

## Hawaii Selects Still a Mystery Team

Written by Alex Goff

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Is there any more mysterious team at the National 7s Championships than the Hawaii Selects? Hard to think of one.

The Hawaii RFU pushed for a chance to play at nationals in 2010, traveling to the Pacific Coast tournament only to find out at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour that they could not participate. This year, they skipped that step, getting a dispensation from USA Rugby to enter a team directly into the national tournament.

Certainly the travel from Hawaii is hard enough once, but asking such a team to do it twice within two weeks would have been too much for these players.

The team that arrives in San Francisco on Wednesday will be a varied and athletic one. Registered under Marist Hawaii but playing as Hawaii Selects, the team from the Five-Oh state features several athletes with plenty of potential. Drake Miller is a young, very quick talent, Junior Tufuga, and on Emani Vaimasaanuu, a youngster who coach Sialofi Fuatogi said reminds observers of thunderous Samoan forward Alafoti Fa'aolsiliva.

What that means is that they have power as well as pace, and will be prepared for a physical battle this weekend at Treasure Island.

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The most well-known Hawaii player is likely Dusten Umeda, who attended one of the USA 7s camps. At that camp he was told to pick up his conditioning, and he has done that.

“Dusten is the fittest guy on the team,” said Fuatogi. “And he’s still very quick. I think we’re going to bring a team that can compete, and will play well. We’re going there early to make sure we’re acclimated and ready to play.”

They are still a bit of a question-mark, but several of the Hawaii Selects players will be more well-known after this weekend.