



Season 2017-18

Issue 23

31 January 2018

WINNING RUN ENDS AT LOUGHBOROUGH

Welcome to Parknews after a two week break. Coming off a run of three successive wins, and five matches unbeaten, it was bitterly disappointing to lose at Loughborough last Saturday. The students played with great enthusiasm and determination, but they looked a side that Park could and should have beaten, especially after the first half. There were some excellent passages of play from Park but too often these were spoiled by inaccuracies. Loughborough defended with great skill and commitment, forcing Park to earn every point we scored, whereas at least a couple of their scores looked a bit on the soft side in terms of defending.

That result means that the pressure is back on this Saturday when we face Cambridge, where we lost badly earlier in the season. They present one of the best defences in National 1 and will be full of confidence after last weekend when they added the name of Plymouth Albion to the list of scalps they have taken this season. Please do come down and add your vocal support.

There's a full programme of entertainment at the Rock this weekend. Before the League match against Cambridge we have the Bs, chasing the Middlesex Merit Table 1 title, playing a vital match against Ruislip 2 on the 4G kicking off at noon. Please come down and support the guys. Then, after the Cambridge match, please join us for a Club Social. The Six Nations France v Ireland match will be showing straight after the 1st XV game, there will be live music and we will be serving a curry at 19.30. The price for a curry and a drink is £15 and you need to book for that in advance.

[Book your place using our online ticket booking system here.](#)

The weekend doesn't stop there, though, because on Sunday afternoon the Slingbacks face title-chasing Reading, who will be thirsting for revenge after the Park girls sprung a surprise win on them away earlier in the season, then repeated the trick in a cup match. The Slingbacks are unbeaten in 2018, but have never beaten Reading at the Rock! Please come along and support.

While this newsletter was off-air during the Editor's holiday, Park gained two valuable wins: 22-20 away to Bishops Stortford and 31-15 at home to Fylde. We have reports and photos from both matches later.

Loughborough 37

Rosslyn Park 15

National 1

A strangely lacklustre performance saw Park slump to defeat at Loughborough last Saturday after having the better of the first half.

After the home full-back, Owen Waters, traded penalties with Park fly half Harry Leonard in the first three minutes for 3-3, the match settled into a midfield battle for possession.

Playing down the slight slope, Park looked the more dangerous in attack but it was Loughborough who broke the deadlock on 19 minutes when an interception set up home fly half Sam Ripper-Smith for a try, converted by Waters for 10-3.



Scrapping it out at Loughborough [Photo by David Whittam]

Saturday 08 February
Curtain Raiser

B XV v Ruislip 2

Middlesex Merit 1
Home (4G) KO noon

1st XV v Cambridge

National 1
Home KO 3:00

Followed by International Rugby on the big screen and a social evening with live music and a curry

To book for the pre-match lunch please call David Booth in the Club Office on 020 8876 6044

Chichester 2 v Hatters

Zoo Sports Shield
Away: KO 12:00

Old Priorians v Fours

Middlesex Merit 2
Away KO: TBA

Regatians 2 v Nomads

Surrey Championship
Away: KO TBA

Sunday 04 February

Slingbacks v Reading

League
Home (4G) KO: 2:30PM





The lead lasted for only seven minutes before a concerted attack from the visitors saw Leonard get over the line, converting his own effort for 10-10.

Park piled on the pressure but the hosts defended well, though they lost two players to successive yellow cards for their troubles.

Loughborough took a surprise lead with a Waters penalty on 29 minutes, but Park replied immediately with the move of the match that sent full-back Henry Robinson scampering in for a try to give the visitors a 15-13 lead at the interval.



Loughborough started the second half playing down the slope but it was Park's performance that went downhill.

Eight minutes into the second period home centre Oscar Hinklij-Douglas grabbed a try, converted by Waters, to put his side into the lead at 20-15.

When the same two players struck again on 60 minutes things looked really bleak for the visitors at 27-15.

