

# PARKNEWS

Season  
2011-12

Issue No: 24

25 January 2012

The e-magazine for all Rosslyn Park supporters

## AFTER THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW



Graham Barr breaks against Tynedale [Photo: David Whittam]

**W**elcome to Parknews. It was surely a classic case of "After the Lord Mayor's show" so far as the 1<sup>st</sup> XV were concerned on Saturday. The players had raised their game to play with immense intensity at Jersey the previous weekend, and looked relatively lacklustre this week. They are human beings, not machines and – hindsight being such a wonderful thing – it was possibly a predictable follow-up to such an effort. Nevertheless it was a wake-up call, if one was needed, that nothing but top form every single week can ensure success in this extremely competitive League. All seemed to be going well at half time, taking a lead into the interval against the elements. But the second half illustrated the old axiom that you can't play rugby without the ball - and Park just could not win enough of it to make headway. A defence that looked utterly impregnable at Jersey leaked 5 second half tries. Just one of those days, and best simply to put it behind us and move on.

### Cinderford

**I**t doesn't get any easier, with a trip to our old friends at Cinderford this Saturday. The Foresters always provide tough opposition, and the League table paints a totally false picture. Since recruiting England's Phil Vickery as a coaching consultant their only loss has been at Jersey last Saturday – and even there they stretched the top club to the extent that they emerged with a losing bonus point. Vickery's appointment may add to the caricature of Cinderford as a forward dominated side, and it's true that they boast a very strong pack capable of locking horns with the best, but ignore their nippy backs at your peril!

On the field, the players can expect the sort of welcome the Forest of Dean sides reserve specially for Londoners, but off the field it's as friendly a club as you could hope to visit – real decent rugby people -so please do come along and give the team your vocal support.

By road, from the M4 at Junction 15 take the A419 for about 15 miles to the A417 until meeting the A40. Follow that through 2 roundabouts and at the third turn off onto the A48 for nearly 8 miles before turning off onto the A4151 (Elton Road). In about 3.6 miles, at a *Continued back page.....*

### Club Diary

**Saturday 28 January**

**Cinderford**

v

**1st XV**

National 1

Away KO 2:30

**2nd XV**

v

**Old Albanians**

Zoo Sports Shield Div 1

Home KO 2:30

**Dorking II v Hatters**

Zoo Sports Shield Div 3

Away KO TBA

**4th XV v Ealing Cougars**

Middlesex Merit 1

Richmond Park KO TBA

**Teddington II v Nomads**

Middlesex Merit 1

Away KO TBA

**B XV TBA**

**Sunday 29 January**

No fixtures advised

Following 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:news@rosslynpark.co.uk)

# TIRED PARK ARE TROUNCED

Rosslyn Park 23

Tynedale 37

National 1

Despite fielding similar personnel, this was not the Rosslyn Park team that performed so heroically at Jersey the previous weekend. Perhaps the physical and emotional toll of that supreme effort taxed Park's part-timers more than was obvious at the time, because the tank looked decidedly empty here.

The afternoon started well enough for the home side. Playing into the teeth of a strong blustery wind, they soon won a penalty, which was kicked to touch but they were unable to profit. However, they soon won another penalty, this time in front of the posts, for Ross Laidlaw to put them 3-0 ahead on 10 minutes.

Two minutes later Tynedale fly half Gavin Beasley equalised with a penalty of his own, but despite the wind Park looked the better side with some incisive attacking play. A John Rudd run through the middle was stopped but Park were able to spin the ball wide and Steve Parsons ran in a good try for 8-3 on 21 minutes. Laidlaw's conversion attempt looked right on target until blown off course.

Park were immediately back at the opposition and Tynedale forced to resort to extra-legal methods, resulting in the loss of flanker Grant Beasley to the sin bin. Park tried to press home their consequent advantage but obdurate defence saw them claim only a Laidlaw penalty towards the end of Beasley's "sentence", which increased the lead to 11-3.

Despite having the worst of the elements, Park looked in no trouble and put together some good attacks, eventually seeing flanker Joe Trayfoot go in for a try out wide. Such was the influence of the wind, however, that a kicker of Laidlaw's pedigree simply could not reach the posts.

With the last move of the match Tynedale had a really concentrated attack, finally spreading the ball for number 8 Sam Shires to gallop over, his score making it 16-8 at the interval. With Park about to enjoy the apparent advantage of conditions in the second half, it looked more like a death rattle than a warning. Which shows how wrong you can be.

