

PARKNEWS



The E-magazine for Rosslyn Park supporters Wednesday 3rd March 2010 - Issue 143

MUDDY MARVELLOUS!

Park go second after great win at Ealing

Welcome to Parknews. Last Saturday saw a great, committed performance at Ealing with Park giving everything to topple Ealing in atrocious conditions to go second in the League (table back page - match report next page). The players were so physically tired at the end that one of them - no names, no pack drill - owned up to having gone to bed at 8:00PM on Saturday evening! It was also great to have such good support - the gate was four times Ealing's normal crowd, and it didn't feel like there were many neutrals!

On Saturday it is down to earth with a bump, with pressure of a different kind when we play the bottom club, Bridgwater & Albion. "Bridgy's" financial difficulties are well documented, as a result of which there is little cash available to reward players. But when guys are playing out of sheer commitment you may be sure that they will give everything, and they were no pushovers in the match at their ground earlier in the season. Park need to win and to get a bonus point if we are to stay ahead of Ealing and chase Barking.

On the subject of Saturday's opponents, Bridgwater & Albion are a real rugby club run by real decent rugby people, and with a long tradition in the sport. It should concern those who are charged with running the game - if they ever look below the very top level - if a club like Bridgy cannot financially sustain National 2 level rugby. We cannot let our sympathies for their plight affect matters on the pitch, but let's wish them luck and - if what looks like inevitable relegation happens - wish them a swift return. But don't let that stop you encouraging our lads to go for it!!

Taking the *#@%



Our revered Chairman was not a happy bunny at the end of Saturday's match. Indeed, at the final whistle he was so deeply depressed that he just got into his car and left. There was a mitigating factor: five minutes from time he had felt an urgent need to answer the call of nature. He was therefore blissfully unaware of Ross Laidlaw's third penalty to make the score 9-3. When Park presented Ealing with their last minute try, he was convinced that we had blown it by 6-8. Mr Adair phoned the Editor from his car to share his grief and took some persuading

that we had actually won! Alas he had already texted our "defeat" to luminaries who could not be there, including Simon Tindall and Chris Ritchie. Chris said it had ruined his ski-ing holiday and was threatening to throw himself off Mount Verbier. When John tried to call them back to correct his misinformation both men had already turned off their mobiles and turned to alcohol for solace!

Golden Oldies

Assuming the pitch recovers from recent rains, there is a very attractive curtain raiser to Saturday's 1st XV match, in the form of the Park veterans' side Park Bench taking on Weybridge Vets in the Surrey Vets league at 11:00. Some old Park favourites have been turning out for the Bench this season, including Lee Gibson, Alex Milward, Crawford Henderson, Dan Campbell, Andy Ray, Ben Fennell, Rob Sedman and Tom Colburn among others. Even the legendary Boardo has been threatening a comeback. Pip-pa Rollitt reports, "Congratulations should go out to Graham and Lizzy Boardman who had baby no 3 -Zak - arrived just over a week ago ! Apparently Boardo is thinking of putting his boots back on again - not sure Lizzy is too pleased about this!!! " *Continued back page.....*



Park's pack give everything for the cause [photo: David Whittam]

Saturday 3rd March

1st XV v Bridgwater & Albion

National 2 South

Home KO 3:00 PM

Curtain Raiser at 11:00AM

Park Bench v Weybridge Vets

Surrey Vets League 1

Pitch conditions permitting

Ealing v 4th XV

Middlesex Merit Table 1

Away KO TBA

Nomads v Old Actonians 2

Middlesex Merit Table 3

Richmond Park - KO TBA

Hatters v Merlin International

Friendly Richmond Park - KO TBA

Old Oundelians 2 v B XV

Friendly (away) KO TBA

Sunday 4th March

Romford & Gidea Park v Slingbacks

Championship 2 - Away KO 2: 30

The Clubhouse bar is open on Tuesday & Thursday evenings. Come along and enjoy a sociable drink

PARK WIN TO GO SECOND

Ealing 8
 Rosslyn Park 9
 National 2 South



Huggy drives on (all match photos David Whittam)

In a dramatic end to a full-blooded battle in the Ealing mud, Ben Ward's attempt to convert Phil Chesters' last gasp try for Ealing passed outside the far post and Rosslyn Park's players leapt for joy. They could claim a victory that they deserved for their efforts over the whole 80 minutes. But their last ditch attempt to hand the match to their opponents, after a supremely disciplined 80 minutes, certainly raised the blood pressure among their army of travelling supporters.

