

# PARKNEWS



The E-magazine for Rosslyn Park supporters 21st May 2009 - Issue 116

## NEW SIGNINGS STRENGTHEN SQUAD

Welcome to what is effectively the first Parknews of the 2009-10 season, which for Rosslyn Park kicks off at Bedford Blues with a practice match on Saturday 15th August.

The team have been training on Monday and Wednesday evenings, with track sessions on Saturdays. The Editor can honestly say that I have never seen the players fitter, nor a more positive atmosphere emanating from the squad, this early in the season.

Before we get too carried away, though, it's worth making a couple of points. Last season we hardly shone pre-season: the thrashing at Luton in our final practice match was a humiliation, and yet we had our most successful season for a while. Secondly, other clubs will not have stood still. A by-product of the recession is that there are probably more quality players available than usual - and everyone is trying to snap them up.

Each level within the league pyramid improves each year, but this year there is likely to be a step change difference in National 2 South. We shall need to improve in order to stand still. Just look at the way some of the bottom sides improved towards the end of last season with an infusion of loan players from Premiership Academies. Our watchword must be to fear no one but to respect everyone.

Our first League match at home to Clifton, promoted as Champions of South West 1, should tell us more. This should be a really good test of where we stand in the grand scheme of things. There's going to be a lot going on that day in terms of curtain-raisers, etc so make a note in your diary now - Saturday 5 September.

### Meet the new boys

Director of Rugby, Shaun Justice, is pleased with the acquisitions thus far made during the close season. He said, "We are extremely happy with how our summer has gone. The really positive news is that we have kept the majority of our successful squad from last season together. Sadly we had to lose a few guys: Dan Frazier was a loan player from Quins who will now be tested in a higher league, Rhys Evans is taking up an exciting work opportunity in Hong Kong and Richard Mahony moves to Staines in a player/coach role- we wish them all the best of luck.

"We have recruited to fill all the areas we felt necessary to make sure there is real competition in every position. There are more league games this year -30 - and it is vital that we have a squad strong enough to cope with this.

"The new players have fitted in extremely well. We always look to recruit on character as well as ability and have every confidence that the new faces will help grow the fantastic spirit that exists already within the squad.

"We are also nourishing some real young talent from our Youth set up / Continued Page 2



Pre-season training is well under way [Photo: David Whittam]

**Saturday 15 August**  
**Bedford Blues v 1st XV**  
(Away, friendly, KO TBA)

**Saturday 22 August**  
**Senior squad play 2 matches**  
**Home v Reading Abbey**  
**Home v Civil Service**  
KOs TBA

*Activities for everyone - meet the players at a barbecue after the matches, plus disco / live music into the evening*  
*Free admission*

**Saturday 29 August**  
**Blackheath v 1st XV**  
**Blackheath 2nd v 2nd XV**  
(Blackheath training ground, close to Eltham station KO TBA)

**Saturday 5 September**  
**1st XV v Clifton**  
Home, National 2 South  
KO 3:00PM

**Plus curtain raisers and other events**  
*The Clubhouse is open from about 5:00PM Mondays and Wednesdays for training. Come along for a social drink and chat.*

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within the senior squad. We will have between 10-15 players aged 18/19 training within the senior squad this season. Hopefully their games will develop quickly with the help of the senior coaches and the more experienced players around them."

**Steve Millard (28) Position: Prop**



Previous Clubs, including number of 1<sup>st</sup> XV appearances  
Rosslyn Park (1999/00) - 15 appearances  
Wasps U21's (2000-2002)  
London Welsh (2002 - 2007) - 100 league appearances  
London Scottish (2007 - 2009) - 39 appearances  
Other Rugby Honours: England U18 A; England Universities

Steve said, "The decision to re-join Park after a few years away was fairly simple. Having met with Shaun it was clear that the club have ambitions to win the league this season and I know from having played against Park over the last 2 seasons that the team is more than capable of achieving those goals. There are a lot of familiar faces still at the club (Kojo, Holty, Cow, Kearnsy, Dowse and Pippa) and I know a lot of the players from Welsh....so it doesn't really feel like I am joining a new club in some respects.

"My first impressions of the club are that it is very professional and everyone here is incredibly friendly and shares the same ambition. Pre-season so far has been well structured (good work Murray) and the players are all getting on well together, which should stand us in good stead for the start of the season."

