

Hong Kong, December 17th, 2017

Racing 92 to take on first-ever South African Super Rugby side to play in Hong Kong, Cell C Sharks, in 2018 Natixis Rugby Cup

Natixis and TeamOne Groupe, with the support of the Hong Kong Rugby Union, are excited to bring the Natixis Rugby Cup to Hong Kong's shores once again, with the event pitting Racing 92, one of France's most storied rugby clubs, against the first-ever South African Super Rugby side to play in Hong Kong, the Cell C Sharks.

The high-profile fixture will take place at the Aberdeen Sports Ground on Saturday, 3 February 2018.

Racing 92 is presently in third place in the French top league and is within striking distance of securing another title after winning the French championship in 2016. The club is also taking part in the European Champions Cup. Among the bevy of French and international stars in the Racing 92 side are Dan Carter, voted World Player of the Year in 2005, 2012 and 2015, and up-and coming local player Matt Worley, who most recently appeared for Hong Kong in September's World Rugby U20 Trophy in Uruguay.

"Natixis is delighted to once again welcome Racing 92 to Hong Kong, and particularly excited at the prospect of the team including one of Hong Kong's native sons, Matt Worley," said Mr Alain Gallois, Chief Executive Officer, Natixis, Asia Pacific.

Natixis has a long commitment to rugby and, in France, has sponsored Racing 92 since 2007. In the region, the bank has also been the proud sponsor of the Hong Kong Football Club rugby section since 2014.

"The Natixis Rugby Cup offers us the opportunity to bring our local and international rugby partnerships to life, as well as to engage our clients and staff in a unique and emotive way," Mr Gallois said. "This is a very significant engagement for Natixis, and one that provides an opportunity to spread the positive values of the game to wider audiences and we hope that all of the local fans will enjoy the match once again."

Philippe Spanghero, Chief Executive Officer of event promoters, TeamOne Groupe, added: "I would like to thank Natixis for bringing this event to Hong Kong. The Natixis Rugby Cup is a formidable opportunity for the large rugby playing and following population in Hong Kong to engage with the world stars of rugby and to attend a world-class sports event just a few weeks before the kick-off of the renowned Hong Kong Sevens."

Robbie McRobbie, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Rugby Union was similarly excited about the event. "The Hong Kong Rugby Union is delighted to once again host the Natixis Rugby Cup in 2018. This innovative series has made Hong Kong a home for Northern versus Southern hemisphere rugby matches and helped us deepen our engagement with Hong Kong's growing French community," Mr McRobbie said

"We are particularly excited to be welcoming the first-ever South African Super Rugby side to play in Hong Kong, the Cell C Sharks, this February. They will join the likes of the Highlanders, the Chiefs, the British & Irish Lions, the Home Nations, France, the All Blacks and Wallabies among the ranks of international sides that have delighted rugby fans in Hong Kong over the decades," added Mr McRobbie.

The Hong Kong tie will present an important pre-season opportunity for the Cell C Sharks to fine-tune their squad for the 2018 Vodacom Super Rugby campaign. The Sharks have reached the Super

Rugby final on four occasions (1996, 2001, 2007 and 2012) and the semi-final on four further occasions, with the most recent coming in 2014.

At the beginning of 2017, The Sharks announced the appointment of Robert du Preez as their new Head Coach. Du Preez coached a young and talented side to the Vodacom Super Rugby quarter-finals, topped the table at the end of the pool stages and contested a home Currie Cup final, leading the team into a new era of success.

The team has also announced the appointment of Dick Muir, the former Springbok and Sharks player and coach as a consultant responsible for the team's attack and backline play for the 2018 season. Muir coached The Sharks to the final of the 2007 Super Rugby tournament and was also an assistant coach of the Springboks from 2008 to 2011.

"We are delighted to participate in the Natixis Rugby Cup 2018. Racing 92 is an impressive team with quality players. A match against them will be the ideal test that we require at the start of the 2018 Vodacom Super Rugby tournament, in terms of preparation and the fine-tuning of our game plan," said Cell C Sharks Head Coach, Robert du Preez.

