



Who will win: Arizona

The Wildcats are the only Pool D team who competed in the 2010 CRC. While that doesn't guarantee them victory, it does mean they've played under the bright lights and in front of the big crowd and cameras before. They should have less jitters.

They should also have more playmakers. In Peter Tiberio, Arizona has the only player in the entire competition who's played for the 7s Eagles this year. Tiberio is a pre-tournament favorite to win tourney MVP. Arizona also has Brett Thompson, who's focusing full time on rugby now after leaving the Wildcat football team, and Michael Getzler, an all-conference performer in the CPD.

Who will challenge them: Good Question

Since Oklahoma, Texas and Temple did not play in the 2010 CRC, we know less about what they're capable of. The Longhorns were in Las Vegas at the CRC Qualifier, and they had a good showing, going 5-1. But none of the teams they beat are in the CRC. They will be out-athleted by both OU and Arizona, but Texas has been working on 7s longer and more consistently than any of the three teams not nicknamed the Wildcats.

Oklahoma has more across-the-board talent. Kelton Miller and Arryn Wilkinson are legit. Both will standout. Former Sooner wide receiver Zac Givens should be pretty fun to watch, too. Those three would not look out of place in a Cal, Arizona or Utah uniform, so that's why OU is probably the second-best team in this Pool.

But the best overall player in this pool, not necessarily in 7s, is Temple's Gareth Jones. He spent the last semester doing an internship in Ireland and playing for Young Munster. He will be

CRC 2011 Pool D

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an Eagle, 7s and/or 15s, and he's a Philly-area native playing for the hometown team.

Schedule:

12:10 Arizona vs. Temple

12:32 Oklahoma vs. Texas

Arizona will calmly ride Temple's wave of emotion the first couple minutes, and Arizona will prove to be too deep, fast and experienced, but Gareth Jones will turn heads with some broken tackles and piercing runs. The Red River Rivalry will be the first big rivalry of the day. Texas can stay in the game with good execution and ball movement, but once OU gets its hands on the pill, the Sooners will score.

3:16 Temple vs. Texas

3:38 Arizona vs. Oklahoma

Temple and Texas is a toss up. Texas has worked too hard and too long preparing for this single event, but Gareth Jones is a competitor, and the hometown team will be eager to draw some cheers. The second game is a barnburner. It's the pool decider, but the Wildcats are simply too fast.

5:30 Arizona vs. Texas

7:30 Oklahoma vs. Temple

If Arizona is 2-1, this could be a trap game, especially if the Longhorns are still searching for their first win. The first half is a tight contest, but Arizona wakes up and takes it in the second. If OU is 1-1, they could be caught in apathy here. The four-hour wait to play the night's final game is a sleeping pill, but Oklahoma should be too deep to lose here, as long as they don't fall asleep at the wagon wheel (get it?).