

## ANDY RIPLEY DIES

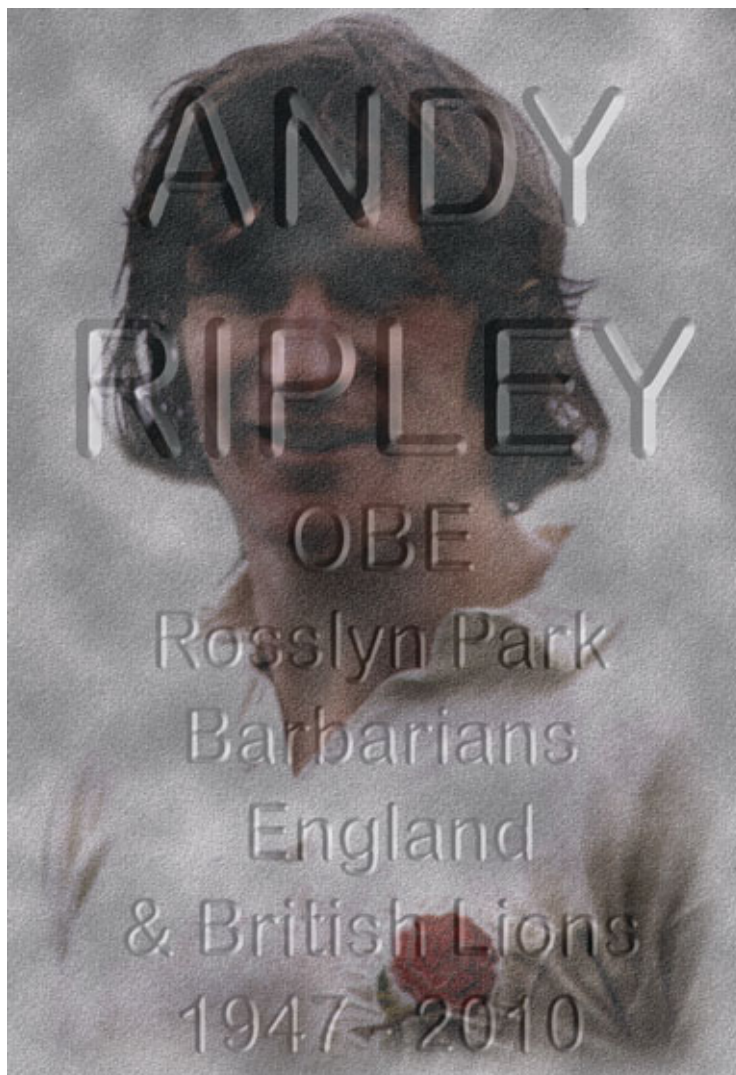
Sadly the greatest player and the finest man in Rosslyn Park's history is no more. Andy Ripley died on Thursday morning after a long and brave battle with cancer. The Club has issued the following Press Statement:

*Everyone at Rosslyn Park is devastated at the news that Andy Ripley has finally lost his brave battle against cancer just four weeks after receiving his OBE for services to sport. Andy was a rugby legend; a superstar before the era of superstars – and not just because he famously won the TV series of that name.*

*He truly was a gifted sportsman: an athlete of international standard, holder of world records for static rowing and a contender for a place in the Varsity Boat Race eight well into his fifties. But it*

*was on the rugby field that he reached truly international fame. His very athleticism made him a player in advance of his time: a forward who could out-run the backs. In an era where being a "character" was not universally approved of, his iconoclastic image as a motorbike-riding, rugby-playing hippy ensured his skills were noticed.*

*Rosslyn Park Chairman, John Adair, said, "Andy was Park's greatest player in the post-war era, probably its greatest ever. Others will doubtless eulogise about his International career: but as a Club man he was also without equal. An exemplary*



*sportsman, even at the height of his stardom there was no trace of vanity or aloofness about Andy. He was one of the lads but also an inspirational skipper who people wanted to play for.*

*"When his playing days came to an end, he never lost interest in the Club, serving as President in the early 90s. Even when fighting cancer nothing was ever too much trouble for Andy if it would help the Club. Andy loved Rosslyn Park and everyone at Rosslyn Park loved him. Rugby Union has lost a legend; we at Rosslyn Park have lost a dear, dear friend.*

*"The whole Club extends our deepest sympathies to the family he leaves behind".*

After some thought, the Editor has decided not to even attempt an obitu-

ary for Andy. Nothing I could write could possibly reflect the true greatness of the man both as a player and as a human being. We shall each have our own memories of him and perhaps that is as it should be.