**Jon Dawson (29) Position: Tight Head prop**



Previous Clubs:  
Harlequins – Over 100 appearances (99-05)  
Wasps – (05-06) 15 appearances  
Cambridge University Rugby Club – (06-09)- Over 30 appearances.  
Bath – 1 appearance when I did my knee! – (06-07)  
Other Rugby Honours: England U16 'A', 18's (2 years), 21's (3 years) and England XV (vs. the Barbarians in 2004, not a capped game). Barbarians (2 appearances). Cambridge University Rugby Blue 2006, 2007 & 2008 (Captain in 2008).

Jon said, "I joined RP as I wanted a club that could fulfil my needs for a friendly and family orientated rugby club, strong playing squad and ambition. Furthermore I was impressed with the structure of the club and where the DOR and coaches are committed to improving the club and players. I wanted to join a real 'rugby' club with a heart and a history. I believed RP has that, and I hope to be part of that in the coming season.

Everybody has been very welcoming from the Chairman right down through the club. There is a nice atmosphere and everybody is working hard to be ready for the start of the season and give a good account of ourselves in what will be a really competitive league."

**Jonny Barrett (29) Position: Hooker / Back-row.**

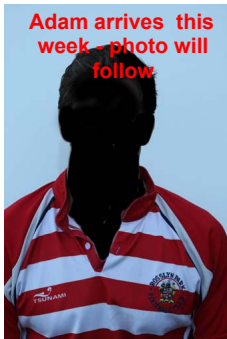


Previous Clubs, including number of 1<sup>st</sup> XV appearances-  
London Wasps (47)  
Other Rugby Honours-  
England Students

Jonny said, "When returning to the game after a 2 years absence there were several clubs that I considered playing for. I spoke to a number of guys I've played with and against over the years and considered my reasons for getting back in to the game. Overwhelmingly the thing I missed most about rugby was being part of the banter between a group of great lads that bond together on and off the pitch to produce a successful team. There were clubs that had elements of one or the other, but it seemed from speaking to guys whose opinions

I respect that Park was the place that ticked the boxes. My very early feelings of the club have lived up to what I expected. It seems a very lateral, player led club and I felt at ease straight away, as when I turned up for the pre-season meeting I recognised half the room, some I had seen last week, some not for years. On the one hand the room seemed full of optimism and expectation that we'll end the year as league champions, and on the other there was just as much excitement about tearing New York & Boston apart on tour! I hope that my early impressions turn out to be accurate....."

**Adam Jones (27) Position: Second Row**



Previous Clubs:  
Cross Keys RFC (Welsh Premiership, Last season)  
Welsh Crawshays (Invitational rep, 16 app)  
Rugby Noceto FC (Serie A Italy, 2 years) 60+ first team games.

Adam said, 'I was greatly honoured to have been approached by Rosslyn Park. Seeing what they achieved last season, coupled with their great tradition, really made this a no brainer for me. With the signings the club have made for the forthcoming season added to the already excellent squad, I believe that we can be serious contenders for promotion. I hope I can strengthen this already well estab-

lished team!"

**Simon Etheredge (31) Position: Back row.**



Previous Clubs:  
Zingari-Richmond (Dunedin, Otago) 60 games 1998-2001  
Exeter Chiefs. 47 League and Cup games. 2002-2005  
London Welsh. 52 League and Cup games. 2005-2009  
Honours:  
Southland NPC team 2000/2001. 22 games;  
Highlander Otago Colts 2001; Otago Sevens Otago Development Squad; South Island Maori

Simon said, "I Joined because it is a club that is building steadily and responsibly for the future, putting correct structures in place with the goal of winning the league. Also a chance to be reunited with a lot of old mates and play hard and enjoyable rugby with them again."

**Mark Lock. (29) Position: Back Row**



Previous Clubs:  
Wasps 1<sup>st</sup> XV (80 appearances),  
Leeds 1<sup>st</sup> XV (15 appearances),  
Ealing 1<sup>st</sup> XV (26 appearances).  
Other Rugby Honours-  
England U21's.

