

## Eagle 7s Pull Off Stunner

Written by  
Saturday, 21 May 2011 10:44

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The USA pulled off an incredible upset at the London 7s to defeat Argentina 22-21.

The Eagles looked completely overmatched for ten minutes of the 14-minute match. At that point they had completed only three passes, as Argentina had dominated possession, scoring early, through Francisco Merello and then late in the first half through Francisco Cuneo to lead 14-0.

At the beginning of the second half it looked like more of the same. Gonzalo Gutierrez Taboada running well in support to score Argentina's third and a 21-0 lead with five minutes to go.

Finally, though, the USA got some possession and decided to use it. First Mike Palefau linked with Tai Enosa to send the youngster in at the corner. 21-5 and still looking a hopeless cause for the Americans.

But right off the kickoff the Eagles pressured and Enosa grabbed the ball, dummied and was in under the posts. Enosa's conversion made it 21-12.

Miles Craigwell, on since two minutes into the second half, tested the Argentina defense

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repeatedly, and did well to retain possession. We was rewarded as Paul Emerick broke through wide, passed to Matt Hawkins, who then sent a long, flat pass inside to Craigwell, who twisted over the line. 21-17 with less than a minute to go.

The Eagles then sent Zack Test up high to reclaim the kick, He couldn't, but Argentina, still needing to run out the clock, couldn't do it. A promising break ended with a knock on, and one more chance for the USA with 17 seconds to go. Head Coach Al Caravelli put on Justin Boyd as fresh legs on the wing and in the hopes the speedster would get to be the hero.

From the scrum, Argentina pushed early. The USA tapped and attacked right, and then spun the ball back left. A worrying moment, then, as Craigwell was bottled up and seemed about to be thrown into touch. He set the ruck, through, and Palefau did well to clear out. The ball rolled out the back of the ruck and Hawkins, the former water polo player, slapped the ball straight back to Shalom Suniula. Quickly the Americans sent the ball all the way out to Boyd, who had enough space and no time left to score in the corner.

Twickenham went wild as the Americans pulled off an improbably victory.

"We believe in ourselves," said a breathless Craigwell.

And really, all they needed was the ball.

The win was crucial for the USA if they are to make the Cup Round. They are now tied with everyone else in their pool after France upset England. Everyone, England, France, Argentina and the USA, is 1-1.

The USA faces France with the winner gaining a place in the Cup Quarterfinals.

USA 22

Tries: Enosa 2, Craigwell, Boyd

Convs: Enosa

Starters: Hawkins, Test, Emerick, S. Suniula, Enosa, Hawley, Palefau

Subs: Craigwell in at 2:03 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Half; Malifa in at 5:46 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Half; Boyd in at 6:43 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Half

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Argentina 21

Tries: Tabuada, Cuneo, Merello

Convs: Tabuada 3