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Northumbria confirmed as training base for Rugby World Cup

Northumbria University has been confirmed as the UK training base for the Tongan national team during the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

Rugby World Cup organisers England 2015 carried out a nationwide search for the very best training facilities, sports clubs, hotels and universities, to provide 20 teams with a place to stay and train during next year's tournament.

With three games being held at St James' Park in Newcastle, the organisers

were keen to have high-quality bases in the North East region.

Northumbria was officially designated as a Team Base for the Tongan team after going through rigorous inspections and discussions with the teams. The Tongan's will use the University's outdoor grass pitches at Bullocksteads and the indoor training hall, fitness facilities and swimming pool at Sport Central.

Elsewhere in the region, the South African and Samoan teams will train in Gateshead at the International Stadium and at Gateshead College's Academy for Sport. Defending champions, New Zealand, will be based in Darlington and the Scotland team will use the Royal Grammar School's facilities in Newcastle.

Professor Paul Croney, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International Development) at Northumbria University, said: "Northumbria already has an outstanding reputation for excellence in sport. We have invested heavily to develop world-class facilities that are used by students, members of the public and professional athletes alike, most recently the Jamaican women's netball team before the Commonwealth Games.

"We are delighted that the organisers of next year's Rugby World Cup have recognised the benefits that we can offer as a training camp and we very much look forward to welcoming the Tongan team to our campus."

England Rugby 2015 CEO, Debbie Jevans, said: "As the organising committee for Rugby World Cup 2015 we are committed to ensuring that all participating teams have the optimum training environments available to them throughout the Tournament. Rugby, rightly, is at the heart of all our planning and we have worked closely with the teams to ensure that they have access to facilities and a Team Base that meet their individual needs.

"I would like to thank all those who have been part of the Team Base selection process and we are lucky to have some fantastic facilities right across the country. With a wide range of excellent facilities and locations secured the teams can be assured of having all their training needs met whilst allowing us to spread the reach of the Tournament even further throughout England and in Wales."

The Rugby World Cup 2015 kicks off on Friday 18 September, with host

nation England playing at Twickenham. The first of the three games taking place at St James' Park will be on Saturday 3 October 2015 with South Africa facing Scotland. This will be followed by New Zealand v Tonga on Friday 9 October, and Samoa v Scotland on Saturday 10 October.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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