



# DUBAI EXILES RFC

Since 1966

Sponsorship Opportunity  
Season 2024-25





Since **1966**

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Established in Dubai in 1966, under the patronage of  
His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum,  
Dubai Exiles RFC is the oldest sports club in the UAE.

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The first rugby matches in Dubai were played, by the Exiles, in the late 1960s against various British military sides who were based in neighbouring Sharjah. The military generously provided the referees and refreshments.

# ABOUT DUBAI EXILES RFC

Established in Dubai in 1966 under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai Exiles Rugby Football Club is the oldest sports club in the United Arab Emirates.



Bur Dubai.



Preparing the pitch for a match.



Fixing posts. Summer 1970.

## History

The first early rugby matches were played against various British military sides, based in neighbouring Sharjah. The military provided not only the pitch, the referee and the refreshments, but often some of the Exiles team as well. From these early encounters in the late 1960s, the nucleus of today's club was formed.

With the help of Dubai Municipality and through the good grace of His Highness Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the then Ruler of Dubai, the early Exiles were granted a small plot of land in Bur Dubai.

The Exiles set about grading, levelling, marking, and erecting rugby posts on the Bur Dubai land. With the appearance of the familiar shaped uprights the number of new players increased every month.





Exiles First XV 1977

## Onwards

and forwards

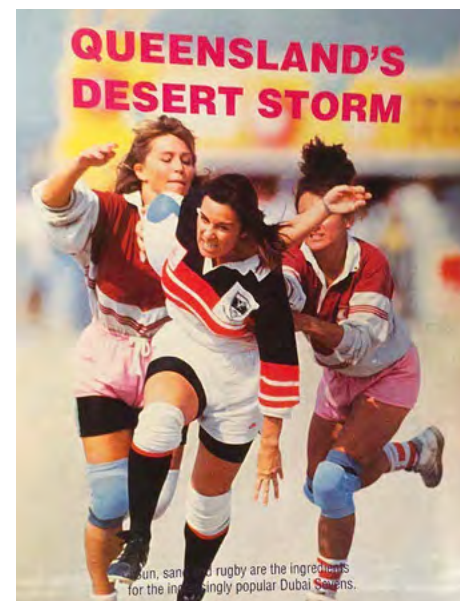
The 1977 season also saw the first official overseas tour for the club to Sri Lanka.

By 1979 two, good quality, sand pitches were in use, floodlights were also erected to allow club members to train and play in the evenings.

The club continued to grow throughout the 1980s, while the 1990s saw more infrastructure being added in the form of a clubhouse and a stand, with changing rooms.

By 1977 the Exiles had over 200 playing members. That same year a record 23 teams entered the Benson & Hedges 7s tournament and over 5,000 spectators turned out to enjoy two days of rugby.

The club is immensely proud to have been heavily involved in the promotion of Rugby 7s. In 1999 the club were honoured to host the first ever games to be played in the IRB World Sevens Series.



Exiles Ladies' Anita Sajjad 1994



Exiles Ladies Dubai 7s Winners 2006

“The whole point of rugby is that it is, first and foremost, a state of mind, a spirit.”

Jean Pierre Rives  
(French International 1975 - 1984)

Over the years clubs both amateur and professional, as well as individual stars of the game and visiting schools have come from all over the world to visit us and to enjoy traditional Exiles hospitality both on the field and in the club house.

This stream of visitors has always included sailors from various navies patrolling the Arabian Gulf seeking to stretch their legs on land during their

port visits to Dubai. This is a tradition that also continues to this very day.





# OUR VALUES

In 2009 the World Rugby member unions identified integrity, passion, solidarity, discipline and respect as the defining character-building characteristics of rugby.



**RESPECT**

**TEAM WORK**

**INTEGRITY**

**DISCIPLINE**

**PASSION**



Since 1966

# MINI & YOUTH RUGBY

Mini & Youth rugby is the mainstay of any rugby club. Dubai Exiles RFC's Mini & Youth Rugby is made up of over 400 boys and girls from 53 countries aged from four to eighteen years.

Dubai Exiles Rugby Football Club has been a place where youngsters from the local and wider community can take their first steps into rugby since 1982.

The Exiles follow the Player Pathways of the world's leading rugby playing nations to create a safe and enjoyable environment for these fledgling rugby players to revel in the game.

