

MASSIVE MOBILIZATION FOR THE LAUNCH OF #FRANCE2023



French Rugby has massively mobilized to officially launch the #France2023 bid, at a press conference today in Paris:

- The captains of the French teams presented the #France2023 logo, which will be present on the shirts of Les Bleus, starting this weekend.
- Sébastien Chabal and Frédéric Michalak, who were nominated ambassadors for the bid, were alongside several French internationals (Dimitri Szarzewski, Julien Bonnaire, Dimitri Yachvili...) who joined the #France2023 XV, led by Pascal Papé and Fabrice Estebanez.
- Bernard Laporte, Serge Simon, and Claude Atcher presented the vision of the bid and the main strengths of the application.

Les Bleus with #France2023

Like Guilhem Guirado, the captains of the French teams came to present the #France2023 logo, which will be displayed on the shirts of the French team, starting this weekend. Beginning with the 6 Nations match against Scotland, the French XV, the French Women's team and the French under 20's will sport this collector's shirt. The French Seven's teams will also wear the #France2023 colours around the world, at tournaments on the world circuit.

For Guilhem Guirado, the captain of the French XV, *"it is with pride that we show our support for the French bid on the Blue jersey. By playing for the national team, we are already representing our country. With #France2023 on our shirts, we will have the impression of*

representing it twice!".

The #France2023 teams

Sébastien Chabal and Frédéric Michalak, internationally recognized emblematic players, have been nominated Ambassadors for the bid. *"I will commit myself completely to the #France2023 bid! I was fortunate and privileged to play in a World Cup at home in 2007. For a player, it's a unique experience. I hope our young people will have this opportunity in 2023"*, said Sébastien Chabal.

Pascal Papé and Fabrice Estebanez, internationals and members of the FFR steering committee, presented the #France2023 XV, which symbolizes the transgenerational support behind the bid. Before the arrival of new recruits, the composition of the team already looks great, with the selection of Dimitri Szarzewski, Julien Bonnaire, Dimitri Yachvili, Olivier Merle, Alain Lorieux, Jean-Pierre Romeu, Olivier Milloud, Denis Charvet, Franck Mesnel, Christian Califano.

Foreign players playing in France are not to be outdone, as there are many who have come to give their testimony on the exceptional dynamism of French rugby, such as Chris Masoe (Nouvelle-Zélande), Juan Imhoff (Argentine) et Waisea Nayacalevu (Fidji).

In addition, alongside the rugby players, two other teams of supporters were presented: The Gastronomy XV, made up of the Meilleurs Ouvriers de France [top award for French craftsmen], who represent the excellence of French savoir-vivre, and the corporate XV, made up of FFR partners and companies that are supporting the bid, highlighting the major mobilization of the business world behind #France2023.

Finally, the 1895 French clubs forming the base on which the bid is built, reminds Bernard Laporte: *"This World Cup is above all that of the 1895 clubs. They are the ones who will mobilize the volunteers and will be the guarantors of the spirit of fun, sharing and conviviality that characterizes French Rugby... which is why the 2007 World Cup was a success!"*.

The vision and strengths of #France2023

Four months before the deadline for submitting the application to World Rugby, Bernard Laporte, President of the FFR, Serge Simon, Vice-President of the FFR and Claude Atcher, Director of France2023, shared the vision of the bid and presented the main strengths of the application.

Bernard Laporte insists on the impact of a World Cup on French rugby: *"France wants the Rugby World Cup! The #France2023 bid is supported by 80% of the French people. This World Cup will also be that of the 1895 French rugby clubs. Through the legacy of the event, all rugby will be positively impacted by the 2023 World Cup in France"*.

"Through this bid, France, which is one of the largest markets in world rugby, will regain its place in international governance. By being chosen to organize the 2023 World Cup, the FFR would put France back at the centre of the world chessboard", says Serge Simon.

Claude Atcher reviews the contents of the application, which will be presented to World Rugby before June 1: *"The bid highlights the "France" product. The France of rugby, of course, with its 1895 clubs and 450,000 registered players, but also the France of savoir-vivre, which makes our*

country the world's leading tourist destination (85 million tourists a year), and finally the France of savoir-faire, with its efficient infrastructure and our country's expertise in the organization of the biggest events in the world, such as Euro2016 and the 2017 World Handball Championship ».

To date, 19 cities are candidates to host the matches: Paris, Bordeaux, Grenoble, Lille, Lens, Le Havre, Le Mans, Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, Nanterre, Nantes, Nice, Rennes, St Denis, St Etienne, Sochaux, Toulouse and Valenciennes.

"The ambition is to build a partnership relationship with host stadiums, cities and regions to provide a unique experience for participating teams and their supporters. The teams will be welcomed so that they feel at home, whether in the stadium, the base camp or the host city", concludes Claude Atcher.

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