

## Men's internationals – 7-8 March

### World Rugby Men's Rankings highlights:

- Wales and France could end the weekend in the top band of seeds for the Rugby World Cup 2023 pool draw
- Third is possible for Wales, while France can climb to fourth
- Scotland will drop out of the second band of seeds if they lose to France
- Georgia can drop three places to 15th
- Russia could return to the top 20 with victory over Romania

### SIX NATIONS

#### **ENGLAND (3) 88.25 v WALES (6) 82.79 (Saturday)**

England win by 15 points or less – England 88.41, Wales 82.64

England win by 15 points or more – England 88.48, Wales 82.56

Draw – England 87.41, Wales 83.64

Wales win by 15 points or less – England 86.41, Wales 84.64

Wales win by 15 points or more – England 85.48, Wales 85.56

#### Head-to-head

Played: 134 – England leads 63-59, with 12 draws

Points for: England 1,758 / 1,593

Average score: England 13-12 Wales

First meeting: 16 February, 1881 – England 0-0 Wales – Rectory Field, Blackheath\*

Last meeting: 17 August, 2019 – Wales 13-6 England – Principality Stadium, Cardiff

*\*England won by 8 goals to nil*

- England cannot catch New Zealand as they can only earn a maximum 0.23 points
- Wales will be the higher ranked of the two teams in third if they win by more than 15 points – by a mere 0.08 points
- A smaller margin of victory would be enough to lift Wales one place to fifth if France fail to win at Murrayfield
- Wales cannot fall from sixth even with a loss by more than 15 points – and could actually climb above France if they suffer a loss by the same margin in Scotland
- England will remain in the top band of seeds for RWC 2023 pool draw, even if they lose by more than 15 points

#### **SCOTLAND (8) 79.55 v FRANCE (5) 83.86 (Sunday)**

Scotland win by 15 points or less – Scotland 80.68, France 82.73

Scotland win by 15 points or more – Scotland 81.25, France 82.16

Draw – Scotland 79.68, France 83.73

France win by 15 points or less – Scotland 78.68, France 84.73

France win by 15 points or more – Scotland 78.25, France 85.16

#### Head-to-head

Played: 95 – France leads 55-37, with three draws

Points for: Scotland 1180 / France 1401

Average score: Scotland 12-15

First meeting: 22 January, 1910 – Scotland 27-0 France – Inverleith, Edinburgh  
Last meeting: 24 August, 2019 – Scotland 17-14 France – Murrayfield, Edinburgh

- France last tasted victory (19-17) at Murrayfield on this day in 2014
- Scotland cannot improve their ranking with victory
- Scotland will swap places with Japan if they lose at home, dropping out of the second band of seeds for RWC 2023
- They will also fall below Argentina if they lose by more than 15 points
- France will climb above Ireland if they win by this margin and be in the top band of seeds unless Wales also win by more than 15 points

## **RUGBY EUROPE CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **BELGIUM (27) 57.57 v SPAIN (18) 66.75 (Saturday)**

Belgium win by 15 points or less – Belgium 59.19, Spain 65.14  
Belgium win by 15 points or more – Belgium 60.00, Spain 64.33  
Draw – Belgium 58.19, Spain 66.14  
Spain win by 15 points or less – Belgium 57.19, Spain 67.14  
Spain win by 15 points or more – Belgium 57.00, Spain 67.33

#### Head-to-head

Played: 17 – Spain leads 14-2, with one draw  
Points for: Belgium 109 / 501 Spain  
Average score: Belgium 6-30 Spain

First meeting: 11 April, 1954 –Spain 14-0 Belgium – Treviso, Italy  
Last meeting: 10 March, 2019 – Spain 47-9 Belgium – Estadio Nacional Universidad Complutense, Madrid

- Belgium's two victories have both come in Brussels, in 2006 and 2018
- Spain will swap places with a victorious Romania side, even if Los Leones win in Belgium
- Victory will lift Belgium above Brazil – and also the Netherlands if they fail to beat Lithuania in the Rugby Europe Trophy
- Belgium can climb as high as 24th but this would require them to win by more than 15 points, the Dutch fail to win and Russia to lose by the same margin
- Belgium cannot fall from 27th even with a heavy defeat
- Spain can close the gap to Uruguay above to just 0.08 if they win by more than 15 points