Park tried to come back, and only a fine last ditch tackle in the corner stopped Charlie Amesbury from claiming what would have been a great try.

However when Waters slotted over a penalty on 71 minutes it left Park needing more than two converted tries in the limited time remaining.

They set about the task, getting close to the line before a stray ball allowed home replacement scrum half George de Cothi to intercept and run the length of the field and score under the posts, Waters converting, to set the seal on a match that Park will want to forget.



Line-out action at Loughborough. All 1st XV match photos in this newsletter re by David Whittam

Rossllyn Park Head Coach, Kieran Poiwer, said: "We were very much in the game at haltime and playing some of the better rugby.

"In the first 15 minutes of the second half we compounded errors and our discipline let us down, which allowed Loughborough to capitalise and take control of the game to get a well deserved win".

Park: Robinson; Crane, Henderson, A Ellis, Marfo; Leonard; Gash; Nwakor, Hughes, Lovell; Spivey, Macpherson; Macfaarlane, Barnard, H Ellis. Bench: Vaughan-Edwards, Maguire, Frampton, Brand, Amesbury. Park scorers: Leonard (T, P, C), Robinson (T)

The week before Park beat Fylde at home:

Park 31
Fylde 15
National 1

On a blustery Saturday afternoon Rossllyn Park ran out 31-15 winners at home to Fylde RFC. The visitors started the day bottom of the pile in national one whilst Rossllyn Park aimed to continue a good run of form that has seen them undefeated this calendar year.

Park got off to a strong start with winger Benji Marfo dotting down for the games first score after 9 minutes, with a quick tap penalty from Jack Gash put him into space before beating one man into the corner.

The second score of the game soon followed as Arthur Ellis managed to push his way over the line on his home debut for the club. The conversion from Harry Leonard was successful to make it 12-0 after twenty minutes.

Moments later though, Fylde got off the mark with a try from Harlan Corrie who was the most alert player when an over-thrown lineout bobbled around on the turf.

Just before half time Park grabbed their third try of the game as Henry Spencer got onto the back of a driving maul from five meters out to make the score 17-7 at the break.



Five minutes into the second half Fylde made it a one score game with a penalty in front of the sticks from Greg Smith bringing the score to 17-10

With just over twenty minutes on the clock the home side secured their try bonus point as Oli Grove busted his way through Fylde's defence from close range.

Park then brought on England under 20's player and former Fylde man Rory Brand and ex-Bristol and Harlequins winger Charlie Amesbury. A fantastic chip through from Andrew Henderson was gathered by full back Robinson who won a penalty, which Park elected to kick into the corner. The resulting lineout was driven over the line and Owen Hughes managed to touch the ball down to bring the score to 31-10 to the hosts.

Replacement prop Stuart Maguire was then yellow carded for a high tackle with ten minutes on the clock.

Visitors Fylde got the last score of the game through Tom Carleton, much to the delight of their fantastic travelling support.

Rosslyn Park head coach Kieran Power said after the match "It was good to get 5 points again but still plenty to work on. We have a big couple of



weeks coming up now and it's good to carry on our momentum into these next 2 matches"

Park: 15. Henry Robinson 14. Rhys Crane 13. Andrew Henderson 12. Harry Leonard 11. Benji Marfo 10. Oli Grove 9. Jack Gash 8. Hugo Ellis 7. Arthur Ellis 6. Jack Barnard 5. Paul Spivey 4. Henry Spencer 3. Nick Lovell 2. Karl Gibson 1. Maurice Nwakor
Replacements – Owen Hughes, Stuart Maguire, Matt Macphearson, Rory Brand, Charlie Amesbury

The week before that we won away at Bishops Stortford and have purloined their version of the match report:

Bishop's Stortford 20

Park 22

National 1

By John Allanson

After a strong start, Stortford errors allow Rosslyn Park to gain confidence to go on and win a deserved victory.

