The High School All Americans won their opening match in South Africa with ease, but Head Coach Salty Thompson said he expects a sterner test this coming weekend.

The Kwazulu-Natal Development team that faced the Americans was fast, committed, and hard-working, and it was a great moment for the tourists to play an all-black team in South Africa. But KZN gave up a lot to the Americans in size, and that proved their downfall.

“Kwazulu was actually very tough in the breakdown and slowed down a lot of our ball,” Thompson told RUGBYMag.com. “That’s something we will have to work on. But we had about 75 percent possession and were on the front foot a lot. We just had a lot of size on them.”

Leading the way was an impressive front row of Titi Lamisotele (Chuckanut RFC, Wash.), Cameron Falcon (Shaw Eagles, La.), and captain Henry Hall (originally from Purallup, Wash., now at St. George’s School in Vancouver, BC).

“Henry has been a great captain,” said Thompson. “He’s just so dependable. He comes to practice ready to go every day.”

Hall, who started playing rugby for the Tacoma U19 program before getting a scholarship to St. George’s, and whose dad, Ric, is a longtime player and accomplished rugby artist, will follow up

this tour with a year in New Zealand.

Falcon meanwhile was central to an effective lineout strategy that used a five-man lineout to great success. Falcon's throws were accurate, and that set up an attacking platform that used Lamisotele frequently. Converted from center to prop as an all-star in Washington state, the 260-pounder rammed through the KZN defense repeatedly.

Adding to the team's success were forwards Pierca Dargan (who could follow the USA pipeline to Trinity in Dublin), Davis rugby lock Christian Castro (moved from prop to lock) and flanker Tony Viatafa (Red Mountain), a legitimate DI football prospect who was a monster in the breakdown.

Out wide big flyhalf Sione Aisea (Westside, Ore.) was also an intimidating presence, and helped set up tries for PITS product Jesse Milne and center Sione Latoi of Tempe.

"Both Jesse and Sione was good team players, very unselfish," said Thompson. "With a little less than half the squad being new to an assembly, it takes about five sessions for them to really get on board. We had some moments where players were being a bit too individual; maybe trying to show us what they could do. But when we played more as a team and gelled together more as a unit, we were more successful."

Going forward, the HSAA squad will take on Glenwood, one of the top rugby schools in South Africa. It's a private school with roughly 30 rugby teams (multiple levels in every age group). Thompson expects a sterner test up front.

"It's going to be a challenge for us," he said. "We've definitely got to get on top of handling the clearouts and combating the slow ball. It will also be a test of how we handle a different game. We had 75 percent possession against Kwazulu. It could be the opposite of that against Glenwood. But if we get enough ball, I think we have the ability to do some good things. We know it will be harder."