



# Experienced star to lead SA women's sevens team in Dubai

**'We played Wales at the Commonwealth Games last time, so that will be a good starting point for us to see where we are with the new squad.'**

The experienced local star Marithy Pienaar will spearhead the Springbok Women's 7s' challenge at the Emirates Airline Dubai Sevens International Invitational next week.

Pienaar will be joined by experienced sevens players Zenay Jordaan, Eloise Webb, Mathrin Simmers and another former Tuks player, Nadine Roos, in a youthful-looking squad named by coach Paul Delport for this tournament, to be played from 29-30 November at The Sevens Stadium in Dubai, with a number of regulars missing out.

Pienaar is taking over the captaincy from regular skipper Zintle Mapupha, who is doing duty with the Springbok Women's team touring Europe at the moment, while Snehlanhla Shoji, Babalwa Latsha and Zinhle Ndawonde are not available for the Dubai trip due to the same reason.

No less than six players will play for the

team for the first time and Delport feels that his young side should gain from the experience of playing against quality teams and getting used to the intensity and level of other international squads.

"We have to develop our squad and improve our playing depth as we are going into a very important cycle, that of Olympic qualification.

"We need every opportunity we can get to improve and test ourselves against other sides, as we are not part of the HSBC World Rugby Women's Sevens Series and this will provide us with that chance," said Delport.

South Africa will face Wales, Almaty Women's Sevens (Kazakhstan) and Arukas Queen Kumagaya (Japan) in their pool matches, and Delport would like his team to enjoy the experience.

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"The focus will be on performing well in that one and improve from that base. Ultimately, we would like to leave Dubai a better team than the one who arrived there," Delport concluded.



Marithy Pienaar was named captain of the Springbok women's sevens team for this coming weekend's Dubai Sevens tournament. **Photo: GB Jordaan.**

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