Stortford started strongly and dominated the first 7 minutes in this game, but came away with only three points from a George Cullen penalty after



some stout Park defence. A pinpoint crosskick from the visitors' flyhalf, Harry Leonard quickly overturned the lead, as the stretched Stortford defence was breached out wide by quick hands, leading to an unconverted try to Benji Marfo.

Within three minutes, the home lead was restored, though when a fortunate ricochet from a George Cullen grubber kick flew straight into Chris Smith's





hands, allowing the winger to run round the last defender and touch down close enough to the posts to give Cullen a relatively easy conversion.

Despite repeatedly turning the ball over, Stortford prevented the opposition from making any serious threats for the rest of the half but then two yellow cards for foul play at breakdowns in the last five minutes to Tom McCrone and Smith turned the game on its head. The situation was soon worsened with a late injury to Dec Caulfield, but the home side nevertheless held out until half time.

They had, though left themselves with a major challenge at the start of the second period and, sure enough, the visitors were quickly onto the attack and their slick backs, gaining confidence as they retained possession against only 13 defenders, progressively came into the game. Although, Stortford's stubborn defence held them out for 5 minutes, some clever interplay between winger, Marfo and fullback, Henry Robinson eventually produced a good try for the latter, converted from the touchline by Harry Leonard.

Even after Stortford were restored to their full complement, Park maintained their momentum and they took full advantage of a poor clearance kick by the home side to switch play to the opposite wing, where centre, Andrew Henderson this time rounded off some more skilful backs play for an unconverted try.

The home side now showed their mettle, fighting back to exert significant pressure on the Park defence and were rewarded some 9 minutes later with



another Cullen penalty, after a second Chris Smith try was disallowed for a forward pass. This briefly boosted the home side and one of a number of excellent attacking kicks from Cullen put them into the Park 22. A great lineout steal capitalised on the position and the pack seized on the opportunity to go through a couple of quick driving phases to allow Steve Ball to touch down. Cullen's conversion took his team into a 5 point lead.

This proved, though to be short-lived, as the visitors launched a sweeping attack through powerful forwards, with their dominant back row to the fore, gaining quick ball at a number of breakdowns, backed up by more good handling from their backs. This produced a penalty, which was kicked to touch and there was no stopping the driving maul from the resultant 5 metre

lineout. Leonard couldn't convert and Stortford once again fought their way back into the game.

Boosted by a yellow card to the visitors' loosehead prop for a scrummaging offence, the home side launched a final assault on the Park line with time running out and, showing impressive patience, they went through many phases before releasing the ball wide, where a 3 on 2 beckoned. Unfortunately, the backs couldn't produce the precision necessary to take the opportunity and finished with a desperate lunge for the line being snuffed out with a strong cover tackle, which ended the game.

Club sides

Will Thorogood reports a busy weekend, Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, for the Clubsides. Plenty of action, tries and drama, with mixed fortunes. I'll relate the scores, as far as I remember:

B's 38 L.Cornish 3's 32

Nomads 12 Ironsides 2's 33

4's 69 Ealing Am 2's 7

Hatters 21 Richmond Jutes 34.

Many thanks to Cara, Charlotte and Pippa for their help and cover over the weekend. Also, to Jane for all that cooking, and Jamie and his bar crew coping with all the bar custom.

The previous weekend only saw the Hatters and Nomads cantering out. The Hatters had a Surrey Tankard tie against Dorking 2's. An entertaining and competitive game, but, at times confusing game for me. Dorking play in red and white hoops, and the team in blue (Hatters), at the end of the game started running away with the game, with three late tries. I had to be reminded and reassured that blue were Park.

At 60 minutes, it was 10-all, and I was concerned we might have to go into extra time. Not to worry, when I'd reorientated myself, as to who was whom, the Hatters end up 27-10 winners. Into the final in May, at Esher RFC! Hooray! The Hatters have another Cup tie this weekend, Zoo Sports, so it could be two finals, and it's still January!

