

PARKNEWS

the e-magazine for Rosslyn Park supporters - Wednesday 10th October, 2007

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PARK BAG FIRST HOME WIN

The important thing is that Park won. At times they played some really good rugby, though they will be disappointed that - 2 tries to the good against the first half wind - they didn't go on to grab a vital bonus point as well. They now face a difficult trip to Lydney and a very difficult home match against Cinderford.

But before then comes the small matter of playing Swanage & Wareham in the EDF Trophy. The Dorset side qualified to play in the Cup by winning their own County competition. They play in South-West 2 (East) where they enjoy a 100% record. Saturday will be arguably the biggest match in their history, and they are using it to formally open their new changing facilities.

The Cup always presents the opportunity for big men in small clubs to stand out and write a whole new page in their own history, and Park will need to be on their guard. Having said that, provided Park accord Swanage & Wareham the respect they deserve, there should only be one winner.

A very large, vocal crowd is anticipated so it would be great to get as many Park supporters there as possible. The ground is in Wareham. From the traffic lights at the crossroads in the centre of Wareham, go down Bestwall Road, and the ground is at the bottom on the left.

Alas no news on the 2nd XV this week: Manager Robert Boulwood only saw 10 minutes of the match before having to accompany Rhys Lapidus to hospital

Lucy Ross-McKenzie wins a line-out against London Welsh at Old Deer Park (report Page 3)



was that a nurse (male!) cut off his Rosslyn Park shirt!!!! Thankfully Rhys is ok, although on Sunday he was on liquid food and had a very sore head!"

The Slingbacks kept their 100% record going with a fine performance to defeat a much-improved London Welsh side at Old Deer Park on Sunday. They now face what could be a difficult trip to Chesham this Sunday.

Among the Club sides, the 4th XV won a hastily arranged match with Barnes Vets by 38-5, and the Bs beat a combined Mitcham 1st, 2nd & 3rd by 40-17, and on the back page we have a report on the Nomads win over Sutton & Epsom.



Michael Poppmeier shows the Ealing defence (and the referee!) a clean pair of heels as he goes in for his second try in two matches, against Ealing on Saturday - match report on Page 2 [Photo: David Whittam]

NO PARKNEWS FOR 2 WEEKS

Parknews will not be published for the next 2 weeks, due to the Editor being on holiday.

after a nasty looking injury. As Robert described it, "Rhys, playing 15, went in for a tackle against a rather large Esher player who caught his shoulder in Rhys' neck. He was knocked out for about thirty seconds. The St Johns Ambulance staff at Esher were great, as were the Paramedics, Ambulance staff and Kingston Hospital! Thankfully, six hours after the incident he was discharged with two painkillers, a broken tooth, very stiff, told not to play for two weeks (hmm!) . The most traumatic thing

This Week

Saturday 13th October

Swanage & Wareham v 1st XV
(Away - EDF Energy Trophy KO: 3:00 PM)

2nd XV v Blackheath
(Home, Canterbury League KO 3:00PM)

Basingstoke 2nd v Development XV
(Away, Canterbury League 3 KO TBA)

Wimbledon 2nd v Hatters
(Away, Canterbury League KO TBA)

London Nigerians 2nd v B XV
(Away KO TBA)

Old Hamptonians 2nd v Nomads
(Away KO TBA)

Richmond v Benchers
(Away KO TBA)
4's TBA

Sunday 14th October

Chesham v Slingbacks
(Away, League KO 2:30)

Chipstead v U-15 (Away)

Guildford v U-14 (Away)

London Irish v U-13 'A' (Away)

U-13 'B' v London Irish (Richmond Park)

Minis at Wimbledon 'B' Festival
KO TBA

PARK BREAK HOME DUCK

Rosslyn Park 21 Ealing 10 National 3 (South)

Park will be relieved to have grabbed their first home win of the season, but really should have punished Ealing more emphatically. Both sides engaged in the rugby equivalent of shadow boxing for the first 15 minutes, Park having an edge but neither side committing to the all-out attack that might breach the other's defences. That changed when a long kick from Richard Mahony took Park into the visitors' 22 for a lineout. The pack kept up the pressure and crashed over the line, Dewald Blom claiming the try.