Many of the volunteer coaches involved in creating the environment for the club's Mini rugby players are primary school teachers along with volunteer senior and even international players.

## EXILES MINI RUGBY

Under 5 to Under 8  
Boys & Girls







During the 2022-23 season thirty-three Dubai Exiles represented the UAE on the international stage. Six of those players joined the club at the age of four.

# MINI & YOUTH RUGBY

Almost 100 players aged from 8 to 12 enjoy playing midi rugby at Dubai Exiles RFC.

The club's Midi rugby section, ages U9 to U12, is made up of almost 100 players from 23 different countries.

For many of the players Midi rugby is the first experience of contact rugby with tackling being introduced in the Under 9 age-group.

The club works hard to appoint specialist coaches in the Under 9 age-group to make the transition from 'tag' and 'Quick Rip' rugby into

contact rugby a safe and enjoyable experience.

Being coached to tackle, also how to be tackled, is fundamental not only to the safety aspects of the game, but also to the continued enjoyment of playing.



## EXILES MIDI RUGBY

Under 9 to Under 12

Boys & Girls





“The advantage law is the best law in rugby, because it lets you ignore all the others for the good of the game.” **Derek Robinson** (Author)



# MINI & YOUTH RUGBY

During the 2022-23 season thirteen Dubai Exiles Youth Players represented the UAE in both Under 18 and Under 20 levels.

Dubai Exiles Rugby Football Club is a multi-cultural club that is grounded in team sports.

The club's Youth rugby section, ages U13 to U18, is made up of over 200 players from 33 different countries.

Not just the traditional 'tier 1' rugby playing nations such as England, South Africa, New Zealand and France, but also from non traditional rugby playing nations such as Egypt,

Germany, Turkey, Brazil, Lithuania, and Kazakhstan. Our Under 13s, Under 16s, and Under 18s are current UAE champions and cup winners of prestigious tournament such as the [HSBC Rugby Festival](#).

## EXILES YOUTH RUGBY

Under 13 to Under 18

Boys





Rugby promotes a sense of healthy competition and teaches young players about winning and losing as well as the tools and skills needed to cope with both. A team sport such as rugby increases confidence, self-respect, and an awareness and respect for those around you.



# MINI & YOUTH RUGBY

During the 2022-23 season eight Dubai Exiles' Girls represented the UAE in International Sevens rugby tournaments in both Under 18 and Under 20 levels.

Girls rugby is one of the worlds' fastest growing sports. Dubai Exiles RFC has been at the forefront of girls' rugby in the UAE for over 30 years, debuting a female team in the early 1990s.

The Exiles' Under 18 Girls have a long and distinguished history in which they have won everything that can be won in UAE domestic rugby.

They have won the Gulf Under 19 Girls competition at The Emirates Dubai 7s

on six of the last 9 occasions.

Our Under 12 and Under 14 girls play 'Quick-Rip' rugby which is a non-contact form of the game while the Under 16 and Under 19 girls play full contact rugby.



## GIRLS RUGBY

Under 12, Under 14,  
Under 16, & Under 18

Girls





"The last time I scored three tries in a match was in club footy. It feels amazing, we're battlers." **Eva Karpani** (Australia)



# HSBC MINI & YOUTH RUGBY FESTIVAL

The HSBC Mini & Youth Rugby Festival is the largest rugby festival in the Gulf Region. It has been hosted annually by the Dubai Exiles for over 15 years.

The HSBC Mini & Youth Rugby Festival is the largest Mini & Youth rugby festival in the Gulf region.

Almost 3,500 young rugby players, boys and girls, aged from 5 years to Under18, took part in the 2024 festival at The Sevens Stadium in Dubai.

636 rugby matches were played over January 27th and 28th by 245 teams from across the UAE and the Gulf region.

Over the two days, more than 10,000 people attend the rugby festival.

A sponsor's village is available to club sponsors to populate and engage with visitors to the event.

**THE LARGEST  
MINI & YOUTH  
RUGBY FESTIVAL  
IN THE REGION**

Under 6 to Under 18  
Boys & Girls







Danielle 'Nolli' Waterman at the HSBC

The Exiles' clubhouse is available to sponsors throughout the weekend. Sponsors are welcome to take the opportunity to represent their products / services, or to place any point of sale / promotional materials in what is an extremely busy 'hub' throughout the festival weekend.



