

PARK MADE TO WORK FOR THEIR WIN

Welcome to Parknews There have been some thrilling and entertaining matches at the Rock this season, but Saturday's dour battle with Cambridge was not one of them. Still, Park came away with a win that takes us to ninth in the table, leapfrogging Cambridge and putting us level on points with Caldy, our next opponents. So a win next Saturday would see Park into the top half of the table for the first time this season.

If last Saturday's match was less than a thrill a minute, it has to be said that Cambridge presented a superb defence that was really difficult to break down. They have developed quite a reputation for this lately, and a similarly stubborn display saw them topple Plymouth Albion the week before, so let's give credit to our boys for finding a way to win. Perhaps there was also something in the air on Saturday because only two National 1 teams managed the four try bonus: Coventry against bottom club Fylde and Blackheath against second from bottom Old Albanian.

Our try on Saturday was scored by Adam Frampton, playing his first game at the Rock since being stretchered off against Bishops Stortford back in September with a serious neck injury. The immediate concern was his overall future, regardless of whether he would ever play again. Scans showed a couple of cracked vertebrae among other injuries. Fortunately the prognosis for a full recovery was good. Adam has trained diligently to regain fitness as early as possible, but he has also always been the first to put his hand up to help the club in any way he could while not being able to play. He is the epitome of the good club man – scoring the winning try on his home return could not have happened to a more decent bloke.



Park battle for the ball against Cambridge [all 1st XV photos by David Whittam]



Framps is under there somewhere!

If Saturday was not our most memorable performance it still meant that of the last seven matches since our loss to the League leaders we have won five, drawn one and lost one. If we can maintain that sort of form we should finish a lot nearer the top than the bottom which, with the run of injuries we have endured, would be quite something.

To extend our run we need to win at **Caldy**, which will be our first visit to Paton Field for a League match, though we did visit to play in their excellent Sevens tournament back in the early 80's. They have found their feet at National One level and have posted some good results, particularly at their own ground. They showed enough in our 36-32 win at the Rock earlier in the season to prove they will be something to reckon with on their own ground. They got a losing bonus point at Plymouth Albion last Saturday, which is no mean feat, losing by 21-16 and even the Plymouth match report said they deserved the bonus. We have one player in common with Caldy in the form of Harry Broadbent, who is still awaiting medical clearance as to when / whether he can play again.

Saturday 10 February

Caldy v 1st XV

National 1
Away KO 2:00

At the Rock

Parliament XV

v

Welsh Assembly XV

Kick off 11:30

Followed by all the 6-nations action on the big screen in the Clubhouse. Free Admission

B XV

Not playing

Hatters

Not playing

Fours

Not Playing

Nomads

Looking for a friendly fixture TBA

Next 1st XV home Match

Saturday 17 February

1st XV v Old Elthamians

League

Home (4G) KO: 3:00PM

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

The midfield battle - 1st XV match photos are all by David Whittam



Your vocal support at the match would be very much appreciated. The ground is at Paton Field, Telegraph Road, West Kirby, CH48 1NX. **The match kicks 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. We cannot offer any intelligence as to local hostelryes, but the CAMRA app suggests the West Kirby Tap in Grange Road which is only about a drop goal from the station and opens at noon.

At home this weekend

We have a novelty match at the Rock this Saturday kicking off at 11:30 with a Parliamentary 'International' before showing all the six nations rugby on the Clubhouse screens. You can run the rule over our rulers when the Parliament XV take on the Welsh Assembly on the 4G. It should be a lot of fun, though the guys involved will be taking it deadly seriously. If you can't make Caldy, please do come down. There's no admission charge so bring your friends down to watch the 6-nations in a real rugby club atmosphere (and with cheaper prices than the local pubs).

**Rosslyn Park 10
Cambridge 7
National 1**

A superb defensive display by Cambridge made Rosslyn Park work really



hard for their narrow victory in a match that went right down to the wire.

Park did most of the attacking in the first half, but the visitors always looked dangerous on the counter. However they rarely reached the Park 22 and it looked as if the first half would end in stalemate – with the emphasis very much on 'stale'.

Park looked good ball in hand but too often kicked away possession.