Tynedale were now forced to play close-contact "up your jumper" stuff, and proved very good at it. Park kicked off deep into visiting territory, which was the last they saw of the ball. A succession of pick-and-drives and close passes saw Tynedale work the ball to half way, where they won a penalty, kicked to touch and drove over courtesy of prop David Dickinson, leaving Park to kick off again at 16-13.

Rob Anderson commands the line-out



Steve Parsons scores for Park [all match photos by David Whittam]

Tynedale's ball retention was superb, and whatever latent threat Park's backs might have presented was rendered ineffective without the ball. Again Tynedale made steady progress into the home 22 where they won a penalty, and a quick-witted tap saw full-back Hamish Smales go in by the posts to give his side the lead for the first time, Beasley's conversion making it 16-20.

If that looked bad for Park, worse was to come four minutes later when Tynedale mounted a super attack up their left past a couple of tired tackles and quickly flashed the ball across for winger Peter Cole to claim a good try for 16-25, and bring up the 4-try bonus.

Park were still unable to wrest any worthwhile possession from their eager opponents, who were supplying a text book lesson on how to prevail with a limited game in these particular conditions. Back in the home 22, they were again rewarded with a penalty, kicked to touch. The drive that took lock Richard Boyle over seemed a tad too easy for the comfort of home supporters. Beasley's conversion brought up 16-32 with 20 minutes remaining.

Park really did try to pull it back. A good move took them to the visitors' line but, just as a score looked likely, they were frustrated by conceding a penalty. Back they came and were rewarded with a penalty just outside the 22. Laidlaw hammered it to touch and Park drove over, prop Lorne Ward the scorer. Laidlaw's conversion left them to score ten points with 12 minutes remaining in order to turn things round.

Park gave it their best shot, immediately returning to the attack, forcing a further penalty, again hooped to touch. Camped on the line, all things looked possible as Tynedale defended desperately but, again, as they sought to probe for another opening they conceded a penalty.

Tynedale managed to work the ball to the Rosslyn Park 22 for the final proof that somehow the Rugby Gods had been offended. It would have been bad enough for a defender to have knocked on, but for the ball to conveniently fall conveniently to visiting lock Boyle to allow him to lope in for his second try seemed somehow a bit too cruel. At 23-37 Park's goose was not so much cooked as completely frazzled.

Playing for pride alone, Park managed a last incursion into the Tynedale 22 but when the visitors secured the ball they had no hesitation in wellying it out over their own goal line to bring a win they probably did not anticipate. It would be wrong to be too harsh on Park (though the coaches may prove an exception here). It was a tired looking performance, but those who followed them to Jersey may well endorse the fact that it was at least understandable.

**Park:** Edwards; Rudd, Parsons, Gower (Robinson), Mantella; Laidlaw; Barr; Ovens, Gotting, Ward (Huggett); Pape (McKeen), Anderson; Trayfoot, Rowland, Lock.

**Sub (did not play):** Richmond, Baxter

**Park scorers:** Parsons (T), Trayfoot (T), Ward (T), Laidlaw (2P, C).

# SECOND HALF SINKS SLINGBACKS



Slingbacks 13  
Woodbridge 29  
Championship 2

**T**he Slingbacks, with a squad of only 17 players, put up a characteristically brave performance against a talented Woodbridge side, but were eventually out-gunned in the second half after losing combative centre Karin to an injury. Park started well, playing with a strong wind (though with not so much kicking in the ladies' game this is far less of a factor) and soon established themselves firmly in Woodbridge territory.

Woodbridge showed how dangerous they could be with a quick-fire raid that saw them get over the line, and convert, with a fraction of the possession and territory that Park had enjoyed. It proved to be a warning, but the Slingbacks cheered their supporter by soon re-establishing themselves at the other end. They still had difficulty in breaching the line and jumped at the chance of another Lou Micklewright penalty, which they turned around with a 13-7 advantage.

**W**oodbridge looked a different team in the second half. Eschewing their problems in close contact they began to throw the ball around and to use their pacey backs. A runaway try by their inside centre closed things to 13-12, missing the conversion. When shortly afterwards their fly half sold an outrageous dummy on halfway and sprinted away to score it became clear that this was going to be a long second half for the Park girls.

Park did everything they could to stem the tide, but on the day Woodbridge were simply too good and added two more tries, converting one of them. This only added to the Slingbacks' frustration, as the losing bonus point in Championship 2 is for losing by 15 or less and this took the margin to 16 points at 13-29.