The Nomads have a spirit, of the Corinthian type, and it was almost a case of lambs to the slaughter in a Surrey Championship game against Camberley 2's, plus a few of their 1's who didn't have a game! Anyway, it was rather a lot to nil, with only 13 men, but those heroes came back with smiles on their faces and some beer in their bellies!

The weekend before that was, overall, not a bad weekend, results-wise, for the Club.

Friday Night game, Hatters 26 v Sutton & Epsom 2's 25. It could have gone either way, but Sutts kicker didn't have his kicking boots. Exciting, nail biting and physical.

Saturday saw:

B's 40 H&F 3's 29. A good win for the B's, with a few scares on the way.

Top of the table, for the time being, and a report below.

4's 31 Streetonians 2's 24. Fun in the mud of Hackney Marshes. Top, too!

Nomads 17 Esher Abbots 52. Started with 14, I believe, and then some problems, but 3 tries?

Park 'B' XV 40

Hammersmith & Fulham 3s 29

Middlesex Merit 1

On Saturday, the B's returned to the Rock, having not played there in over two months to take on local rivals Hammersmith and Fulham. Having conceded 50 points against the B's at home, the Hammers were keen to make amends and had few survivors of their home defeat. The B's also had a very strong squad with 25 players putting their hands up and a few having to miss out, but making up for it with their vocal support.

The B's have not always turned up from the get go this season, but this time decided to start at a ferocious pace. Some great power in the forwards mixed with pace in the backs put top try scorer Dean Asonitis through in the corner. Asonitis was soon to turn villain however after he fumbled a beautifully weighted grubber by Rumley over the line. It was all a little too easy and the B's then dropped off for 15 minutes, as Hammersmith and



SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY MAY 5TH, 2018

MASQUERADE *Ball*

BLACK TIE CHARITY BALL IN AID OF
ROSSLYN PARK INJURY TRUST AND CANCER RESEARCH

DINNER, DANCING AND AUCTION

LOCATION: ROSSLYN PARK RUGBY CLUB

PUT THE DATE IN THE DIARY AND WE'LL BE IN TOUCH
WITH MORE INFORMATION VERY SOON.

Fulham put a lot of quick phases together to score two well worked tries. This was the wake-up call that the B's needed as they started to go through the gears. A couple of Hammersmith and Fulham penalties in their 22 led to a kick and a strong B's scrum, which man of the match Adam Strong picked up from to feed Weller who dummied and darted over. Some good power by Strong and the ever-present Nick Jones then fed Lace for an easy score to put the score to 20-12 at half time.

The B's started the second half as they had finished the first, by keeping the pressure on Hammersmith and Fulham and a loose pass in the opposition 22 saw Rumley step his man before running through unopposed to score between the posts. As he put the ball down, he did a forward roll, which earned him DOTD. The floodgates seemed to be opening when Rumley played a beautiful missed pass in his own half to Asonitis who ran through, stepped the full back and as the opposition came back, fed Stevens who had run a great support line to score one of the tries of the season between the posts.

Hammersmith used this opportunity to ring the changes and bring on their excellent bench and come back, putting huge pressure on the B's to score two tries and make it an 8-point game with 15 minutes to go. However, the Rosslyn Park forwards marshalled by the returning Jamie Curtis played some sensible rugby, keeping it tight to win a penalty that was converted and close out the game for a 40-29 win that keeps them at the top of the league.

Hatters 27 Dorking 2nd XV 10 Surrey Tankard

After a hard-fought 26-25 win over Sutton & Epsom, which had still left its mark on Foot's face, the Hatters returned to the Rock in the Surrey Tankard to take on Dorking 2nds, a team they had already turned over in the league.

Park kicked off and quickly enjoyed a period of possession. Dorking, being perhaps too enthusiastic in defence, gave Parmenter, Porter and Longley space to take advantage. After Dorking were caught offside and Stern picked out his man at the lineout, the Hatters set up a strong drive. Unfortunately, despite good possession and territory, Park struggled to cross the whitewash. was not converted. This was soon to change after Chrissy Scott took a quick penalty and made a barnstorming run down the left wing. Pulled down 5 yards out, Davies made a strong run to crash over. 5-0. No convert.