The home side had the first real chance on 34 minutes with a penalty at the extreme end of fly half Harry Leonard's range two metres into the Cambridge half. A good effort hit the padding of the post.



Park continued to attack but the complexion of the game changed when Park lock Henry Spencer was adjudged to have made a high tackle and sent to the bin.

Cambridge saw an opportunity and a rare incursion into the Park 22 was dealt with, but number 8 Hugo Ellis' clearance kick found visiting fly half Ben Penfold. He sent winger Albert Portsmouth away to run wide on the right and then cut in past Park's short-handed defence for a good try. Penfold converted for 7-0 on 35 minutes.

Park returned to the attack and on the stroke of half time were rewarded



with a penalty in front of the posts for Leonard to bring the score to 7-3 at the interval.

Cambridge started the second period determined to exploit their temporary one man advantage. But gradually Park wrested back a degree of control.



A score looked all but inevitable, but it took until the sixty-first minute. Leonard chipped a penalty to the corner to set up the catch and drive. The Park pack set up a text book rolling maul which Cambridge simply could not resist and it was lock Adam Frampton who touched down. Leonard converted for 10-7.



With six minutes to go Park were awarded a penalty within range for Oli Grove, who at just that moment had come on for Leonard, but a good attempt grazed the outside of the far post.

There was a final scare for Park when the visitors were awarded a just-about-kickable penalty at the end of the match that would have given them a draw. Instead they kicked to the corner to set up a catch-and-drive to go for the winner. However, it was Park who made the catch and when they cleared to touch it brought the final whistle.

Park Head Coach, Kieran Power, said "It was a hard fought win where we controlled possession and territory in the first half but with little reward.

"In the second half we were pinned back in our half for long periods and defended well, but our energy and attitude were first class and the reason we were able to take our chance in the second half and ultimately win the game".

Park: Robinson; Crane, Henderson, A Ellis, Amesbury; Leonard; Crow; Nwakor, Vaughan-Edwards, Maguire; Spencer, Frampton; Ovens, Barnard, H Ellis.

Bench: Hudson, Wade, Barnes, Gash Grove.

Park scorers: Leonard (T, P, C), Robinson (T)



Park take the game to Reading on Sunday



Slingbacks Slingbacks 20 Reading 19 League

A super performance by the Park girls in a very entertaining and exciting match. The win was Park's first over Reading at home, and effectively ended the Berkshire club's title chances. The Slingbacks richly deserved their success, having much the greater share of the attacking possession, but it was such a good match, played in the right spirit that in many ways it was a pity either side had to lose.



Late withdrawals left the Park girls with a bit of a makeshift pack, which was a worry before the match. Park took the early play to Reading, but the defence held firm. Alice Lovett attempted a drop goal to ensure Park got something for their efforts, but it narrowly missed. Park returned to the attack, but a knock on intervened. Concern about the pack proved somewhat misplaced when they took the scrum against the head and some neat passing saw Julia Daffy plunge over wide on the right for 5-0.

Reading produced a great passing move, spreading the ball to the right then cutting in to score close to the posts, the conversion giving them the lead at 7-5. Two of the passes in the move looked to be marginally forward, but to be fair the referee cut a bit of slack for both sides in terms of slight technical breaches to keep the game moving.

The Park half back pairing of Maria Castellina and Shanice Williams combined well to use some hard-won ball from the forwards. Player-coach Alice has dropped back to centre in order to develop Shanice as a fly half and it looks to be working well. Alice is a class player in any position, and Shanice is showing signs of being a more than useful fly half. Up front Hannah Murphy and Amanda Burton made some extremely hard yards running at the Reading defence. But everyone really put her body on the line in a good team effort.

Park kept up the pressure, and full-back Anja Grant produced a magical piece of rugby to finally prise open the visiting defence. Joining the attack, she picked up the ball under pressure from two opponents and showed great acceleration and balance to swerve past two more before passing on. A couple of swift passes later and Alice plunged over wide on the far side for 10-7.

With half time approaching another good Park attack saw Alice go in again to make it 15-7 at the break.

