

Oceania Cup

The Oceania Cup is a three daylong invitational Oz-Tag tournament, this year it was held in Auckland, New Zealand from Friday the 27th until Sunday the 30th March. This year, Indigenous Oz-Tag Australia sent 7 teams to compete with a group of over 150 people. I was selected to play in the mens 21's team and was very proud to be given this opportunity to represent my family and my community.

I arrived in Auckland in the afternoon of Thursday the 26th and was amazed at the natural beauty of the countryside. We were lucky enough to stay in the Crowne Plaza, which is a luxury hotel. On Thursday afternoon, we had one final training session that went well. After training, we headed back to the hotel to get ready for our team dinner, which was being held that night. The dinner was lovely and it was a great opportunity for everyone involved to socialize and meet some new people. We all had an early night excited for the days to come.

I woke up excited on Friday morning, I was excited to show other countries what Indigenous Australia's could do. We travelled to Trusts Arena by coach, which was about 20 minutes away from our hotel. The Oceania Cup started with the opening ceremony, where each country performed a dance or performance that reflected their culture. The other competing countries included Tonga, Samoa, New Zealand Colonial, New Zealand Maori's, Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, and Lebanon. The opening ceremony was a great chance to gain an insight on each of these cultures.

We had two games on Friday; we played Fiji and Samoa with one win against Fiji and a tough draw against Samoa. After our first two games we were happy with how we went but we knew that there was lots of room for improvement. A highlight of the day was performing a cultural dance before playing both games.



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On Saturday we played 3 games against Tonga, Cook Islands, and New Zealand Maoris. With two draws against Tonga and New Zealand, and Loss against New Zealand Maoris. The highlight of the day was performing a traditional war dance against the New Zealand Maoris while they were performing the Haka.



Sunday was finals day, we finished 2nd overall in the rounds and were to play the Cook Islands in elimination semi final. Unfortunately, we went down 5-3 to the eventual winners who defeated Tonga in the final. We finished 3rd overall, which I am incredibly proud of.

I would like to thank the Australian School of Business, and Adrian Williams (Head of Finance Property, AMP Capital) for sponsoring me, for without their support I would not have been able to attend the Oceania Cup.

Overall, It was a privilege to be able to represent Indigenous Australia and share a little bit about our culture with other nations. It was an amazing experience, I was able to play a sport that I love, for my culture and meet some new life long friends, as well as be exposed to other cultures and their traditions.

Thank you,
Dylan Booth