

On Tap in DII Clubs This Weekend

Written by Alex Goff

Thursday, 17 January 2013 23:15

Division II club rugby really gets going this weekend with a full slate of games in warmer states.

Southern California

This is week two and Pasadena and Ventura County, two of the clubs that contended well last year, are off to 1-0 starts.

Pasadena hosts 0-1 South Bay Rhinos this weekend, while Ventura County visits San Fernando Valley, who were idle last week. Pasadena and Ventura County have developed an interesting rivalry. Last season Ventura finished 2nd in the league with an 8-1 record, but lost a multi-overtime playoff game to 3-5-1 Pasadena 46-41. They will remember that when two play April 6.

Also 1-0 are the North County Gurkhas, who host 0-1 Huntington Beach, and Kern County, who host 0-1 Eagle Rock.

Two other teams face off, both 0-1, as Santa Barbara visits Riverside.

Northern California

The league starts play this weekend with Fresno taking on the Sacramento Capitals, Gaels at Santa Rosa, Chico at BA Baracus, and San Jose at Vacaville.

Fresno is 2-1 in preseason play and were stymied a bit by SoCal team Kern County 28-8 in a friendly match.

Texas

After a break over the holidays the Texas DII league restarts with Frisco and Houston United firmly on top at 4-0.

With a big, powerful forward pack Houston United is formidable up front, and the HURT have enough pace to punish teams if they leave gaps. They take on 0-2 Dallas Athletic this weekend.

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The Frisco Griffins, led by No. 8 and captain Kevin Harrell as well as center Justin Boyd, will have a tough task this weekend as they travel about 300 miles to take on 1-3 Alamo City.

Winless Katy plays 1-3 Oklahoma City in Oklahoma, while the big game may well be 2-1 Shreveport making their way to La Porte, Texas to face 2-1 Bay Area. Clearly the winner of that game will remain in the hunt for 1st place. Shreveport will be hoping Mark Burley against has the scoring touch as his two tries paced his team to a big win over Alamo City a month ago. Bay Area hasn't played a league game since December 1, when captain Hayden Randall scored three tries and kicked another eight points for a total of 23 in his team's 40-10 dismissal of Katy.

Florida

Life back in DII agrees with the Tampa Bay Krewe, and here's hoping they won't get forced up to DI, where they don't want to be. The Krewe are 5-0-1 and visit 1-4 Daytona this weekend. The Krewe struggled early in last week's match against St. Petersburg, but exploded in the second half, led by the play of Charlie Hutchens, to win 44-12.

The Orlando Griffins, who are 4-1-1, visit Jacksonville, 0-3. As with Tampa, last weekend was far from easy for Orlando. They needed Ken Britt to block a drop goal attempt, gather the ball, and ramble 75 meters for a try to edge Daytona 26-17.

Naples (5-1) visits 3-3 Fort Lauderdale. Once again, the favored team comes into the game a bit shaken up. Yes the Hammerheads won last week, but only 11-10 over Boca Raton. Johnny Lindsay scored the lone Naples try and Ryan Shore kicked two penalties for the victory.

Boca will not be too happy to see that game slip away. Now at 4-2, the Buccaneers look to rebound against 0-7 Miami.

Brian Cole's reports for the [Tampa Bay Rugby Examiner](#) contributed to this report.

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Arizona

Just started in Arizona, the league is yet to see a clash of major contenders. Red Mountain starts off their season against 0-1 Magpies.

Northern Arizona gets off the blocks at 1-0 Tempe, expected to be one of the leaders again. Phoenix is 1-0 after beating the Magpies last week, and they now visit Camelback, who lost a close one to Scottsdale 28-20 Jan 12.

Scottsdale hopes to keep the momentum going at home against 0-1 Old Pueblo.