

Army to Lead Women's DI Pool C

Written by Jackie Finlan

Wednesday, 27 April 2011 14:30

Pool C of the Women's DI College Round of 16 will also be Blaine, Minn., with Pool B ([read more](#)). Army and New Mexico will do battle in one Friday match, while UC San Diego and North Carolina fight for the other bid to the quarterfinals.

Northeast champion Army is the favorite to emerge out of this pool by weekend's end, but they'll have to through New Mexico first. Los Lobos exited the West championship as the #2 team and represents a talent rich ERRFU region. Eagle Jill Potter has joined Shannon Robinson on the coaching staff and has revitalized an already tough forward arsenal, and the electric Madlen Glainyk is a difficult back to contain.

But Army is one of the top teams in nation, routinely making the Final Four. The team is all healthy and has been playing well, although its struggled to line up competitive matches aside from the 24-22 Army Navy game earlier this season.

"We've been focusing more on inter-squad sessions to keep the game pace and mentality," Army captain Sylvia Thomas said. "We don't know much about UNM, but we expect any team who has made it Nationals to be a challenge. Our mentality, however, has been to play as the same team every game no matter who we play."

Army has the edge in experience and firepower, and should face the winner of UC San Diego and North Carolina. San Diego stunned UCLA earlier in the season by defeating the former So Cal champ in league (and then UCLA evened the score in the rematch, but UCSD won the title on points). They've got a very strong pack, led by Kelsey McIlonie and Heather Jones. The backs are highlighted by Evi Aushenbrucker, Leilani Martin and Jenna Anderson.

North Carolina struggled to find its footing until later in the season, losing to East Carolina during league and forced to advance to the South championships through the play-in tournament. Even with a new scrummaging technique still in the works, UNC took the longer, but just as successful path back to the national tournament.

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UNC bowed out in last year's first round, losing to Brown 23-10 before getting a 17-5 win over Colorado in the consolation round. The Tar Heels will be relying on the stellar performances of flyhalf Kimber Rozier and finishing power of wing Holly Zoeller. The team is without a starting prop and reserve flanker, so the forwards will lack their full power.

"We'll just stick with the same game plan that's been serving us well over the past few months and maybe make a few tweaks during the game based on what we see," UNC coach Johnathan Atkeison said in advance of UCSD. " We've spent most of our practices refining what we've already been doing and implementing a few new twists in our system, but really we've focused on being more precise in our executing of what we've been doing that got us this far."

Read more about [Pool A](#) , [Pool B](#) and [Pool D](#) .

Pool C Round of 16 - Blaine, MN

Friday

Game 1 - 3pm (EST): Army v New Mexico

Game 2 - 3pm (EST): UC San Diego v North Carolina

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Saturday

Consolation Quarterfinals

Game 3 - 3pm (EST): Game 1 loser v Game 2 loser

Quarterfinals

Game 4 - 3pm (EST): Game 1 winner v Game 2 winner