



Season 2018-19

Issue 03

04 July 2018

PREPARTATIONS ARE GOING WELL

Welcome to Parknews Pre-season training is now in full swing. Having seen last Thursday's session, it all looks very encouraging with a great spirit in the squad. Everyone seems really positive and bouyant about the new season. Head Coach, Kieran Power, certainly seemed happy about the way things were going. Having said that, we have learned over the years to suspend judgement until the serious stuff really gets underway. One season we had an execrable warm up, culminating in losing at Luton, but then went unbeaten in the League for several matches: other times we have sparked only to disappoint. One thing looks pretty certain, that our new signings look to have really strengthened the squad, but the fact is that the standards in National One rise every year and all the other clubs will have looked to strengthen as well. That uncertainty is surely one of the main attractions of competitive sport.



Players warm up last Thursday before the serious training session started

Rotherham have come down from the Championship but are reverting to part-time for financial reasons and so may have difficulty in retaining last season's squad, and we have not heard of anyone splashing around the sort of money that Coventry invested in gaining promotion last season. So it should be a more even playing field this year. Having said that, while last season's second, third and fourth clubs – Darlington Mowden Park, Plymouth Albion and Amphyll – will start as favourites to be battling it out at the end there are some well-funded clubs that could spring a surprise. Having established themselves last season, Old Elthamians will probably not miss out on anything that money can buy. If only half the stories are true about the sort of money Chinnor are offering players then they should hit the National One ground running! Park may be playing off a more modest budget than some, but there seems to be a quiet confidence that we can compete with the best given better luck with injuries.

Is your pint glass half full or half empty? As a philosopher wisely observed: it doesn't really affect the outcome - it just shows you need a refill.



Please do come down and run the rule over things at our pre-season practice matches. Admission to all of them is free, and the Clubhouse will be open to meet your refreshment needs. It's a great opportunity to bring along your friends to show them what the Club has to offer – we really would like to reach out to more people to become regulars. The first of these 'friendlies' is on Saturday 11 August, when we entertain old friends **Newport**, who finished mid-table in the Principality Premiership last season. 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. 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.

As mentioned previously, our League campaign starts on Saturday 01 September, with a

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

Cinderford v 1st XV

National 1
Away KO 3:00PM

Saturday 08 September
First Home League Match

1st XV v Bishops Stortford

National 1
Home KO 3:00PM



tough visit to last season's National 2 South Champions, Cinderford. Travel details for our first few away matches appear near the end of this newsletter. National 1 Rugby at the Rock commences the following Saturday, 08 September, with the visit of Bishops Stortford. The full fixture list, and those of the Clubsides, appears later.

The Slingbacks also started training last Wednesday, under new Head Coach, David Mobbs-Smith (hereinafter referred to as "Mobbs", as he prefers to be known). Mobbs is, as we have mentioned before, recognised as one of the top coaches in the women's game. In one respect he faces a tough job with the loss of four of the best and most experienced players in Chrissie Overton, Alice Lovett, Katie Parkinson and, tragically, Rachel Collins. On the other hand there are some younger players who show some incredible raw talent that a coach of Mobbs' pedigree may well quickly bind into a really effective unit. There is also an active recruitment campaign going on. It may take the 'new look' Slingbacks a couple of matches to find their stride but – despite the loss those experienced players – there are others ready to 'step up' and every reason to be optimistic about the future of women's Rugby at the Rock.



Slingbacks Head Coach, Mobbs, talks to some of his squad

Meet the players

Please do come along to the club this Saturday at 2pm where you can meet all the senior players, old and new, in a social atmosphere, with something for the whole family. The players will have been training that morning, but are staying on for the social. 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. There will be a cash BBQ served from around 3pm, the Clubhouse bar will, of course be open, along with Live music into the evening.

ADVERTISING STANDARDS

Our resistance to the campaign to stop our advertising income by the group led by Amanda Benzecry is gaining some traction in the media. You may have seen an interesting item in a recent Evening Standard by 'City Spy', concerning the campaign and its leaders' other interests. Readers may be interested in a slightly more fleshed-out account making the same points.

