

PARKNEWS

Season
2011-12

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The e-magazine for all Rosslyn Park supporters

PARK SO UNLUCKY IN DEFEAT



Steve Parsons puts Park ahead in Saturday's gripping encounter in Jersey [Photo David Whittam]

Welcome to Parknews, It was disappointing to lose so narrowly at Jersey (report next page) but surely no one could have asked more of the team than they gave. Often the term "unlucky" is used to disguise teams not taking their chances or making crucial errors, but it would be a hard person indeed who could not sympathise with the players with some of the decisions that went against them. It happens, and in a league system it tends to even out in the course of things, but that is little consolation when it happens to you in the most crucial match of the season.

But in cursing Park's luck it is important to recognise that Jersey really were a top notch side. They proved themselves to be a very good side indeed, and good enough to take their chances whenever they arose. It was Park's first visit to Jersey, and they really are a great club in every sense and – result apart – it was a great pleasure to be there. There was a great turnout by Park people to support the team, even if our 100 or so were drowned out by the more than 3,500 home fans. The team really appreciated the effort and expense put in by everyone who went. Surely, though, no one will feel short-changed by the effort the players made. As the match report says, sometimes it just isn't your day.

Park remain within two points of the League leaders and – having amply demonstrated on Saturday that they are no lesser side than Jersey – they need to ensure that they are back "up" for Saturday's match with Tynedale, which kicks off at 2:30. It goes without saying that your vocal support could make a big difference. Tynedale play good enterprising rugby and could easily spring a surprise if Park are less than 100% focussed after the disappointment of last weekend.

There are some brief clips of the match on the Channel TV website which you can view by following the link on the next page for the Channel TV website, where (at least when we went to press) they still had posted an excerpt from their Saturday Evening "Report Sport" programme:

Continued back page.....

Club Diary

Saturday 21 January

1st XV

v

Tynedale

National 1

Home KO 2:30

Ealing 2nd v 2nd XV

Zoo Sports Shield Div 1

Away KO TBA

Sutton & Epsom II v Hatters

Zoo Sports Shield Div 3

Richmond Park KO TBA

4th XV v Civil Service 2nd

Middlesex Merit 1

Richmond Park KO TBA

B XV v Grasshoppers 2

Middlesex Merit 2

Richmond Park KO TBA

Nomads TBA

Sunday 22 January

Slingbacks

v

Woodbridge

Championship 2

Home KO 2:30

Following 1st XV home match is v
Macclesfield on Saturday 11
February, KO 2:30

Send all letters, articles, reports, photos etc to news@rosslynpark.co.uk

NO DISGRACE IN THIS DEFEAT

Jersey 20

Park 18

National 1

Sometimes it just isn't your day. Rosslyn Park's luck deserted them in a titanic top-of-the-table struggle in front of 3648 spectators squeezed into the tiny Rue des Landes ground, Jersey, on Saturday. Jersey kicked off with a strong breeze and three and a half thousand sets of lungs behind them.

An early nervous handling error in gathering the starting kick gave the hosts first possession, but Park met the challenge with some first rate tackling and were awarded a penalty, which Laidlaw banged to touch. Jersey won the throw, but Park were soon at them and initially imposed their own game. A super move saw them pass the ball along the line to out wide on the right for Steve Parsons to charge over and give Park the lead after 5 minutes. A tight angle and a stiff breeze defeated Ross Laidlaw's conversion attempt.

The home side tried to impose themselves, but generally Park's defence were clearly up to the job and effectively made their 22 a "no go" area. Unable to play their way through the defensive line, Jersey seized upon the chance to score via a Ross Broadfoot penalty. Sensing blood, and roared on by the crowd, Jersey piled on the pressure and won a



Getting stuck in, Park's tackling was magnificent on Saturday [all match photos by David Whittam]

Six minutes later it was Park who forced a penalty, and Ross Laidlaw pegged the score back to 11-8. Park's tackling was now beginning to turn the game around, but a great tackle was ludicrously judged to be a potential "spear tackle". It was nothing of the sort, but a good old-fashioned text book clattering that swept the victim off his feet. The penalty meant that instead of Park maintaining momentum Broadfoot was able to hammer over the penalty to restore the 6-point margin at 14-8.

Park continued to press forward and were rewarded with a further penalty for Laidlaw to peg the scores back to 14-11. Park were far from done for, and drove back deep into the Jersey half but could not retain the ball. Still no one could get the vital edge in a see-saw match until Park were penalised in front of their own posts and again Broadfoot extracted the price for 17-11 with 15 minutes left.

