

細說香港「七欖」 THE HONG KONG RUGBY SEVENS

大球場內的全球化嘉年華 A Festival of Globalization



文、圖

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香港欖球總會

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每年三月近尾聲，是屬於欖球迷的季節：一連三日的周末，欖球迷擠滿香港大球場，一是為了欣賞球賽，二是為了來參加派對。顧名思義，七人欖球每方球員只有七人，每半場七分（傳統欖球為每方十五人、每半場四十分鐘），對球員的體能要求甚高，球賽也更加緊張刺激。這一邊廂，綠茵場上競技氣氛熾熱；看台上，卻是一個讓各國球迷化敵為友的盛大嘉年華。

Every year, at the end of March, rugby fans fill the Hong Kong Stadium for three days to watch rugby and to party. The “Sevens” form of rugby (seven players per team instead of 15, and seven minutes per half instead of 40) is physically demanding for players, and an exciting game to watch. Competitiveness reigns on the field, but there is nothing but camaraderie in the stands.



南看台「香港：亞洲國際都會」標語下的七欖觀眾。
The crowd in the South Stand, under a sign proclaiming Hong Kong as Asia's World City.

香港國際七人欖球賽（簡稱「七欖」）是一個展示全球化的節日，看台上的「國際關係」毫不緊張，來自不同國家的球迷坐在一起，大部份都支持多於一支球隊，尤其被視為「弱旅」、「魚腩」的國家更是不乏捧場者。香港站賽事的球迷被認為是獨一無二的，因為不管哪隊打入決賽，他們都會留下來支持到最後，使「香港七欖」被譽為世上最佳的七欖賽事。數以千計的球迷專程飛到香港參與盛事；不少公司會把會議或年會安排在「七欖」舉行的數星期前，好讓員工能夠盡情享受「七欖周末」。香港「七欖」除經常成為每年香港大球場唯一全場爆滿的活動，亦是世上云云七欖賽事中規模最大、最重要的一個：參賽隊伍最多（共廿四隊競逐；其他賽事只有十六隊），時間也最長（為期三天，比其他賽事多一天）。事實上，七欖的真正身份除了是體育競賽，還是一個嘉年華會。

The Hong Kong Rugby Sevens ("Sevens") is a festival of globalization, where nationalism is tempered because fans from different countries sit together and most people cheer for several teams, and especially for the underdogs. Fans in Hong Kong are unique because they stay to the end of the tournament no matter which teams play in the final, creating what is considered the best Sevens tournament in the world. Thousands of tourists come to the city to enjoy the tournament. Multinational companies organize conferences and annual meetings for the week before the Sevens, so participants can enjoy the weekend festival. The Sevens is often the only event of the year that sells out the Hong Kong Stadium. The Hong Kong Sevens is the biggest and most important Sevens tournament in the world: more teams participate (24 instead of 16) for over three days (instead of just two elsewhere). But more than a sporting event, the Sevens is also a carnival.



當有球員犯規後，便會以圖中的「鬥牛」重新開球。
A scrum is the way the game restarts after an infraction.

斐濟雖是小國，但已在香港舉辦的系列賽事中稱冠十二次，擁有大量擁躉。

Fiji is a small island nation, but has won in Hong Kong 12 times, and is a crowd favorite.

(Photo by Andy Jones, © HKRFU)



七人欖球節奏快、容易理解，即使球迷並不完全熟悉球例也能投入賽事。圖為香港隊對加拿大的賽事。
Hong Kong vs Canada. Sevens rugby is fast and easy to follow, even if a fan does not know all the details of the rules.