Mark said, "My reasons for joining Park are that it is an ambitious club, with a huge amount of history, with a friendly, family atmosphere, its clear that the players and everyone I have met so far have a huge amount of loyalty to the club and love being a part of Rosslyn Park. With all these factors in mind I feel very lucky and excited to be playing for Rosslyn Park next season."

**Ross Laidlaw (25) Position: Fly half**

Previous Clubs:



Plymouth Albion 07-09 (35 starts, 302 points)  
Saracens 06/07  
London Irish 03-06 (3 starts, 32 points)  
Bristol 02/03  
Representative honours:  
England U21, U16

Ross said "I've signed for Rosslyn Park because it is an ambitious club that's really going places whilst maintaining a great reputation within rugby circles for having a family atmosphere." /Continued next page...

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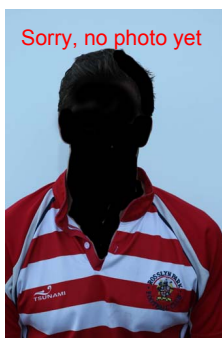
### Marc Sweeney (27) Position: Centre



Previous Clubs –  
Llanelli Academy 01/03  
Llanelli RFC 03/04 (15 1st team appearances)  
Cornish Pirates RFC 04/05 (18 1st team appearances)  
Cornish All Blacks RFC 05/08 (60 appearances)  
Newbury RFC 08/09 (18 1st team appearances)  
Honours –  
England Counties (2 caps 2007)

Marc said "The main reason I was attracted to Rosslyn Park was because of their ambition to progress onto higher levels of rugby. Their coaching staff along with the quality of current and recently signed players is a statement of their intent for success in the coming seasons. Their attacking style of rugby along with their tradition as being a sociable club in the heart of London confirmed my decision to sign for Rosslyn Park RFC. Having had such a very warm welcome from players, coaches and committee members, I already feel at home and cannot wait for our first pre season encounter."

### Allen Chiltern ((30) Position: Scrum Half



Previous Clubs (all 1st XV) -  
Newcastle 30 apps,  
Caerphilly 45 apps,  
Celtic warriors 6 apps, London welsh 93 league app 105 app overall  
Other Rugby Honours-  
Wales U21, U16

Allen is on loan from London Welsh, but is committed to playing for Rosslyn Park for the whole of the coming season

## Meet the players

One of the ways to underline what a friendly club we are is to come along and meet the players yourselves. On Saturday 22nd August we have two home "friendly" matches in which the whole squad is expected to take part. A barbecue is being organised afterwards with the specific purpose of inter-mingling between players and supporters. Also, while pre-season training continues on Mondays and Wednesdays the Clubhouse bar will be open from around 5:00PM and you're very welcome to pop in for a few beers with your fellow supporters while the lads are put through their paces. Training will revert to Tuesdays and Thursdays once the new season starts.

## London Welsh

As we go to press we hear that London Welsh have been saved. They recently went into administration, admitting they had only enough money to survive one more month. They appointed administrators, saying that they needed an extra £1m to £1.5m to operate each season. The official club statement said: "The club recently made the decision to turn professional and has developed a three-year plan to reach the Guinness Premiership. However, investment in top-quality players and experienced training and coaching staff has come at great personal cost to the principal investor and chairman, Kelvin Bryon. For London Welsh to progress towards promotion to the Premiership, the club will need to secure additional investment from either another individual or a consortium of investors. There are sufficient funds available for the club to continue to operate for one more month but without additional income the club will be unable to continue to trade in its present form."

The administrator, Tenon Recovery, has secured a deal to save them. The official statement says, "London Welsh Rugby Club has completed a deal with Red Dragon Rugby Limited (RDRL), negotiated by Administrators, Tenon Recovery for the sale of the Club. The deal will see the club, which was founded in 1885 and has developed around 177 Welsh International players, retain their Championship status. The Rugby Football Union (RFU) sanctioned the sale of the Club's shares to RDRL after the new owners demonstrated that sufficient funding was in place for the next two seasons. Tenon Recovery ob-

tained a Court Order late last week allowing their release as Administrators having negotiated a solvent exit. Existing creditors totalling £1.3million have agreed to write off their debts, and the other bona fide creditors of around £450,000 have been underwritten and will be paid in full".

