BOULDER, Colo. – The Men's Junior All-American Under-20s (JAAs) squad has been selected for the IRB Junior World Rugby Trophy (JWRT) tournament to be played in Tbilisi, Georgia this summer. The JAA squad consists of mostly collegiate players and will take on Pool A opponents Samoa, Russia, and Uruguay. The JWRT kicks off on May 24 and concludes on June 5.

Eleven players named to the squad play in the College Premier Division (CPD) so they will effectively close their CPD seasons out and catch the next plane to London where the JAAs will train for a week ahead of the JWRT. The squad arrives in London on May 15 and leaves for Tbilisi on May 21.

JAA Head Coach, Scott Lawrence, isn't expecting many surprises when his players assemble in London. Lawrence has been working with the athletes and their "home team" coaches on a weekly basis to ensure that players arrive at camp in shape, on the same page, and ready to play at the international level.

In order to select his JWRT squad, Lawrence and his staff considered a number of criteria. For each player they evaluated game film, monitored player form during the course of the spring season, and sought feedback from each player's home team coach.

"We expect the players to arrive at camp ready to focus on the U20s [JAAs]," said Lawrence.

When asked about the USA's opponents in the JWRT, Lawrence is realistic about what their opponents bring. The USA will have a solid test as they take on rugby nation Samoa in the JWRT opener on May 24.

"Samoa will be a good test for us. We'll be going into that game without a whole lot of intel," Lawrence said, noting that game footage of his team's Pool A opponents is hard to come by.

The coach continued to say that throughout the remainder of the tournament they will have

opportunities to scout Russia and Uruguay, so they will go in with knowledge of the threats and opportunities each of those teams present.

Lawrence has assembled a coaching staff that will help him prepare the JAAs for international age-grade level rugby. Two Rugby Super League head coaches, Jason Kelly (Denver Barbarians) and Mike Diamantopoulos (Boston) will help Lawrence prepare his troops for the JWRT.

JAA forwards coach, Luke Gross, is the most capped USA international player ever, tallying 62 caps for his country during his professional career in Europe. Gross also coaches the Men's Collegiate All-Americans and the USA Rugby Women's National Team.

Another former Eagle, Chris Osentowski, will coach the scrum, lending his 13 caps of experience to the JAAs.

The USA last competed in the JWRT in 2009. In that tournament, the USA defeated the Cayman Islands and Namibia in pool play, but lost out to Romania in the championship game. Current USA Eagles Zack Test, Peter Tiberio, and Tai Enosa all played a part in the 2009 JWRT campaign.

MEN'S JUNIOR ALL-AMERICANS SQUAD – 2011 IRB JUNIOR WORLD RUGBY TROPHY
Oliva Auimatagi (Old Mission Bay Athletic Club), Tyler Black (Colorado Springs), Sean Carley (St. Mary's College), Joseph Cowley (Life University), Michael Durant (New York Athletic Club), Jake Fallon (Grand Rapids Gazelles), William Farrell (University of Georgia), Alec Gletzer (UC – Santa Barbara), Paris Hollis (Life University), Madison Hughes (Wellington College – UK), Andrew Jackson (UC-Santa Barbara), Bubba Jones (St. Mary's College), Michael Juszczak (University of Utah), Charles Koehler (University of Wisconsin – Whitewater), Patrick Latu (San Francisco Golden Gate), Will Magie (Leeds University – UK), Daniel Metcalf (Penn State University), Conor Mils (Texas A&M), Paul Mullen (Houston Area Rugby Club), Timothy O'Hara (Santa Clara University), Michael Oliver (Loughborough University -UK), Andrew Ohmann (Life University), Eric Rygiel (Arizona State University), Adam Sandstrom (Arizona State University), Tavake Sanft (Spearhead Academy), Caleb Tracey (Kutztown University)

MEN'S JUNIOR ALL-AMERICANS STAFF
Head Coach: Scott Lawrence
Manager: Justin Hickey
Forwards Coach: Luke Gross
Backs Coach: Jason Kelly
Scrum Coach: Chris Osentowski**
SWOT/Film Analysis: Mike Diamantopoulos
Strength and Conditioning: Justin Goonan
Sports Psychologist: Bergen Beck*
Nutritionist: Adam Russell*
Trainer: Ben Cowin
Trainer: Tim Higgins
Physician: Tom Mick

**Non-traveling*
***Traveling status TBD*

IRB JUNIOR WORLD RUGBY TROPHY – TBILISI, GEORGIA

Date

Kickoff Time (Local)

FIXTURE

Venue

May 24, 2011

2:00 p.m.

USA v. Samoa

Avchala Stadium

Tbilisi, Georgia

May 28, 2011

4:00 p.m.

USA v. Russia

Avchala Stadium

Tbilisi, Georgia

June 1, 2011

2:00 p.m.

USA v. Uruguay

Avchala Stadium

Tbilisi, Georgia

June 5, 2011

TBD

Playoff/Championship Game

USA v. (Opponent TBD)

TBD

Stay with RUGBYMag.com for coverage.