Park made a massive attack on the Jersey line with a series of pick and drives. The hosts' defence was magnificent, but a try looked inevitable which would snatch a late lead if converted. However, when Park quickly spread the ball to where the defence was stretched the referee again penalised Park for "crossing". With no opponent anywhere within tackling distance, it was a woeful decision. Not only did it allow the home side to clear, but Park were then almost immediately penalised again, and instead of potentially taking the lead, the visitors looked to have been shut out of it at 20-11, with less than 10 minutes left.

Of course, no one can know whether Park would have scored had they not been unfairly penalised, nor how Jersey would have responded if they had, but it always seems a shame when such a vital and well-fought match appears to turn on such a questionable decision.

But the Park team – greatly to their credit – simply got on with things and set up another massive assault on the Jersey line. The inevitable try came when replacement scrum half Graham Barr managed to get over. But a miracle was ruled out when – as Ross Laidlaw's conversion bisected the posts to make it 20-18 the referee blew for time.

Park could justifiably feel unlucky, inter- ception try and, whilst Jersey s Park who set up the more tions. It would be deeply unfair to sugg a perfectly good official, was in any way partial, but everyone makes the odd mistake and unfortunately for the visitors a couple of his apparent errors had a fundamental effect on their fortunes. But Jersey were good enough to seize their chances and force the win. Park let no one down, least of all themselves, and there is no reason at all to give up on their title chase, but if Jersey do go on to win the title then – as a team and as a club – they will be worthy Champions.

Park: Edwards; Shabbo, Parsons, Robinson (Gower), Mantella; Laidlaw; Baxter (Barr); Ovens, Richmond, Ward; McKean, Anderson; Rowland, Campbell (Pape), Lock
Subs not used: Huggett, Gotting
Park scorers: Parsons (T), Barr (T), Laidlaw (2P, C).



Luke Campbell takes the ball on for Park

further penalty but Broadfoot missed a difficult kick.

This was a match of almost unbearable tension as the two best sides in the league slugged it out. Park looked the more dangerous side in terms of penetrating enemy territory, and saw their chance when Islanders' number 8 Steve O'Brien was despatched to the sin bin. A great attack saw them working the ball along the line to the left until a careless pass was intercepted close to the try-line. Jersey reacted instantly, flanker Guy Thompson sprinted away, was stopped close to the line but the ball was quickly worked across for full-back Glenn Bryce to score before numbers arrived. Broadfoot's conversion kick hit the outside of the post, but the home side led by 8-5.

Back bounced Park, with a good move started with a break by Parsons but it ended with a knock on. Park then, with an immense effort by the pack, turned over the powerful Jersey scrum on the edge of their own 22 but when they looked to have the home side well stretched were penalised for "crossing" to allow Jersey to clear.

Jersey took an 8-5 lead into the interval. They probably shaded possession in the first half but hardly entered the Park 22. On slightly less possession, Park had made a few dangerous excursions into the Jersey 22. All was therefore set for a gripping second half.

With the wind at their backs, Park looked to have every chance of turning things round but early efforts could not breach an excellent defence and first blood went to Jersey in the form of a penalty, converted by Broadfoot for 11-5. Park were straight back at them but were again harshly penalised for "crossing" when a score looked very much on the cards.



Rob Anderson

HATTERS LOOKING GOOD



The Hatters (photographed before the previous week's match)

Richmond IV 27

Hatters 41

Friendly

By Joe Wigley

Hayward's Heath having conceded the points in the league, the Hatters congregated at the RAC for a friendly against Richmond 4th XV. It was evident from the outset that the opposition, who play in the northern equivalent of Park's division, would provide a stiff test. This was confirmed right from the kick-off, shortly after which Richmond, having won several turnovers at the breakdown, crossed the Hatters' line to take an early lead. In weeks past, this may have been enough to throw Park off their game, this week it merely served to wake them from a weekend slumber.

Park surged forward from the restart, powerful in attack and unflinching in defence. While Richmond continued to enjoy a significant share of possession, they were being driven back by good defensive organisation and strong tackling. Soon enough such pressure began to tell, as Owen was able to exploit some scrappy play in the midfield to put Park's first points on the board.

The Hatters did not relent, hammering the ball up through the midfield as the energy the pack saved from uncontested scrums seemed to be directed towards taking the ball forward in open play, with significant yardage won by Reilly, Jawich and Davies. This continued pressure gave Park a penalty, which Beale fired down into the Richmond twenty-two to set up the lineout. A good take from Curry provided time

to organise a powerful maul. After the ball was taken on a couple of times in the tight, drawing in the Richmond defence, it was spread wide quickly allowing Russell Bond to open his tally for the day and pushing Park into the lead.

