



Season 2018-19

Issue 01

06 June 2018

# NEV EDWARDS KEEPS HIS PROMISE

**Welcome to Parknews** There is some good news of more new signings and developments. Further on is news of a significant threat to the club's future, and a report on the Social 7s organised by the Hatters, played on the 4G on a Friday evening at the end of the season. It was a very entertaining evening's rugby indeed and well-organised. But first the team news.

First the latest new signings, and a very popular will be our former player **Nev Edwards**, a Park man through-and-through who has played for the club at every level from the minis upwards and is a former Park 'Player of the Year'. Nev left with our best wishes to play Championship rugby at Bedford Blues and then Premiership rugby at Sale, but always said that Park was "his" club and that he would return. Without giving details of private conversations, the Editor knows that there were financially bigger offers to go elsewhere. Welcome back, mate!

**Jo Munro** is an imposing 6'5" centre who joins us from Ealing Trailfinders, a powerful ball-carrier who previously played four seasons with Nottingham.

**Jonathan Mills** has signed as a player / forwards coach. The 6'5" lock will bring a wealth of experience having played for Llanelli and London Welsh before a four year stint at Premiership Sale Sharks where he played over 100 matches. He has filled a similar player / coach role at London Scottish.

In addition, **James Valentine** - a kiwi scrum half who has represented Otago - will be trialling with the club for two weeks at the start of pre-season.

These names should be added to those already given in the previous Parknews, which were as follows in case you missed them.

On the coaching front we are delighted that **Kieran Power** will remain as Head Coach and **Andy Houston** as attack coach. Unfortunately, **Andy Reay's** new work commitments along with the demands of a young family leave him no longer able to devote sufficient time to continue as our defence coach and strength and conditioning guru with the highest standard that he has always demanded of himself. He leaves us on the very best of terms and we are deeply grateful to 'Razor' for his significant contribution - we will hopefully see him around the Rock from time to time.

However, every cloud has a silver lining and we welcome **Jordan Turner-Hall**, the former Harlequins and England centre as our new Defence Coach. **David Mobbs-Smith** joins from Richmond and will act as a skills coach for the 1<sup>st</sup> team and he will also work within the wider playing side of the Club. We shall expand upon that elsewhere, but some positive developments are afoot.

In terms of players, already announced, **Arthur Ellis** joined us on loan from Ealing for a brief spell last season and now joins Park on a more permanent basis. Brother of Hugo, he can play either flanker or centre with equal aplomb.

**Rory Walton** is an Australian lock who played Super Rugby for Western Force and spent last season playing in France with Carcassonne. He has recently moved to London and we are very pleased that he has chosen to join Park.

Those of you who watched the HSBC Rosslyn Park National Schools 7s will doubtless have been impressed by Cranleigh second row **Hugh Tizzard**, an outstanding talent whose longer-term future probably lies with Premiership rugby as a Harlequin. He will be jointly registered with Park in order to gain experience.

**Gregor Gillanders** is an experienced back row, who can also play in the second row, joining from London Scottish where he has played much Championship rugby.

**Connor Hayhow** joins us from London Scottish. Connor can play in the centres or the wing and will add some real bite to our back line.

Centre **Ollie Richards** started his career at Harlequins, gaining England U-20 recognition,

Hatter's Team Post Final: of the Social 7s - see report inside - (BR - left to right) Beale (coach), Benson, Masters, Bond, Newcombe, Savage (FR -left to right) Parmenter, Longley ©, Wilson, Riley, Brusasco



Saturday 11 August

## 1st XV v Newport

Practice match  
Home KO 3:00PM  
Free admission - Clubhouse open

Saturday 18 August

## 1st XV v Leicester Lions

Practice match  
Home KO 3:00PM  
Free admission - Clubhouse open

Friday 24 August

## 1st XV v London Irish Wild Geese

Practice match  
Home KO 7:45PM  
Free admission - Clubhouse open

Saturday 01 September

## First 1st XV league match

Opponents and venue TBA

before playing Championship rugby for Leeds Carnegie and in the Premiership with Newcastle Falcons.

Pacy winger **Harry Barlow** is another really exciting prospect from Cranleigh school. Already an England U-18 international he will be dually registered with Harlequins.

