

Eagles Plummet to 0-3 With Loss to Canada

Written by Pat Clifton
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The United States fell to 0-3 in Dubai with a 26-7 loss to Canada in pouring rain.

Canada kicked off and recovered the ball immediately. They went through a couple of phases before Sean Duke was isolated against Matt Hawkins on the wing and raced past the prop for the opening try. Nathan Hirayama hit the conversion.

Hawkins then redeemed himself on the Eagles' first offensive possession, drawing the attention of multiple Canadian defenders and dishing to Zack Test, who ran in for the Eagles' lone score. Shalom Suniula slotted the conversion to knot the game at 7-7.

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The slippery Phil Mack put Canada back up by evading a would-be tackle before splitting the final two Eagle defenders, Test and Hawkins, to put Chauncey O'Toole into free space for a try. Hirayama's conversion attempt was successful, making it 14-7 to Canada going into halftime.

The Canadians extended their lead to open the second half when two American penalties at the breakdown gave them good field position. They spun it wide to Ciaran Hearn, who found his way through a Nick Edwards arm tackle and into the try zone. Hirayama then slotted his third conversion of the game.

Mack sounded the death knell shortly thereafter. Following a messy scrum, he plucked the ball from the ensuing ruck and darted between the posts. The conversion failed, leaving it 26-7.

The Eagles have now gone winless in pool play in each of their last three IRB 7s World Series tournaments, and the loss to Canada drops them to 0-3 against their rivals under coach Alex Magleby. The Eagles have now lost five straight, and eight of their last nine, against Canada.

The win pushed Canada to an impressive 3-0 start to the tournament. The Maple Leafs scored four tries in all three of their wins and will move to the Cup Quarterfinals, where they'll face either Fiji or Kenya. The Eagles are relegated to the Bowl Quarterfinals, where they'll face Spain.

Canada 26

Tries: Hearn, O'Toole, Mack, Duke

Cons: Hirayama (3)

USA 7

Tries: Test

Cons: Suniula