加拿大隊奮力衝過葡萄牙防線，希望取得達陣。
Canada struggles to get over the try line against Portugal.
(Photo by Juan Flor, © HKRFU)

派對與嘉年華
Party and Carnival

「七欖」的最大特色，莫過於絕大部份入場球迷都以奇裝異服現身，這早已成為七人欖球賽公認的文化之一。不論球迷身穿愛隊球衣，或化身成性感護士、魔鬼、肚皮舞者、動物等等，穿上這些裝束讓他們暫時脫離了慣常的社會身份，一同扮演「欖球迷」這個角色。即使表面上穿著敵對國家的球衣或上衣，他們也不是敵人，而是一同欣賞欖球的朋友。

The most striking phenomenon of the Sevens is the large proportion of fans wearing costumes. This is widely recognized as part of the ethos of Sevens rugby. No matter what fans wear, be it the event jersey or more colorful and creative costumes such as sexy nurses, devils, belly dancers, animals, all such costumes disguise their social identity and bind them into a collective "rugby" identity. Even those who wear rivals' national team jerseys or T-shirts are not viewed as adversaries but rugby friends.

很多本地球迷提到在「七欖」期間，覺得自己彷彿離開了香港，到了另一個地方旅行。場內整天喧嘩叫嚷、情緒繃緊，三天比賽過後，當星期天終究要離開球場之際，突然發現自己再次回到人多擠迫的銅鑼灣，不少球迷均難以適應。這樣的經驗，說明整個「七欖」賽事營造了一個從正常的社會狀態之中分離出來的「闕限」時空，是一個創造「共同體」——欖球迷口中那種無國家、無分你我的友誼——的儀式。

Many local spectators note that they feel like they have travelled outside of Hong Kong during the Sevens. As they leave the stadium on Sunday, after three days of intense emotion and celebration, they feel surprised to be suddenly back in Causeway Bay, the most crowded part of Hong Kong. This experience underlines the way the whole event is a liminal time and space, a ritual that produces *communitas*, or what rugby people call camaraderie.

「七欖」一向不設固定劃位，球迷可以自由走動，走到其他座位區認識新朋友。球賽和休息時間梅花間竹，在緊張刺激的球賽之間，每半場便有兩分鐘中場休息、兩場比賽間有五分鐘休息，因此「七欖」絕對是交朋結友的最佳場合。在音樂、影片和酒精助興下，賽事就更加像一個嘉年華會。球賽停頓時，球迷紛紛站起來，隨著音樂載歌載舞。

Open seating is the custom of the tournament, so spectators are free to move around and visit friends. The game is ideal for socializing, since it has spans of intense action and excitement along with half-time breaks (two minutes) and pauses between games (about five minutes). Music, videos and alcohol all add to the carnival atmosphere. Fans stand up and dance to the music during the frequent breaks.



看台上，人類「回歸動物本性」的打扮特別受歡迎。Costumes that highlight humans' animal nature are especially popular at the Sevens.
(Photo by Manuel Queimadelos, © HKRFU)



一些裝扮也甚有政治諷刺的意味，二零一三年的賽場就出現數隻馬兒，諷刺當年歐洲超市「馬肉冒充牛肉」的風波。
Some costumes express political satire; these "horses" comment on the tainted meat scandal in Europe in 2013.



對不少球迷來說，酒精是七欖裡不可或缺的元素，一些球迷更打扮成斟酒器。
Drinking is an important part of Sevens for many fans, and an inspiration for some costumes.



男扮女裝（或女扮男裝）在七欖中極為常見。
Cross dressing is common in Sevens costumes.

雖然場內人數眾多，而且少不免都喝下了大量酒精，「七欖」卻幾乎從沒有意外發生。香港是個眾所周知的安全城市，即使在瘋狂一整天後喝到酩酊大醉，還是可以放心坐上的士回家或回到酒店，第二天起床後，錢包依然在你的袋子中。

Despite the heavy drinking and huge crowds, there are virtually no accidents. Hong Kong is a remarkably safe city. Inebriated partiers can reliably take a taxi home or to a hotel and wake up the next morning with their wallet intact.