From the restart, Dorking started strongly and it was the Hatters turn to defend, with Peck putting in a big hit in the midfield, no doubt looking to sort out his dodgy neck. Foot, who was a rock at the front of the lineout, stealing several of Dorking's throws, won a defensive lineout from which the ball was cleared well by Beale. After Porter made an incisive run through the middle gaining 40 yds and some good running from Bhuiya on the left, Riley was

able to weave his way over from the breakdown - 10-0.

With less than ten minutes to halftime, the Hatters took their eye off the ball and allowed ill-discipline to let Dorking score ten unanswered points with a penalty and converted try. 10 all. However, the ship soon steadied as the Hatters forwards took a grip and set up an excellent lineout and scored a well-earned pushover try to regain the lead at 15-10. This gave Park the confidence to start playing again with ball in hand as Somerville, who had woken up in Milton Keynes, running hard in the midfield, releasing Longers whose quick hands put Savage over in the corner. With Longers finally finding his kicking boots, 22-10. Longers had the last word gathering Porters' opportunistic kick to score in the corner to finish with a decisive 27-10 win to take the Hatters into the Surrey Tankard final due to be played at Esher on 7 May.

The Longers juggernaut marches on with Richmond Jutes in the Zoo Sports Cup next week's challenger to put an end to this impressive run. The Hatters are ready and waiting.

We also have a Hatters match report that arrived too late for the previous edition:

Hatters 40 Chobham 2nd XV 0 Zoo Sports Shield

After a lacklustre defeat to Merlins with an under-strength team before Christmas, it was good to see the Hatters return from the festive break in full force. With Wigley out injured until February, Longers led a strong side out on to the 4G with Newcombe joining Willis and Chrissy Scott in the back row, and Riley returning from injury at 9.

The game started well for Park, winning a scrum in Chobham's 22. After multiple phases, Longers, who started in the centres made good yards to offload to Willis. Taking Willis' pass, Parmenter beat his man to score in the corner. With barely 5 minutes on the clock, 5-0 to the home side.

Chobham came back hard as play concentrated in the middle of the field. Strong defensive play from de Haan led to an impressive turnover. Foot and Davies were putting in the hard yards taking the ball again and again off Riley at 9. With a hint of space, Alexander made a break on the outside beating several defenders in the process. In what looked a little too cosy, Chrissy in support took the offload before returning the ball to Adam - and in a final act of devotion, AA fed the ball back to the Scottish back row to score under the posts. Crawford, now warmed up, took the extras. 12-0 to the Hatters.

Continuing to apply pressure, Park won a penalty in Chobham's 22. Captain Longley opted for a scrum, a bold decision had it not been for the

dominance that Horgan, de Haan and Stern were exerting up front. With a couple of passes from the set piece, Porter did what he does best (not pass) palming off several defenders to score under the posts. With the extras added I, Hatters 19, Chobham 0.

A frustrating ten minutes ensued where the Hatters allowed Chobham to play for the first time in the match. However to their credit, Park did not let them cross the whitewash with strong defensive play from Willis and Newcombe, the latter of whom was in the Chobham 10's face all day.

At halftime Longers challenged the boys to keep Chobham to 0, a challenge Park rose to. With Wardie and Peck now on in the back row, Newcs switching to the centres and Longers to 9, the finishers had a point to prove. Within minutes, Newcombe came on a hard and fast line from 10 yards out - with the conversion, it was 26-0.

The Hatters were playing with increasing confidence. After some hard running and good interplay between Newcombe and Foot, Davies ran a superb dummy line from the ensuing breakdown to create the space for Stern to smash over for a great score under the posts. Crawford did the business to make it 33-0.

Park's final score of the match came from a strong chase and fly-hack from Parmenter, before Rosser snaffled the ball almost from Adam's hands to take bring up, with Ali's conversion, 40.

