

# PARKNEWS



The E-magazine for Rosslyn Park supporters Monday 23rd November 2009 - Issue 132

## Shaun plots against his former Club

Welcome to Parknews. A smaller and earlier edition this week, as there were few games last weekend and the Editor is otherwise engaged for the rest of this week on matters concerning a far smaller ball passing over a net.

The focus was on Richmond Park last weekend with two very different - but both vastly entertaining - matches. On Saturday the 2s were very impressive against a very strong Henley Hawks side, winning by 26-13 (report page 2). What was particularly gratifying was to see so many products of our own youth set up playing key roles. It must be immensely encouraging for our existing Mini and Youth players to see these youngsters already knocking on the door of National League rugby. It is also a great tribute to the standard of coaching throughout the club.

On Sunday the Slingbacks took over, pitting their running skills against a physically stronger Romford & Gidea Park side (report page 3). Playing against a strong second half wind, having lost two key players to injury it was really inspiring to see the sheer selfless team spirit that allowed the Park girls to hang on for a 7-5 victory. Their tackling, and the ability to get up and do it again when already digging deep was really amazing. A real pity more people didn't brave the elements to watch it - it was a performance to be really proud of.

### This weekend

On Saturday, after the dress rehearsal involving the 2nd Xvs last weekend, the 1sts are at home to Henley Hawks, kicking off at 2:30PM. Henley had financial difficulties hanging over them and made a poor start to the season, but their form has improved of late. They are climbing the table, and only the top 5 sides have a better points difference. It will be a far from easy match and it goes without saying that your vocal support would be very much appreciated by the players. Just to add a bit of spice, Henley are of course the previous club of Shaun Justice, Adam Gates and Chris Simmons.

The club sides matches shown in the panel on the right are correct at the time of going to press. However, Will Thorogood has yet to hear from all skippers that they are definitely fielding sides, so if there's one you are particularly interested in please do check first.

### Sunday

On Sunday the Slingbacks have a tough match away to Wasos 2s at the main Wasps training ground in Twyford Avenue, Acton. They would, of course, welcome as much vocal support as we can muster. The match kicks off at 2:00PM and the ground is a short walk from Ealing Common tube station, turning right out of the station, across the road, left along Twyford Avenue and the ground is about 200 metres along on your right.

### Lost property

One of our loyal members lost a Nokia mobile phone last Saturday week at the Shelford (H) game. The phone itself is not so much of a problem however there was some footage on the camera of his five day old new born child which for obvious reasons is of huge sentimental value to him and his family. Please if anyone can help /continued back page...



Is that Doug Rodman at the back of the ineout for the 2s against Henley? It was certainly father, Steve, behind the camera!

**Saturday 21st November**

### 1st XV v Henley Hawks

Home, National 2 South  
KO 2:30

2nd XV v London Scottish 2nd  
Richmond Park, KO TBA

Hatters v Haywards Heath 2nd  
RugbyTech Shield 4  
Richmond Park: KO 2:30

### Hammersmith & Fulham 2s v 4th XV

Middlesex Merit 1, Away, KO TBA

### Chiswick 2 v B XV

Middlesex Merit 2, Away, KO TBA

### Grasshoppers 3 v Nomads

Middlesex Merit 3, Away, KO TBA

**Sunday 29th November**

### Wasps II v Slingbacks

Championship 2

Away: KO 2:00PM

### Kilburn Cosmos v Slingbacks Too

League: Away

(Fixture to be confirmed)

*The Clubhouse is open to Members and Supporters on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Why not come down and enjoy a social drink, watch the players train and catch up with the gossip?*

# 2s IMPRESS

## Park 2<sup>nd</sup> 26

## Henley Hawks 2<sup>nd</sup> 13

### Friendly Match

The Hawks second-string are running away with Division 2 of the Rugby Tech Shield and were looking for some decent opposition, thus this Friendly on an otherwise blank Saturday was good business all round.