Ealing tried to come back with two attacking line outs of their own, both brilliantly disrupted by Russ Forster, and they should have equalised when gifted a 3-man overlap on the left only to pass to Park's Chris Robson, who streaked away up the wing to relieve the situation.

Park had a clear advantage up front, but seemed unable to convert it into decent ball for the backs. Ealing were undone when their scrum half, James Duncan, tried to be too clever by half at the base of his own scrum and got scragged. Park broke away and Michael Poppmeier went in for his second try in two matches for the club, Mahony adding a conversion for 12-0.

Ealing were making a lot of errors, but Park were playing into a brisk wind and would have been happy to go into the interval having shut Ealing out. However, shortly before half time Park conceded a penalty on their own 10 metre line and stupidly talked back to the referee to advance it 10 metres and present Ealing stand off Ben Ward with an unmissable penalty. At least Park atoned for this with the last kick of the half, a Mahony special, a penalty into the wind from way out on the left which sent Park into the interval with a 15 point cushion and the wind in their favour in the second half.

The home side were soon taking the match to Ealing, attacking in waves with the forwards time and again recycling the ball and driving the visitors backwards. Eventually the ball came back to Mahony whose attempt at a drop goal narrowly missed. From the drop out, Mahony again received the ball, but this time his attempt to kick for position saw the ball dribble over the dead ball line, and it was a scrum to Ealing close to half way.

Ealing nearly made something of that but were penalised for not releasing and back swept Park, the pack again driving the visitors remorselessly backwards to earn a penalty in front of the posts. However, simple indiscipline from Blom saw the penalty reversed. Ealing nearly extracted a heavy price, breaking up-field they earned a penalty of their own. Fifteen points in arrears, they needed a try and kicked to the corner but the home defence were equal to the situation.

Back came Park, and the pack emphasised their superiority by driving Ealing right back over the ball at their own scrum. Soon they were rewarded with another kickable penalty, the referee very harshly sending the Ealing flanker to the sin bin. Many felt that Mahony should go all out for the bonus point against reduced opponents by kicking to the corner to maintain the forward pressure, but the skipper was of more conservative turn of mind and took the 3 points on offer for 21-3.

A man short, Ealing tried to play their rugby in Park's half and were rewarded with a penalty, the referee atoning for his previous decision by sending Park prop Tim Heenan to the bin for equally mystifying reasons. Ealing were able to turn the situation to their advantage and Ward hopped in for a try he converted himself to reduce the arrears to 21-10.

During seemingly interminable injury time Park huffed and puffed but did not really look like scoring. They will be pleased to have recorded a first home win of the season, but they really should have built on their first half showing to bring up their first 4-try bonus point as well.

Park: R Jackson; Robson, Swords, Paul, Traynor; Mahony; McCluggage; M Jackson; Huggett, Blemings, Blom (Heenan); Poppmeier, Forster; Gates, Underwood (Daw, safety), Count (Jones).

Park scorers: Blom (T), Poppmeier (T), Mahony (3P, C).

PHOTOS FROM EALING

Top to bottom: Dewald Blom emerges as the scorer, Park having driven over; (middle) Jon Underwood attacks with Mike Count and Michael Poppmeier in support, and (bottom) Adam Gates in the line-out. [Photos by David Whittam]



SLINGBACKS JUST TOO GOOD

London Welsh 5 Rosslyn Park Slingbacks 12 Champions League 1 SE

by Alex Burbridge

Park were riding high after their victory over Wasps IIs but would the Welsh be singing today? Park were pumped up and keen to come away with another win, but Welsh also looked like a well drilled side and looked confident as they ran out. London Welsh kicked off and Julia at 2 collected it safely. However possession soon turned and Park had to counter some good attacking runs by the Welsh 9. Park though showed their dangerous side early on with some strong running, notably by number 7 Lou Jarman and the back line, but Park were bedevilled by some unforced errors. A series of knock ons hampered any continuity in play and Park seemed a little off the pace. Welsh were strong in their forwards play and the number 8 troubled the Park defence, but some strong tackling stopped the Welsh attack.