It could have been more, had the returning Wilson managed to gather a well-weighted pass from Crawford to score in the corner, but the ball evaded his grasp trickling into touch. This win Wilson DotD (despite some superb tackles and turnovers won). With a number of contenders for man of the match, including Newcombe who put in an excellent performance both from the back row and the centres, the accolade went to Ports who created difficulties for Chobham all day with the ball in hand and ran things magisterially from the back. The Hatters next host Sutton & Epsom on evening of Friday 12 January to continue their excellent form in the league.

Slingbacks

Three matches into 2018 and the Slingbacks are unbeaten! A 48-7 win over Harlequins on Sunday was a really good team performance in difficult circumstances (report below). While we were away the Slingbacks posted an impressive 26-0 win at home to Witney, following up their cup win of the previous week. Unfortunately we do not have a report of that match.

Harlequins 7 Slingbacks 48

League

It was clear from the start that the Slingbacks were far the better side. This was apparently also clear to the referee, and possibly the fact that it took more than 20 minutes for Park to register a score had more to do with his efforts to 'even things up' than any deficiency in Park's play. Almost the entire first quarter was played in Quins' territory, yet it was Park who were persistently adjudged to have offended or mishandled. From the touchline it looked as if Quins were being allowed to lie all over the ball, whereas Park



were persistently whistled for technical offences, real or imagined.

When eventually Park did get a penalty, scrum half Rachel Collins took a quick tap to set up the powerful Hannah Murphy to crash over for 5-0.

Play had hardly re-started when Alice Lovatt received the ball close to halfway and simply pinned her ears back, beating fully six defenders to cross the line for a wonderful individual effort. Shanice Williams added a conversion for 12-0.



It looked as if Park would run riot when Hannah – about to cross for a second try – was halted by a penalty that defied understanding. However, justice was done when Rachel sniped the ball from a Quins scrum and dived over for a try, Shanice adding the extras for 19-0 at the interval.

Almost from kick off, Park struck again with a super run from full-back Anja Grant that saw her go under the posts, Shanice again converting for 26-0.

Maintaining the pressure, Park added further smart tries from Rachel and Ellie to stretch the lead to 36-0.

A rare Quins attack, aided and abetted by two distinctly questionable penalty decisions, took the home side to the Park 5-metre line, from where



they crashed over and converted for 36-7.

Park were determined to have the last say and some good work by Rachel and Chrissy Overton sent Emma in, Shanice converting for 43-7, before Rachel went over again to complete her hat-trick for 48-7.

There was just time for a Quins player to make a good break. She was tackled round the waist and carried into touch - only for a penalty to be awarded on the 5-metre line! Furious Park showed the sort of determination in defence one might expect if the result had depended upon it, and when they cleared the final whistle went.

Park: Anja G; Sam E, Alice L, Dani W, SophieM; Shanice W; Rachel C; Fi W, Becca B, Hannah B; Hannah M, Katie G; Maria C, Amanda B, Katie P. Bench: Chris O, Elly B, Emma A, Marta B-R, Elise R, Sarah V, Ellie H Park scorers: Rachel (3T), Alice (T), Hannah M (T), Anja (T), Elly (T), Emma (T), Shanice (4C)

This coming Sunday the Slingbacks face a tough assignment in the shape of a home League match against **Reading** on the 4G, kicking off at 2:30PM. Reading are one of the stronger sides in the League, lying third in the table, but the Park girls pulled off a brilliant away win there earlier in the season, then repeated the trick in a Cup match a couple of weeks ago. Doubtless Reading will be all out to gain revenge in what should be a cracking game of Rugby. Admission is free and the Clubhouse will be open before, after and throughout. Please do come along and add your support.

While we were away the Slingbacks posted an impressive 26-0 win at home to Witney, following up their cup win of the previous week. Unfortunately we do not have a report of the match.