*There have been many rumours in the media, including the London Welsh website and local papers, about a rescue package (Involving Saudex) that would see London Welsh playing their home games at either Rosslyn Park or Brentford FC next season. I cannot at the moment shed any light on these stories so far as they affect Park. Superficially, if a deal could be done on a "landlord / tenant" basis, that did not adversely affect any section of Park, then it would provide a vital source of considerable income with rental and bar income. Perhaps the Committee will be in a position to say something at the AGM as to the status of any such proposals and their effect on the Club. If you are a Member, please go along to the AGM at 7:00PM on Thursday to hear the latest. We'll endeavour to get out a Parknews next week to clarify matters if appropriate. No doubt the Chairman will feel that – with the AGM this week – if there is anything to be said, it is proper that should tell Members first. However, in the light of persistent rumours of a done deal, it should be added that when asked he did say unequivocally (emphasised in bold letters) that **there is no agreement on a ground share.***

Things looked bleak for **Mounts Bay**, to the extent that Clubs were advised not to commit to any transport or accommodation arrangements for matches with them in the coming season, amid rumours that they had only seven registered players and simply not the money to fulfil their fixtures. However, it looks as if there may now be a tie up with Redruth, subject to ratification at their AGM. From all reports it looks as if they will become effectively the Redruth 2<sup>nd</sup> XV, but at least it keeps the club alive with the prospect of re-grouping in better times.

Worse news of **Halifax**, who have given up the ghost as a senior side and will start again at the very bottom of the pyramid in Yorkshire 6. Few stars burned more brightly as Halifax shot up the leagues, effectively bankrolled by former player David Brook. However, National Level rugby led to spiralling costs and the sad death of David effectively saw the whole thing implode. A sad state of affairs for the club who gave us former 2<sup>nd</sup> XV skipper Dave Holroyd, and I think Matt Hill turned out for them as a very young man. However, their demise stands as an apposite warning of the perils of cutting your cloth according to the largesse of a single sponsor!

## AGM

Please remember that the Annual General Meeting of the Club takes place on Thursday 23rd July at 7:00PM in the Clubhouse. The formal business is usually over fairly quickly, leaving time for an informal question and answer session. It's the 130th AGM, so it's your chance to say "I was there".

It would be wrong to quote from the AGM documents here, especially as they do not legally "exist" until approved by the Club's Members, but it's fair to say that the club's relatively good financial position given the advances that we've made, is pretty much down to the enthusiasm and generosity of Simon Tindall: it's clearly a situation the rest of us need to address!

## Fixture shift

The RFU have agreed with the French RU that the England Counties game against the French will be played on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010. In view of this and to avoid any postponement of league games the fixtures for the 20<sup>th</sup> March will now take place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March.

## FIXTURES SEASON 2009- 2010

DATE	1 <sup>ST</sup> XV	2 <sup>ND</sup> XV	HATTERS
Aug 15	A Bedford (P)		
18	H Civil Service (P)	H Reading Abbey (P)	
29	A Blackheath (P)	A Blackheath (P)	
Sep 5	H Clifton	A Chinnor (F)	
12	A Barnes	A Barnes (F)	
19	H Mounts Bay	A Glam Wdrs (C1)	
26	A Richmond	H Barking (C1)	A Ldn Scots (C4)
Oct 3	H Lydney	H Ldn Welsh (C1)	
10	A Barking	A Southend (C1)	H Ldn Irish (C4)
17	H Canterbury	A Richmond (C1)	A Chobham (C4)
24	A Dings	A Esher (C1)	H O. Paulines (C4)
31	H Ealing	H Ealing (C1)	A Staines (C4)
Nov 7	A Bridgwater	A Plymouth (C1)	H Ldn Cornish (C4)
14	H Shelford	H Launceston (F)	A Ruislip (C4)
21		H Henley (F)	
28	H Henley	H Ldn Scots (C1)	H Haywrds Hth (C4)
Dec 5	A Worthing	A Blackhth (C1)	
12	H Southend	A Ldn Irish (C4)	
19	A Wstcmbe Pk	A Ldn Welsh (C1)	H Chobham (C4)
Jan 2	H Barnes	H Barnes (F)	
9	A Mounts Bay	H Southend (C1)	A O. Paulines (C4)
16	H Richmond	H Richmond (C1)	H Staines (C4)
23	A Lydney	H Esher (C1)	A Ldn Cornish (C4)
30	H Barking	A Ealing (C1)	H Ruislip (C4)
Feb 6		A Henley (F)	
13	A Canterbury	H Plymouth (C1)	A Haywrds Hth (C4)
20	H Dings	A Barking (C1)	H Ldn Scots (C4)
27	A Ealing	A Launceston (F)	
Mar 6	H Bridgwater	A Ldn Scots (C1)	
13	A Shelford	H Blackhth (C1)	
20			
27	A Henley	H Glam Wdrs (C1)	
Apr 3	H Worthing	E A S T E R	W E E K E N D
10	A Southend		
17	H Westcumb Park		
24	A Clifton		