Sherry, playing 10 made good use of the boot probing the Welsh territory but the Welsh 15 was difficult to wrong foot. Park often went in high with the ball and mauling seemed to be the tactic of the day. Possession switched fast and often. But again Park put in strong runs, Jo A (playing loose head prop) making the yards from an inside pass from Milo at 13. Park recycled and tried to force a way through the middle, Truck at 12 showing customary strength. A war of attrition had set in as Park and Welsh matched attacks and counter attacks. Despite spending some time in Welsh territory Park couldn't seem to find a way through. Suddenly Milo found space out to the left, and a scything run created an opportunity for Beef out on the left wing. She was cut down a metre from the try line and an inside pass to try and keep play alive found a Welsh player. The supporters, who were on their feet having sensed a scoring opportunity, sat heavily down again. They were feeling Park's frustration.

Park were now playing with more confidence and from a lineout deep in the Welsh half, Truck again forced a path through the middle. Sherry passed to Milo who flipped out a pass to Terangi, (debuting at 11) but a knock on and it was a Welsh scrum. Jo P made yards but was brought down away from support and gave a penalty when she had to hold on.

The Welsh came back at Park and Sherry put in a massive tackle on the Welsh 8. However Welsh won the maul. Sherry again puts in the big hits, stopping the Welsh 13 in her tracks. Welsh try the kick but Milo was safely under it. Sherry threatens the Welsh line, but still Park can't find a way through! Another sortie by the Welsh and again Sherry shows her tackling presence in midfield and wins Park a penalty for the Welsh holding on. Jo P has a storming run and the ball works out to Beef who is held up on the wing. Park seem to have had a lapse in organisation and Welsh are winning the maul battle. In the heat of the game Sherry suffers a high tackle and Welsh are cautioned.

The game is dominated by mauling and scrums, and possession seesaws but then a period of Park pressure on the Welsh line sees Sherry charge down a Welsh kick and gathering possession she is held up on the try line! Sherry and Beef try again but there is another period of sustained pressure from the Welsh. The mauling is still dominating the contact area! Terangi, new to the wing, is frustrated when a strong run ends in a knock on.

Then Jo P collects the ball on the left wing and passes off to Sherry who makes a brilliant dodging run right through the Welsh lines. She fails to score but the Welsh 8 is cautioned again. Lou Jarman runs through and passes to Shorty but Park are penalised for crossing. Beef's tackle forces a knock on. But still Park can't score! The crowd are desperate to see a Park try!

Another run through the back line ends in a forward pass to Terangi who looks increasingly dangerous. Charl, number 5, does a great run but is halted by a lack of support. Terangi again makes yards but a knock on stops her. The Welsh win a messy line out but Sherry gets in the middle of the ensuing ruck to win ball. Park clear and Terangi chases down the Welsh 15. Park are rewarded with a penalty for hands in the ruck. The ball comes out to Sherry who dummies and makes a storming run to score right under the Welsh posts. Rae (15) converts to make it 7 nil to Park on the stroke of half time. Park have points on the board but the Welsh aren't down yet.



The Park front row look suitably mean at Old Deer Park on Sunday, where they consistently out-scrummaged London Welsh.

Park make a strong start in the second half putting in hard tackles against a determined Welsh side. There is a trade off in penalties and errors. Shorty kicks well but the Welsh full back on the ball. A Park scrum and Terangi again blasts down the wing but Park still can't break through despite strong runs notably by Jo P and Truck. Penalties again come Park's way and their rucking improves with some hard hits going in. A Welsh kick only finds Beef. Sherry again makes some huge tackles. Rae kicks for territory from a penalty and makes immense ground. The line out finds Lucy R M easily. Rae tries to go inside but it's Beef who picks up and storms through to touch down on the left wing. The conversion falls short but it's 12 nil to Park.

Park attack again from the off, with a great kick from Sherry and Terangi charges down to force the Welsh to clear. Sherry takes it on the full but a knock on halts what could have been another scoring chance. Asked to comment my Mum says 'it's terribly exciting' and who could fail to agree?

