The Las Vegas Invitational has showcased some of the up-and-coming 7s athletes in front of American fans. Amanda Street, Natalie Kosko and Katie O'Malley have all impressed during their first international 7s matches for the USA select sides. Jane Paar and Sadie Anderson [Dobson Images photo], although they have both been capped already, represent two of the latest contracted players, and it was great to watch them find their places within the 7s squad.

Although Paar played for the USA as late as the 2012 Hong Kong 7s, Anderson hasn't booted up with the 7s Eagles for a couple of years.

"I talked to [USA Women's 7s coach] Ric [Suggitt] at the beginning of 2012 and told him that I wanted to focus on 15s in the summer and fall," Anderson explained. "But after the fall tour in France, I just felt that if I got a chance to play 7s, I was ready."

So Anderson rang up the 7s coach and told him she was interested in 7s, "whatever that means," Anderson said to Suggitt.

"I wasn't expecting to get the offer right then," Anderson said of the immediate contract proposal. "He said, 'How about you move to California in January?' 'Oh my goodness,' I thought. 'This is crazy.' So I got on it, figured out my classes and worked everything out."

Anderson is missing her senior season with Penn State, the reigning DI college champion, and

will finish her psychology major remotely.

“It’s pretty busy,” Anderson said. “I spend the whole day at the OTC [Olympic Training Center], and in the evenings, I come home and do my homework. I’m used to it, and I like it.”

She’s also missing out on another season with PSU coach Pete Steinberg, who doubles as the Women’s National Team coach.

“He was really for happy for me,” Anderson said of Steinberg’s reaction to losing his best player. “I think he knew; they [Ric and Pete] probably talk to each other. He’s been helping me get my school stuff set up. I miss being at Penn State, playing with the team, being around Pete, but I really like this challenge.”

Sevens is a bit of challenge for Anderson. She’s the prototype for American rugby – gaining notoriety at Fort Collins in Colorado, captaining the USA U20 team for years, and then transitioning onto the senior Eagle team, where she’s played flyhalf during the last two tours. But sevens was a late addition to Anderson’s resume.

“Sevens is a big challenge for me mentally, because it’s totally different and I’m not comfortable like I am with 15s,” Anderson said. “But then I was getting a hold on my classes, was a leader on my [Penn State] team, and I just felt like I was ready for a challenge, ready to step out and do something. I just got a good opportunity.”

But that opportunity does have its consequences. Anderson will miss some tests with the 15s Eagles this summer, as she and the 7s team train for the Rugby World Cup Sevens in Russia. Further conflicts may lie ahead, since the USA – as most countries – doesn’t have a vast enough player pool to fill both national teams adequately.

“I’d love to go to the 15s world cup, and one of my goals is to be the best flyhalf in the world,” Anderson said. “Being contracted is going to help me get there, so I’m just going to take everything step by step and do as much as I can.”

Anderson played well this weekend, although the USA Stars bowed out of the Women's Elite division after a 17-7 loss in the Cup quarterfinals to a wily Japanese team. She's got a nice crisp pass, great acceleration and step, and plays hard. She's part of a new, young class exerting pressure on the experienced veterans.

"My goal for this weekend was to come here and have fun, get to know my team, and play at a really high level – without putting a ton of pressure on myself," Anderson said. "It was good; I played well. I'm learning a lot, but I'm trying not to be hard on myself. But I love my teammates and it's a lot of fun being able to play with them this whole weekend."

Young and relatively new to 7s, it appears that Anderson has already learned a lot since her last stint with the USA 7s program, and one can only imagine how she'll progress in a professional environment.