在香港，欖球迷的數量與日俱增，當中包括外籍人士和土生土長的香港人。他們固然是「七欖」的忠實觀眾，但除他們以外，其實許多入場人士都不是欖球迷，而是一心來參加派對的。儘管越來越多華人參與欖球運動，欖球給人的第一印象始終是「白人運動」。看台上的人大約四分之三是白種人（「外籍人士」），不過日本人和其他亞洲人亦為數不少。

Hong Kong has a growing local fan base, both expat and local Chinese, that provides a core audience, but many in the stadium are not regular rugby fans. They come for the festival. Though more and more Chinese play rugby, it is still primarily an Anglo sport. The crowd is about three-quarters White (“expat”), but there are significant numbers of Japanese and other Asians.

作為欖球核心球迷的「英語」族群，在香港屬於少數。根據二零一一年的人口普查結果，居港「白種人」有五萬五千二百三十六人，而在香港七百多萬人口中，六萬六千四百二十四人登記為英國、美國或澳洲籍（還有數以萬計人士擁有雙重國籍，但於二零零一年人口普查後只登記為中國香港公民）。香港「欖球人口」少，「香港七欖」卻地位崇高，這也多得香港本身是東亞的重要金融中心之一，全球化的痕跡在香港隨處可見。

The “Anglo” community in Hong Kong, which forms the core of rugby fans, is small: the 2011 census shows the “White” population of Hong Kong was only 55,236, and 66,424 of the SAR’s seven million residents are registered as British, American, or Australian nationals (tens of thousands more who are dual citizens are registered only as Hong Kong-PRC nationals since the 2001 census). Despite this small local audience for rugby, the Hong Kong’s Sevens has become a major tournament because Hong Kong has risen to become one of East Asia’s major financial centers, thus its celebrated globalization.



年輕球迷臉上分別畫了蘇格蘭、英格蘭、英國和澳洲的旗幟。Scotland, England, United Kingdom and Australia flags painted on the faces of young fans.

(Photo by Andy Jones, © HKRFU)



這位來自英國的球迷居於香港，她的臉上也塗上兩個「家鄉」的旗幟。她的帽子是七欖某贊助機構的免費贈品。

This fan is English but lives in Hong Kong, so her face painting expresses both her homes. Her hat is a freebie from a corporate sponsor.

球迷眾生相：人體彩繪
The Fans' Face Painting



這位住在香港的婦人也同時支持出生地蘇格蘭。This Hong Kong resident also supports the nation of her birth, Scotland.



球迷愛跟球員合照。二零零八年時，十七歲的澳洲球星奧干拿便跟這群香港女子橄欖球員合影，而作為當時隊中最年幼的球員，他必須時時刻刻把球隊吉祥物——一隻沙袋鼠公仔帶在身邊，這是澳洲隊的傳統。

Fans like to have their pictures taken with players. Here Hong Kong women rugby players posed with James O'Connor in 2008 when the Australian star was just 17, and as the youngest player on the team he had to carry the wallaby mascot.



在大巡遊中，參賽球隊會繞場一周接受球迷歡呼，所有香港本地小型橄欖球會的小球員亦參與其中。圖為中國隊。
The Chinese team on the March Past, where each team circles the pitch to the cheers of all fans, following all the children who play mini rugby in Hong Kong.

世界大同的民族主義 Cosmopolitan Nationalism

表面看來，「七欖」是個宣揚民族主義，兼且排斥著少數民族的派對。的確，「七欖」某些環節具有民族主義色彩，例如在星期日的大巡遊中，各隊人馬都穿上代表自己國家的顏色或民族服裝繞球場一周。我們也許會把球衣上的國家標記，或球迷臉上、身上的誇張國旗圖案解讀為極端民族主義，但其實場內表現的「民族性」大多是玩笑的表現。比如說，向澳洲和法國隊喝倒采是其中一個「七欖」傳統，幽默而無傷大雅。

Superficially, the Hong Kong Sevens seems to be an ethnonationalist celebration. There are some expressions of nationalism, such as the March Past, which is a procession on Sunday during which teams wear national colors or costumes. The nationalism is actually all very playful, even though the national symbols on jerseys, the face paint and even body paint suggest extreme nationalism. Booing the Australian and French teams is a playful tradition of the Sevens.