Park seem to have more confidence, and dig in. There are more big tackles but it's not enough to stop the Welsh 8, who's looked threatening for much of the game, going over. 12, 5 to Park.

Potter, Hazel and Merthyr (Australian judo champion debuting for Park at 7) come on to add some fresh impetus to a hard working pack. Lucy R M charges down a clearance kick close to the Welsh line. Sherry picks up the ball who pops to Jo P and she makes ground. There is some disorganisation in Park and Welsh are still putting the pressure on with the Welsh 9 exploiting any space she can find. Sherry makes a great break but Park knock on.

Becks comes in on the wing for Terangi and shows good pace but still there are no breakthroughs. Then Park dig deep and take possession; Sherry has a half break, Jo P takes the off load and Truck goes through to touch down under the posts. But even as the supporters are cheering the referee calls a forward pass and the try is disallowed. Rae makes a darting run which ends in a maul but Sherry sees the space and passes out to Beef who is stopped just short of the try line. A tense moment as Welsh clear to empty space behind the Park defence but Milo chases back to secure the ball. Sherry again finds space down the right wing but is tackled high by the Welsh 8 who receives a yellow card.

Park find the gaps but can't break through enough to score again. A knock on by Park but it's the final whistle and Park take the win. It was a hard fought game and victory and at times it felt as tense as watching England v Australia in the recent world cup quarter finals! Beef felt Park had consumed their fair share of Welsh rarebit. This week Park take on Chesham away.

NATIONAL 3 SOUTH NEWS

A potentially crucial weekend at the top of the table: those of us who'd already mentally engraved "London Scottish" on the League winners' trophy were forced to reconsider after they lost at Canterbury. Mounts Bay now go top after piling on 55 points at Clifton and underlining what we thought at the time: it was a very good Park performance at Penzance recently, and indeed at home to Canterbury wasn't bad either. Cinderford kept up the pressure with an away win at Barking.

Park now face two more very difficult matches: away to Lydney and home to Cinderford. By that time we shall have played 8 matches and only one of them - away to Clifton - will have been against a team not in the top half of the League. We have some - on paper at least - easier matches to come. But to take advantage of that we really do need to learn how to damage teams by turning forward pressure into points in order to pick up those crucial bonus points.

Barking 5 Cinderford 33

Barking: Try: Flannery (24).

Cinderford: Tries: McNeil (1), Hodges (8), Copsey (63), Roberts (68), Evans (76). Cons: Roberts 4.

Cinderford make it five wins out of six as they return to winning ways with this win away at struggling Barking. Cinderford made a great start to the match and were 14-0 ahead after nine minutes with tries from flankers Chris McNeil and Jed Hooper and Tristan Roberts converted for 14-0. Barking did manage to get over the visitors try line when centre Sean Flannery going over for an unconverted try. In the second half it was scoreless in the third quarter before the match went to uncontested scrums for a 10 minute period with Barking losing a front row player to the bin and all their replacements used. Tries from winger James Copsey, Fly half Roberts and No 8 George Evans saw the visitors home to the win and the four try bonus point.

Dings Crusaders 13 Lydney 10

Dings: Try: Panoho (30). Con: Gasson. Pens: Gasson 2 (10, 52)

Lydney: Try: Jones (59). Con: Westall. Pen: Westall (7).

Dings were pushed all the way as Lydney went down to a third straight away defeat of the season. Adam Westall kicked the visitors ahead on seven minutes with a penalty goal. Three minutes later and the home side were level when Waylon Gasson put over a penalty for Dings. On the half hour mark they went ahead when Mike Panoho playing in the 2nd row went over and Gasson converted for a 10-3 lead which was the way it stayed till half time. 12 minutes into the 2nd half and Dings went 13-3 clear with a second Gasson penalty goal. Just before the hour mark Lydney were over the home line with fly half Craig Jones going over and Westall converted for 13-10 going into the 4th quarter. That though was scoreless as Dings took the win and moved into sixth place in the table.

Clifton 19 Mounts Bay 55

Clifton: Tries: Trinick (43), Lambert (55), Viol (60). Cons S Kent 2.

