

New date for Rhinos visit?

Thursday, 12 November 2009

Whitehaven are in talks with Leeds Rhinos about a new date for their high profile pre-season friendly at the Recreation Ground.

It had been fixed last month for Sunday, January 24 but now the Rhinos are set to open their Super League campaign on Friday, January 29 in Wales.

Whitehaven general manager Nigel Beaty said: "Leeds will probably be going down to Wales on th Thursday and we are thinking that it doesn't give them much time to prepare after a game in Cumbria on the Sunday.

"They were planning to bring a very strong side but whether that would be the case now they play on the Friday is open to debate. We are going to be talking with them to see if there is another possible date we could look at."

The Rhinos were expected to bring their entire first-team squad to west Cumbria, including the likes of Jamie Peacock and Keith Senior, as they prepare to launch the defence of their crown, and Haven coach Ged Stokes was expecting a big crowd.

"Leeds have a following in Cumbria anyway, and to have all their players up here gives us a great lead in to the week,"

He said. "It won't just be about the game, but what we can build around it, for our spectators and sponsors.

"With some of the things we are planning, everyone can share in it, not just those who turn up at the turnstiles.

"It's a chance for all the kids who don't get the opportunity to go to Super League games to see these guys in the flesh. I hope everyone takes advantage of it."

A dinner was being planned at Summergrove the night before the match, when fans would have got the chance to meet the Leeds stars.

The Rhinos secured a third successive top-flight title when they beat St Helens 18-10 in front of over 63,000 fans at Old Trafford.

Whitehaven hope to make an official announcement very soon.