(C1) Indicates Canterbury League Div1 match;  
 (C3) Indicates Canterbury League Div3 match  
 (C4) Indicates Canterbury League Div4 match  
 (F) Indicates Friendly (P) indicates Practice match

## Fixtures for next season

The Canterbury League fixtures for next season have now been published, (see panel on the left) but are still open to negotiations between the clubs. The 1st XV fixtures are now pretty much confirmed.

The list as published is far from ideal from a practical viewpoint. Second XV Manager Robert Boulwood has highlighted a few problems with the draft list as published. He said, "The first half of the season is a nightmare with either the 1s at home the same time as the 2s (necessitating the trips to Richmond Park on a regular basis), or both 1s and 2s are away, leading to reduced bar profits etc, especially when we have fixtures against Richmond, Scottish etc".

With his Canterbury League hat on, David Booth said that if it was possible to negotiate for changes he'd be glad to help, but that the league sides will not have too many alternatives. Obviously changing venues would only have the same result for the second half of the season. He went on to say that the primary consideration had been finishing the season before Easter and ensuring a weekly match schedule at the request of all the Div 1 clubs (ourselves included). Basically it is impossible to please everyone and our predicament is made worse by having just the one main pitch at the ground.

As reported in a previous Parknews, we shall not be running a Development XV for the coming season.

The Hatters have a small but challenging fixture list with only 9 sides in Canterbury Shield Division 4. But playing the second Xvs of London 1 sides, plus the 3rd XV of London Scottish should be demanding enough.

We don't yet have the Middlesex Merit Table fixtures or those of the Slingbacks and the Youth sides, but we'll publish them here in due course.

## Reader's Letter

*Phil Peace is organising another luxury coach trip*  
 Charlie

Please could you provide advance notice to Members that the successful VIP Trip undertaken last season has been re arranged for Saturday 5 December 2009.

We will be visiting Worthing RFC and I am reliably informed that the final access road to their ground is completely free of adjacent brambles and potential hazards.

This will be of great comfort to those Senior Members and Past Presidents who have only just completed their recovery from the previous trip to Chinnor.

The coach company have now repaired the bodywork and have installed a completely new state of the art "Scrat Nav" System to ISO BS 999 which links directly to the Astra Satellite located over Worthing.

This will ensure an incident free journey.

**Phil**

## Farewell, Fred

Bar manager Fred Elkington has left Rosslyn Park's employment with effect from the end of June. Fred's departure was completely amicable on both sides and Chairman John Adair wished him every success in the future.

The many friends Fred has made during his tenure behind the bar will doubtless hope that he will drop in from time to time to sample life on "our" side! On a personal level, the Editor was particularly appreciative of Fred's assistance and guidance on numerous occasions whilst working in the Club office. On numerous occasions he did things well beyond his remit as bar manager to help out for the common good. (The appreciation of his guidance does not - however - extend to his tips for horses)!!

Without doubt Fred's finest moment was when Phil Peace was conducting a close range counselling interview with a young lady, to the general embarrassment of those in the vicinity. Fred simply picked up a bucket of ice from the bar and cooled Phil's ardour by pouring it over his head.

Tyron Forbes has taken over pending a decision as to exactly what to do in the longer term.

# MARATHON GIRLS

On 11 July, in aid of charity, four Slingbacks took on the massive challenge of cycling from John O'Groats to Lands End in just 9 days, averaging about 100 miles a day. The four fearless riders set out on this epic journey with a two-woman Support Crew to keep them on the road day in and day out. Each of the riders was supporting a different charity. Each night they kipped down beneath the stars in their tents, before getting up at dawn to get back on the bikes. No B & B luxury for these girls, thus maximising the amount for charity! They decided to travel north to south, as everyone knows, this is downhill!