Find your Inner Warrior

Owen Slot, *Chief Rugby correspondent of The Times*, visited the Rock recently to witness the Slingbacks' "Inner Warrior" event at their Wednesday evening training session. The following piece appeared in the paper:

On a refrigerated Wednesday evening in southwest London last week, I saw the next generation of Caslicks and Tonegatos. Except they were mostly English and they were not particularly motivated by Olympic medals.

On the all-weather pitch at Rosslyn Park, a small group of new players had pitched up to join a session with the club's women's team, the Slingbacks. Katy Daley-Mclean, the England fly half (94 caps), was there to give her encouragement. Daley-Mclean's England team-mates are attending these events all around the country.

This is an RFU campaign, called Inner Warrior, designed to recruit more women into the game. The blurb encourages you to "free your inner

warrior". At Rosslyn Park, the initial message seemed simply about having fun.

Everywhere on the pitch, there were examples of talent transfer. You can spot the netball players immediately, because they catch the ball, stop and pivot. You can see the footballers, running upfield ahead of the ball to find space.

Handball players try to snatch the ball from the opposition rather than making a tackle. At one point, a tall, slim woman received the ball out wide and immediately caught the eye — a fast, very agile, upright runner. Ah yes, that was the ballerina.

Since the launch of Inner Warrior last year, more than 10,500 women have attended camps; 3,500 of them had never picked up a rugby ball before. Last year, 41 new women's rugby teams were established.

Up and down the country, the story is the same. Very few girls play rugby at school, so most people coming to these camps arrive with skills that they probably never thought would transfer so well from other sports. Those who have played team ball sports may not realise it, but they have been educated to understand spatial awareness.

What is interesting is the impact of the new-age footballers. The traditional girls' sports — hockey, netball, rounders — don't teach girls to kick. Maybe that is why, at the women's rugby World Cup last summer, it was kicking skills that were in short supply. Only New Zealand and England, the teams in the final, had decent kicking games.

All the new Warriors at Rosslyn Park that night seemed to have fun. They all said that they would be back. I would encourage anyone else to follow them.



Men's rugby used to be a game for different skillsets and shapes and sizes, but that is decreasingly the case. The women's game can boast that now; all shapes, all sizes welcome, all skillsets, netball players, ballerinas, the lot.

Away travel

Next Saturday Park play away to **Caldy**, kicking off at 14:00 and there is a considerable advantage in booking an advance ticket. The nearest station is West Kirby, and the normal routing from London is via Chester, but it is worth checking at the time you book whether it might be cheaper and quicker to get an Advance return ticket to Liverpool Lime Street and pick up a local train from there on a cheap day return. It's about 20 minutes on the local rattler, with a fairly regular service. This will be the first time we have visited Caldly for a League match, though we did play in their excellent Sevens tournament many moons ago, so we cannot offer any intelligence as to local hostellers.

On Saturday 24 February we travel to **Hull Ionians** for the re-arranged League match. Check out the Hull Trains service for that one, which is usually a lot cheaper than the Virgin East Coast route and avoids changing trains at Doncaster. Brough is the nearest station to the ground. Their 09:27 service arrives in Hull around noon; after the match the train home is not until 18:48, but the Buccaneer pub very close to the station provides a convenient bolt hole. The ground is about a mile and a half from there: if you want to get a cab then book it as soon as you arrive — available taxis there seem to be as rare as sightings of Bob Fisher's wallet.

After that it's **Plymouth Albion** (03 March) with Plymouth obviously the

station to book to. Their Brickfields ground really requires a cab ride from the station unless you are a keen walker. Our regular away supporters have a regular pub crawl that starts at the Blue Anchor in the Barbican area as close to 11:00 as transport permits. Look out for staggering red and white hoops if you fancy sharing a cab.

Rosslyn Park Academy Training Camps February 2018

The Spring Academy Training Camps will take place during the first half term of 2018 on Monday 12th – Friday 16th February 2018.

