

## ***Inaugural TCIRFU Presidents Dinner Held with Dewi Morris as Guest Speaker***

*Sunday August 24<sup>th</sup> 2008*

Last Sunday saw the TCI Rugby Football Union hold its inaugural Presidents Dinner at the Provo Golf Club. This well attended event was a great success and laid the foundation for this event to be held annually in the future.

The guest speaker was the famous England and British Lions player Dewi Morris, who delivered a witty and well received address to the attendees. Mr. Morris took questions from the crowd and reflected on his time as an international rugby player.

These included playing in the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa, including the game in which New Zealand rugby superstar Jonah Lomu famously burst onto the world scene with a one man demolition job of the England team in the semi-final.

This was Mr Morris's final international tournament and his previous career highlights included being a member of the 1992 Grand Slam winning England team and also being awarded the man of the match award in the 2<sup>nd</sup> test match of the 1993 British Lions game against New Zealand. The evening was intermingled with many funny stories and anecdotes and Mr. Morris played up to the various personalities of the TCIRFU club members who were in attendance.



The Minister for Sports, the Hon. Dr. Carlton Mills, was a guest of honour and took the opportunity to meet with the Executive Committee of the TCIRFU in discussing the future of rugby in the Turks & Caicos Islands. The club captain, Mr. Simon Taylor, in his address to the crowd, reiterated the unions ongoing desire to develop junior rugby in the islands, and stated that the best way for this to be achieved, was for the creation of a pitch and clubhouse in Providenciales. The TCIRFU has been graciously donated land in the Grace Bay area by a private sponsor, for the development of a full-size grass rugby playing pitch. This project still requires funding for completion and whilst generous donations have been received to date, which have allowed a substantial amount of preliminary work to be completed, more funding is required to see this project through to completion. The completed field will allow the junior development and seniors programs to proceed forward in a proper and safe environment.



TCIRFU president Mr. Keith Burant in his address to the union said that the club would be launching a comprehensive sponsorship drive in the local community to achieve these aims. With the success at the recent Can Am Tournament in North America, the launch of the clubs new website recently and an increase in playing numbers both at the senior and junior levels the union has a marketable product that would appeal to local and international organisations. This drive would secure the future viability and success of the union in the Turks & Caicos and ensure that the next generation of rugby players would be playing in a proper environment, and this can only lead to further international success. The establishment of the field would also enable to Union to host the various internationals that are planned in the near future, namely the annual Conch Cup match against the Bahamas, as well as hosting visiting North American and Caribbean teams who are planning on touring the TCI. Mr Burant went on to thank Dewi Morris for the invaluable contribution he had made during his visit as well as the time and enthusiasm he had shown for rugby in the Turks & Caicos Islands. It was only with the help from outside parties like Mr. Morris, Mr Burant said, that the TCI RFU could continue to push the International Rugby Board for recognition, and allow the TCIRFU to continue to develop rugby in this part of the world.



Dewi Morris will be holding one final training session on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August, with this session focusing on the juniors. This follows on from the immensely successful and well attended seniors session held at the National Stadium on Thursday evening. All junior players are welcome to attend this – at 9am at the Grace Bay beach in front of Mango Reef restaurant. Mr. Morris will return to the UK on Sunday and continue his work as an international sports broadcaster on Sky Sports, helping bring the Turks & Caicos Islands and rugby here in particular, to the wider world community. For further information on the TCIRFU and Dewi Morris's visit lookup the TCIRFU website at [www.rugby.tc](http://www.rugby.tc)