### **RUSSIA (24) 60.85 v ROMANIA (19) 66.64 (Saturday)**

Russia win by 15 points or less – Russia 62.13, Romania 65.36  
Russia win by 15 points or more – Russia 62.77, Romania 64.72  
Draw – Russia 61.13, Romania 66.36  
Romania win by 15 points or less – Russia 60.13, Romania 67.36  
Romania win by 15 points or more – Russia 59.77, Romania 67.72

#### Head-to-head

Played: 23 – Romania leads 16-6, with one draw  
Points for: Russia 329 / Romania 567  
Average score: Russia 14-25 Romania

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First meeting: 7 May, 1994 – Romania 30-0 Russia – Stadionul Parcul Copilului, Bucharest  
 Last meeting: 9 March, 2019 – Romania 22-20 Russia – Stadionul Municipal, Botosani

- Romania have won the last four meetings since a 16-13 loss in Krasnodar in February 2015
- Romania will climb above Spain into 18th place if both sides are victorious
- A victory by more than 15 points would also lift Romania above Uruguay
- Russia will climb at least three places if they beat Romania, four if Portugal also lose to Georgia
- Russia will fall one place if they lose by more than 15 points and the Netherlands beat Lithuania by the same margin
- Romania cannot drop any lower than their present position of 19th

### **PORTUGAL (20) 61.45 v GEORGIA (12) 72.70 (Saturday)**

Portugal win by 15 points or less – Portugal 63.27, Georgia 70.88  
 Portugal win by 15 points or more – Portugal 64.18, Georgia 69.96  
 Draw – Portugal 62.27, Georgia 71.88  
 Georgia win by 15 points or less – Portugal 61.27, Georgia 72.88  
 Georgia win by 15 points or more – Portugal 61.18, Georgia 72.96

#### Head-to-head

Played: 20 – Georgia leads 14-4, with two draws  
 Points for: Portugal 268 / Georgia 469  
 Average score: Portugal 13-23 Georgia

First meeting: 19 April, 1997 – Portugal 21-17 Georgia – Estadio Universitario, Lisbon  
 Last meeting: 13 February, 2016 – Portugal 3-29 Georgia – Jamor, Lisbon

- Georgia are unbeaten in their last 13 meetings with Portugal (11 wins, two draws) since Portugal won 18-14 in Lisbon in February 2005
- Georgia cannot improve their position even with an emphatic victory as they trail Fiji by 3.51 rating points
- Portugal will fall one or two places in defeat, depending on the margin and the outcome of Russia's match with Romania
- Portugal will fall one place if they lose and Russia win – two if Os Lobos' lose by more than 15 points with Hong Kong the beneficiary
- Georgia will drop below Tonga and Italy in defeat
- They will also fall a third place if the margin is by more than 15 points

### **RUGBY EUROPE TROPHY**

#### **NETHERLANDS (25) 60.08 v LITHUANIA (44) 47.14 (Saturday)**

Netherlands win by 15 points or less – Netherlands 60.08, Lithuania 47.14 (No change)  
 Netherlands win by 15 points or more – Netherlands 60.08, Lithuania 47.14 (No change)  
 Draw – Netherlands 59.08, Lithuania 48.14  
 Lithuania win by 15 points or less – Netherlands 58.08, Lithuania 49.14  
 Lithuania win by 15 points or more – Netherlands 57.08, Lithuania 50.14

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### Head-to-head

Played: 5 – Netherlands leads 4-1

Points for: Netherlands 162 / Lithuania 61

Average score: Netherlands 32-12 Lithuania

First meeting: 14 May, 2005 – Netherlands 51-11 Lithuania – Klaipeda

Last meeting: 8 June, 2019 – Netherlands 50-3 Lithuania – Panevezys

- With no rating points on offer for victory, the Netherlands cannot improve their position unless Russia also lose by more than 15 points at home to Romania
- The Netherlands will fall at least once place – two if Belgium avoid defeat to Spain – if they lose this top versus bottom encounter
- Lithuania would climb four places to 40th with a draw
- A climb of six or seven places if possible for Lithuania depending on the margin of victory

*The World Rugby Men's Rankings update every Monday at 12:00 GMT*

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