War-Hardened Afghans Discover a New Sport: Rugby

KABUL — Thirty or so teenagers kick up dust as they sprout around a field in Kabul, focused intensely as they chase an oval ball in the swirling heat. The players are sweating profusely but that has not dampened their enthusiasm for their new-found sporting rage.

Essentially unheard of before the arrival of international forces, the sport has slowly begun to pick up steam in Afghanistan, where football, cricket and body-building are better known.

“I love the tackles and passes of rugby,” said 16-year-old Lutfullah Kazem.

The players are sweating profusely as they sprint around a field in Kabul.

The incident took place in the Lisan kheel Mandalai locality on Monday.

The Afghan Rugby Federation is convinced Afghans have the characteristics to shine at the sport, given the physical conditioning. For the moment, the focus is on seven-a-side rugby, known as rugby sevens, as it is easier to understand than 15-a-side.

Atilde Mohammed Taltiat, the Provincial Council head, said Afghan News the incident has happened at around 8:00pm in the Ghaghato district in the southern Wardak province.

The injured had been shifted to emergency hospital in Kabul.

The blast killed Sahel, his brothers, sister and two children. (Pajhwok)