# SENIOR MEN'S RUGBY

UAE Premiership Champions 2016-17, 2019-20, 2020-21, & 2022-23.  
Emirates Dubai 7s Gulf Men's Champions 2017 & 2021.

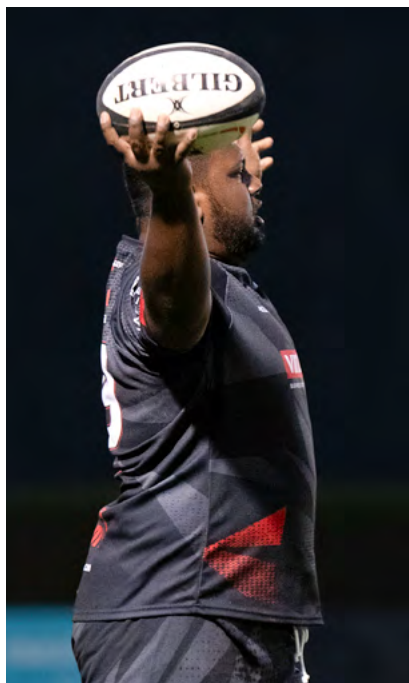
West Asia Premiership and UAE Premiership rugby is played to an extremely high standard in what is a ferociously competitive competition.

The UAE Premiership currently consists of six UAE based teams playing a home and away league format. The West Asia Premiership encompasses the UAE Premiership competition with the addition of Bahrain RFC and Doha RFC.

Since 2017 the Dubai Exiles have reached five UAE Premiership finals and crowned champions on four occasions. They were most recently Gulf Men's Champions at the Emirates Dubai 7s in December 2021.

**EXILES  
MEN'S  
RUGBY**





By competing in the Gulf regions' premier rugby competitions, the West Asia and UAE Premierships, and also the Emirates Dubai Sevens, the Dubai Exiles regularly feature in leading domestic publications both in print and online.



# SENIOR WOMEN'S RUGBY

Dubai Exiles Rugby Club first introduced a women's rugby team in the early 1990s, over 30 years ago.

Women's rugby is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. In the UAE and at Dubai Exiles RFC it is no exception with the club regularly fielding two sides in the UAE Women's Sevens Series each tournament.

Over the last few seasons, with players both new to the sport and those players who are more experienced joining the club, membership of women's rugby has more than doubled.

The last two seasons the multinational Exiles' ladies team has won the plate final of the UAE Women's Sevens Series and reached the semi-finals of the Emirates Dubai Sevens Gulf Women's Tournament.

**EXILES  
WOMEN'S  
RUGBY**







Emirati **Fatma Alsuwaidi** UAE International

“Women’s rugby is on the rise, every single week so you have to be better.”

**Ruby Tui** (New Zealand) World Rugby Women’s Sevens Player of the Year 2022



# TOUCH & VETS' RUGBY

A fun and fast, minimal-contact, form of the game for both men and women.

Touch Rugby is a minimal contact, six-a-side, form of the game which is fast and fun for both men and women as well as boys and girls.

The Dubai Exiles Touch Rugby teams compete in the Community Leagues every week.

Touch Rugby is a game for everyone, all shapes, all sizes, rugby beginners or more experienced players who just want to enjoy themselves on a rugby pitch without collisions of the traditional game.

The Touch Rugby section of the club also encompasses the Exiles Veterans team which competes annually in the Emirates Dubai Sevens competition.







Shaikh Mohammed Zayed Mohammed Hamdan Al Nahyan playing for Exiles' Under 14s at the 2023 HSBC Mini & Youth Rugby Festival

# EMIRATIS AT THE EXILES

Dubai Exiles RFC is committed to grassroots rugby and to making the game of rugby accessible and enjoyable to the local and the wider community.

Each season, more and more Emirati children begin their rugby journey with us at the Exiles.

Fatma Alsuwaidi who took her first steps into rugby at the club has represented the UAE at many international tournaments.



# UAE INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS 2022-23

During the 2022-23 rugby season, thirty-four Dubai Exiles were honoured to represent the UAE on the international rugby stage at Under 18, Under 20, and Senior levels.

Over the years Dubai Exiles RFC has provided many players, boys, girls, men, and women to represent the UAE on the international rugby stage.