As previously mentioned, since the retirement of Ron Savage as our kit man, Kojo Jecy had been left saddled with that job in addition to his other duties as Team Manager, a demanding job in itself. We are pleased to announce that the popular **Fergus Farrell**, who most will know by sight if not name, will be taking on the role of operations manager next season.

There are, alas, three more names that we shall not be seeing next season. **Will Crow** has been released from his contract and we would like to thank him for his services and wish him well wherever his career takes him next. **Nathan Thomas** is moving to Kent, and can no longer commit to the demands of travelling to training twice a week plus match days. **Harry Hudson** is leaving due to work commitments. All three men know that they will always be welcome back at the Rock.

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## OUR FUTURE UNDER THREAT

*A letter from the Chairman,  
Adam Tyrer*

The club's future development has come under threat as a result of a campaign started by a local resident against our advertising boards.

Having been in Roehampton since 1957, players and supporters will know better than anyone that our facilities had hardly been touched since that time and were badly in need of investment – with just one pitch, our boiler and hot water system failing, our changing rooms in dire need of refurbishment and in early 2014 one of our floodlight pylons came down in a storm onto the South Circular.

Park has always been a not-for-profit community-based rugby club. Each week we get over 1000 local kids (both boys and girls) playing rugby and 100+ adults. As with any community organisation that receives no funding from government or other central bodies, our finances have always been fragile and we have only kept going by the generous support and donations of our members and sponsors - but that left us vulnerable and with no stability.

With just one grass pitch we were restricted to how much we could use it and realised that if we wanted to continue and to get more children playing sport locally then we needed to invest in the facility and put in a modern artificial 4G pitch that would allow constant use in all weathers. We also needed to replace the hot water system, install new floodlights and upgrade the changing facilities. That is just the priority list!

### discussions

This all cost around £1m - money that the club simply didn't have. So, we investigated how we might be able to raise the funds and pursued the idea of advertising screens along our border on the South Circular arterial route. After many months discussing our plans with local residents, the council, TfL and conducting surveys to understand the environmental impact we applied for planning permission for the pitch, facility improvements and the advertising screens that would provide the funding for the much-needed updated facilities.

We were delighted when, at full Planning Committee, approval was given thus enabling us to raise debt to fund the development, backed by the advertising income. The pitch was installed in 2015 with the screens going up later that year. Other club improvements and landscaping is ongoing.

Community use of the facility has gone through the roof and we are working with a large number of local schools to get kids playing on the pitch – the feedback is really positive. The kids just love playing in a small stadium, with stands and floodlights and it really inspires them. It's not used just for rugby, also football and other sports as well. And it's not just schools, we also work with local charities such as Regenerate and the Feel Good Bakery.

The stability it has given the club has meant that as well as increasing

community use, we've been able to make our flagship National School 7s even bigger and better (this year we welcomed over 9000 kids from 850 schools around the world to SW15 to take part in the world's pre-eminent school rugby tournament).

However, today all this is under threat from a lady who has started a protest group about the screens as she is opposed to all such digital advertising screens. She is conducting an on-line campaign for the removal of the screens and is writing directly to advertisers giving them a very partisan view which is inaccurate and grossly misleading. The screens are completely legal and we went beyond the due process in consultation with our community and planners.

Unfortunately, her campaign is influencing some of the advertisers - some have withdrawn their adverts from the site. The loss of revenue from the screens would be catastrophic: it would undo all that has been achieved, not just in terms of Rosslyn Park as a club, but the thousands of local kids and families who have benefited and would have benefited in the future. The work we do with local schools and nationally will be lost forever.

### support us

We are therefore asking supporters and, indeed, our local community to show support for Rosslyn Park by,

- Signing an online petition asking TakeDownTheAds to stop their campaign against Rosslyn Park.
- Write directly to TakeDownTheAds highlighting how they have benefited from Rosslyn Park
- Thank those firms that are supporting Rosslyn Park by advertising on the screens and show our appreciation of their support and what it means for the club and community.

When using social media please use the hashtag #SupportRosslynPark.

Especially if you live locally, please talk to your friends and neighbours about this threat to the club and the local community and enlist their support. We know that some people don't like the screens but when we explain that they went through a thorough consultation and the importance of them in funding our activities, we find that they accept and support the club and the screens.