[For further details and booking forms visit the RPFCA Academy page here.](#)

Obolensky Dinner, 21 Feb. 2018

We are currently taking bookings for The Obolensky Association dinner on 21st February 2018. Tickets cost just £60.00 which includes a pre-dinner drinks reception, a three course dinner, crafted by The Butcher & Grill, and half a bottle of wine. All money raised goes towards supporting the aims of the Association and the Rosslyn Park Sports Injury Trust Fund. The Association have secured the services of Graham Rowntree as guest speaker please book your place or preferably take a table or part thereof as fast as you can! To book your place or table please email Hannah Eborall hannaeborall@lifesearch.co.uk ASAP, she will then be in touch to confirm and arrange payment. Further information is available on the [Rosslyn Park Events page here.](#)

National 1 focus

What value the form book after the results of the previous two weekends? Two weeks ago, **Blackheath** put in a superb effort to record ten tries against previously unbeaten **Coventry** in a 61-29 victory. At the same time **Hull Ionians** were slumping to a 50-28 loss in their relegation battle with **Old Albanian**. The following weekend, **Hull Ionians** beat **Blackheath** by 32-21! Anything can happen in National 1.

Last weekend there was no change at the very top of the table with the three leading teams all recording wins. **Coventry** had a comfortable 36-10 away win at the cost of **Bishops Stortford**, **Darlington Mowden Park** beat **Old Albanian** by 52-24 and **Amphill** won comfortably by 26-5 away to **Fylde**. Only fourth-placed **Plymouth Albion** slipped up in a 16-14 defeat by our next opponents, **Cambridge**.

At the other end of the table, **Fylde** look to need a miracle to avoid the drop, and **Old Albanian** desperately need some results, but **Loughborough's** win over ourselves pulls them three points clear of the drop zone, at the expense of **Hull Ionians**, who lost 38-27 in a high scoring match at **Esher**.

In the other matches, our next away opponents, **Caldy**, had a good win (32-24) over **Old Elthamians** and **Blackheath** saw off **Moseley** by 20-12.

Next weekend's fixtures

Amphill v Loughborough
Birmingham Moseley v Esher
Coventry v Fylde
Hull Ionians v Bishops Stortford
Old Albanian v Blackheath
Old Elthamians v Darlington Mowden Park
Plymouth Albion v Caldly
Rosslyn Park v Cambridge

Gerald Brown

The Club received some sad news in the week from David Brown, who older supporters may remember backed up Tony Brookes at number 8 during Hugh McHardy's reign as Head Coach. Only our oldest supporters will remember that David's father – Gerald Brown – also played for Park back in the 1950s. He played in the second row, joining the Club after captaining England schools. Gerald's brother, Denis Brown, played around the same time at number 8 and went on to become Park's first formal Coach in the 1960s. Unfortunately, on 07 January, Gerald Brown died aged

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88. The funeral will take place on Monday 05 February at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, at 11:00AM. Family flowers only by request. Donations may be made, if desired, to the Alzheimers Society.

400 Club

400 Club January winners are £100 Stephen Hockaday, £50 Nick Overend and £25 Robert Boulwood. If you would like to help your club while having the chance to win monthly cash prizes (and an end-of-season 'Jackpot') then the 400 Club could be just what you are looking for. Contact Boothy in the Club Office on 020 8876 6044 for full details.

Val Winn

.Following the recent passing of Park legend Chris Winn, we are sorry to report that Val Winn, Chris's widow, was in St Georges Hospital having had an amputation and is now recovering in a nursing home in Richmond. We have no further details at hand, but are sure everyone will wish to be associated with wishing her a full recovery.

Next Parknews

Parknews appears on the Club website weekly, usually between Tuesday lunchtime / Wednesday afternoon. Contributions are always welcome and the deadline is normally at noon on the Tuesday of publication. If you would like to receive a 'tweet' immediately it appears then subscribe to the @RPNoseyParker twitterfeed. Letters and other contributions from readers are always welcome: the usual deadline is around noon on Tuesdays.