Throughout the 2022-23 rugby season thirty-four (34) Exiles were chosen to fly the UAE flag at many international and Asia Rugby tournaments.

The UAE are current Asia Rugby Sevens Champions at Under 18 boys and Under 18 girls, Under 20, men and

Under 20 women, Senior Men and Senior women.

In July 2023, in the 15-a-side senior game, eleven of the squad of twenty-three that gained promotion to the top tier Asia Rugby Championship were from Dubai Exiles RFC.



UAE Captain & Dubai Exiles' Matt Mills with UAE Head Coach Apollo Perelini (right) and assistant coach DuRandt Gerber (left).



# 34





Annabelle Garner



Aydia Coetzee



Carel Thomas



Charlie Pollard



Dylan Bevan



Epeli Davetawalu



Femke Soens



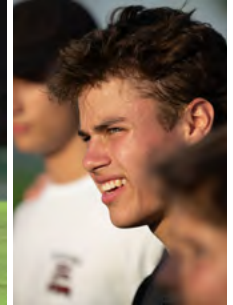
Fourie Du Preez



Gabrielle Casas



Hannes Kruger



Heinrich Du Plessis



Justin Walsh



Kahurangi Emberson



Kayla Ackerman



Lara Botha



Marcus Kruger



Matt Mills



Max Allen-Paver



Max Wilson



Megan Theocharis



Robbie Sproul



Robyn Etherington



Tadhg Nash



Tatum Muller



Tom Berger



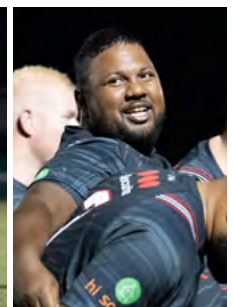
Alfie Wilson



Anne-Marie Banas



Tayne Stannard



Moeneeb Galant



David Gairn



Lukas Waddington



Jaen Botes



Pieter Killian



Haydn Palmer



# JUNIOR & ADULT NETBALL

Dubai Exiles Rugby Club introduced netball to the club, over ten years ago, in 2011.

Netball was introduced by the club in 2011 and has proved to be a very popular addition. It's open to girls from the age of 5 all the way through to adults.

Our junior teams play competitive netball every Saturday morning and our senior ladies sides play in the Dubai Netball Leagues on a Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.

The Dubai Exiles netball players

are truly multi-cultural, 36 different countries are represented by the almost 200 strong membership.

The club enters teams into the Emirates Dubai Sevens netball competition annually.



## EXILES NETBALL

Junior and Adult





“Netball has been fantastic for life skills: It’s given me confidence — I’m able to work in a team, I’m able to sometimes lead — discipline and the determination to hit goals and targets that we’ve set.” - **Sasha Corbin** England & Hertfordshire Mavericks

# THE DUBAI EXILES CLUBHOUSE

The Dubai Exiles Clubhouse, on the top floor of The Sevens Stadium, opened in 2018.

The Dubai Exiles' clubhouse, located on the top floor of the Players' Club at the world-famous 'Sevens Stadium', on Al Ain Road (E66), opened in 2018.

The Clubhouse has proved a popular addition for members, offering panoramic views of the Dubai Exiles 'home' rugby pitch as well as several other rugby pitches and the four netball courts.

The clubhouse is fitted with six Windsor doors which open to allow access to the galleries that overlook the pitches. It's a wonderful vantage point to enjoy the highest level of rugby offered in Dubai and the Gulf region.

As a sponsor of the Dubai Exiles there are numerous opportunities for point of sale and promotional materials in what is an incredibly busy and well used space, especially during club training mornings, evenings and especially on the big match days.







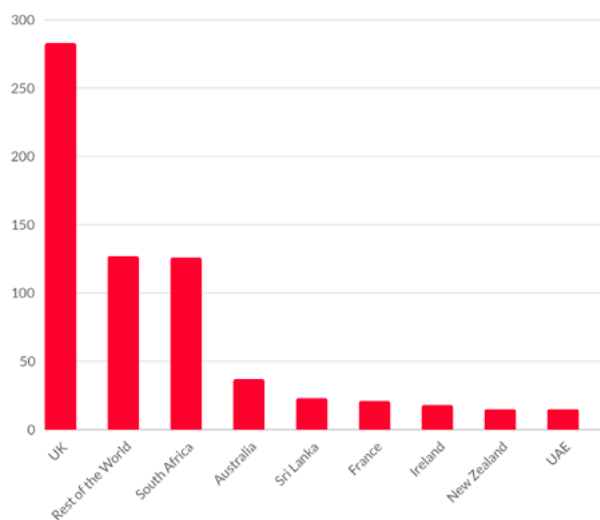
"Rugby is great. The players don't wear helmets or padding; they just beat the living daylights out of each other and then go for a beer. I love that." - **Joe Theismann** NFL Quarterback



