

Nessies Return to All Star Final

Written by Jackie Finlan
Saturday, 28 May 2011 01:00

The Northeast began its run back to the title match during yesterday's Women's All Star Championship, defeating Southern California 24-3 in the team's semifinal.



Kath Ryan during the NRU's win over SoCal.

But it wasn't all easy going for the Nessies, who took a 12-3 lead into the half.

"We were able to beat SoCal by putting together some good phase play with quick ball," NRU's Rebecca Brafman said, "but they were able to frustrate us by doing a good job getting some turnover ball when we were slow getting support to our rucks."

The team was missing 12 of last year's teammates and relied on the veteran leadership of players like Jamie Burke, Phaidra Knight and Kitt Wagner to solidify the team. Knight played a particularly strong game at flanker, both with ball in hand and on defense. Fullback Katy Dowty also did well to clean up linebreaks, corral loose kicks and build some nice counter-attacks. Wing Kath Ryan, Knight and Amy Daniels all scored tries for the eventual win.

Looking ahead to tomorrow's game against the Midwest, the Northeast has a few game points to address.

"We need to do a better job securing our rucks, making sure we get quick ball when we need it," Brafman said. "We have to dictate the pace of the game. Obviously the Midwest will bring a very physical aspect to the game, but we have a strong pack as well."

It'll be a nice match-up between the territorial teams tomorrow in the final. The Northeast, though only traveling with 19 players, has a quality lineup whose seven 15s Eagles and two 7s

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Eagles have been bolstered by young talent in players like Devin Keller, Rosie Miesner and former West player Jen Kuchar.

The Midwest is missing some key players as well, including Christy Ringgenberg and Jill Potter, who is still recovering from injury in New Mexico. But the solid leadership provided by veterans Krisin Zdanzewicz, Lynelle Kugler, Pam Kosanke and former MARFU player Kate Daley promises an excellent championship match.