As a thank you for our community's support, for the first home game of our next season in September there will be free admission to the game and activities encouraging local families to get involved playing rugby and highlighting the heritage of the club.

Links can be found on the website at [www.rosslynpark.co.uk/SupportRosslynPark](http://www.rosslynpark.co.uk/SupportRosslynPark)

*Online Petition:*

<https://www.change.org/p/amanda-benzecry-carpa-support-rosslyn-park-rugby-club-and-secure-our-future>

*Contact details for CARPA/TakeDownTheAds:*

Email: [info@takedowntheads.com](mailto:info@takedowntheads.com)

Twitter: @takedowntheads

*Firms Advertising on the Screens*

@easyjet

@AmericanExpress

@Tesco

@HeartFM

@LexusUK

@The\_Macallan

@theFCA

*Adam Tyrer*

*Ed: This article was written before the club's own petition and campaign against the protesters was formally underway. We have already been overwhelmed and humbled by the response, with almost 8000 signatures the morning we went to press. To put it in context, CARPA's original on-line calling petition for "proper consultation" was posted on 26 November 2015 and has thus far gained 535 signatures; they followed this with a more militant "We will boycott the goods and services advertised on the screens at Rosslyn Park" petition on 1 March 2016, which has thus far attracted 156*

signatures. The Club's own petition against CARPA's campaign – even before the direct communication to our own Members went out – had gathered more than 5,000 signatures in less than six days, simply by spreading on social media. Some of the comments from people in the community who have benefitted from the Club's activities are truly moving.

However, this is no time to rest on our laurels. If you haven't signed yet please do so now, and if you live in the local community please do speak to your friends and neighbours.

It is worth pointing out that, although those involved in the protests did not object during the consultation period, since their campaign started the club has gone to great lengths to reach out to them about ways in which we might ameliorate their concerns, including additional landscaping – even offering to plant trees around Barnes! Thus far this has not borne fruit but the door is still open.

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## Quotable quotes

"Rosslyn Park was what made my weekends fun. The club and coaches formed a great group of kids which I am still very good friends with today. It's actually pretty amazing how many of us have grown up together through our childhood. For this I'll be forever grateful to Rosslyn Park and the parents involved" – **Danny Cipriani**

"Rosslyn Park has been ever present in my rugby career, from starting in my minis age group through to the 1st team, and now again after a great few years of professional rugby. When I was a mini the coaches formed a great group of us which I am still very good friends with today. Many of us have grown up together, and gone onto play at the highest level. Rosslyn Park will forever be my club" – **Neville Edwards**

## Social Sevens report

The Hatter's Social Sevens tournament entered its third year on Friday night with an 8 team schedule sharply reduced last-minute to 7 with a late pull-out. This didn't dampen enthusiasm, but the glorious weather of previous years didn't reappear and perhaps capped the supporters in what traditionally has been a well-attended event. The seven entrants were all local sides from Battersea Ironsides, Merlins, Richmond, London Exiles, Hammersmith & Fulham & two Rosslyn Social entrants (B's & Hatters). A pair of competitive group's left Rosslyn Park Hatter's 2<sup>nd</sup> in the truncated three team group 1, with Merlins run-away winners, whilst Group 2 saw three team's on two wins and subsequent rain man-esque maths being conducted to leave Hammersmith & Fulham as winners and London Exiles as runners-up, leaving Richmond the unlucky third place party losing out on points difference.

Semi-final 1 was then group winners Hammersmith & Fulham vs the 'home' team Hatters (as the support seemed to suggest influenced proceedings) and despite being heavy underdogs due to an experienced rather than sprightly squad, Hatter's progressed in a match where they rarely relinquished possession. As can be the way with Sevens, by holding onto the ball for long periods, Hatters nullified the superior speed of Hammersmith & Fulham that had seen them deservedly progress as Group 2 winners. Aggressive defence and superb kick-off set-piece allowed the Hatter's to progress to a surprise final. The undoubted highlight being the rarely seen cross-field kick from Longley giving Parmenter a free run to the try-line which he turned down to instead come inside & beat four players to score.

