

Written by Alex Goff and Pat Clifton
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The College Premier Division Semifinals are on Saturday.

RUGBYMag.com's Alex Goff and Pat Clifton talk over who they think will win.

Cal v. Utah.

Goff: The thing I saw with Utah was that of course they mounted an amazing comeback against Army, but their way of play is in danger of being sloppy. I think they're very entertaining. Someone like Thretton Palamo can rescue bad ball, put in a couple of moves, and make defenders look bad.

But Cal's defense is far too disciplined for that; and because Cal's D is so disciplined - and I am talking mostly here about their backs at the moment their loose forwards can go all-out and not worry that anyone else is missing his assignment. Rooke, Asbun and Barrett don't have to worry too much about over-committing.

Clifton: I think we're likely to see Don Pati at scrumhalf and Thretton at flyhalf, which is a bit of a surprise because most people see Thretton as a center or even a big wing. But this not only puts the ball in Utah's best players hands a great deal of the time, it also means that if Pati and Palamo can get success early, they can cause the over-commitment. Like you said, Cal is going to be hard to discombobulate, but if any 9-10 combo in the country can do it. It's Utah's.

Goff: It's a complete contrast in styles at #10. James Bailes is very calm, not necessarily a big runner, but is reliable, intelligent, and his tactical kicking could be a huge factor.

Clifton: I also think the Utes match up athlete for athlete in more spots than Cal is used to. AJ Tuinau is quite good, as is Tenata Lauti, who is also a reliable goalkicker. Those guys can make plays on their own. Utah also has some quality forwards in Danny James and Mike Jusc Zack, so they'll be somewhat equal in a lot of areas.

Goff: Actually it's a great battle in the forwards. I think overall Cal is a little bigger and a little more polished, but it could all be decided in the tight five.

I also look at the deep three, Cal's Dustin Muhn, the overlooked James McTurk, and Blaine Scully ... that's a deep three anyone would want. I take Cal, close for a while, then not late.

Clifton: Bottom line, for me, is this: Can Utah make enough individual plays on offense and defense to get Cal uncomfortable? If so, I think your prediction is spot on. If not, the Bears could be up four scores early on. Gotta take Cal

BYU v. Arkansas State

Goff: This is going to be a massive physical confrontation. I don't think anyone beats BYU without winning the physical battle ... or at least holding them to a tie in the rucks and around the fringes. Navy actually came close ... but then you factor in turnovers and it was a tough day for Navy. Dylan Lubbe, Jared Whippy, Zeke Mendenhall ... those guys can motor.

Clifton: BYU is physically larger than Arkansas State up front, as they are against anyone they play. But the Red Wolves play some of the most ferocious, diligent, tenacious defense of any team in the country. Their back row loves to tackle. So I think Arkansas State can match the physicality Navy showed against the Cougars. Will they make the same mistakes elsewhere? No.

CPD Semis - RUGBYMag Predicts

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Clifton: Patrick Sullivan, 6-4 240-plus, has been lights out this season at flyhalf, and he's lining up against Lubbe, who goes about 5-8 and well under 200. This could be a fun battle. I'll be interested to see if Sullivan takes the ball in hand at Lubbe a few times early to bloody his nose.

Goff: That would be a great tactic on Arkansas State's part. I think Navy showed that you can indeed contain Ryan Roundy, but to do so puts you in peril of leaving space for others. And Potgieter can play a little at No. 8 too.

I have to go with BYU on this. They are so clinical when anyone turns the ball over. It will be their closest match of the year, possibly, but BYU all the same.

Clifton: Yup, can't bet against BYU. However, if Vegas were giving me, say 5 to 1, I'd put a few peanuts on Arkansas State. That is, if gambling on the game didn't ruin my journalistic integrity.