The match nearly didn't take place at all. After the pitch had passed a 9:00AM inspection there was an hour's heavy rain, leaving it up to the captains whether or not to go ahead. Park were keen to play, Ealing less so.

The referee sensibly suggested that, as he had refed both sides in pretty desperate conditions in the past, the match should go ahead but that he would stop it if he felt conditions were getting dangerous. Underfoot conditions were indeed pretty awful, but players of a previous generation – where slopping through a mud bath was an essential part of the game – would have scoffed that there should have been any doubt.

Park underlined their wish to play, taking the match by the scruff of the neck from kick off and being rewarded with a third minute penalty, stroked over by Ross Laidlaw for 3-0. When both defences were not engaged in playing aerial ping pong at each other, Park were having slightly more possession and territory in what was essentially a mid-field war of attrition. However, Ealing showed how dangerous they could be when awarded a penalty 10 metres into the Park half and Ward made the equaliser look easy.

The visitors were beginning to play some – in the conditions – good rugby, putting together some good attacks, notably when a run from full-back Richard Davies nearly went over. Ealing's defence was top notch but they were forced to concede a penalty in the 23rd minute which allowed Laidlaw to increase the lead to 6-3.

Ealing had their best attack up the right wing, but the defence was equal to it. Park mounted a great attack through the middle but knocked on. A super kick from Laidlaw put Park firmly back in the 22, but Ealing countered, forcing the Park defence to play some smart rug-



Steve Pape brushes off a defender

by behind their own posts. Ealing then had their only period of real concerted pressure, driving at the visitors just before the interval, and Nick Huggett rashly allowed himself to be provoked into throwing a punch and was yellow carded. Park held out until the interval.

Starting the second half a man short, Park really took the game to Ealing. A good run from James Strong saw him stopped just short of the line. The visitors applied solid pressure through several surges but Ealing's last ditch defence was superb. No sooner had they weathered that attack than Ollie Lyndsey-Hague nearly got over, and another siege was set up. Park could not get over, but they had dominated play and conceded nothing for the entire period of the sin bin.



Gotcha! Park's centres deal with an invader

ever, it was they who made the crucial error when Park followed-up and Ealing were penalised for "crossing" on their 22 in front of the posts after 37 minutes. Laidlaw snapped up the 3 points for 9-3.

Ealing tried desperately to salvage something, but the visiting defence were more than equal to it, and Richard Davies put in a tremendous clearance kick almost to the home line. When Park then won possession for the last play of the match all they had to do was to stick it up their proverbial jumpers to claim a deserved and hard-earned victory. But in one of those moments of sheer madness that drives Coaches insane they chose to make the ball available. Unfortunately the player it became available to was the League's top try-scorer, Ealing winger Phil Chesters, who hacked and dribbled the ball to the Park line and triumphantly dived on it.

Had the kick gone over it would have been daylight robbery, except that it is pretty well impossible in law to mug yourself!
Park: Davies (O'Driscoll, blood); Strong, Sweeney, Jewell, Lyndsey-Hague; Laidlaw; Chilten (Barr); Huggett, Tauialo, Collier; Pape, Quigley; Gates (Daw, safety), Barrett (M Jones), Lock.
Sub (Did not play): A Jones.
Park scorer: Laidlaw (3P)



Mark Lock runs at his former team mates, Amo in support

LAST MINUTE TRY SINKS 2s

Richmond 2s 32

Rosslyn Park 2s 26

By Robert Boulwood / Gareth Jordan

Only the third fixture of 2010 for either Park or Richmond after weather difficulties since early January (with this fixture being touch or go). After five minutes Richmond opened the scoring with a penalty. Anthony Fenner scored and converted his own try nine minutes later and then repeated it after a few minutes. Jon Swords scored a little while later making the score Richmond 3 Park 19. Park were on fire!

