Two weeks prior to the 2011 Senior Women's Nations Cup kicking off at Appleby College in Oakville Ontario, Head Coach John Tait is eagerly looking forward to his first matches at the helm of the National Fifteens program getting underway.

Coach Tait assumed leadership of the Canadian Women's Program last fall, after the team's return from the 2010 IRB Women's Rugby World Cup. To date he has enjoyed much success with the Canadian Women's Sevens program winning three of three International Tournaments (Las Vegas, Hong Kong and Amsterdam). August 2nd versus South Africa will mark his first match leading the Fifteens squad.

"We have had a very busy spring conducting Talent Identification and Development Camps, across the country. You will see in the selected team for Nations Cup a real mixture of Canada's veteran athletes and fresh faces to the Senior International scene" Tait remarked from his Vancouver Island home.

Of the twenty six women's selected to the Nations Cup squad, eight will be seeking to earn their first Senior Women's International Cap in this summer's tournament. The Nations Cup tournament is organized jointly by USA Rugby, the RFUW (England) and Rugby Canada. Two tournaments are held every other year, one for the senior women's national teams and one for the women's Under-20 national teams, with rotating host locations. Canada's U20 Women are currently embarking on their final matches in Santa Barbara California. The Senior Women's Event runs August 2nd through 14th and will feature matches amongst Canada, USA, England and South Africa.

Canada last met North American rivals USA in their final match of the 2010 IRB Women's Rugby World Cup, where the USA Eagles were triumphant 23-20 earning a 5th place finish at the tournament. Canada will look to regain the upper hand and get back on pace with their 2010 record versus the Eagles where Canada were victorious in three of their five matches with regional rivals.

Canada last met England in the 2009 Nations Cup Final, where England defeated Canada 22-0. England has enjoyed much success and continued growth over recent years on the fifteens front culminating with the successful hosting of the 2010 IRB Womens Rugby World Cup and an appearance in the tournament final versus New Zealand in front of a sold out home crowd at the famous "Stoop" venue.

To date, Canada has only had one meeting with the senior side from South Africa, at the 2009 Nations Cup, where Canada prevailed 35-16.

Coach Tait is optimistic of Canada's abilities to be contenders for an appearance in the 2011 Nations Cup final. "Our top athletes have made significant gains in off field development over the course of 2011. Working collectively in regional training centres with top Strength and Conditioning coaches, we are excited to see their progress transfer to the pitch this summer."

Tait will be looking to continue to expand on the skill level of the squad as a whole, which began in June with the recent Senior Women's Camp conducted at Shawnigan Lake School. Here, forty women vied for the coveted 26 spots to wear the Maple Leaf Jersey this summer. With Canada's vast size and varied season, National Coaching staff will seek to optimize the 16 days that the team will be assembled, as this is the only fifteens aside assembly in the 2011 calendar.

"The Nations Cup marks the first competition in the start of our four year cycle building towards the 2014 IRB Women's World Cup in France. It will be a good opportunity to assess where we are at against some of the top international competition, as well as internally as a program."

You can follow all the Nations Cup action at www.womensnationscup.com

2011 Nations Cup National Senior Women's Team
*Name (Alphabetical by last name) – Club Team (Home Town, Province)
Jessica Belchos - Markham Irish Canadians (Innisfil, ON)
Marie Bosco - Ottawa Irish (Ottawa, ON)
Andrea Burk - Capilano RFC (North Vancouver, BC)
Kim Donaldson - Burnaby Lake (Vancouver, BC)
Jess Dovanne - Valkyries (Victoria, BC)
Arielle Dubisette - Toronto Nomads (Ajax, ON)
Corinne Jacobson - Burnaby Lake Rugby Club (Vancouver, BC)
Maria Jaworski - Calgary Hornets RFC (Calgary, AB)
Shannon Kane - Velox Valkyries (Victoria, BC)
Jen Kish - Edmonton Rockers (Edmonton, AB)
Ghislaine Landry - Toronto Scottish (Toronto, ON)
Ashley MacDonald - Lethbridge RFC (Corran Ban, PEI)
Kayla Mack - Wild Oats (Saskatoon, SK)
Mandy Marchak- Capilano RFC & Saracens, UK (Vancouver, BC)
Brittany Orr - Lethbridge RC (Lethbridge, AB)
Cheryl Phillips - Toronto Scottish RFC (Toronto, ON)
Marie-Pier Pinault Reid - Club de Rugby de Québec (Québec, QC)
Danielle Rowlands - Calgary Hornets (Colonsay, SK)
Kelly Russell - Toronto Nomads (Bolton, ON)
Laura Russell - Toronto Nomads (Bolton, ON)
Laura Stoughton – Calgary Hornets RFC (Calgary, AB)
Julia Sugawara - Burnaby Lake (Vancouver, BC)
Brandi Van Eeuwen - Lethbridge RC (Duncan, BC)
Brittany Waters - Meraloma Athletic Club (Vancouver, BC)
Kelsey Willoughby - Lethbridge RC (Lethbridge, AB)
Julianne Zussman- Town of Mount Royal RFC, (Montreal, QB)
Non traveling Reserves-
Asya Bartley - Barrhaven Scottish RFC (Ottawa, ON)
Marlene Donaldson - Velox Valkyries (Victoria, BC)
Magali Harvey - Club de Rugby de Quebec (Quebec City, QC)

Staff:

John Tait	Head Coach
Sandro Fiorino	Assistant Coach
Penny Delaney	Team Manager
Jason White	Athletic Therapist
Darren Wharrie	Athletic Therapist

Tuesday 2nd August
4:30 pm - Canada vs. South Africa
6:30 pm - USA vs. England

Friday 5th August
*Games at Chatham
5:00 pm - England vs. South Africa
7:00 pm - Canada vs. USA

Tuesday 9th August
4:30 pm – South Africa vs. USA
6:30 pm – Canada vs. England

Saturday 13th August
2:00 pm 3rd vs 4th
4:00 pm 1st vs 2nd