However, it would be a terrific tribute to the great man, if we could put out a special Parknews as a celebration of his life and career. There must be many reading this who played with Andy. Many others will have treasured memories. Whether it's a single line or a long story, please let us have your thoughts and memories of Rips (and any photos) at [news@rosslynpark.co.uk](mailto:news@rosslynpark.co.uk) and it will be done.

## Andy Ripley

Many people will doubtless be feeling that the Club should do something in memory of Andy Ripley, perhaps raising money for cancer charities. The Club is very much seized by the need and the wish to do this. However, as it is likely to be a major event it would be wrong to embark on that without first discussing it with Andy's family and clearly, so soon after his passing, now is not the appropriate time to do that.

At the time of posting this on the website, details of Andy's funeral arrangements are not at hand.

## Future Hope

Here's a great opportunity for someone who would like to combine Rugby coaching with travel and a chance to do some real good in the world.

Tim Grandage, who gave up a life in banking to help others and formed the Future Hope School in Calcutta, is looking for a coach to spend the summer in Calcutta to help with their rugby team. In case you don't know what Future Hope is...

Tim is a former Rugby school pupil and a player for Quins before establishing himself in the world of business. It is a long story but suffice to say with his contacts and influence around the world, he has transformed the lives of children whom he and his wife literally rescued from the railways in Calcutta and after initially having them living in their apartment, raised the funds to establish a school in Calcutta. They are not only educated academically and pastorally but given the chance to play organised sport, including of course rugby.

Future Hope competes in the Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s every other year and several players have made their way in life in the UK, which Tim says is all down to their participation in the 7s and being recognised as wonderful, talented young boys.

If you would like to chance to have an adventure in Calcutta, can coach rugby and have no other obligations this summer, please contact Tim direct on 07817 175993. He is in UK for a couple of weeks so please do get in touch with him.

Please also visit the Future Hope website to get all the background information you wish.

## AGM

Club Secretary, Bob Evans, has asked us to flag up in advance that the Club's AGM this year will be on Thursday 22nd July in the Clubhouse. Bob says that Members will get the formal notice through their letterboxes, along with all the usual papers and reports, about 2-3 weeks before the date of the meeting.

## Congratulations

I'm sure everyone at the Club would like to join in congratulating Shaun Justice, who gets married this Saturday. He will then be going on honeymoon, before returning for pre-season training. I think it's also Shaun's first

proper holiday since taking over the reins, so he has probably earned it. I gather he has completed a number of significant signings before going off.

## Player movements

The editor spoke to Shaun this week before he heads off for his life-changing weekend. Shaun is very bullish about the signings already made for next season. However, because there are still some minor details to be addressed, he will not be releasing details until July, when you - the supporters - will be the first to know. I'm aware from calls received already that many of you are keen to know this information, but it's worth noting that other clubs are yet making statements. (And to save you the trouble - Shaun didn't tell me privately, so there's no point in asking!).

So far as players leaving the club are concerned, we are not aware of more than one or two going in the opposite direction. Duncan Traynor did tell me that he wouldn't be able to play for us next season because he has taken up a teaching job in the Oxford area and simply won't be able to get to training. Duncan is a smashing bloke and I'm sure we all wish him well. He's a Park man at heart, so we'll almost certainly see him at the Rock from time to time. I've also heard that we're unlikely to see Chris Simmons next season, though I don't think he has actually left the club. The story is that Chris and his other half are going to spend a year off travelling the world. Again, we wish them well.

## Reader's Letter

*Geoff Dignum in response to the fixtures (published in the previous edition)*

Dear Charlie,  
Wouldn't it be nice to have four wins in September! A fantasy, perhaps - still, I hope that Park have a positive approach to a tough start to the season!  
Regards,  
**Geoff Dignum**

**Ed:** *A start with four wins off the reel is a lot more likely than Bro Dignum becoming a teetotaler!*

## Next Parknews

There will be a Parknews in July, announcing our new signings and, hopefully, details of pre-season friendly matches. We'll also by then know when pre-season training returns to our own ground, so that the Thursday evening drinking club can resume operations.

## Remember

*Please let us have any memories, stories or general anecdotes on Andy Ripley so that we can do the great man proud. If you're in touch with anyone who knew or played with Andy and who doesn't receive Parknews then please let him or her know. It would be appreciated if any photos or cuttings could be sent as .jpg files. Send them to [news@rosslynpark.co.uk](mailto:news@rosslynpark.co.uk)*