Mounts Bay: Tries: Mosey (7), Harris 2 (13, 57), Cheung (26), Burnett (33), Stevens (46), Jarvis (66), Andrew (73). Cons: Jarvis 6. Pen: Jarvis (3).

Mounts Bay returned to the top of the National Three League table after this away win at Clifton running in eight tries too three. Fly half Lee Jarvis put the Bay ahead on three minutes with a penalty goal and when he converted a try from full back Tim Mosey, his 5th of the season, and they were 10-0 ahead. Further tries from winger Will

Harris, centre Andrew Cheung Fook and No 8 Nick Burnett saw them go into a 27-0 lead after half an hour and secure the try bonus point which they took into the half time break. Clifton got the first score of the second half as debut winger Rob Trinick went over and Sam Kent doing the kicking in the absence of their point's machine John Barnes put over the conversion. Three minutes later and Bay were over for a 5th try as prop Stevens went over and Jarvis was again on target. Flanker Tom Lambert got the second Clifton not long after but just before the hour mark Harris went over, for his 5th try in two matches, and Bay were 41-12 ahead. In the final quarter Clifton got a try and Bay went over for two more and they passed the 50 point mark. Jarvis kicked 15 points to move onto 99 for the season and 43 clear of the next highest scorer in the division.

Canterbury 17 London Scottish 14

Canterbury: Try: Burgess (39). Pens: Rasch 3 (20, 27, 46). DG: Rasch (65).

Scottish: Try: Petzer (75). Pens: Cholewa 3 (24, 31, 63).

Canterbury moved into 2nd place in the table after this excellent home win over the previously unbeaten London Scottish. The home side were first on the scoreboard when fly half Sam Rasch put over a 20th minute penalty goal but four minutes later it was 3-3 after Lee Cholewa replied for Scottish. Rasch and Cholewa exchanged penalty goals but just before the break the home side went over for the games opening try as centre Ian Burgess touched down for an 11-6 lead. Rasch and Cholewa again exchanged penalty goal before a Rasch drop goal made it 17-9 after 65 minutes.

The Scottish did finally make it over the home line when right wing Anton Petzer touched down but the conversion was missed and they were three points with five minutes remaining. It was though the end of the scoring and Scottish dropped to 4th in the table.

Bridgwater 46 North Walsham 0

Bridgwater: Tries: Elisara (12), Edwards 2 (18, 49), Penalty try (35), Osborne (55, 79). Cons: Wulff 5. Pens: Wulff 2 (16, 30)

Bridgwater & Albion picked up their third win of the season with this comprehensive win over North Walsham who slip to a fifth straight defeat of the season after their opening day win. It was 11 minutes before the first Albion try as centre Tito Elisara went over for a try and Christian Wulff converted. Wulff added a penalty goal before converting an 18th minute try from wing John Edwards for 17-0. He added a second penalty goal before converting a penalty try as Albion went in 27-0 ahead at the break. Nine minutes into the 2nd half and they had the try bonus point in the bag as Edwards completed a double. The last two tries came from full back Sam Osborne and Wulff converted them both to round off the win.

Havant 32 Luton 7

Havant: Tries: Raubenheimer 2 (19, 28), Wells (40), Randle (49), Stapleton (80). Cons: Ngapaku 2. Pen: Knowles (79).

Luton: Try: Rudgard (72). Con: Gray.

Both sides went into the match with just one win each and were in need of a 2nd win to move up the table. Havant made the better start and were 19-0 ahead at the break. No 8 Dylan Raubenheimer got the opening two tries for Havant and Pucs Ngapaku added a conversion to the second try to make it 12-0 after 28 minutes. With half time approaching they went 19-0 ahead with a try from prop Tom Wells and a Ngapaku conversion. Nine minutes into the 2nd half they had the four try bonus point as prop Karl Randle went over for 24-0. Luton went