In the second quarter, the Hatters began to grow wise to Richmond's ability to turn ball on the ground over and resorted to mauling. This proved a successful tactic as time and again the Richmond pack was sucked in and driven backwards. Such a drive worked well to give England, who slotted in seamlessly at inside centre, the space to bullock through the midfield. Bond was then able to exploit half a gap for his second score of the day. After the conversion was slotted by Beale on the stroke of half-time, the teams changed ends with the Hatters leading 17 points to 10.

The second half brought no respite for the home team, as almost from the off, Davies touched the ball down for a pushover try after ferocious scrummaging from the front five. Beale stretched Park's lead further with a simple conversion. There followed three tries in quick succession, with Owen Jones picking up two and the insatiable Wise getting his name on the scoresheet after a superb break in the midfield and an good finish from the halfway line. With another conversion added, Park led 41-10 with only twenty minutes to go.

While, in the final quarter, the Hatters, with a raft of changes, lost their shape somewhat, conceding 17 points, the game was convincingly won by that stage. This week provided another step forward for the Hatters who, after four victories in a row in addition to the walkover, are beginning to have the confidence in each other to play some excellent

NOMADS HAND OUT A THRASHING

Nomads 48

Twickenham 2nd 0

Surrey Premier League

By Nick Wood

The Nomads had a good win against Twickenham 2's in their league game at home. On a lovely sunny Saturday down in Richmond park the strong Nomads side set the tone of the game with 5 points in the first 5 minutes. The first half continued with a Nomad dominance against a young Twickenham side. The forwards dominated the set pieces and were clearing out and turning over most of the rucks whilst the backs were getting some clean ball and running some very fast and clean lines, breaking the Twickenham defence on

virtually every phase. It wasn't long until we had 29 points on the board going into half time.

The second half gave us the advantage of playing down hill, but with the sun in our eyes. Still the Nomad possession of the ball meant that Twickenham weren't really able to capitalise on this. Our Achilles heel was giving away penalties for the tackler not releasing before playing the ball and for playing the ball on the ground (although I think some of the decisions were a bit dubious). Still another fantastic half with some great work by both the forwards and some fantastic and blistering lines run by the backs.

Final score 48-0 and a great win for the Nomads, maintaining their position at second in the Surrey Premier.

A Postcard from Jersey

Our roving reporter, John Weatherall found plenty of Park supporters around Jersey on Saturday, including - taking the airs at St Brelade's Bay, the President, Peter Berryman, along with David Whittam, who can usually be found at the other end of the camera lens. Is Garry (top photo) trying to hide his beer inside his jacket? Why?



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Telephone 020 8876 7668

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The Prince Obolensky Association

Annual Dinner

Wednesday 15 February 2012

7:15 pm

Rosslyn Park FC, SW15

Featuring

Guest Speaker: Tony Diprose
(Saracens, Harlequins &
England; Manager of the
Harlequins Academy)

The 2012 *Obolensky Award*
to a legend, a Lion, a
Barbarian, an England
international...



Dinner and Obolensky Award
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From front page...

http://www.channelonline.tv/channelonline_sportnews/displayarticle.asp?id=497820

2nd XV

The 2s had a fine victory by 46-14 over Shelford last weekend in Division 1 of the Zoo Sports Shield. Unfortunately we have no report of the match, and even John Weatherasll's camera was absent, being in Jersey.

Clubsides

Will Thorogood reports that it was generally, a good rugby weekend for the club. "Excellent wins for the Hatters, B's and 2's, but a "tight" Jersey made the 1's sweat across La Manche! So, they continue to yo-yo within the top 4 of the league. Unlucky, I hear, not to get more from their game"

Anyway, after a cancellation by Haywards Heath, a confident Hatters unit found a friendly against Richmond 4's down at the RAG, and continued the winning streak with a 41-21 victory. There's a report on the match inside.

The Nomads, having "rested up" over Xmas and the New Year, came out, against Twickenham 2's, chomping at the bit. A try in the first couple of minutes set the trend for the afternoon. A young Twickenham side was, basically, blown away! They did show a lot of character in the second half, but could not resist a rampant Nomadic rugby force. 29-0 at half time, and 48-0 at the final whistle.

Last, but by no means least, the B's had an excellent performance against Old Priorians 2's up in Greenford. OP's had pipped the B's, back in October, so a very satisfying win for Nick Jones and the B's. 20-7. A big game, again, this week for them against Grasshoppers.