Semi-final 2 saw Merlin's face London Exiles in a match where momentum swayed one way then the other. Both team's played excellent sevens and looked the most 'pure' exponents of the game on the day with each try brilliantly executed. With the final play of the game going on for over three minutes and the score tied at 12-12 it appeared that London Exiles had finally fashioned the overlap that would lead them to the win as their winger pinned his ears back for the corner. A superb covering tackle took him towards the touchline at the same time as he grounded the ball and despite furious protestations, the referee deemed the player in touch. The game consequently went to golden score extra-time. With both sides feeling the strain, Exiles coughed up possession and Merlins struck on the counter-attack to secure their place in the final for the second year running and to allow them a chance to defend their 2017 crown.

The final provided a rather more competitive game than the group match

between Merlins and Hatters. The pattern was set early as despite Hatter's having relatively strong possession they were outgunned for speed and struggled to break Merlins down. However, in reverse Merlin's superior sevens game meant almost any mistake was punished and at half-time the score was four tries to two. With Hatter's having to abandon their slow, patient build up to chase the game, they were picked off repeatedly allowing the Merlin's to run out comprehensive winners and ensure a second consecutive title.

Congratulations to the Merlins who's mix of excellent kick-offs, impressive physicality, searing pace and turnover execution demonstrated their 7's prowess and led to a very deserved title. Rumours abound that, against the spirit of the tournament, they had played in a 7's tournament together the previous weekend and consequently practiced. A tip for future entrants wanting to lift the hallowed tankard.

Thanks to Will Scott (in absentia) for organising, Physio's Tris & James for dealing with a large number of hurty knees (4G injuries) as well as the referees who officiated the tournament in the spirit of a social Friday night 7's bonanza.

## Gym

A smart new gym facility is to be erected at the ground, close to the changing block which will free up the old weights room next to the home dressing room on the first floor. This development is not being financed by the club but will be available, free, to our players. It is hoped to achieve completion by mid-July. That will in turn provide scope to expand and improve the home dressing room into that area. A source of funding for that work is expected to become available fairly soon. More information on this when all has been cleared.

## Internationals

Two Park scrum halves represented England last weekend. Rory Brand (dually-registered with London Irish) benched for England U-20s in their win over Argentina, while Jack Gash started for the victorious England Counties in Bucharest, grabbing a try just before the interval. Congratulations to both men!

## Pre-season matches

The club is holding three pre-season practice matches, all of them at home, and admission to each of them is absolutely free. It's a great opportunity to bring down friends to show them what Rosslyn Park has to offer.

The first of these is on Saturday 11 August, when we entertain old friends **Newport**, who finished mid-table in the Principality Premiership last season. Founded in 1874, they are among the great names in Welsh rugby history. The two clubs used to enjoy fairly regular fixtures before League Rugby intervened but, although we visited Rodney Parade for a similar match last season, this will be our first opportunity to entertain Newport at the Rock for many years.

The following Saturday - 18 August – we entertain for the first time **Leicester Lions**, from National 2 North. The Lions made a great start to last season, winning six of their first seven matches, but injuries, etc, intervened and a slump in form saw them finish eleventh. However, they should be back to full strength and looking to make a big start to the new campaign. They will be looking to topple National 1 opposition and it should be a very competitive match.

We round off our pre-season preparations with a visit on a Friday evening – 24 August - from **London Irish Wild Geese**, currently of National 2 South, who boast a number of ex-Park favourites among their players and coaches. They gave us a good match in a similar exercise last season and we expect no less this time.

These will be competitive 80 minute matches, but with a relaxed attitude to substitutions so that the coaches can run the rule over various players and combinations. Please do come along and watch – it's free admission for everyone and the Clubhouse will be open.

We expect to receive the draft league fixtures for next season very shortly. If they arrive before this Parknews hits the website then we'll tag them on the end as a stop press. Otherwise, assuming we get them shortly, we'll add a page at the end of this Parknews on the website. However the editor is now on holiday until 14 June so it won't be before then!

## Slingbacks

The Park girls will be breaking new ground next season. The detailed fixtures are not yet to hand, but Park are now in the same division as Guernsey. Although we understand that the RFU subsidises a limited number of airfares, its unlikely to cover a full squad including coaches and physio. It is also unlikely to cover accommodation costs (we know of one team who played there last season who took sleeping bags and hired a local scouts hut!). Expect the Park girls to be embarking on some fund-raising initiatives!