Richmond replied with two tries, one unconverted. Suddenly they were ahead. A further try before half time and fortunes had changed, Richmond 20 Rosslyn Park 19.

The second half saw another Richmond try eventually replied to by a fantastic team effort try by Canty, converted by Pugh. With the score at 27 to Richmond and 26 to Park, tension mounted. Sadly a last minute try from Richmond led to the defeat.

Coach Gareth Jordan said "Richmond had some big boys up front and they ran at us all day. They created a lot of momentum going forward and once they had achieved this we were sucked in and they scored

by going around us. On a positive note, we scored an amazing trying running from our 22m. Both the backs and forwards were involved. I encouraged the boys to have a go at every opportunity and there were moments when we played some attractive rugby".

The referee said that he enjoyed it!



[Match photos by John Weatherall]

UNDER-12s BEAT THE WEATHER

Story and photos by John Weatherall

The Under 12's Middlesex B Squad were playing in the wind rain etc on Sunday morning, organised by Teddington Rugby Mini's. Even with the continue down poor the pitches at Surbiton High School Sports Ground, Hinchley Wood were pretty good. Must admit it was very cold. It was a Round Robin involving Teddington, Ealing & Rosslyn Park. Again well done to Teddington Coaches finding a fit and playable venue

In line with child protection policy individual players are not identified



From front page...

Talking of absent friends, Pippa also mentioned that "Lofty" Lofthouse will be at Saturday's match, though Pippa is believed to be less than keen on his turning out for the Bench on account of his demand on physio services. It was not clear whether Ms Rollitt was referring to his propensity to become injured or to his girth nowadays! She also reports that Andy Wyeth is still keeping tabs on the club from his current base in Kuwait.

2nd XV

The 2s lost to a last minute try at the Athletic Ground on Saturday (report on page 3). This week they are due to return to play the other residents of the Athletic Ground - London Scottish - in a League match. At time of writing details are yet to be confirmed.

Slingbacks

The girls did not play last weekend, but this Sunday play a crucial relegation battle against Romford & Gidea Park away from home, kicking off at 2:30. The ground is in Crow Lane, near the centre of Romford: by car take the A12 to Moby Dick Pub, right into Whalebone Lane North. At light, left onto London Road, 0.5 miles. Right (after speed camera) into Jutsums Lane. Under Bridge (not suitable for coaches or high vehicles), left into Crow Lane. Ground 100 yards on right. It's not too long a walk from Romford rail station (if you are seated facing forward, you should see the posts and floodlights to your right shortly before arriving at the station).

There have been some changes to the Slingbacks fixtures as printed in the handbook, which are listed below. Two matches are particularly worthy of your attention: on Friday 9th April the girls have an evening floodlit match against a touring Swedish team, so with the Clubhouse open (and hopefully some better weather by then) what better way to start your weekend than with a game of rugby. On Saturday 17 April the ladies play their crucial final League match against Harlequins as a curtain raiser to the last 1st XV match of the season. Remaining fixtures are:
 Sunday 14th March - Henley (A, friendly)
 Sunday 21st March - Thurrock (A) League
 Sunday 28th March - Wasps (H) League
 Friday 9th April - Swedish XV (H, KO 7:30)
 Saturday 17th April - Harlequins (H, KO 12.30) League

By the way, following the departure back to New Zealand of Juddy as the Slingbacks' forwards coach, the girls have been fortunate to get as a replacement something of an expert - Nick Huggett. Huggy is taking his duties seriously as well - he turns up every Monday to review the previous weekend's match with fellow coach Will and to agree the structure for the week's training, and then back for training itself on Wednesday evenings. A great guy, and his efforts are very much appreciated.

Clubsides

Will Thorogood reports: "An "Easy Win" for the 1's against Ealing on Saturday?! 9-8, well done. As you know, our home games were decimated by the weather... waterlogged pitches. Only one game was played by the Clubsides, as result. The B's went to Imperial College, who are top of MMT2. With a team, many of whom have just come from injury, the B's, so I'm told, played some of their best rugby this season. They came out 29-26 winners, which sounds entertaining and nail-biting, and maybe it's enough to get them through to the Play-Offs? Fingers crossed.

