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Bill Beaumont Cup Lancashire Preview

This years Bill Beaumont Cup campaign for Lancashire Senior Mens XV has a far flung feel for the first two matches prior to the Roses clash on home turf at Fylde on Saturday 18th May .

This Saturday sees the Lancastrians travel to Wearside to take on Durham at Sunderland RUFC . This is the first time Lancashire Senior Mens XV have played at this ground , indeed the following week there is another first when they travel to play Eastern Counties at Volac Park home of National 1 outfit Cambridge. There have been matches between the two counties in recent seasons but this is a first visit to the Blood and Sand venue . The group stage round of games will finish on much more familiar territory , with the first Roses game in several years being staged at Fylde's Woodlands Ground on May 18th .

Ahead of the campaign, Mark Nelson , Lancashire Head Coach said ,

“Each season provides different and difficult challenges for us . This year we will have to put in the miles for our opening two games at unfamiliar grounds against tough opponents in Durham and Eastern Counties , the series concludes with a revival of our rivalry with Yorkshire at home at Fylde . Each of our opponents have indigenous National 1 clubs to select from , Durham ;Darlington MP , Eastern Counties ;Cambridge and Yorkshire ; Rotherham so we can expect to face very strong teams in our campaign. Three games in a fortnight is a very compact tournament and leaves very little space for manoeuvre as the format has six teams split into two pools with the team with the best record going through to the final .

Our training sessions have been very positive with high energy from the players . Everyone involved , both playing and management buy into the mantra of leaving club kit bags at the door and becoming Team Lancashire for the duration of the campaign . It is refreshing to see new and young faces in the squad this season along with the more experienced players, this shows the enthusiasm and passion for representing Lancashire that exists in the Red Rose County . Indeed the U20 s take on Yorkshire in Final at Twickenham this Sunday , the Lancashire Royals travel to Eastern Counties playing their counterparts before the Senior XV match and Lancashire Womens XV begin their Gill Burns Cup tournament this weekend . This is allied to age group teams playing across the season , shows the strength and popularity for the County game at all levels , something the RFU should pay strong attention to when making budgetary and structural decisions affecting the game .

For this year's campaign we are reigning Champions but I never consider that a factor , each new tournament has to be taken on its own merits and as I say we have a tough road ahead , but there is a lot of talent, experience and confidence within the group and we are looking forward to getting things underway up in the northeast “

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