The Slingbacks next match is the return fixture with Woodbridge in deepest Suffolk. The girls can take heart from the fact that they more than matched Woodbridge at close quarters: if coaches Nick Huggett and Will Readhead can come up with a tactic to stop Woodbridge spreading the ball wide to their dangerous runners, and a couple more players return, then the result is certainly not a foregone conclusion.



Nicola Smith scores for Park

In close quarters Park's technical skills were excellent in retaining the ball, particularly some top class rucking. By way of contrast, while Woodbridge were clearly very dangerous with ball in hand, they had extreme difficulty in winning it from the committed Slingbacks. Instead they conceded a litany of penalties for mostly technical offences, to the extent that the referee twice warned their skipper.

Park tried to take advantage with a series of quick tap penalties, but lacked a good old fashioned bludgeon to get across the line. The Park pack were excellent in providing a platform, and fly half Milo Brueton constantly probed for gaps but the visitors' defence was so well-drilled that there simply weren't any.

Full-back Laura Heywood tried a few characteristic powerful runs from further out but even she could not find a way through.

Eventually the powerful Nicola Smith forced her way over from close quarters to break the stalemate, Lou Micklewright neatly converting. Park returned to the attack but were again unable to make territory and possession count, and when they won another kickable penalty, Lou Micklewright was again on the spot to extend the lead to 10-0.



Lou Micklewright nails a penalty



Dani Williams is the ball carrier, supported by Laura Templeman and Laura Heywood



Laura Heywood has the ball, supported by (l-r) Kika Haland, Sam Emery and Lou Micklewright

# TOUGH MATCH-UP FOR NOMADS

Battersea Ironsides 27

Nomads 10

Friendly

**W**e were unprepared at the beginning of the match with the kit caught up in traffic and not really getting much of a warm up at all. Still we started the game with force and some dominance in the rucks, securing our ball and playing our rugby.

Some nice expansive play and great lines by the backs allowed for DSQ to get an early try 5-0 to the Nomads. With the wind against us Ironsides fought back kicking the ball into our half whenever they could turn it over. Unfortunately this was to be our Achilles heel for the day. A combination of yours truly not hitting the mark, strong winds and the oppo having two well drilled lighthouses, we struggled to win many of our own lineouts, let alone contesting theirs. With the wind this made it difficult for us to get back into the oppo half, although when the Nomads had the ball we were the stronger of the two teams, crashing the ball up and spinning it down the line with some great support.

Unfortunately the smallest mistake meant that they would be back into our half and we'd need to turn over the ball in the rucks to regain possession (something we were good at with terriers like JP, MP and Coops). The scrums were solid with Lapin and Bob "The OX" steadying the front row and some brunt from Moff and Coaches in the second row. If they hadn't fed the ball into their number 8 on every scrum we'd have been able to win some more off them; nevertheless a good set piece.

Our defence was very strong, holding off wave after wave of crash balls from some big players and some massive hits from Gee, DSQ and Briggs. The whole defensive line was excellent and if we can

keep that up this weekend, Teddington are going to struggle to break through. Ironsides were able to make the most from a lineout in our 5m which put them into the lead going into halftime.

We started the second half with the wind behind us, although due to our inability to capitalise from the lineouts we needed to keep the ball in hand and run most of our penalties. Still with the likes of Coops and Coaches putting in some good crash ball and the backs demonstrating some excellent and quick hands we were able to make some yards. We had a good offensive spell where we camped on their 5m, but we just couldn't get the ball over. They managed to turn it around and head back into our half where they had 1 try held up, but eventually managed to get some more points on the board. We lost some composure in the scrum with the fatigue of the second half putting more pressure on ourselves, however did show tenacity in our defence. The final 10 minutes were played down in the Ironsides half where we managed to get some quick ball out of a ruck and across the backs for Gav to score a final 5 for the Nomads ahead of the whistle.

Final score 27-10.

A tough game, although considering Surrey 2 is 3 divisions ahead of us not a bad game at all. If we had been able to capitalise on the lineouts I think we would have given them a run for their money. Some great defence from both the backs and forwards (the ref had to ask me if the number 7 (JP) and 13 (Briggs) could make-sure the players they were dumping landed safely). If we can improve our lineouts ahead of this Saturday and play similar rugby we'll be on top of Teddington. Again best wishes to Jamie who had been having an excellent game (and season) with the shoulder.

