



Women ready to build on platform of England glory

Patrick Kidd

The women's World Twenty20 gets under way today with two matches at Taunton, including England v India.

All the group games will be played at the Somerset ground, with the final to be held at Lord's on June 21, before the men's final.

For Ebony Rainford-Brent, the England opening batsman, a possible semi-final at the Brit Oval on June 19 would be a dream homecoming to a ground where she averages 50 in domestic cricket but has never played for her country.

She grew up just down the road in Herne Hill, attending a state school and stumbling into cricket by chance.

"It was quite random," she said. "I was in my last year in primary school and someone from the London Community Cricket Association came to do a hit-about. I was the only girl interested, so they sent me on a course at the Oval, where someone saw me and said, 'You have to go to Surrey trials.'

"A few years later I was in the junior England team. My secondary school never played cricket, so if it wasn't for that one-off opportunity, I wouldn't be here."

Ebony-Jewel Cora-Lee Camellia Rosamond, to give her full set of Christian names, hopes the World

How they line up

Pool A: South Africa, West Indies, Australia, New Zealand

Pool B: England, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

Twenty20 title will complete part two of a golden year for England.

It began with a 50-overs World Cup win in Australia in March and will conclude with their defence of the Ashes. That one-off Test, to be played in Worcester from July 10, presents new challenges for the younger players.

"I've never played a Test match before," Rainford-Brent said. "I've never batted for longer than a one-day game, but the fact we are playing only one Test makes it more special. There is only one chance to retain the Ashes. It's pressure, but if I wasn't up for that, I shouldn't be here."

Winning the World Cup has been life-changing for her. "Kids ask for autographs," she said. "It's definitely making an impact."