Both sides provided a very entertaining match for the small crowd in a wind-swept Richmond Park. With the strong wind in their favour, Henley had the better of the early exchanges and Park were forced to – and did – defend well. When Park broke, they looked dangerous but such was the wind that, even close to their own line, the visitors could easily belt the ball back into the Park 22. Thus it was a requirement for Park to deploy a couple of backs far deeper than usual to mop up these kicks without surrendering too much territory.



However, it was Park who drew first blood when the excellent Tom Cuff-Burnett spotted a half chance and the young scrum half did not hesitate to dart through the gap, Rhys Gosling's conversion making it 7-0 after 10 minutes.

Henley came back and, awarded a penalty 40 metres out, took the opportunity to reduce the arrears to 7-3. Park replied with a good run through the middle by full-back Leon Driscoll but he was pinged for not releasing. Another good sniping run from Cuff-Burnett almost bore fruit, but the disadvantage his side were labouring under was illustrated when the cross-field clearance kick that looked nothing special bounced into touch deep in the Park 22.

Park's backs were beginning to look a different class, but that was in no small measure due to some superb work by a predominantly young pack, led by the inimitable Kearnsy, who maintained a running commentary for the benefit of his colleagues throughout. His two young props, Italian signing Gino Corradi and Brett Williams, matched two far more experienced opponents. Jon Lake and Adam Slade did a great job in the second row. Doug Rodman was everywhere from number 8 while two young flankers, Charlie Thompson and Craig Nightingale won more than their share of 50 / 50 balls and a few 40 / 60 ones.



Behind the pack, Cuff-Burnett and Gosling were always looking to deploy their deadly three-quarters. Gosling's kicking from hand – against a formidable wind – was good enough to keep the opposing defenders honest. How important

a factor this was did not become apparent until the second half when Henley twice bore the consequences of not doing the same thing.

But Park were under big pressure, defending well and eventually they gained relief by forcing a penalty. They knocked on, frustratingly, from their quick tap but then dug deep and won the scrum against the head. But something had to give and eventually Henley were able to spread the ball across to the left and barrel over for 8-7.

Park's reply was almost instant and straight out of the top drawer. Doug Rodman won the ball in midfield and gave a pass to send Billy O'Driscoll haring through the middle and when he ran out of space James Pedder was in exactly the right place in support to accept a perfect pass and finish it off.

### Match Photos

Steve Rodman takes over as photographer this week. Top left, Paul Unseld sprints away to score; bottom left Tom Cuff-Burnett gets ready to pounce at the scrum and, below, that looks like Nick Harlock with the ball

Young Ant Hitchcock on the right wing (a player of immense promise, who can be a more than useful fly half) had a superb run up the right but couldn't quite make the line. The consensus on the touchline before the start was that the wind was worth at least 15 points, so turning round with a 14-8 advantage represented a good reward for 40 minutes hard labour.

However, Henley brought on a handful of better players after the interval (if they weren't 1<sup>st</sup> XV regulars then our Firsts are in for a hard time this weekend!) and the wind dropped considerably. Henley made a very smart start, missed a wide penalty but were making the going. They were undone by a superb individual try out of nothing by Paul Unseld that would have been worth going a long way to see.

He got onto the ball well into Henley territory and nothing looked on until he found a way past three defenders and then used his blistering pace, backing himself to beat the last defender with a 5 metre handicap. Rhys Gosling added a conversion for 21-3 after 51 minutes. At this point an old Park favourite, Nick Harlock, came on for a run out in place of Leon Driscoll.



The visitors returned to the attack and looked to be getting on top, but again Park found the lethal counter-punch. This time it was James Pedder who received the ball on the left; he did not hesitate, pinned back his ears and made for the line, his momentum taking him over in the tackle. Gosling could not quite make the conversion, but that was 26-8 after 56 minutes.

The visitors may have been shaken to concede two such tries, but it did not knock them out of their stride. They continued to attack and a move across the field from left to right saw them grab a try in the corner for 26 – 13. At this point Adam Harris came on for the injured Craig Nightingale.