七欖的商業影子

The Sevens and Business in Hong Kong

「七欖」和商業有著千絲萬縷的關係。賽事之所以能舉辦，乃得益於國泰航空與滙豐銀行的冠名贊助，他們都借贊助「七欖」來提升企業形象。贊助商在球場內擁有廂房，除了用來招待他們的生意夥伴，甚至可在此「揀蟀」。這些贊助商都是參與環球業務並獲利的公司。橄欖球和商業競爭有很多類似的地方：兩者都很重視領導能力、團隊精神、公平競爭以及「平常心」。

The Sevens are very much tied to business. The tournament is made possible by the title sponsorship of Cathay Pacific and HSBC. Both use rugby and the Sevens to boost their corporate brand. They and other sponsors entertain clients and select employees in corporate boxes. These sponsors are all companies that facilitate and profit from global business. Rugby mirrors many values of business, from leadership and teamwork to fair play and "getting on with it".

球迷最生動：民族打扮
The Fans
Ethnic costumes



「郵購新娘」造型。
Rugby Sevens humor:
Mail order brides.

假如再深入細看，便會發覺「七欖」裡的民族主義是非常淡泊的。「七欖」並不像奧運會般處處見國旗，也不見球迷搖著小國旗為國家吶喊。二十四支參賽球隊各有支持者，除了香港隊外，沒有球隊會獲全場觀眾一致支持。大部份球迷來這裡是為了「看一場好球」，多於為場上自己支持的球隊打氣（唯一例外是香港隊的比賽，但畢竟港隊也不在頂尖爭冠之列）。

In fact, the nationalism is muted. There are not as many national flags as at Olympic events and there are none of the small handheld flags. With 24 teams competing, each with at least a few supporters and none (except Hong Kong) with a majority of supporters, most spectators in any particular game are looking for a good game of rugby rather than cheering their home team (except when Hong Kong plays, but Hong Kong is not one of the top teams).

不設劃位亦進一步淡化了民族主義，各國球迷在看台上並非壁壘分明。儘管有時會看見一群數十人的斐濟、日本或新西蘭球迷霸佔著看台上的某些區域，但大致上，場內球迷是混雜而坐的。加上香港本身就是個國際化社會，人們慣於與不同國籍的人交流，使場內多數球迷相處良好，避免了出現一些醜陋的民族主義爭拗。

Nationalism is also muted because, with open seating, the crowd is not segregated by country. A few pockets of a dozen or so Fiji, Japan and New Zealand supporters intentionally sit together, but in general, fans are mixed throughout the stadium. Open seating and the fact that Hong Kong social networks are typically multinational make much of the crowd integrated and prevent any ugly nationalism.

大多球迷還不只忠於一支球隊。球迷兩邊臉上分別塗上不同國旗、甚至身穿代表不同國家顏色的衣服，已是見怪不怪了。他們也尤其喜歡為新球隊（例如有墨西哥隊首度亮相的二零一一年賽事，就有許多球迷戴闊邊帽和披斗篷）和弱旅助威。球迷不對國家愚忠，所有吶喊助威都是友誼的表現。因此，香港「七欖」雖然是國與國之間的競技，球迷們卻玩笑著模糊了國與國之間的界線。

Most fans cheer for multiple teams, because they have multiple loyalties. It is common for fans to have one flag painted on one side of the face and another flag on the other, and to dress up with multiple countries' colors. This hybridity in multiple nationalisms is very common. Fans especially love to cheer for new teams (e.g. Mexico in 2011; many fans dressed up with sombreros and ponchos) and underdogs. This diffuses any nationalism and national partisanship, and gives a friendly cast to all cheering. Thus, the Hong Kong Sevens is a competition based on national teams, but the spectators play with and blur the boundaries of nationality.



