

OUTBermuda, Bermuda Rugby Football Union and the World Rugby Classic Celebrate Equality and Inclusion with Rainbow Shoelaces

Ireland's Rugby Team Will Proudly Sport Rainbow Laces in Play on Sunday, November 4



Hamilton, Bermuda – November 1, 2018 – In just a few days, the world's attention comes home again to Bermuda to toast the 30th anniversary of the World Rugby Classic – and to celebrate equality and inclusion on and off the field.

Since 1988, the top names in international rugby have headed to Bermuda for the World Rugby Classic, one of the most exciting events on Bermuda's sports calendar. Thousands of fans from Bermuda and around the world once again enjoy a week of great international rugby, social events and an atmosphere unique in the game.

The difference this year? For the first time, the Irish Legends rugby team will wear rainbow shoe laces to send a message of equality, sportsmanship and inclusion especially meaningful to OUTBermuda and Bermuda's LGBTQ families and citizens.

Speaking for OUTBermuda, Adrian Hartnett-Beasley said, "Growing up, there should be no barrier to sports based on your sexual orientation - every person belongs in the game, including every LGBTQ child and family. We are honored to partner with the World Rugby Classic to involve everyone in support of LGBTQ equality. Personally, as someone who grew up playing rugby in Bermuda and in youth exhibitions at the Classic, I'm thrilled as an out gay Bermudian that diversity and inclusion are being further recognized and affirmed in Bermuda. Lacing up may seem a small thing to do, yet this has a lasting impact for every sports fan and every player. If just one person is positively affected by this initiative, then it has been successful."

Ronan Kane, Events Director, World Rugby Classic, said: "Rugby is a uniquely welcoming sport. In no other sport will you see a 160-pound person attempting to tackle a 260-pound person! It is a sport for all shapes and sizes and one that recognizes diversity and promotes inclusion. The World Rugby Classic is proud to support the LGBTQ movement and firmly believes that everyone is created equal, whether they weigh 160 pounds or 260 pounds, whether they are straight or gay and regardless of race or gender. The spirit of rugby encourages a more equal society for everyone in Bermuda and around the world."

An Irish Legends representative added, "Every athlete should compete knowing their chances soar when they bring their full self to the game. If these shoe laces inspire hope and change

some hearts and minds, then even simple shoe laces are a victory for human rights and acceptance.”

Sean Field-Lament, President of the Bermuda Rugby Football Union, pledged the enthusiastic support of the BRFU too, by adding, "The BRFU is committed to supporting initiatives that reduce bullying, promote diversity and inclusivity. The sport of Rugby is open and welcoming to all, including those in the LGBTQ community. We applaud the work being undertaken by OUTBermuda and look forward to seeing the rainbow laces on the field and collaborating with them in the future.”

What: Rainbow Laces come to the World Rugby Classic, Hamilton, Bermuda

Where: Bermuda National Sports Centre, Devonshire, outside Hamilton

When: 2:15 pm, Sunday, November 4, 2018 match between Ireland and France

Why: By taking this action at one of Bermuda’s most popular sporting competition, World Rugby Classic, Irish Legends and the Bermuda Rugby Football Union join with OUTBermuda to send the world the message that rugby is an inclusive sport which has at its heart character-building values of passion, integrity, solidarity, respect and discipline – for all.

The World Rugby Classic has been hosted by Bermuda annually since 1988, attracting some of rugby’s most famous players to our shores. Teams from twelve countries have battled it out for the crystal rugby ball trophy for over thirty years. Aside from the action taking place on the field, visiting players give their time to coach youngsters in special training clinics organised with local schools, and throughout the year, the Classic donates prizes to numerous Bermuda charities. The 2018 event runs [from November 4th](#) - 10th and the tournament schedule and more information can be found online at www.worldrugby.bm. Tickets may be purchased from www.ptix.bm

OUTBermuda is a registered charity (#973), which promotes and supports the wellbeing, health, dignity, security, safety and protection of the LGBTQ community and was awarded the 2018 Best of Bermuda Award for Charity/Community Service. Our mission is to advance human rights, and the promotion of equality and diversity relating to Bermuda’s LGBTQ people. Learn more and support our work and this lawsuit at www.OUTBermuda.org

For media inquiries, contact:

Ronan Kane, Events Director for World Rugby Classic ronan.d.kane@gmail.com

Adrian Hartnett-Beasley, OUTBermuda@gmail.com and Mobile +1 441-505-1256 (Bermuda)

Bob Witeck, bob@witeck.com and Mobile 202-997-4055 (U.S.)