However, Park were clearly determined not to allow them back into things and the forwards asserted themselves with a massive drive to the line. The ball was whipped across the middle and Gosling almost put Pedder in but the defence was good enough to stop him grounding it.

Park almost gifted Henley an interception try, but the receiver didn't react or run quickly enough. The visitors finished with a massive attack which saw Pedder yellow-carded for his efforts, but his 14 mates held out magnificently for the last few minutes. There is some real young talent here, several of the players having developed through our own Youth system, something for which Park's coaches – from Mini level upwards – should take great credit.

We also saw another possible future star in the teenage referee allocated to the match. It never looked like getting out of his control and he refereed strictly but sympathetically, playing intelligent advantage throughout.

**Park:** Driscoll (Harlock); Hitchcock, Pedder, O'Driscoll, Unseld; Gosling; Cuff-Burnett; Corradi, Kearns, Williams; Slade, Lake; Thompson, Nightingale (Harris), Rodman.

**Park scorers:** Pedder (2T), Cuff-Burnett (T), Unseld (T), Gosling (3C).

# SLINGBACKS WIN THE HARD WAY

## Slingbacks 7

### Romford & Gidea Park 5

#### Championship 2

Severe winds in Richmond Park made great difficulties for both sides, but it is probably fair to say that the Slingbacks' quick passing game was affected more than Romford's more physical approach. With the wind strongly behind them in the first half, the Park girls found passes eluding their outstretched fingers – but there was also some poor handling. It stopped them fully exploiting the advantage they had with the wind.

Park were first on the attack, gained an attacking lineout but Romford defended successfully, gained themselves a scrum and were then gifted 10 metres quite unnecessarily. Laura Wilkinson led a great counter-attack, but Tanya Chainey on the left wing was closed down as soon as she received the ball. Park were playing some good rugby but were consistently let down by handling errors.

A great run through from Terangi Maeva opened the defence and fly half Gaida Erlano, in support, was able to send in Tanya Chainey at the left corner, and the winger had the presence of mind to come round behind the uprights when not tackled. Gaido Erlano's boot made it 7-0.

Romford came driving back at Park. It was all battering ram stuff, which probably their correct tactic in the conditions. Park defended heroically, won the ball only for the clearance kick to bounce in-goal off a Romford player for a panicked touchdown and 5-metre scrum.

The Slingbacks came back with a great attack up the left, featuring Lou Potter, switched the ball across and Terangi Maeva had another good run. Park got the ball to the line but were penalised for not releasing. Romford tried to run their way out of trouble but the Slingbacks put in some great tackles, knocking their larger opponents backwards.

When Romford hoisted a dangerous kick Laura Wilkinson caught it in textbook fashion and ran through to threaten the visitors' line, only for the move to end with a forward pass. Laura was incredible, one moment launching ferocious tackles, the next embarking on dangerous runs; she seemed to be everywhere.

Towards the end of the half Romford forced Park into all-out defence, and it was a massive blow to Park when Terangi Maeva was forced off injured. She may answer to the nickname 'T' but she certainly puts the 'F' in feisty: she is a terrific ball carrier with great handling skills and was just the player Park needed in the second half to play into the wind. Park spent the dying moments quite literally on their own try line but simply refused to yield.

Seven points was not much of a lead to take into the second half against a very stiff wind, and Romford had their tails up. Park were rarely able to get out of their own half. The pack was superb under immense pressure, but every single Slingback gave her all to keep them out. Every time a score seemed inevitable someone would find that last drop of energy to finally wrest the ball away. It was inspiring stuff to watch.

Laura managed one dangerous breakaway but in essence it was a backs-to-the-wall job of heroic proportions. Just as it seemed the Slingbacks would hold out they were undone by heat of the moment naivety and a piece of refereeing generosity. Romford again drove to the line, and such was the relief when the Slingbacks got the ball that several players in front of the kicker forgot the offside law. Back under pressure, Romford got over the line but dropped the ball in the tackle. The referee, who overall had an excellent game, was on the spot and must have seen it was dropped, but awarded the try.