# CLUB MEMBERSHIP

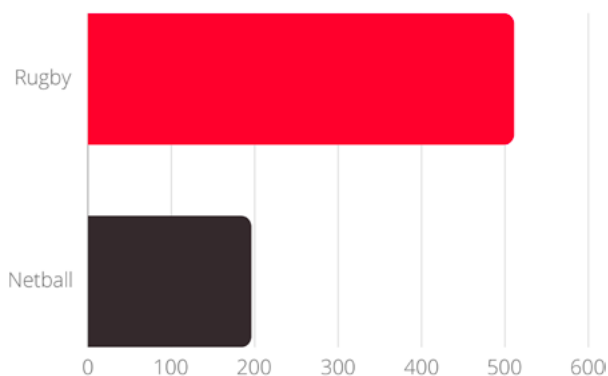
## 2023-24

Dubai Exiles RFC has over 1,200 registered members (1,237) and 707 playing members who regularly participate in rugby and netball at the club.

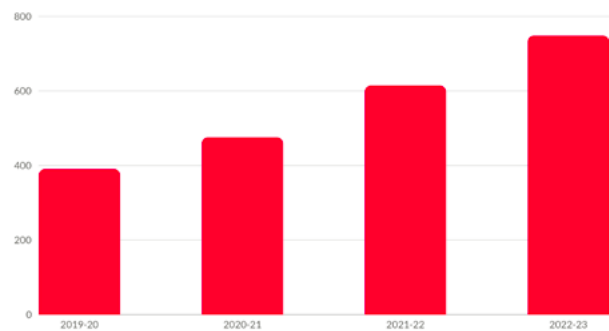


### Membership by Nationality

The Dubai Exiles membership is made up of men and women, boys and girls from over 50 different countries. The United Kingdom (283) and South Africa (126) are the two largest nationalities at the club.

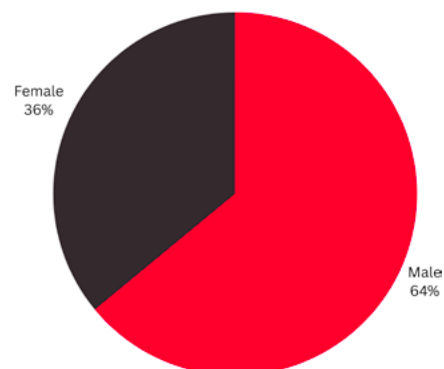


### Rugby / Netball Participation



### Playing Membership

Since the end of the 2019-20 season Dubai Exiles playing membership has steadily increased. By the end of the 2022-23 season it had almost doubled, increasing by 91.5% since 2019-20.



### Playing Membership Male / Female

Female participation at the club has increased from 24% to 34% since the end of the 2022-23 season reflecting the established global trend.



# OUR CHANNELS

## Website & Social

The club's website remains one of the most, if not the most, visited website rugby club websites in the Gulf region.



### dubaixiles.com

Over the 8 months of the 2022-23 season the Dubai Exiles' website welcomed 43,196 users who visited on 61,148 separate occasions and viewed 172,784 pages.

Dwell Time: 3 minutes 04 seconds

Bounce Rate: 57%

For club sponsors we can offer a number of branding and messaging opportunities throughout the Exiles' website and via email to our considerable membership database.



### Social Media

Coinciding with the considerable membership increase since the end of the 2019-20 season, Dubai Exiles RFC now has a sizeable social media following:

Facebook: 5,720

Instagram: 5,985

Other: 1,628

**Total: 13,333**

# CONTACT

Telephone.....+971 (0) 58 565 1966

Email.....sponsorship@dubaixiles.com

## **The Sevens Stadium**

Al Ain Road, E66, Dubai. United Arab Emirates.

**dubaixiles.com**