Man Of The Match goes to Briggs this week for his tireless efforts in defence with his big hits and also his great lines and attacking ball.

# PLAY-OFFS BECKON FOR FOURS

Park IV 18

Civil Service 13

Middlesex Merit 1

**F**ours skipper Anthony Leatham reports that, having been thrown off our usual game plan by a Civils side offering uncontested scrums from the outset, we failed to capitalise on the opposition's weaker scrum and lost our aggressive edge at ruck time (giving away some soft turn-overs... not a euphemism), and thereby placing too much reliance on first phase ball to the backs, which is always a big ask. To be fair to the opposition, they boxed clever with the resources that they had but we had to take a look at ourselves,

10-0 down at half time and a sin-binning to boot (don't ask), and regroup. The message was clear - stamp our authority on the game before it slipped away from us. The half-time talk from Chi had the desired effect and in the face of a howling gale and against the slope we played phase after phase - pick and go, off 9, off 10. Big lads

punching holes with support. This led to the first try from Kouj, great angle and step, which fuelled our self-belief and allowed us to put more point on the board. We had to defend our line valiantly in the final dying minutes. Not the prettiest but certainly the right result!

Rallying his troops, "Fresh" points out that, "Unsurprisingly, our league position has not change dramatically off the back of this win but it has allowed us to catch up - must win game from here on in:

28th Jan - Ealing

4th Feb - Staines

18th Feb - Baa Baas

25th Feb - Imperial College OBs

3rd March - Chiswick

Clear your diaries, cancel skiing/fishing trips, allow other work-colleagues to go to Twickenham on that corporate knees-up, this is rugby season! If we put in a good run from here, a place in the play-offs awaits!"

He also reports the other result from the weekend: Double Duvet decided to pop the question and got engaged on the weekend, many congratulations!

## Nosey Parker

**T**he French have a phrase, *l'esprit de l'escalier*, which translates as "staircase wit". It refers to the phenomenon that you always think of the witty retort, or what you **should** have said, after you have left the room and are half way down the stairs.

In a previous Parknews the Editor wrote a piece about the forthcoming Wharton Report. In shorthand, it could have been summarised as saying that the report will be a stitch-up, concluding that what is needed below Championship level is unfunded regional leagues, as the RFU proposed before and as was voted out by the clubs. Moreover the piece suggested that the RFU was also a conspiracy between the big money interests and the county blazers representing the Old Rubberduckians of this world to screw everyone inbetween.

On Saturday I was accosted by one who moves in these elevated circles, and who averred that I was completely mistaken. The RFU was going to spend two years consulting widely, including players at all levels (a fine tactic for pretending there is a consensus around your own viewpoint, because you framed the question and heard the response; it smacks to me of the RFU knowing it can't win the vote if the clubs are left to their own devices). Moreover, my interlocutor said, I misunderstood: what was proposed, which was four regional leagues immediately below the Championship with the winners of those leagues playing off against each other for promotion.

I said that was exactly what I was opposed to. I wanted to aver, but he walked away, that what was needed was a national league at the highest semi-pro level so the best could compete against each other every week, not just at the end of the season. What, of course, I **should** have asked is: "OK - if it's not a stitch up, how come you know what the outcome will be?" Ah, *L'esprit de l'escalier*.

# SECOND HALF BLOW FOR BS

B XV 0

Grasshoppers II 22

Middlesex Merit 2

by Pete Snow

**O**n a blustery day in Richmond Park the Bs turned out to face league leaders Grasshoppers. Three unusual things might have grabbed the attention of any casual observer.

First, there was a screaming crosswind. If you stood on the upwind side of the team huddle, it was difficult to catch your teammates' words. Kicking was going to be unpredictable.

Second, the Bs line-up was an unfamiliar one. Player availability and oppo coaches had conspired against us, leaving us with a team of many ringers – to whom we are very grateful. Of particular mention were the Canadian trio in town for a reunion weekend and happy to join in a game of rugby. (One of them had only stepped off a plane from Montreal at midday!) Also making their debut for the Bs were Matt Turner and Gordo Morrison, whom we look forward to playing alongside in the future.

Third, there was an unusually strong police presence. In delivering the post protectors, Bob Coutts had incurred a hefty £60 fine from the local constabulary, and could be seen receiving a stern talking-to at the side of the pitch.

