



Battle of the Borders

The first match in the Battle of the Borders takes place this weekend between the New South Wales Country Cockatoos and the Queensland Country Blue Heelers.

The match will be played on Saturday at Crozier Oval, Lismore kicking off at 5.00pm and will be preceded by a series of matches involving the Coolangatta Tweed and Wollongbar Alstonville Rugby Clubs.

The Battle of the Borders dates back to the mid nineties when New South Wales Country played an annual match against Queensland, but the introduction of "Professional Rugby" saw the demise of the fixture.

With the ARU suspending the Australian Rugby Shield in 2009, the NSW and Qld Country Rugby Unions have reintroduced the Battle of the Borders as part of their respective representative programs in 2009.

Two matches will be played to determine the winner of the Trophy, with the first in Lismore this weekend and the second in Noosa on Saturday, 6 June 2009.

The Cockatoos will go into this weekend's match as slight favourites based on the results of their three matches to date, which has seen them register victories over NSW Suburban (35 – 20) and Melbourne (31 – 20), together with a solid performance against the ACT (29 - 41).

The Blue Heelers have only played the one match so far, with the result being a surprise 24 – 12 loss to the Darwin Mosquitoes in Darwin last weekend.

Matches between the two teams in the past have always been evenly contested affairs, and this series of matches will be no different as each team will be keen to register a win in the opening encounter.

The Cockatoos will be at full strength following the return of Hooker Chris Comerford, Lock Matt Dun and Centre Heath Riggs who all missed the match against the Melbourne Axemen in Melbourne.

Cockatoos

1 Fergus McIntosh (NE), 2 Chris Comerford (CC), 3 Liam Vaughan (NE), 4 Matt Waterford (WP), 5 Tom Cullen (NE), 6 Gavin Holder (Ill), 7 Ben Colley (CN), 8 Mike Te Moana (NE), 9 Josh Darby (Ill), 10 Richard Manion (WP), 11 David Kennedy (NH), 12 Simon Newton (CN), 13 Heath Riggs (CN), 14 Chris Jack (Ill), 15 Justin Placek (Ill), 16 Ron Hobden (NE), 17 Chris Plunkett (CW), 18 Matt Dun (NH), 19 Alex Burnheim (WP), 20 Luke Sullivan (CC), 21 Sam Stewart (FNC), 22 Dennis Raft (CC).

ENDS