Current League Table – National 3 South

	Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	4T	7L	Pts	
1	Mounts Bay	6	6	0	0	249	93	156	5	0	29	minutes through
2	Canterbury	6	6	0	0	179	92	87	3	0	27	placement prop
3	Cinderford	6	5	0	1	223	67	156	4	1	25	and Mark Gray
4	London Scottish	6	5	0	1	187	63	124	4	1	25	converted. It
5	Lydney	6	3	0	3	112	74	38	2	2	16	was Havant
6	Dings Crusaders	6	3	0	3	108	110	-2	1	2	15	who had the
7	Ealing	6	2	1	3	144	124	20	3	1	14	last word as Jon
8	Bridgwater & Albion	6	3	0	3	120	145	-25	1	0	13	Knowles added
9	Havant	6	2	0	4	107	138	-31	1	1	10	a penalty goal
10	Rosslyn Park	6	2	0	4	117	140	-23	0	1	9	and then Full
11	Barking	6	1	1	4	84	179	-95	0	1	7	Back Stephen
12	Luton	6	1	0	5	86	194	-108	1	1	6	Stapleton went
13	Clifton	6	1	0	5	100	217	-117	0	1	5	over to wrap up
14	North Walsham	6	1	0	5	56	236	-180	1	0	5	the win.

THE SHERRY & SHORTY SHOW



Sherry (left) and Shorty after victory over London Welsh

The best half backs come in pairs. That is certainly the case with the Slingbacks' all-Canadian pairing of Sherry Lake and Jenny 'Shorty' Matheson. With skipper Kate Landells incurring a long-term injury, Sherry has slipped into the captaincy and the scrum half spot has been taken by Shorty. The result is an almost telepathic understanding that is a joy to watch. They would be the first to assert that they would be nothing without the forwards to win good ball up front and the backs to run from behind, but the link they provide is sheer class.

Both are teachers. Sherry - who may only be 5'5", but towers 7" above her half back partner - first came to the UK to teach and travel, and Park were the first side to respond to her enquiries. She was already an established star with the club when Shorty followed



Shorty flings out a diving pass against London Welsh

in her footsteps. They are now flat mates and buddies, but it wasn't always like that!

A player with Halifax RFC, Nova Scotia, Queen's University, St Mary's Uni and the Nova Scotia Provincial Team, Sherry received MVP in grades 11 and 12 in high school, MVP at Saint Mary's in 2000-2003, and for Halifax in 2004 and was nominated all-star in years 2000-2005. She said, "We've been playing rugby against each other starting in University, and although we didn't like each other too much in those years, we put those differences aside when we began playing together for our Provincial Team in 2004, in the 9-10 positions, and we realized the other wasn't so bad after all!! Since then, we've been really good friends". She started in the sport at 16 years old in high school. "I remember watching a game and thinking how much fun it looked", she said, "and I really wanted to know the rules. When I played my first game and made my first hit, I knew that this was the sport for me".

Shorty played for Halifax Tars, and also played soccer, volleyball, hockey, track & field and softball. She decided to try out Rugby when it was introduced for women in her grade 10 year, playing at Rugby Canada National Festival in 2004 and 2005 with Nova Scotia, and in 2006 with Newfoundland. She also played in Canadian Inter-sport (Canadian University National Championships) with St. Francis Xavier in 2002 and 2003. Among her honours are MVP in grades 11 & 12, Rookie of the Year at STFX in 2001, Allstar in 2001 in the AUS,

Rookie of year for Tars in 2003 and MVP for Tars in 2005.

Commenting on the best moment of her career so far, Shorty mentioned "Winning the Atlantic University Sport Championships each year I played at STFX University and travelling to CIS to compete at Nationals. One moment in particular (that Sherry hates) - was playing against her team in the AUS final in 2002 - score: 10-10... seconds left and they receive a penalty in their 22. I kicked the penalty for 13-10 win! I also enjoyed the 2005 Nationals - best tournament of high quality rugby I've played - and the 2002 tour to England and Wales with STFXU girls. The worst moment was breaking my collar bone last year in Plymouth and being out for a season!!! Now have metal in my body!!"

Sherry recalls, "The summer of 2005 with my Halifax team. It was such a whirlwind of a summer with training, games and social events that it's hard to pinpoint what the best part actually was (although beating the Tars- Shorty's team- in the final that year would be somewhere at the top!). But she confirms, "My worst memory is probably Shorty's best. We had beaten X twice in the season and lost to them in the final, due to a last minute penalty kick by Shorty herself to make the score 13-10. Still brings back bitter feelings".

