The IRB has announced the pools and match schedule for the third round of the inaugural IRB Women’s Sevens World Series, the Guangzhou Women's Sevens in China on 30-31 March 2013.

Twelve international sides from six continents will compete at the Guangzhou University Town Stadium, with tournament hosts China facing both Cup finalists from round two in Houston - winners England and runners-up USA - in pool play, as well as Oceania qualifiers, Fiji.

The landmark event for Rugby in China gives the host nation a second outing this season and hands Series debuts to the Fijians, Ireland and Tunisia, all of whom have also qualified to compete at the Rugby World Cup Sevens in Moscow on 28-30 June.

CHINA MATCH SCHEDULE
CHINA POOLS

Having won the opening round of the Series in Dubai, and finished fourth in Houston, New Zealand's women lead the Series at the halfway stage. Sean Horan's side heads pool A and faces another core team, the Netherlands, as well as South American champions Brazil and African qualifiers, Tunisia.

Aside from the kiwis, Australia are the only side to have reached both semi-final rounds this season and they head Pool B, which also features seventh-ranked Canada, Japan and Ireland.

After victory at round two in the USA, England's women currently lie third in the standings and they head the third and final pool featuring the hosts China, USA and Fiji.

IRB Chairman, Bernard Lapasset, said: "We are extremely excited to bring the game of Rugby and this exciting new IRB Women's Sevens World Series to China, a country with such massive potential for success and growth in the game.

"After two rounds we already have two different Cup champions and at the halfway stage any one of five or six teams could still win the first Series, which shows the competitiveness that has quickly developed in the women’s game. The level of professionalism and dedication from the teams is outstanding and that has already produced a dramatic improvement in the standard of play across all the teams.

"Just three years now remain until many of these women prepare to compete in Rio at the 2016 Olympic Games and this Series is a major step forward, while closer in the future there is also the allure of the Rugby World Cup Sevens in Moscow at the end of June.”

New Zealand currently lead the standings on 34 points with a slender lead from Australia (30) and England (28), and only 10 clear of two surprise packages, Russia and South Africa (24).

FULL IRB WOMEN'S SEVENS WORLD SERIES STANDINGS

IRB Women's Sevens World Series 2012/13
Round 1 – UAE: Dubai, 30 November-1 December, 2012 – 7he Sevens Stadium *(winners New Zealand)*
Round 2 – USA: Houston, Texas, 1-2 February, 2013 - BBVA Compass Stadium *(winners England)*
Round 3 – China: Guangzhou, 30-31 March 2013 - Guangzhou University Town Stadium
Round 4 – Netherlands: Amsterdam, 17-18 May 2013 - NRCA Stadium