"The Bench were meant to play A.S.Milan Vets, but that game was washed out. However, we managed to find a game, for the tourists, against Bec Old Boys. The Italians, although losing 55-12, and thanks Tim Horgan for covering as ref, had an excellent day, particularly with

National 2 South

	P	Home			Away			Bonus					Pts
		W	D	L	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Try	Loss	
Barking	20	11	0	0	7	0	2	637	221	415	13	2	85*
Rosslyn Park	20	11	0	0	6	1	2	631	277	354	10	1	81
Ealing	20	9	0	1	7	0	3	694	355	339	14	2	81
Clifton	19	8	1	0	5	1	4	423	359	64	8	2	66
Southend	20	8	0	2	4	1	5	542	447	95	8	3	61
Canterbury	20	5	0	5	5	1	4	464	507	-43	7	2	51
Shelford	20	7	1	1	3	0	8	437	449	-12	4	2	48
Worthing	19	6	1	3	4	0	5	365	352	13	2	3	47
Dings Crusaders	20	6	1	4	1	1	7	394	414	-20	4	4	40
Lydney	19	3	0	6	3	0	7	386	466	-80	4	7	35
Richmond	21	4	0	6	2	0	9	475	614	-139	8	3	35
Westcombe Park	18	4	0	4	2	0	8	275	425	-150	1	4	29
Henley	18	5	0	4	1	0	8	344	433	-89	3	2	27*
Barnes	20	0	1	8	3	0	8	288	622	-334	1	3	16*
Bridgwater & Albion	20	2	0	9	0	0	9	229	643	-414	1	1	10

* Barnes, Henley and Barking have each been deducted 2 points

Outstanding Fixtures of Leading Clubs

Date	Ealing	Rosslyn Park	Barking
06/03	a Henley	h Bridgwater & Albion	a Westcombe Park
13/03	h Worthing	a Shelford	h Clifton
20/03	h BARKING	no fixture	a EALING
27/03	a Southend	a Henley	a Barnes
03/04	h Westcombe Park	h Worthing	no fixture
10/04	a Clifton	a Southend	a Richmond
17/04	h Barnes	h Westcombe Park	h Lydney
24/04	no fixture	a Clifton	a Shelford
01/05	a Lydney	a Canterbury	h Dings Crusaders

Italy winning. It would have been a great shame if they hadn't played, having traveled all that way. Thanks to Bec Old Boys for their hospitality and assistance. Note, their pitch, although a bit like the North Face of the Eiger, was perfectly drained and had no waterlogging problems.

"I think that the Club, because of 6 Nations day, the 1's playing away and the Clubsides home games being cancelled, could not have made a great deal of money on Saturday, so let's try to compensate this Saturday! We have three home game, there's Former Players' Luncheon and the 1's are at home. If you are away, try to get back afterwards".

Trivia

Slingback Louise Morrison is running a trivia night at the Clubhouse on Friday 19th March and is hoping that different parts of the club will enter teams for what should be a good social evening. The fun starts at 7:00PM, the cost is Cost £10 pp and teams will be between 6 - 10 people. There is a cash prize for the winning table and also prizes to be won throughout the night. Players, friends and family members are all welcome to come along for a laugh. Contact Louise at Morrison.louise@ymail.com

The Scrum

Just a reminder that you can catch up on all the London rugby news and gossip by tuning in to the Scrum on BBC Radio London 94.9FM every Thursday at 9:00PM. If you are one of the many Rosslyn Park exiles around the world, you can listen to the programme live from the BBC website - there's always at least a mention of the Park. If you miss the live broadcast, you can still listen to a recording from the BBC website.

Good Samaritan needed

And finally, just a reminder that Park supporter Simon Woods, who broke both his feet, would really appreciate a lift from North London to Saturday's match against Bridgwater. If you're able to help please mail Simon directly at simon334@btinternet.com and a favourable perch in the Next World is all but guaranteed.