Before bringing you Liz Delves' incisive report on the event, we ought to introduce the brave riders:

## Alice "Scooby/Evie" Watchorn



Alice is the crazy lass who came up with the idea. She is a broker for BGC in Canary Wharf, London and is cycling to raise money for Spinal Research. Scooby was a new girl this year at the Slingbacks and although due to a broken leg she hasn't made much impact on the pitch, she has got up to a lot off it! She's a keen horse rider and snowboarder so spinal injuries are something she has seen a few of.

When she returns from her E2E Scooby

has 5 days rest before she takes on the ToughGuy Nettle Warrior challenge with another team of crazy loons. Scooby will be riding Baby, her Specialized who inspired this ride by last year taking her from Peckham to Norfolk in a day, team 138miles! If you'd like to sponsor her ride in aid of Spinal Research her justgiving page is:

<http://www.justgiving.com/awatchorn/>

## Julia "Goolia" Daffy



Jules is our token Aussie (every team has one!), she has been playing for the Slingbacks for 5 years, despite "retiring" when she left Australia! She is our hooker and is known for her excellent rucking and poker straight line-out throws on the pitch. Off the pitch she is an HR recruitment consultant for MDH in London. Goolia's Trek bike is affectionally known as Robin, because of his red breast and she hopes he will fly her down the length of this country. Jules is raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support after her mum was diagnosed with breast cancer. Thankfully her mum

was one of the lucky ones and has come out of it OK, but Jules wants to raise money for Macmillan as they support the family as well as the sufferer. If you'd like to sponsor Jules in aid of Macmillan her justgiving page is:

<http://www.justgiving.com/juliad>

## Camilla "Milo" Brueton



Milo is old school Slingbacks, having been part of the team since its inception, she plays at number 10 and in our opinion would give Jonny a run for his money when it comes to reading the game and organising the backs! Milo works as a freelance artist in London and has exhibited work in many shows around town. Milo shall be mounted on Molly for this ride, Milo took her in and has given her a bit of a smarten up and this lovely Trek is now ready to do battle with the mountains of Scot-

land! Milo is riding in aid of Amnesty International. If you'd like to sponsor Milo in aid of Amnesty International her just giving page is:

<http://www.justgiving.com/camillabrueton/>

## Kate "KLF" Francis



KLF is currently training to be a lawyer and fits her rugby in around her work and study, she's been a Slingback for years now and can often be found chilling on a wing or at full back. KLF is known around the circuit for calling everyone "chicken", we will be interested to see how this goes down with clients once she is a solicitor! KLF's darling bike is named Bert when she isn't muttering obscenities at him as she works her way up a hill, Bert is also a Trek. KLF is raising money for Godstone branch of the RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association) where she and her mum

volunteer. If you'd like to sponsor KLF in aid of the RDA her justgiving page is not yet ready: send it to the club office and we'll get it to her.

The support crew was:

**Elizabeth "Diz" Delves** Diz is another lady who has been a Slingback since the dawn of time, she would bleed red and white if you could cut her! Diz is the long arm of the law and will be keeping the rest of these scoundrels in line over the 9 days..... or will she! She works for the Met Police. Sadly Diz is retiring from the Slingbacks at the end of this season but has been an awesome prop or hooker over the years. She has also been spotted on the wing scorching down the line to score a cheeky try. Diz is our trusty driver who along with the other support ladies will be ensuring the riders have a tent to clamber in to at the end of each day and a pot of tea in the morning!

**Vanessa "Ness" Matthews** Ness is the newest recruit to the Slingbacks, and has picked up the job of team physio! Ness easily slipped into the Slingback after it was discovered she can drink copious amounts of alcohol and still hold a coherent conversation, even if she can't remember it! Ness worked at the James Cook Hospital in South Tees for 5 years and has left the North for the Big Smoke down South where we will see her patching girls up and getting them back on to the pitch in no time.

