



HISTORY OF ROSES

The Roses Rivalry: A Legacy of Civic Pride, Competition and Community

The Roses competition between Lancaster University and the University of York, celebrates a rivalry that has been alive since the thirteenth century War of the Roses! The battle between either side of the Pennines forms the backbone of the Roses Tournament - the largest inter-varsity competition in Europe. This spirited contest, symbolised by the struggle between the red and white roses, has become a hallmark of student life at both universities.

The origins of this event trace back to 15 May, 1965, when Lord James of Rusholme, the then Vice-Chancellor of the University of York, proposed a boat race between the two institutions. Now, 60 years on, what began as a boat race has transformed to feature 140 fixtures across a weekend filled with events ranging from eSports to Ultimate Frisbee. The three day, Olympic-style tournament has continued to grow year on year. The tournament is not just about competition; it's a chance for students, alumni, staff and the local community to come together and celebrate their university pride.

Each year, the Roses event is brought to life with live coverage provided by a collaboration of student media outlets from both universities providing outstanding TV live streams, radio broadcasts and written pieces to keep everyone up to date. There are also many other societies who take part outside of the competitive fixtures, through a range of music & dance performances, arts workshops and more.

As we gear up for this year's 60th anniversary tournament, hosted at the University of York, the white rose teams will be hoping to return the trophy to home soil. The fixtures will start on Friday 2 May with a huge opening ceremony in the evening and run through until Sunday 4 May, when the overall trophy will be handed to the victorious university at the closing ceremony.

Whether you're team York or Lancaster, this is your chance to wear your colours proudly, support your team, and immerse yourself in a weekend filled with competitive spirit, camaraderie, and unforgettable memories. Get ready for the ultimate showdown to decide: are Roses red or white?

[Find out more about the history behind the War of the Roses.](#)