It is difficult not to sympathise with his concluding that Romford deserved something for their almost complete domination of the second half, if that is what happened, but this was a League match! The try was out wide and there was no chance of the conversion going anywhere near the posts.

We were now in injury time, and Park never looked like surrendering the match, indeed they came closest to scoring when another Wilkinson charge very nearly sent Alex Burbidge in. Not for the first time, the Slingbacks showed what you can achieve if you play for each other and give everything.

An honourable mention should go to prop Liz Delves. An original Slingback, she "retired" before this season due to a number of injuries, answered the call at the beginning of this season when the team were short and the next Monday bought herself a new pair of boots. She's still as enthusiastic as ever, had an immense game, and is the epitome of everything good about this team. Mind you, if rumours as to how she spent the night before the match are to be believed, it could be that she had only to breathe on her opponent to send her staggering backwards!

**Slingbacks:** 1. Elizabeth delves 2. Ann marie McGuigan 3. Julia daffy; 4. Hannah Boardman 5. Nicola Smith; 6. Anna Hannick (Kristina Dorer) 7. Louise Morrison 8. Louise Potter; 9. Maria Castellina; 10. Gaido Erlano; 11. Danielle Williams 12. Terangi Maeva (Tara Hodgkinson) 13. Laura Wilkinson 14. Tanya Chainey; 15. Alex Burbidge

**Subs not playing:** Subs: Ann-marie Evans, samantha emery, charlie, julie-ann Cowley, Kerry Wilson

**Scorers:** Tanya Chainey (T), Gaido Erlano (C).

## Meet the Slingbacks

### Alice "Evie" Watchorn



Alice describes herself as a "City bottom feeder" and the "Evie" bit comes from the rather unfair Evil Alice.

Pressed as to her age, "Should a lady say? Haha who am I kid-

ding?! 25". She's a flanker, "but I'll play anywhere!" Her previous club was Diss, "A long, long time ago. I played when I was a whipper snapper for Diss but between then and now I have mainly been all about being a spectator".

It was Alice who got the Slingbacks involved in the charity bike ride from John O'Groats to Lands End. When not playing rugby or bottom feeding in the City she lists her hobbies as, "Any form of sport, the more insane the better. More recently extreme distance events like John O'Groats to Lands End on a bike and the Devon X-Trail Coast to Coast off road triathlon. But in the past eventing, kayaking, rowing and hockey". Other sports played include: "Touch rugby for Hot Custard and rugby league for the West London Sharks, and of course all the cycling, running etc, etc".

Both her brothers and her dad played rugby, although they are now all retired. And asked which coaches / players have most influenced her she asserts that, "Wilko is my hero". In terms of who she likes or dislikes playing with or against she picks up on a theme that most Slingbacks seem to echo, "Umm I don't have a lot of love for Thurrock.... They broke me and a few others last year – grudge match now. I love playing with all the Park ladies, the random high fives and the way they laugh at my injuries...."

Asked about any notable or funny incidents you've been involved in, she says, "Every time I get near a pitch or alcohol... and if you put the two together hilarity ensues. May this year's season bring as many laughs and memories as last year's. Such quotes as "Do you play for Cambridge University?" are good but it'd be great to see them

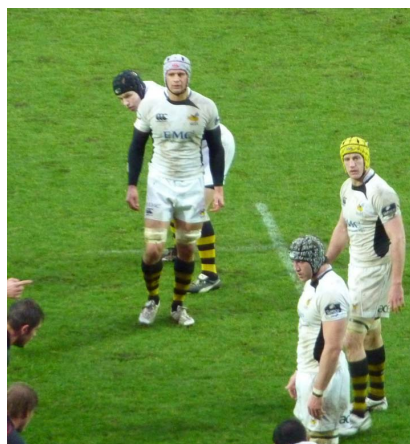
From front page...

in anyway to get this phone returned it would be hugely appreciated. Please call the office number if you have any information 0208 876 6044.