假扮部落民族的球迷。
Pseudo-tribal costumes.



風行一時的墨西哥闊邊帽和斗篷。
Mexican sombreros and ponchos are popular costumes.



裝扮成壽司的球迷，卻不一定支持日本隊！
Fans dressed as sushi do not necessarily cheer for Japan.



也有一些球迷喜歡「踩鋼線」，以一身政治不正確的打扮現身。
Some fans like to be provocative and politically incorrect.



球迷熱情地為香港打氣。
Fans cheer for Hong Kong in costumes. (Photo by Mike Pickles, © HKRFU)



外國人穿上「我愛香港」的服飾，除了支持香港隊，也支持香港的東道主身分。
Foreigners' shirts show their support for Hong Kong, both the team and the venue. (Photo by Andy Jones, © HKRFU)

「七欖」所體現的全球化和國際性的民族主義，是承英國人文化而來。足球和欖球均源自英格蘭的「英式足球」，但足球已成功風行全球，欖球和板球則還是讓人聯想為「大英帝國」的運動。參與「七欖」的球迷，卻沒有把賽事與英國文化或「英聯邦」根源拉上關係；他們到來，只是為了在香港這個東西文化交融的城市，參與一次「世界大同」的慶典，這從他們身穿的「I♥HK（我愛香港）」T恤可見一斑（亦只得外國球迷這樣穿）。球迷們熱情地為亞洲隊伍如中國、中華台北、日本和韓國打氣，尤其當這些隊伍被看低一線的時候。種族主義全然被拋到一邊，因為「世界大同」才是這個「七欖」嘉年華的主題。

The globalization and cosmopolitan nationalism celebrated at the Sevens has a British cast. Though both soccer and rugby both began as “football” in England, soccer has become a world game while rugby and cricket are more closely identified with the British Empire. The fans do not see the event as a celebration of British culture or of the Commonwealth; on the contrary, they see it as a celebration of cosmopolitanism, which Hong Kong, with its fusion of East and West, exemplifies in their minds. Some fans express this by wearing “I ♥ HK” T-shirts (only foreigners wear them). The fans warmly cheer Asian teams such as China, Chinese Taipei, Japan, and Korea, especially when they are underdogs. Racism seems set aside, and cosmopolitan values predominate.

結語

Conclusion

「七欖」有許多不同的象徵意義。有些人把它當作派對，有些人是來享受精彩賽事，一些商人則把它視作拓展商業人脈的機會。國際奧委會決定把七人欖球列為二零一六年里約熱內盧奧運正式比賽項目，亦是深受香港七欖的成功經驗啟發。得益於成熟的商業文化，香港早就提倡並接受企業贊助這個概念，企業贊助為當時仍是業餘運動的欖球帶來重要改變。一九七六年首辦的「七欖」，可說是伴隨著香港發展成國際金融中心的步伐而成長。因此，「七欖」表面上是一個娛樂性豐富的體育盛會，它更深層的價值，是今時今日「世界大同」、資本主義的理想與價值的最佳體現，而這也是「全球化」帶來的結果。✦

The Hong Kong Sevens has many meanings. Some spectators come for the party, others to enjoy the rugby, and some businesspeople use it also for networking. The Olympic Committee's decision to include rugby Sevens in the Rio 2016 Games was heavily influenced by Hong Kong's experience. The Olympic principles of fair play, equal competition, and no racial, religious, or political discrimination are exemplified by the Hong Kong Sevens. Hong Kong's business culture led to the innovation and early acceptance of corporate sponsorship, a major change when the sport was still amateur. The Sevens - first held in 1976 - grew along with Hong Kong's growth as a financial center. Thus it is globalization that has made the Hong Kong Sevens the ideal festival for expressing contemporary cosmopolitan and capitalist ideals and values, in what on the surface seems just an entertaining sporting event. ✦