Slingbacks

The Slingbacks' home match with Richmond III was postponed last Sunday as R9ichmond were unable to field a side on the day. The match will be re-scheduled for later in the season. This Sunday the Slingbacks are home to Woodbridge, kicking off at 2:30. As usual, the Clubhouse will be open throughout the afternoon and admission is free. Please get along and support the Park girls.

Kick off change

Please note that the home match against Fylde on 24 March will now kick off at 3:00PM. This is, of course, the day of the former-players' lunch and one mustn't rush these things.

Better support than Man U?

The gate of 3648 at Jersey on Saturday was even more remarkable than it may seem at first sight. Let us deduct the odd 148 as Park supporters or random tourists with a spare afternoon. Taking the current population of the Island, that is 3.85% of them supporting their club. Being an island there are no nearby towns from which to gather support like, say, Manchester United FC, who attract spectators from all over the UK. But even if you take just the population of Manchester itself then United would need gates of 96, 812 to match Jersey. Or - closer to home - if you take the population of the London Borough of Wandsworth, Park would need a ground capable of accommodating 10,792.

Small wonder that many in the crowd appeared a bit confused over some of the Laws (especially when the ball was passed back into the 22 and then kicked out on the full., which still confuses some hardened fans!) and so full credit to Jersey for some sterling missionary work on behalf of the sport in bringing in so many new punters. The worry for them presumably must be that, if they did get promoted, how many more people could they realistically expect to support them?! For the moment, that one is probably filed under "Nice problems to have".

National One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Try	Loss	Pts
Jersey	19	16	0	3	550	255	295	10	2	71*
Fylde	19	13	0	6	589	440	149	15	3	70
Rosslyn Park	19	14	0	5	555	394	161	10	3	69
Ealing	19	12	1	6	558	409	149	11	4	65
Macclesfield	19	12	0	7	525	445	80	12	2	62
Blackheath	19	9	1	9	468	468	0	7	6	51
Cambridge	19	10	0	9	506	557	-51	7	2	49
Tynedale	18	8	0	10	473	418	55	12	4	48
Sedgley Park	19	9	0	10	446	548	-102	8	2	46
Coventry	18	9	1	8	385	433	-47	5	2	45
Wharfedale	19	8	0	11	419	450	-31	6	6	44
Cinderford	19	7	0	12	440	432	8	6	7	41
Blaydon	17	6	1	10	392	435	-43	8	5	39
Stourbridge	19	5	0	14	407	510	-104	4	7	31
Birmingham & Solihull	19	6	0	13	328	621	-293	3	2	24*
Barking	19	4	0	15	338	565	-227	2	4	22

*Deducted 5 points

Fylde moved to second place in the League on Saturday with a good 29-13 win over Sedgley Park that saw them run in the four tries necessary for a bonus point.

Ealing, though, slipped to fourth with a narrow defeat (27-24) at Cinderford, who are Park's next away opponents. Macclesfield are fifth after blasting Barking by 48-12 at Goresbrook. Barking now look unlikely to escape the drop. Birmingham & Solihull, with their second win on the trot, away to fellow-strugglers Stourbridge still have a considerable gap to bridge. Park's next opponents, Tynedale, went down to the narrowest of defeats, 23-21, at Cambridge.

This weekend's matches: Birmingham & Solihull v Sedgley Park, Blackheath v Stourbridge, Coventry v Barking, Ealing v Wharfedale, Fylde v Blaydon, Jersey v Cinderford, Macclesfield v Cambridge, Rosslyn Park v Tynedale.

Steve Pape returns

Park supporters at Jersey were somewhat surprised to see the familiar figure of Steve Pape run out with the replacements on Saturday. It appears that the popular Papey is on short term loan from London Scottish to provide some cover while Dan Lloyd-Jones recovers from his current injury.

Dates for your diary

As Shaun points out, "These special events are all vital fundraisers if we are to succeed off the field in the 2nd half of the season". We have coming up:

Rosslyn Park Six Nations City Lunch at Vinopolis- Friday 16th March 2012

Former Players Lunch, Fylde 1st XV Game- Saturday 24th March 2012

Rosslyn Park HSBC National Schools Sevens 2012- Monday March 26th-March 30th 2012

London Floodlit Sevens 2012 - Thursday May 3rd 2012.

Rosslyn Park Summer Ball- Saturday May 5th 2012.

Contact the Club Office if you are interested in booking for any of these events. Additionally, see previous page, we also have the Obolensky Association Dinner coming up on Wednesday 15th February. Please make a note in your diary to support these events.

Although Parknews is accessible from the Rosslyn Park website, it is independently edited and any views expressed are not necessarily those of the Club's Committee or Officials unless specifically stated to be so. The Editor warns potential litigants that he is skint and not worth suing.