The Girls U19 National Championship kicks off Saturday, with eight teams from every corner of the USA making their way to Sandy, Utah. It'll be a busy weekend, as the girls join the boys' high school and U19 championships inside Rio Tinto Stadium and on Murray Field.

Sebastian River (blue) debuts at nationals (J. Patrick Rice)

In the first pool, the Pacific Coast teams contest their quarterfinals at 9 a.m. MST. As of today, USA Rugby's Web site indicates that the Sacramento Amazons (Pacific Coast #1) will be playing Sebastian River (South #1) on one pitch, and Kent (Pacific Coast #2) will take on Lakewood (Midwest #2) on the other. The seeding for Pacific Coast teams has been a nightmare, with neither nationals attendee confident as to where they'll be entering the tournament. Sacramento and Kent had contested their qualifiers at separate locations, with a single win guaranteeing their berths to nationals, but it was unclear which team was competing for the #1 and #5 national seeds. At present, it looks like defending national champion Sacramento will take the top spot.

"I haven't been contacted in regards to the seedings," Sacramento coach Sefesi Green said. "I would be lying if I said I don't care if were the 1st seed or not.

"I know that the competition level is going to be high regardless," Green continued. "We try to get the girls to focus and take it one match at a time. They're young and going to have butterflies no matter what, so we focus on us and just try to play our style of rugby. Hopefully we can have another successful run this year."

Sacramento is not the team we saw last year, having graduated a number of its big players, and the team split matches with Mother Lode during league and post-season. Sacramento is young and starts several middle schoolers, but their learning curve is steep. It's a good thing for Sebastian River (Fla.), which makes its first trip to nationals. A game against a 2010-caliber

Sacramento could have disastrous for the first-timers. Sebastian River became the first girls' high school varsity rugby team in the USA back in 2008, and although they're short on experience, they have a bright future ahead. They have all of the benefits of varsity status, including usage of the football stadium for games, which draw upward of 300 people.

Sebastian River advanced to nationals after a three-team round robin against Kennesaw Mountain (Ga.) and Jupiter (Fla.), eventually beating KM 25-10 in the South final. The South Championships conflicted with the Tennessee State Championships, so some of the best teams in the region weren't present. Sebastian River could have used the experience, and Sacramento will likely be an eye-opener for the young team.

Should Sacramento win its opener, then it'll face the winner of Kent v Lakewood. There was much controversy during the Pacific Coast playoffs that there was no opportunity to contest for the top seed (since the games were in different locations), but if Kent defeats Lakewood, then the two Pac Coast teams will have the opportunity to settle once and for all who deserved the top seed out of their territory.

But Kent is by no means looking past Lakewood, which advanced to the national final against DSHA in 2008 and 2009, and defeated Sacramento en route to both title matches. Using common opponent DSHA as a guide, Kent is favored in this match-up, having lost 10-8 to the former champion in the opening round of last year's nationals. In Lakewood's last meeting with the Holy Angels at the Midwest Championship, the Ohio team fell 36-5.

That said, it's still unclear as to who's playing who.

"I'm not sure we're playing Kent yet," Lakewood coach Andre Bruwer said. "Yesterday, it was the Amazons, now it's blank. All very confusing, not sure what is up with USA Rugby and these seedings. Looks like it's going to be a surprise as to who we are playing!

But if it were up Bruwer, he'd prefer to play the Amazons in the first round. "I would rather face the Amazons while I am still strong," he said. "The long distance and high air fares means we are travelling light, and I am going to need everybody I can get. But, hey, it's Lakewood; we will take on whatever you throw in our path."

Which is a good sentiment to end on. Even though teams have every right to be frustrated with the lack of transparency thus far, they also know that being a champion means being able to beat every team in the competition.

Stay tuned for Pool 2 preview.