So the startled Bs deserve credit for meeting the Grasshoppers' spirited first half attack and keeping them at bay. Their young backs looked dangerous and threatened to score, but the Park defence fanned out and put in the crucial tackles. The closest the 'Hoppers came was a penalty that fizzed past the right-hand post.

Half time score: 0 - 0.

**I**t was in those first few minutes of the second half that the game changed. Evidently spurred on by the addition of some fresh legs, Grasshoppers came out fighting and soon secured the ball on the right wing. Putting it through a couple of neat phases, they ran it over in the corner before the Bs had quite collected themselves.

Rosslyn Park came back and looked promising, meeting the opposition threat in the scrum and enjoying some good forward forays from Gordo Morrison at number eight. However, a neat intercept from the Grasshoppers' outside centre saw him run in another try, which was then converted.

The story was much the same for the rest of the half, with the opposition backs taking advantage of overlaps and running in two more tries. In more ways than one, the wind was not in the right direction.

Final score: Bs 0 - 22 Grasshoppers II. We'll need better fitness and lots of grit when we no doubt meet this team again in the final.

## Fitness coach Gotting in health scare shock!



## STOP PRESS

### CAMBRIDGE FINANCIAL CISIS - DoR SACKED AND PLAYERS UNPAID

As Parknews goes to press there is news that Cambridge have sacked their Director of rugby, Bob Crooks, and have stopped paying their players. They say the decision had to be taken to ensure their financial survival. The Club's formal statement says:

"For the club to keep surviving the Committee has had to make some difficult, but ultimately necessary, decisions about cost cutting. As a consequence, the club has had to end the tenure of Bob Crooks as our director of rugby. Bob has been a great asset to the club over the last 3 and a half years and has stuck with us through thick and thin. As the funds available to National 1 sides have dwindled, against the worsening backdrop of the wider economy, the club has to cut its cloth accordingly."

The club has also said that any of the playing staff who are paid for their playing role will no longer receive a salary. Cambridge are 18 points clear of the relegation zone. Much will depend upon the reaction of the players and how many will opt to play out the season unpaid. If Cambridge had let matters drift to the point of calling in the receiver, then they would have at least suffered a points deduction that would have brought relegation. By cutting their cost base immediately, they at least stand a chance of identifying alternative sources of finance for next season whilst remaining a National 1 club.

Cambridge recently weathered a financial crisis when their main sponsor pulled out in acrimonious circumstances, raising funds from within their own membership. So the current overall economic climate may not be the only factor at play here. But if a City as rich as is Cambridge cannot support a National 1 club then there will be many others becoming anxious.

There will be more than the usual interest in the teamsheet when the Blood & Sands take the field this week. Should the players not decide to rally to the cause - as is their right as contracted professionals - and Cambridge were to start losing heavily every week, then there are bound to be noises from some clubs who played them at full-strength that this has rendered the League unfair, but it is difficult to see what could realistically be done about it.

Let's hope things pick up for them - it isn't a situation that should make anyone gloat. "There but for the grace of God..." And all that.



From front page... roundabout, take third exit into Dockham Road, where you will find the ground. For those of you with satnav the address is Cinderford Rugby Football & Sports Club, Dockham Rd, Cinderford GL14 2AQ. By public transport, a train to Gloucester is your best bet, from where it's a short, and signposted, walk to the bus station. Services 30 and 31 go to Cinderford. The 30 leaves at 40 minutes past the hour, the 31 at 10 past the hour, both taking 33 minutes. Book to Cinderford County store, which is only yards from the ground. Returning, there's a 31 at 21 minutes past each hour and a 30 at 15 past the hour. (These details are given in good faith having checked the Gloucester bus timetables, but obviously check for yourself if in any doubt).

If you are reasonably fit and enjoy mountaineering, break your bus journey at the village of Littledean, where the village pub opposite the bus stop (owned, I believe, by the Cinderford President) does a good real ale. You can then walk to the ground, forking right where the main road continues left, and then take the first left up a very steep hill. From the crossroads at the top there are stunning views in all directions. Just continue over the hill and it leads down to the ground. But allow 40 minutes unless you are a potential fell runner. (if you are driving, don't try this route – the road to the ground tapers into an alley and you'll be left reversing out uphill).

## 2nd XV

We have no further details, alas, but the 2s got thumped by 61-12 at Ealing last Saturday. Unfortunately John Weatherall did not attend, so no pics or team details either.