"Through the Hong Kong Sevens, we have seen how popular the game is in that part of the world, and look forward to playing in front of a great crowd and making new memories," Du Preez added.

About the Natixis Rugby Cup

2018 will mark the fourth edition of the Natixis Rugby Cup, with the first in 2013 pitting Racing 92 versus Stade Toulousain in the first ever meeting between two professional French sides in Hong Kong.

That encounter was followed by a Racing 92 versus HKFC President's XV in 2015 and the debut appearance of a Super Rugby side in Hong Kong, The Highlanders, who played Racing 92 in a high-scoring affair in 2016.

In keeping with the finest traditions of French rugby, the Natixis Rugby Cups are marked by a strong outreach to the local rugby community and a sharing of the communal rugby spirit. This custom will continue in 2018 with a mini rugby clinic, featuring players not in the starting line-up on match day, to be held at Aberdeen immediately preceding the match. The fun will continue into the evening hours as well with a beer garden and live music on offer throughout the day.

"The Natixis Rugby Cup is a beautiful adventure initiated in 2013 by Louis Vincent Gave, a major player in Hong Kong rugby. This event offers Racing 92, as well as its opponents, a new international dimension, an opening to Asia and even globally, thanks to the cosmopolitanism of Hong Kong," said Mr Spanghero.

"I wish to thank again Hong Kong Rugby Union and Natixis for their unconditional support, Racing 92 and the Cell C Sharks for their trust, and all fans of the oval ball in Hong Kong, without whom this event could not happen," Mr Spanghero added.

Ticketing:

Tickets for the Natixis Rugby Cup 2018 will go on sale from noon on Monday 18 December via Ticketflap (<https://www.ticketflap.com>). Special early bird ticketing discounts are available through 8 January with general admission tickets offered at \$299 for adults and from \$50 for youth aged 12 and under. After the early bird discount expires, tickets will be \$399 for uncovered general admission seating and \$438 for covered general admission seating. VIP tickets with included food and beverage and reserved covered seating are \$738.

About Racing 92

Racing Club was established in 1882 (it became Racing Club de France in 1885) as an athletics club. A rugby section was founded in 1890, which became an immediate protagonist of the early French championship, being six times French champion (1892, 1900, 1902, 1959, 1990 and 2016), once champion of Rugby Pro D2 (2009).

The first team, coached by Laurent Labit and Laurent Travers (winner of the 2012-2013 Top 14 with Castres Olympique) has been playing in the Top 14 for six seasons, during which it has played three semi-finals.

Racing 92 is also a training club: it has supplied more than 80 French international players and twelve "XV de France" major captains, including Frantz-Reichel, Jean-Pierre Rives, Lionel Nallet and Dimitri Szarzewski. Since 2013, Natixis is also sponsor of the Racing Rugby Schools.

About Natixis

Natixis is the international corporate and investment banking, asset management, insurance and financial services arm of Groupe BPCE, the 2nd-largest banking group in France with 31.2 million clients spread over two retail banking networks, Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne.

With more than 17,000 employees, Natixis has a number of areas of expertise that are organized into four main business lines: Asset & Wealth Management, Corporate & Investment Banking, Insurance and Specialized Financial Services. A global player, Natixis has its own client base of companies, financial institutions and institutional investors as well as the client base of individuals, professionals and small and medium-size businesses of Groupe BPCE's banking networks.

Listed on the Paris stock exchange, it has a solid financial base with a CET1 capital under Basel 3(1) of €12.9 billion, a Basel 3 CET1 Ratio (1) of 11.5 % and quality long-term ratings (Standard & Poor's: A / Moody's: A2 / Fitch Ratings: A). (1) Based on CRR-CRD4 rules as reported on June 26, 2013, including the Danish compromise - without phase-in except for DTAs on tax-loss carryforwards following ECB regulation 2016/445.

Figures as at September 30, 2017

About HKRU

The HKRU is a member of the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China and provides competitive and social rugby opportunities for men and women at every age and skill level, with a thriving community of over 10,000 players. For more, visit: www.hkrugby.com, www.facebook.com/hkrugby and twitter.com/HongKongRugby.

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