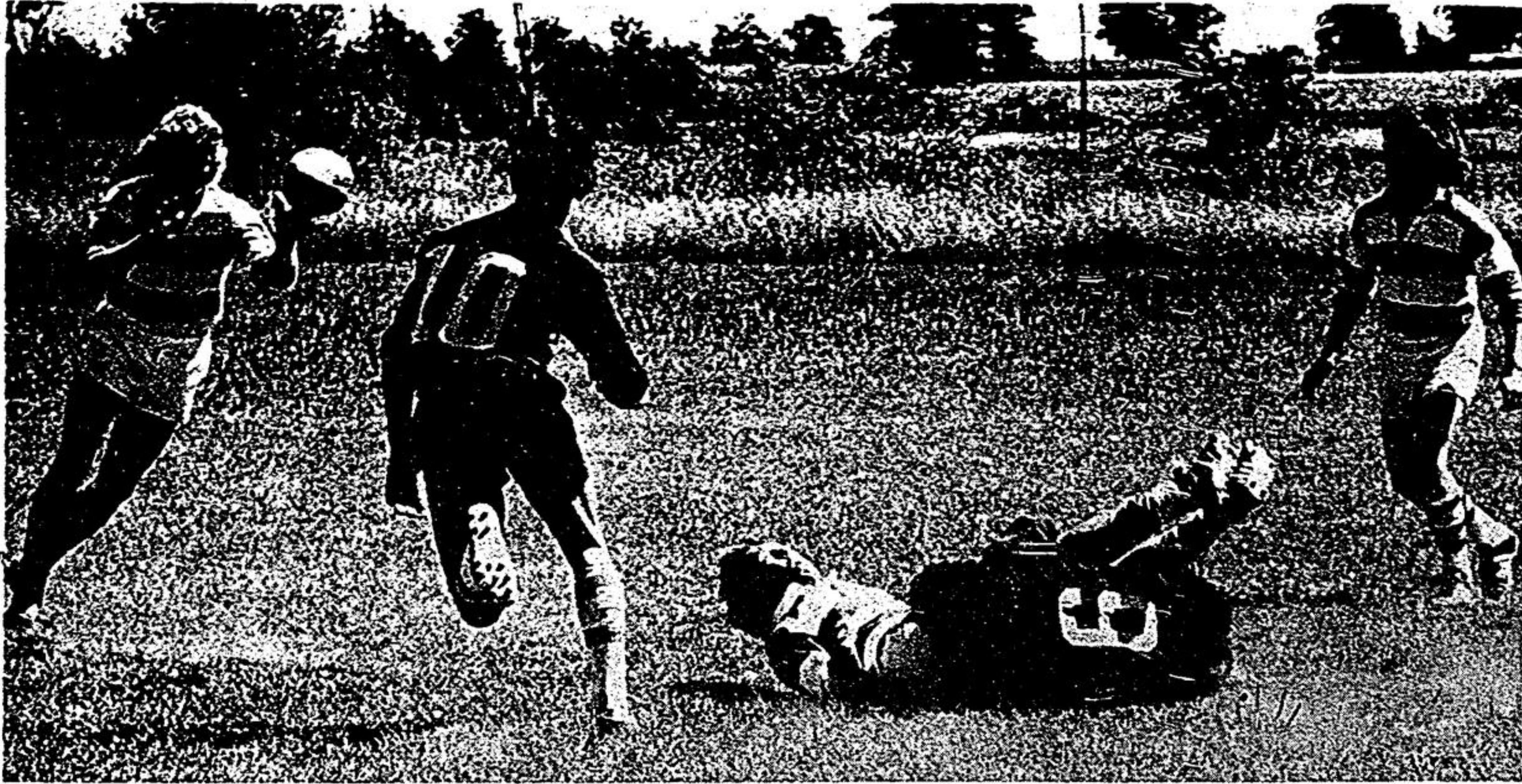


International rugby tourney here



Downed Barrie player (above) successfully passes the ball to his teammate as Balmy Beaches ballier rushes in.

When it comes to non-stop, hell bent for leather action, there's nothing quite like a seven-a-side rugby tournament.

And the largest such tournament in Canada was played just last weekend in Fletcher's Field, Markham. It featured 48 teams from Ontario and the United States, including an entry from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Seven-a-side rugby is definitely a spectator's delight. With only seven on each team, on a rugby field that's slightly wider and just as long as a Canadian Football Field, there is ample opportunity for exciting open field running and spectacular passing. Add to that is the fact the games are only 15 minutes long so there's not time for the teams to take it easy.

Scoring in rugby

is fairly similar to football. Their touch-down, called a try, is worth four points, while a successful conversion attempt after the try is two points. A penalty goal, similar to a field goal, is worth three points, and a drop goal kick is also worth three.

In the Fletcher's Field tournament, the United States teams did very well, taking two of the three championships. In the A division finals the Bethlehem Hooligans from Pennsylvania knocked off the Toronto Irish Canadians team 26-14.

The consolation championship went to the Boston Sorcerers who defeated the Toronto Wanderers 28-12.

In the B division it was an all-Ontario final, as Balmy Beach pulled off a 16-12 victory over the Toronto Barbarians.



Player above had his shirt customized during play. Rugby is a rough game and that apparently, judging from the t-shirts and bumper stickers, is part of the appeal.



Shot at right looks like scene from Keystone Cops movie with everybody sprawled about the field.



Photos by

John Montgomery



A finalist Toronto Irish (plain jerseys) battle it out (below) with Wexford team. Teams from across Canada and the U.S. participated in tournament at Fletcher's Field.