## Slingbacks

The Slingbacks also had "a game of two halves" last weekend. They held a narrow lead at half-time against a distinctly useful Woodbridge side, but in the second half the visitors began to spread the ball and run out wide and eventually the Slingbacks could not prosper on spirit alone. Report inside.

## Clubsides

Will Thorogood reports that, firstly, he would like to thank everybody who helped out the B's on Saturday. Their game (v Grasshoppers) was on, then it was off (because of staff shortages) then it was back on! "I would call it the "light switch" match! It's good to see co-operation and assistance between all our sides... a true and good club ethos!"

## Dates for your diary

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

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

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

**London Floodlit Sevens 2012 - Thursday May 3rd 2012.**

**Roslyn 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.

## National One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Try	Loss	Pts
Jersey	20	17	0	3	567	267	300	10	2	75*
Ealing	20	13	1	6	601	426	175	12	4	70
Fylde	20	13	0	7	599	474	125	15	3	70
Roslyn Park	20	14	0	6	578	431	147	10	3	69
Macclesfield	20	13	0	7	568	464	104	13	2	67
Blackheath	20	10	1	9	509	495	14	8	6	56
Tynedale	19	9	0	10	510	441	69	13	4	53
Sedgley Park	20	10	0	10	478	563	-85	9	2	51
Coventry	19	10	1	8	412	447	-35	5	2	49
Cambridge	20	10	0	10	525	600	-75	7	2	49
Wharfedale	20	8	0	12	436	493	-57	6	6	44
Blaydon	18	7	1	10	426	445	-19	9	5	44
Cinderford	20	7	0	13	452	449	3	6	8	42
Stourbridge	20	5	0	15	434	551	-117	4	7	31
Birmingham & Solihull	20	6	0	14	343	653	-310	3	2	24*
Barking	20	4	0	16	352	591	-239	2	4	22

\*deducted 5 points

What are they putting in the water up in Geordieland? Not only did Tynedale spring a surprise at the Rock last Saturday, but their neighbours, Blaydon, had a stunning 34-10 win at Fylde, leaving Jersey with a 5 point advantage. Jersey won again at home but Park's next opponents – Cinderford – made them fight every inch of the way, fully deserving their losing bonus point. Looks like being another long afternoon next Saturday! Ealing thumped Wharfedale by 43-17 to move up to second. Having gone through a bad patch, Macclesfield have now pulled the gap between them and ourselves back to 2 points following a 43-19 win over Cambridge.

At the other end of the table, the three bottom clubs all lost. Birmingham & Solihull at home to Sedgley Park, Barking away at Coventry and Stourbridge away at Blackheath.

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

The B's cobbled together a side, and played a tight game, in very windy conditions. There, actually, was not much between the B's and Grasshoppers in the first half..0-0 at half time. The B's were unlucky to concede a couple of breakaway tries in the second half, but granted, Grasshoppers did create a couple of well worked tries. Unfortunately, the B's went down 0-22. Well played for what was very much a scratch side. 1-all, in the "Test Series", however, if these two sides meet in the play-offs, there will be a good opportunity for us to go 2-1 up! We have a report inside.

The 4's were on the adjacent pitch in their MMT1 encounter against CS 1863 (Civil Service, to me and you). The 4's had put out a huge pack with front row back-up. However, C.S. 1863 lost two of their front rows in the morning. This meant scrums had to go uncontested, never ideal, which suited C.S. more. Even though, only playing with 14 men (competition rules), C.S. were 10-0 up at half time. The 4's re-appraised their tactics, and gradually clawed back the deficit. Territorially superior and keeping much of the possession in the second half, scoring three tries and a penalty, to just a replied penalty. 18-13 win for the 4's.

Hatters had a bit of a journey to Sutton and Epsom to play their 2's. Unable to shake off the journey, the Hatters were quickly 19-0 down. Oh no! However, they gathered themselves together, coughed out the cobwebs, and got all the pistons firing. A great comeback, but the result never sure throughout the game (it could have gone either way) but an excellent 29-27 win for the Hatters! That's 5 on the trot, now! Keep it going.

Nomads played a friendly against a big and physical Battersea Ironsides First XV (Surrey 2), I think). A good game, and good test, but the Nomads were starved of line-out possession, particularly, which limited their normally expansive style of play. Plenty of defensive work, but a 27-10 loss in the end. Big game this week against Teddington 2'S!

**Although Parknews is accessible from the Roslyn 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.**