

RFU announces QBE Internationals 2012 fixtures

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Issued by Laura Brown, RFU

- Twickenham Stadium to showcase world rugby's elite including Rugby World Cup 2011 champions New Zealand
- During November and December 2012, England will take on New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and Fiji

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has today announced the QBE Internationals 2012 fixtures:

Saturday 10 November 2012, KO 2.30pm
England vs. Fiji

Saturday 17 November 2012, KO 2.30pm
England vs. Australia

Saturday 24 November 2012, KO 2.30pm
England vs. South Africa

Saturday 1 December 2012, KO 2.30pm
England vs. New Zealand

The QBE Internationals will deliver an exciting, international competition between the northern and southern hemispheres and see the World Cup winning All Blacks play on English soil for the first time



Nick Easter in action against the All Blacks
2010

since lifting the Webb Ellis Cup at Eden Park in October.

Reflecting on the fixture announcement, representatives from all five competing unions have expressed their excitement ahead of next year's QBE Internationals.

Nick Easter, England and Harlequins Number 8, a QBE ambassador: "The calibre of opposition at the 2012 QBE Internationals sets up some huge games against very tough sides. You've got to beat the best if you want to be the best and that is what England aspires to be. These tests are a massive challenge especially with New Zealand winning the World Cup. The southern hemisphere has set the benchmark over the years and we know that they hold dominance so it is always good to pit yourself against them. The games always have plenty of support and it is fantastic to see fans really enjoy themselves at Twickenham. Players and supporters love the northern vs. southern hemisphere rivalry so there is a lot to look forward to."

Stephen Donald, 2011 World Cup winning New Zealand and Bath Rugby fly half: "The Rugby World Cup showcased the depth of talent across all rugby nations and the QBE Internationals give yet another chance for teams from around the globe to play at the highest level against quality opposition. It is a great opportunity for all rugby fans in my new home, the UK, to see England pitted against some of the best teams in the southern hemisphere. That north vs. south rivalry is unique and always gives the big battles in every area of the park – it is also one that I will now get to see through different eyes playing my domestic rugby with Bath this season. Twickenham is a stadium steeped in history and playing England in their own backyard is a huge fixture to look forward to for any team and hopefully all the Kiwis in London will get behind the All Blacks!"

James Horwill, Qantas Wallabies Captain: "There are few bigger challenges in international rugby than playing against England at Twickenham. It's a great stadium which provides an amazing atmosphere, with a sea of white in the stands. Obviously the history between Australia and England means there is always an edge to our internationals, and I'm sure that November's game will be no different. My only previous experience of playing against England at the stadium was in 2009 when we were lucky enough to get away with the game, but England were all over us in 2010 playing a brand of rugby that was hard to contain. Our guys still talk about that experience, and how well England played, and so will be motivated when we return to Twickenham next year."

John Smit, Former Captain of South Africa and Saracens' Hooker: "South Africa have enjoyed some hugely competitive clashes with England over the years. Twickenham is one of the most iconic stadiums in world rugby and for the southern hemisphere teams it is an honour to represent your country and play in this famous ground. I have some great memories of facing England and I will be watching with interest next year alongside all those eager to see some very physical and entertaining

rugby.”

Netani Talei, Fiji’s 2011 World Cup Captain and Edinburgh Rugby No 8: “It’s fantastic for Fiji to be playing at Twickenham again. As a nation we’re already building towards the 2015 World Cup so the opportunity against England is very important.”

For more on the QBE Internationals visit www.rfu.com/QBEInternationals

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Notes to Editors:

Tickets for the QBE International, England vs. Fiji, go on sale in February 2012.

Referencing the QBE Internationals:

- This international series should always be referred to as the **QBE Internationals**
- Each fixture will be referred to as a QBE International e.g. *‘the QBE International, England vs. New Zealand’*

About the Rugby Football Union

The Rugby Football Union is the National Governing Body for rugby union in England and supports participants and fans from the grassroots to the national team.

About QBE

QBE European Operations is a business insurance specialist. One of the world’s leading international insurers and reinsurers, the QBE Group has been providing insurance solutions for 125 years with over 14,000 employees and operations in all the key insurance markets. For the year ended 31 December 2010, QBE’s gross written premium was US\$13.6 billion.

QBE is committed to working with all levels of the game, from the elite QBE Internationals and Premiership Rugby to the grassroots fans and clubs. Such schemes include the RFU President’s XV Awards and QBE’s Rugby Pro, a competition to win training sessions and kit for local rugby clubs.

Laura Brown
RFU Communications Manager
07545 602718
laurabrown@rfu.com

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