## Diz's Diary

**11/07/09** 5am dawned and four slightly wired Slingbacks donned their padded pants and mounted their bikes. They were not to know that Big Kev (the support van) would take a wrong turning to a mere 5.1 miles from Dunnet Head, the most northerly point in Britain. Kate had to stop after losing her chain on the way up a hill, causing a muscle spasm. Alice left her Debit Card in a layby along with their directions to the Campsite... Diz then delighted in following physio Pippa's instructions and forcing Alice and Milo to sit in a paddling pool of ice cold water for 10 minutes.

**12/07/09** The riders were up and ready to go at 5am: a breeze - just 80 miles. But the most miserable day ever. The riders soaked before they'd got a mile down and it got ten times worse. Big Kev briefly caught up with them as they stopped for their second breakfast whilst sheltering in a bus stop, a good excuse for a few wardrobe additions, then on through relentless rain. Lunch stop at a roadside café, where they dried their socks under a hand dryer in the toilets. Big Kev arrived at Invercoe Campsite and the half-packed tents were pitched, again in the pouring rain. A call for help arrived from Kate with 1 mile to go: anyone thinking 'it was only one more mile' should just imagine the 'I've lost my shire horse' walk that Kate was doing. With the rain still lashing down 6 sodden Slingbacks looked like they might burst into tears at any minute.

**13/07/09** At 5am they were up and ready to cycle to Glasgow. With the notorious midges munching their way through the pack of Slingbacks at every opportunity there was a delightful smell of DEET in the air. The sun shone brightly bathing Glencoe in a glorious light. No more than a minute later the phone rang and Kate was again stranded on a roadside unable to cycle. As she had made it just 2.5 miles Kate decided to slowly cycle back to the campsite and it was clear she would not be cycling today due to her new 'I've lost my elephant' walk. The views of Loch Lomond were stunning. The riders were making good time to meet Alice's relative, Dave, at Glasgow Central Station. Eventually we met the mysterious Bobbo would put us up for the night at his farm. Washing was done, hot food was eaten and a lot of sitting in front of a roaring fire and everyone retired to bed ready for the 111 mile journey to Penrith.

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**14/07/09** Bobbo provided all with Sausage/Bacon/Egg rolls which were the perfect start to a long day. Sensing the minor panic onset he offered to drive in front and get Big Kev to the right road using back lanes. He went over the roundabout and pulled up on the pavement. Diz pulled a U-ey across two slip roads to the M74 before heading back to the correct turn off. Kev caught up with the riders just past the 70 mile mark: the riders pointed out to that the road surface had been atrocious and the headwind even worse. Dave –who had not cycled beyond 35 miles before - will forever be known as Headwind Hero, allowing the others to draft behind him. The heavens opened as the crew arrived at the campsite, and it got worse. The cyclists arrived at the end of their 124 mile trek in torrential rain.

**15/07/09** Today was just 75 miles to Preston but the riders had to contend with Shap Fell. Ness and Diz were able to get to the campsite, which they again overshot. As the last tent peg went in the exhausted riders arrived after their grueling 87-mile journey. The weather, for once, was glorious and everyone enjoyed lazing around in the sun, then off to the pub which Diz and Ness had cunningly found earlier for a well earned beer and food break. Then it was back to the tents for one of the best night's sleeps ever

**16/07/09** The next trip would be Preston (ish) to Shrewsbury; around 80 miles. The intrepid 4 set off on their cycles - it had rained in the night, so Ness and Diz went back to bed until 9am - just to make sure the tents had dried nicely in the morning sun! As big Kev neared the campsite they spied a Co-op; there was a 2.2m barrier across the entrance and Kev got a bit of a headache. Having smashed their way through the barrier (causing a bit of a dented Kev and a broken barrier) they decided it was probably best not to shop in Co-op so did a quick U-ey and hot wheeled it back out of the car park. The campsite was full, so Ness and Diz set off to find another - a very handy pub-come-campsite a few miles up the road. got themselves a pint of Guinness each and drank to Big Kev's headache until the cyclists arrived. Tomorrow was going to be a long long day as it was 120 miles or so to Bristol..

Unfortunately at this point technical gremlins deleted Diz's entire blog and so we'll have to hold over details of the last few days until the next issue - but the girls made it. Please recognise their achievement by giving generously to the good causes they put in so much effort to support.

## Coaching clinic

&

## Kicking Masterclass

Steve Kearns will again be running the popular Coaching Clinic and Kicking Masterclass (which features tuition from Richard Mahony).