## Youth & Mini Rugby Training camps

The club is running its popular training camps again this summer during the school holidays from 23-27 July. The Rosslyn Park Academy is for u-8s to U-16s, while the Elite Camp is for U-12s to U-16s and will be coached by Rosslyn Park's England 7s international, Rhys Crane. To attend the elite camp, players must be in their club's or school's first or A team. For further details or to make bookings contact Dom Shabbo on 0208 8766044 or e-mail [Dom.shabbo@rosslynparkfc.co.uk](mailto:Dom.shabbo@rosslynparkfc.co.uk)

## 400 Club

The May winners are - Brian Lawrence £400, R.A. Hurst £100, Monica Bayles £100 and Romi Stannard £100. 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.

## Subs due in June

The close season is difficult for all clubs, with little if any rugby-related income but the bills still coming in. It really helps if Members pay their subscriptions as soon as they become due in June, so if you haven't coughed up yet please do so now!

If you are not already a Member, please consider becoming one. We are still owned by and run on behalf of our own Members so in addition to saving on admission costs, becoming a Member gives you a say and a vote on club affairs. You will also be entitled to apply for International tickets through the club, and the Members' Discount card gives you a useful 10% off purchases at the bar.

## National One next season

With promotion and relegation issues now fully resolved we know which clubs will comprise National 1 next season. There are no new grounds, though you would need to be a longer-term Park supporter to remember the last time we visited Sale! We last played them at the Rock in the first season of League Rugby, on 13 October 1992 but that was before you played teams both home and away, and before Sale Sharks spun off. We had been due to visit them the previous year, but that was called off due to the weather. You have to go back to 14 February 1981 for our last visit to Heywood Road – we lost 23-6.

Teams for the coming season:

Ampt Hill  
Birmingham Moseley  
Bishops Stortford  
Blackheath  
Caldy  
Cambridge  
Chinnor  
Cinderford  
Darlington Mowden Park  
Esher  
Loughborough  
Old Elthamians  
Plymouth Albion  
Rosslyn Park  
Rotherham  
Sale

## Next Parknews

Normally Parknews appears on the Club website weekly, usually between



**ROSSLYN PARK RUGBY CAMPS**

**MON 23<sup>RD</sup> JULY TO FRI 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2018**

**LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE**

**ELITE SCHEDULE**  
START 9.30am  
Registration and screening  
Athletic development  
Rugby skills/games  
Lunch 12.15pm  
Workshop/video analysis  
Rugby skills/games  
FINISH 4.00pm

**ROSSLYN PARK ACADEMY**  
U8s to U16s  
RUGBY CELEBS  
NUTRITION ADVICE  
FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS  
VIDEO ANALYSIS  
CLASS WORK  
FITNESS  
**£35 PER DAY OR £160 FOR 5 DAYS**

**ELITE CAMP**  
U12s to U16s  
COACHED BY  
RHYS CRANE  
(ex England 7s & Ealing)  
PLAYERS MUST BE IN SCHOOL/  
CLUB'S A TEAM OR 1ST TEAM  
**£200 FOR 5 DAYS**

**TO BOOK**  
Call: 0208 8766044  
Email: [dom.shabbo@rosslynpark.co.uk](mailto:dom.shabbo@rosslynpark.co.uk)

**ROSSLYN PARK**  
ROSSLYN PARK FC, TRUCKY LANE  
LITTLE HEATH ROAD  
BROMLEY  
LONDON SE16 6LR

Tuesday lunchtime / Wednesday afternoon. However as this still the close season publication will be a bit more sporadic until things get properly underway again. Keep an eye out on the website or opt to follow @RPNoseyparker on Twitter to receive a tweet with a link to the next one and to subsequent issues as soon as they are published. Contributions are always welcome and the deadline is normally at noon on the Tuesday of publication. Letters and other contributions from readers are always welcome: the usual deadline is around noon on Tuesdays.

**Close season social**  
**It's a long close season, so what not come along to the club on 07 July at 2pm where you can meet all the senior players, old and new, who will be training that morning. It's also a good opportunity to catch up with your old rugby friends or perhaps make some new ones. The Clubhouse will be opening its friendly doors, so please do come along.**

**BBQ will be served from 3pm along with Live music into the evening.**