Both have noted a difference in the structure of Women's rugby in this country. Shorty explained, "There are more women playing at the Club level across England and various levels compared to Canada. Rugby in Canada is largely based on university and provincial programs which stem from high school teams. Rugby is becoming more popular amongst high school girls, which is now making it more competitive across the country. Because of restrictions with weather - it is more difficult to have a proper club season in Canada. Basically the year goes as follows with seasons: High School Season in Spring, Club / Provincial & Rugby Canada National Festival in the Summer, University Season in the Fall".



Sherry about to leave a Welsh defender clutching thin air

Rugby is very important in both their lives. Sherry commented, "I love the game itself for its physicality and also the technical aspect of it. I think the sport is a great avenue for aggression and it is such a team sport. Most of my best friends were / are fellow players and there's just something special about the experiences you share on and off the field. I very much support the development of women's rugby, for all these reasons, and have coached a couple of high school teams and the U19 Provincial Team in hopes of instilling the love of rugby in the younger generations". Shorty added, "When I broke my collar bone last season and was off sport for almost a full year - it was extremely depressing. Very excited to be back in the game and getting back to my normal rugby life".

Both are enjoying living in London and playing for Rosslyn Park. "Park is absolutely amazing. They have been so welcoming since day 1, and I couldn't have asked for a greater bunch of women to play with. There is so much heart and determination on the pitch, and the socials afterwards aren't so bad either", enthused Sherry, her mate adding, "It's great. Team atmosphere is very welcoming and Danny has gone out of his way to make sure I have recovered and have adequate training for my return to rugby".

Shorty says that her future plans are uncertain, but that she hopes to stay in the UK for at least one more year. However, Sherry may be working to shorter deadlines, "I am planning to return to Canada around Christmas, probably for good. This has been a great experience, and I've met so many great people, but home is home, and I miss my family and friends too much to stay here for too long".

Lets hope that she is open to persuasion. But just in case, you really should go along and watch the Slingbacks next home league match against Aylesford at 2:30 on 28th October. Admission is free, you'll see some very talented players in action - and definitely catch the Sherry & Shorty Show while it's still in town. It's a class act.

NOMADS PUT SHAKY START BEHIND THEM

Sutton & Epsom 19 Park Nomads 26

Ed Bracken

We're certainly not a team that likes to do things the easy way - but then again, easy is boring.

You could tell from one look around the faces in the huddle before the game that everyone, without exception, would rather have been anywhere else, and given how we started we might as well have been. In every game this season we've had 15 minutes of slumber, and this week it came in the first 15 minutes, with the result that we were soon 19-0 down and playing like total [insert non-family friendly word]. However, following this gentle boot up the ring-piece, we finally turned up and started playing, and sure enough the gaps began to appear. Stu started the fight-back with a long, snaking run through half the oppo defence, and following solid driving from the forwards, a quick change of direction from the returning Matt at 9 opened the space for Pogo to produce the sort of simple, effective pass that most of the outside backs otherwise failed to produce all afternoon to put Alex over for a tidy finish. Despite playing up the hill and against the wind, it was now one-way traffic. With Jamie, Bill and Nick W starting to do a Sheridan in the scrum, Moff (who was surprisingly quiet about his recent trip to France...) winning good ball in the line-out and several surging runs from Barr and the rampaging Dale, we got over again to further reduce the deficit before half-time: 19-14.

As so accurately pointed out by returning Nomad Simon Young (on loan from the 2's) at half-time, we were producing some good individual performances but there was very little of the team display that has served us so well so far this season, but with the hill and wind now behind us we set out to complete the come-back. Scott capped an excellent all-round display with a well worked try after being set up perfectly by Woody and Martin. However, the conversion sailed just wide, Mortlock-style, to leave it 19-19 and, unlike the other Home Nations (ahem), everything still to play for.... Andrew made a couple of his customary lively dashes down the left wing, Barr got stopped just short by the pie-eating full back and after increasing pressure, Barr and Matt produced the classic 8/9 pick-up down the blindside from a scrum and the fight-back was finished.

