

## Highly-Ranked 7s Teams Collide in San Diego

Written by Pat Clifton  
Friday, 08 July 2011 10:57

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One of the more intriguing tournaments of the weekend is not a qualifying event. Old Mission Beach Athletic Club is hosting Belmont Shore, a combined Los Angeles team, San Bernadino and the Glendale Raptors in a round-robin competition that will flank the All Americans' match with New Zealand Universities Saturday in San Diego, Calif.

The Utah Warriors and Old Puget Sound Beach were originally slated to play in this event, but have pulled out.

OMBAC and Belmont Shore are pre-qualification-period favorites to represent Southern California at club 7s nationals in August. They've already met once this summer, in the final of Oasis 7s, and Belmont won. But, says OMBAC coach Craig Hartley, neither team had its full compliment of players in that game.

"We played pretty well, played in the finals against them. We didn't have all of our guys out and they didn't have all of their guys out, so I think it'll be a better representation of both teams."

Hartley expects the Los Angeles squad, which will also make a run at qualifying for Nationals after forming under the new 7s eligibility rules, to be a talented amalgamation.

The team that really makes the tournament intriguing is Glendale. After winning the Dallas Harlequins Cup last month, they sit atop the West qualification standings, which allows them to forgo playing in the Kansas City qualification tournament also being held Saturday.

"We just wanted a change of scenery and a change of competition, because if we went to Kansas City, which we originally planned, we would probably play against the same teams," said Glendale and West 7s all-star coach Andre Snyman.

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“I would like to expose my players to more of a variety of players and not play the same players, so that’s why we decided to go to the San Diego tournament, to play against different players, and the more exposure the team can get the better.”

Snyman, a former Springbok international, will get his first look at Belmont Shore, the perennial 7s powerhouse, Saturday. The San Diego event will be just his second American rugby tournament since arriving the States in May.

“I heard rumors that they are the team to beat,” he said of Belmont Shore, “but they’ve got to perform on the day to beat any team, so if we’re in form on the day and we play against them, who knows, maybe we can make a surprise.”