## Dates for your diary

Don't forget that there are two terrific youth matches coming up, featuring the all-conquering Park Under-19 side who went on tour to South America. They are away to Henley Hawks on the 16th December and then take on Bedford Blues Academy under lights at the Rock on 22nd December.

## Old boy



An ex park player Richard Birkett who played for Park up to the age of 13 was playing for Wasps against Saracens on Sunday. John Weatherall, who provided the photo, spoke with him after and he hopes he will continue for another 4 years until he is 34 years. Long way from the days at Barn Elms on those wet Sunday

morning.

## Worthing lunch

Worthing, whom we visit on Saturday 5th December, have asked us to let supporters know that lunch will be available for those who want it at 12:15. The cost of lunch is £20.00 which includes ground admission and a programme. Kick off is at 2:00PM.

## Gino

Saracens were not the only ones celebrating at Wembley Stadium following their 24-23 victory over South Africa after fan Stuart Tinner claimed a £250,000 jackpot in a half-time kicking contest. The 24-year-old Job Centre worker, who plays hooker for the Welwyn RFC fifth team and currently lives at home with his parents, struck the cross-bar with a punt from 30 metres - in his socks. Tinner was the first of three supporters picked at random from the 46,281 crowd after applying to take part in the competition by text message.



John Weatherall was at the match with Park's new Italian front row player, Gino Corradi, and got these photos of Gino (top) with the lad and (bottom) with Sghar-

Ik Brits at the Saracens v Wasps match. John reports that Gino tried to befriend Stuart hoping he might want to put some of his winnings into Rosslyn Park and tried to recruit Mr Brits but lacked Shaun's authority!

## National 2 South

	Home		Away			Bonus		Diff	Try	Loss	Pts		
	P	W	D	L	W	D	L					F	A
Barking	11	6	0	0	4	0	1	336	134	202	7	1	46*
Ealing	10	5	0	0	3	0	2	356	192	164	7	1	40
Rosslyn Park	10	5	0	0	3	1	1	290	173	117	4	0	38
Clifton	10	5	0	0	3	0	2	248	175	73	4	2	38
Southend	10	4	0	1	2	1	2	255	215	40	3	2	31
Canterbury	11	4	0	2	1	1	3	259	341	-82	5	0	27
Richmond	10	2	0	3	2	0	3	265	278	-13	4	1	21
Shelford	10	2	1	1	2	0	4	201	233	-32	1	2	21
Westcombe Park	10	3	0	1	2	0	4	166	212	-46	0	0	20
Lydney	11	2	0	3	1	0	5	230	251	-21	3	5	20
Dings Crusaders	11	2	1	3	1	0	4	206	276	-70	2	2	18
Henley	10	3	0	3	1	0	3	222	223	-1	2	0	16*
Worthing	10	2	1	2	1	0	4	171	226	-55	0	2	16
Barnes	10	0	0	4	2	0	4	161	242	-81	1	2	11
Bridgwater & Albion	10	1	0	5	0	0	4	122	317	-195	1	0	5

\* Henley and Barking have each been deducted 2 points

## Minis



John Weatherall was also out and about with his camera on Sunday at the Minis Under-12s matches at Wimbledon RFC. In line with Child Protection policies we cannot name the individual lads but the two teams pictured are the Under-12s B and C sides. The matches were "friendlies" and we understand that it is not the done thing to record the results of such games. Wonder how many of these lads will be on the 2019-2020 1st XV team photo?!

## The Scrum

Don't forget that you can catch up with the latest news on the London rugby club scene by tuning into BBC Radio London's "The Scrum" on 94.9 FM at 9:00PM every Thursday. If you miss it, or are outside the broadcast area, then you can listen via the BBC website.