Overall, very satisfying to come back after such a load of b*llcks at the beginning. If we start like that against a better side, we'll get creamed, so we need to get that sorted. But otherwise a job well done in the end.

Man of the match: Matt T made a lively return (and finally broke his personal hoodoo on the team) and Scott had a blinder in his first ever appearance in the pack, but the award this week goes to Nick Mc for his tireless work behind the scenes and also the moment of the match: taking an outstanding catch despite being about to be lynched by half the oppo pack after the restart at 19-19 - it's moments like those that set the standard.

Nomads: 1 Jamie (Dale), 2 Pogo, 3 Bill, 4 Nick Mc, 5 Moff, 6 Nick W, 7 Scott, 8 Barr, 9 Matt T, 10 Woody, 11 Andrew, 12 Alex, 13 Martin (Simon Young), 14 Ed, 15 Stu. **Tries:** Alex, Scott, Ed 2.

YOUTH LEAGUE SEASON KICKS OFF

The U13s kick off their new life in the Surrey Leagues against the mighty London Irish on Sunday. The A team Rhinos play away and the B Stags, scorers of 12 tries in their unbeaten pre-season, entertain the Irish in Richmond Park. The U14s and u15s travel to Guildford and Chipstead. Apart from the U13s all Youth age groups are still recruiting players, so if you know anyone who wants to play, please contact youth@rosslynpark.co.uk or call Steve Cooper on 07946 531139.

Be a referee for FREE

Park and the RFU are planning to hold a refing course at the Club. This will give you a nationally recognised NELRA qualification and enable you to ref games for Mini, Youth and Social sides. Dates are not fixed yet, but if you are interested, please contact Steve Cooper on 07946 531139 or email youth@rosslynpark.co.uk .

If you think you know better than most refs, come and prove it by getting qualified and helping the Club. It's good exercise for the mind and body and teams (usually) buy the ref a pint afterwards.

MINI RUGBY OFF TO A FLIER

The Minis are half way through the autumn festival season and already there have been many fantastic performances writes Tom Blake.

For some reason Park Minis are not the largest breed but are usually highly skilful and very fast. As a result, Park teams tend to play open, running rugby which involves every team member. Occasionally we meet teams who have clearly had an extra Shredded Wheat or two and the physical challenge is immense. But Park Minis tackle well and never shirk the challenge; and once they get the ball they are usually too quick for their opposition.



Rosslyn Park Under 10s

In the Under 12 and Under 10 finals last Sunday, under the shadow of Windsor Castle, this summed up exactly the difference between Park and their opposition. Every move of the Redingensian Under 10s involved one giant lad who needed at least two men to bring him down – but when Donnie Masters's side won possession they always threatened and ended deserved 15-5 winners. Coached by Gerry Manley, the Under 12s had the most physical contest of their lives against Richmond (yes – the rivalry is going strong): on a small pitch which prevented Park from showing their superiority out wide, the boys had to scrap for every yard. The 5-5 result was a fair reflection of play and you could see that the boys had given everything at the end of a long day.

Elsewhere at Windsor all other age groups performed well but we must mention the efforts of the Under 7s who could be seen to improve every game on their first ever festival.

The previous week, Park was able to show its strength in depth at the Chobham B Festival. Once again, the Under 12s (Middlesex champions in the past two years) were magnificent, securing the trophy with a 21-0 win over their closest rivals, Chobham. The Under 11s had a close encounter with Bermuda (!) and narrowly failed to win the Plate while the 8s, 9s and 10s all had notable wins. Stern tests await over the coming weeks at festivals at Wimbledon, Sutton & Epsom and Cobham but there is no doubt that Park will be a match for anyone.

With the support of Steve Kearns and Shaun Justice, the Minis are building ever more ties with the rest of the club. Several 1st XV players are now sponsored by Minis age groups and we look forward to seeing them train with us during the season. Curtain raiser games on the main pitch before 1st XV games have been very popular (and helpful to bar takings). And we issue a challenge to all members to join us at our Curry & Quiz Night on Friday November 16th at the clubhouse.



Rosslyn Park Under-12s