was five years (2002-2007) and was subsequently renewed on a two-year rolling basis. The latest agreement will expire at the end of the current tournament and it was felt by all parties that Canada and USA should be fully integrated into the existing portfolio of international strategic investment tournaments.

“In addition the success of playing additional fixtures in Australia and New Zealand in 2010 and the need to support three Tests Series, has led to the conclusion that the development and performance of England’s elite and potential elite players is best delivered in the future with midweek matches alongside the Test matches.

“We will continue to support USA Rugby and Canada as we much as we can and wish their teams all the best at Rugby World Cup 2011.”

Nigel Melville, Chief Executive of USA Rugby, said: “I would like to thank all those who have supported the Churchill Cup over the last decade, especially the Rugby Football Union for their unerring commitment to the alliance between them, ourselves and Rugby Canada. We cannot underestimate the benefit the tournament has given to our players.”

Rugby Canada Chief Executive Graham Brown added: “It has been a real journey from that first tournament in Vancouver back in 2003 and credit should go to all those who have made the Churchill Cup happen, from the participating unions through to sponsors and the IRB. It gave us regular international competition when there wasn’t any and we can now look forward to being integrated into the match schedules built on a foundation of having had those June Tests for the last nine years.”

Churchill Cup History:
2003 1st England; 2nd USA; 3rd Canada
2004 1st NZ Maori; 2nd England A; 3rd Canada; 4th USA
2005 1st England A; 2nd Argentina; 3rd USA; 4th Canada
2006 1st England Saxons; 2nd Ireland A; 3rd NZ Maori (Plate); 4th Scotland A; 5th Canada (Bowl); 6th USA
2007 1st England Saxons; 2nd NZ Maori; 3rd Ireland A (Plate); 4th Scotland A; 5th Canada (Bowl); 6th USA
2008 1st England Saxons; 2nd Scotland A; 3rd Ireland A (Plate); 4th Argentina Jaguars; 5th Canada (Bowl); 6th USA
2009 1st Ireland A; 2nd England Saxons; 3rd Argentina Jaguars (Plate); 4th Canada; 5th USA (Bowl); 6th Georgia
2010 1st England Saxons; 2nd Canada; 3rd France A (Plate); 4th USA; 5th Russia (Bowl); 6th Uruguay
2011 1st England Saxons; 2nd Canada; 3rd Italy A (Plate); 4th Tonga; 5th USA (Bowl); 6th Russia

USA record: Won 5 Lost 20
Canada record: Won 9 Lost 15