

Overseas Update: Final Europe Pool Games

Written by Alex Goff
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It's welcome to the postseason in European Cup rugby for a couple of USA players, and a disappointing end to pool play for a couple of others.

Here's the rundown:

Heineken Cup

Chris Wyles scored a try to cap off a 40-7 Saracens rout of Edinburgh. With the victory, Saracens ended Pool 1 play with a 5-1 record and a spot in the coveted Quarterfinals.

Taku Ngwenya and Biarritz were stymied in the mud against Harlequins and lost 16-9. Harlequins take Pool 3 with a 6-0 record, and Biarritz, unlikely to get a spot in the Quarters even if they had won, slipped to 3-3. However, the close loss bonus point was enough to clinch one of the three places for Heineken Cup teams to enter the Amlin quarterfinals.

Northampton and Samu Manoa had an outside shot at a playoff place, as well, but lost 27-20 to Glasgow. The Saints finished 2nd in their pool, but were the last-ranked 2nd-place team, and so are out of the Heineken Cup quarters as well as the Amlin quarters.

Wyles is the only Eagle representing in the top-tier European Cup. Saracens will play Ulster in April.

Amlin Challenge Cup

Scott LaValla started at flanker for Stade Francais as Paris beat London Welsh 39-17 to win Pool 5 with a 5-1 record and make the Quarterfinals.

Biarritz plays Gloucester and Stade Francais takes on Bath in two France v. West Country matches in April.

Other Overseas News

Paul Emerick, who injured his ankle playing against Romania in November, is still not ready to play and won't be for some weeks, possibly months. As a result he is reportedly leaving Wasps and returning to the USA. He still hopes to rehab in time for the USA matches this spring.

Despite winter weather that forced some postponements in the UK, London Scottish got their

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game off with Gala, and won 32-0. USA prop Eric Fry was slated to make his debut as a sub.

Todd Clever's season at NTT is just about over as they lost a wild card playoff match to the NEC Green Rockets in Japan.

The French Pro D2 weekend went off just fine, if a little muddy. Inaki Basauri started at flanker for Tarbes, who lost 21-18 to Oyannax. Roland Suniula started at outside center for Auch as they lost 9-6 to Pays d'Aix.

Lou Stanfill and Vicenza won 30-3 over Amatori Catania in Italian Serie A action.

Maketitonga Moeakiola is back on the field playing prop for Nevers (aka USON) in the French Federale 1 Conference #4. Nevers beat Oloron 35-10 Sunday to move to 9-2-2 and second in their conference.

Derek Asbun was officially named to the University of Cape Town preseason squad leading into the South African Varsity Cup competition.