

England Men Sevens announce squad for 2017/18 season

- Simon Amor's 20-man squad is split into senior, academy, university and club players
- The 17/18 season will start with the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series



England will compete on a number of fronts including the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series, followed by the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the Rugby Europe Sevens Grand Prix Series and Rugby World Cup Sevens.

Simon Amor's 20-man squad is split into senior, academy, university and club players. Earlier this year senior players Richard de Carpentier, Ollie Lindsay-Hague, Charlie Hayter, Tom Mitchell, Dan Norton and James Rodwell signed contract extensions, providing continuity to the England Sevens programme throughout the upcoming season.

Dan Bibby, Tom Bowen, Phil Burgess, Alex Davis, Ruaridh McConnochie and Ethan Waddleton are also retained for next season and will join the likes of Tom Mitchell and Dan Norton in the senior playing squad.

England Sevens introduced an academy programme for the first time in 2015 and following its success has offered full-time contracts for 2017/18 to George Chatterton, Will Edwards, Lailand Gordon, Fergus Guiry, Charlton Kerr, Ryan Olowofela, Callum Sirker and Charlie Spawforth. Gordon and Guiry both represented Team England at the 2017 Commonwealth Youth Games in The Bahamas where they secured a silver medal this summer.

Meanwhile, Cameron Cowell who played 38 matches for England on the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series will return to the fifteen-a-side game playing for Newcastle Falcons' senior academy squad this season. Other players who will not be renewing their contracts with the England Sevens programme this season include Jordan Ainslie, Will Attfield, Tom Ffitch, Oskar Hirskyj-Douglas, Henry Martin who will all be heading to university.

England Men Sevens Head Coach, Simon Amor, said: "This season we have two major competitions in the Commonwealth Games and the Rugby World Cup Sevens, and all of our efforts will be focused on doing our best to win these events. This, on top of the 10 legs of the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series and the international academy tournaments that we'll be playing in, demonstrates that this season is undoubtedly going to be a hugely challenging and exciting one for this group of players.

“We have an extremely talented squad made up of experienced, senior players who understand what it takes to win competitions, along with a strong group of academy players who we will be looking to develop through the England Sevens pathway into becoming world-class players.

“We also have a number of players who left the squad at the end of last season to either return to their studies or start new ventures, and we want to thank them for their dedication and contribution to the England Sevens programme over the past few seasons.”

In addition to the full-time contracted players for this season, eight part-time contracts have been offered to university players across the men’s and women’s programmes as a result of the strong relationships that the England Sevens programme has built with selected universities. Harry Glover, Will Glover, Yaree Fantini and Charlie Kingham will train with the men’s squad when they are not studying, while Jess Breach, Liv Jones, Celia Quansah and Kelly Smith will train with the women’s squad. Both groups of players will compete in international academy tournaments alongside the full-time players.

As a shared agreement with Gloucester Rugby to help develop Mason Tonks, he will also join the England Sevens programme on a part-time basis and will compete in international academy tournaments.

Commenting on the university partnerships, Amor added: “We see the university system as a key part of the sevens pathway for both the men’s and women’s programmes. These contracts are a great step forward as we look to support each player’s individual development as pivotal members of their respective squads, while at the same time allowing them the flexibility to continue their studies.

“The relationships we have built with these universities have provided both the programme and these players with a number of brilliant opportunities which we will look to build upon throughout the 2017/18 season.”

England Men Sevens squad for 2017/18:

Dan Bibby

Tom Bowen

Phil Burgess

George Chatterton

James Rodwell

Richard de Carpentier

Alex Davis

Will Edwards

Lailand Gordon

Fergus Guiry

Charlie Hayter

Charlton Kerr

Ollie Lindsay-Hague

Ruaridh McConnochie

Tom Mitchell

Dan Norton

Ryan Olowofela

Callum Sirker

Charlie Spawforth

Ethan Waddleton

Men's university players:

Yaree Fantini (Northumbria University)

Harry Glover (Newcastle University)

Will Glover (Newcastle University)

Charlie Kingham (Loughborough University)

Mason Tonks (Gloucester Academy)

Women's university players:

Jess Breach (Chichester University)

Liv Jones (Loughborough University)

Celia Quansah (Loughborough University)

Kelly Smith (Hartpury College)

England Men Sevens tournament schedule 2017/18:

HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series 2017-18:

Dubai: 1-2 December 2017

Cape Town: 9-10 December

Sydney: 26-28 January 2018

Hamilton: 3-4 February

Las Vegas: 2-4 March

Vancouver: 10-11 March

Hong Kong: 6-8 April

Singapore: 28-29 April

London: 2-3 June

Paris: 9-10 June

Commonwealth Games 2018:

Gold Coast: 14-15 April

Rugby World Cup Sevens 2018:

San Francisco: 20-22 July

International Academy Tournaments:

DHL Oktoberfest 7s: 29-30 September

Assupol 7s: 28-28 October

Silicon Valley 7s: 4-5 November

Dubai Invitational 7s: 30 November – 2 December