**Kicking Masterclass – 25<sup>th</sup> Aug – 10am-3.45pm. £45 (inc Ball and Kicking Tee)**

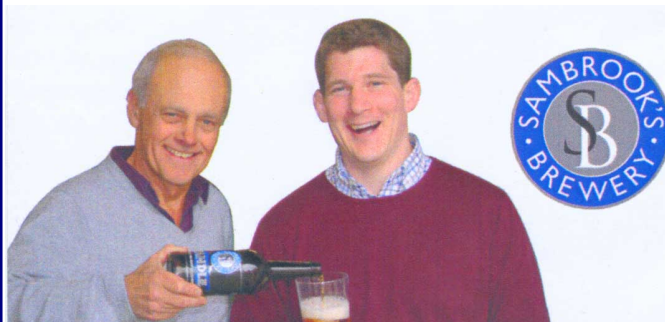
**Coaching Clinic 26<sup>th</sup>- 28<sup>th</sup> Aug and 1<sup>st</sup> Sept – 10am -3pm short pres attached. All are welcome so drop me an email to sign up. £25 per day.**

Visit [www.rosslynpark.co.uk](http://www.rosslynpark.co.uk) or speak to Kearnsy for full details

# YES WE CAN!

Could Rosslyn Park run a p\*\*\*-up in a brewery? The answer was a resounding, "Yes we can" when a select group of Park aficionados took their discerning palates along to ex-Park hooker Duncan Sambrook's state-of-the-art brewery in Yelverton Road, Battersea.

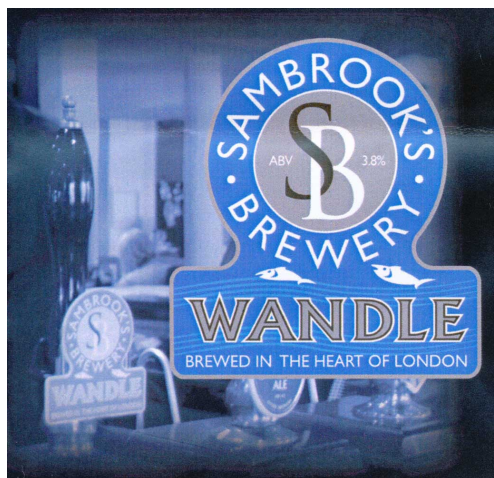
A chance meeting changed Duncan's career path from high flying City Accountant to Brewer. A visit to the Great British Beer Festival in 2006 sowed the seeds. The departure of Youngs from Wandsworth convinced him that there was a gap in the market for a quality ale brewed locally. A trip home to his native Salisbury led to a chance meeting with David Welsh, who had spent 30 years running the renowned Ringwood Brewery, which he had recently sold in order to retire.



The two became business partners: David's only stipulation being that Duncan's vision of a small 5 barrel brewery should be supplanted with a 20 barrel operation, capable of brewing 25,000 pints a week. The existing site has room for further expansion and – touch wood – that's going to be necessary sooner rather than later.

Duncan talked us through the brewing process from first base. He is committed to a quality product, using only English raw materials. He uses Maris Otter barley grown in Hampshire and Wiltshire which is malted by Warminster Maltings, who have been in the trade since 1879 (coincidentally the year Park were founded). Warminster are one of only two maltsters still using the traditional floor method. He uses whole leaf hops from Herefordshire and Worcestershire, believing that this traditional method adds to the distinctive quality of his beers.

At the end came the chance to sample the product, which is simply superb.



Sambrook's Wandle Bitter (3.8% ABV) has, in the words of its brewer, "a golden amber colour, with a distinctive dry, hoppy finish". It actually does taste a cut above the stuff brewed by bigger operations and justifies the extra care and expense of

sourcing the best ingredients.

It is now on offer in a number of pubs in the area, including the Bricklayers Arms, Putney, which is again SW London Pub of the Year. Duncan delivers personally to pubs and clubs in the area, so why not ask your local to try it as a guest beer? Supplies can be obtained from [sales@sambrooksbrewery.co.uk](mailto:sales@sambrooksbrewery.co.uk) or phone 0207 228 0598. Duncan's website is [www.sambrooksbrewery.co.uk](http://www.sambrooksbrewery.co.uk)