Reading are a good side and clearly made a resolution at half time to haul themselves back into the match. The warning lights were soon flashing for Park when almost at the start of the second period the visitors' fly half





broke and sprinted away to score a try that she converted herself to reduce the margin to 15-14.

Park returned to the attack in what had become a fierce midfield battle for possession and were genuinely unlucky when Hannah had the line in her sights but play was stopped for head injuries to two Reading players. Safety has to come first, but with two defenders out of the game you'd have had to back Hannah to score. Play resumed with a scrum, which Reading won and a super clearance kick put Park back into their own half.

The Slingbacks might have been excused for thinking it wasn't their day when Reading, apparently pinned back, scored a great end-to-end try to snatch back the lead at 19-15.

However, the Park girls did not let their heads drop and came back at Reading. A penalty was kicked to the corner to set up a superb rolling maul that bundled over in the corner for 20-19, Helen Pealing apparently being the player who actually touched down.

Park: Anja G; Emma A, Alice L, Elly B, Sophie M; Shanice W; Maria C; Elise, Julia D, Helen P; Hannah M, Amanda B; Dani W, Linn, Katie P.

Bench: Chris O, Ellie H-I, Marta B R.

Park scorers: Alice (2T), Julia (T), Helen (T)

That makes it four wins from four in 2018 and only a try short of the bonus point. That record will be severely tested on Sunday week when the Slingbacks travel to Windsor – where they were thumped 65-0 last year – but if they can spring another surprise they could overtake Windsor to go fourth in the table. With home matches remaining against Harlequins and Crowthorne - plus, of course, league leaders London Welsh the Park girls could still finish in the top three.



Club sides

Will Thorogood reports a good afternoon at the Club on Saturday. The B's, 1's, lots of Trooper ale, some curry and excitement with the 6 Nations!

The B's played Ruislip 2's in what was, then wasn't and then was a Middlesex Merit 1 game. League or friendly? After the game, Captain Will Ferrand and the Ruislip skipper agreed the game should be played as a

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league, after doubts about numbers playing. This meant both sides will benefit with points awarded.

Result: B's 55 Ruislip 2's 17. An open and fast game, played in good spirit.

The **Hatters** went to the south coast, Chichester, and had a good win against their 2's in Zoo Sports 3. Hatters 35 Chichester 2's 0.

The **4's** and **Nomads** ended up not playing, for various reasons. Sports a busy weekend, Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, for the Clubsides

Away travel

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 Dolphin 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 RPFCAcademy 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 hannaheborall@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.](#)

Bob's correct

At Bishops Stortford there was a Guess the Score competition before the match, for which the Park officials all put predictions in. After the game a guy called out that Bob Fisher had got the nearest prediction to the actual score. He was elated and enquired how much he had won and there was further elation when he was told- £50! The bad news came when he put out his hand expecting five tenners but was instead given a £50 voucher only to be used at their bar that evening! Rarely has elation turned so quickly to misery as when he realised that the only way he could spend £50 before the coach left was to buy a round.

National 1 focus

Surely no one is now going to stop **Coventry** at the top of the table, a 47-3 win over bottom club **Fylde** consolidates their lead at the top whilst apparently leaving Fylde needing a miracle to avoid the drop. **Darlington Mowden Park** had a useful 19-14 away win over **Old Elthamians** and, though they failed to secure the four-try bonus a surprise home defeat for **Amphill** (14-21 to lowly **Loughborough**) leaves them a clear second. **Plymouth Albion** had a narrow 21-16 home win over our next opponents, **Caldy**, to remain fourth.

At the other end of the table, **Old Albanian** look to be in nearly as

much trouble as Fylde after a 6-32 home defeat by **Blackheath**, while **Hull Ionians** still have not escaped immediate danger after a 14-21 home defeat by **Bishops Stortford**. **Esher** drew 20-20 with **Birmingham Moseley**, despite out-scoring the Midlanders by 3 tries to 1.

Next weekend's fixtures

Bishops Stortford v Birmingham Moseley

Caldy v Rosslyn Park

Cambridge v Amphill

Darlington Mowden Park v Blackheath

Esher v Old Albanian

Fylde v Hull Ionians

Loughborough v Coventry

Old Elthamians v Plymouth Albion

400 Club

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.

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.

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