Eyebrows are being raised at how a man at the forefront of a campaign that threatens to destroy Rosslyn Park Rugby Club over their lucrative advertising hoarding makes some of his considerable wealth. City office refurbishment magnate Toby Benzecry and his wife Amanda have founded a group called Campaign Against Rosslyn Park Advertising (CARPA) who want to remove the club's main source of funding.

Oddly, in his letters to Wandsworth council and on petitions, including to advertisers who then pulled their ads, Mr Benzecry fails to mention that his multi-million pound company, Modus Workspace Ltd, also provided offices for another advertising hoarding giant, the Clear Channel and yet another, Zenith.

Clear Channel is a direct competitor with Park's advertising firm JC Decaux. There is no suggestion of impropriety, in this respect, however. Not only that, Mr Benzecry has even proudly put up a case study of the work for Clear Channel on his Company website.

Despite its reputation as being a club for rich City types, Rosslyn Park, the childhood club of England star Danny Cipriani, is rather poor. And they insist removal of the advertising hoardings will mean the closure of the club, the loss of the Roehampton ground and a community facility that benefits over 1000 children and local families each week playing sport. It will also mean the end of the National School 7s tournament that attracts 9,000 children from 850 schools around the world each year.

In contrast, latest company accounts show Modus Workspace's revenue was £79 million in 2017, a profit of £2.3 million, £10 million in the bank and a forward order book of £40 million.

A petition against the advertising screen on the South Circular has attracted 540 followers. A petition against the Benzecry's campaign has attracted over 11,500 signatures.

ED It should be made clear that neither the Editor, nor the Club, wishes to suggest or imply that there is anything improper about the campaign against us.



Just to prove he's back -
Nev Edwards at training
last week

Reader's Letter

From Phil Peace
Charlie

In my capacity as an ex pat supporter living in SE Asia I do follow Parknews avidly coupled with the other available sources of National One information - primarily Rolling Maul and Twitter. With a social trip to London in August fast approaching to take in the Newport match, I have experienced another wave of nostalgia, prompted by a recent Parknews, which I would like to share with readers.

It focuses on the vital role of the kit manager to support the smooth running of the 1st XV over the years. Now this is a fancy job title which I now see has been renamed as Operations Manager. Wind the clock back approximately 23 years to about 1995 when we could definitely say we were competing in a deliciously amateur set up.

During the pre season I was asked to assist with the kit. The job was very different to the tasks undertaken by today's guys. Firstly there wasn't really much kit to deal with in comparison with today. The club steward, Doug would chuck everything in the laundry a few days before the match and I would be presented with two kit bags on the morning of the match. One bag contained 15 numbered jerseys in proper heavy duty cotton fabric with the red and white hoops evenly spaced throughout - just a club badge stitched in and certainly no sponsors logos or interruptions to the hoops. All jerseys were long sleeved with proper reinforced collars. The second bag contained a selection of cotton shorts - various waist sizes - no logos plus

about 20 pairs of socks.

I recall a pre season trip to play Exeter on the Saturday and Bridgewater on the Sunday. Naturally there was a cock up before the team bus had departed because Doug had only given me one set of kit for two games. We duly arrived at Exeter's old ground with the dog track around the pitch and after the game which was played in wet conditions I scooped up the kit from the changing room floor and loaded it back onto the team bus at about 5pm on the Saturday afternoon. The kit now weighed a ton due to the rain.

Now came the tricky bit. We needed that kit washed and dried inside 24 hours.

Whilst the players made their way back to the hotel I grabbed a taxi to research how I could sort out the laundry. By about 10 pm I had cracked it - the task would be undertaken overnight by 5 local laundries - total cost about a hundred and twenty quid - which I organized with a Chinese guy who was prepared to work all night. I wrote him a cheque immediately and headed for a local nightclub where I knew the players would be partying.

After breakfast the following morning I visited the 5 laundries to collect the clean dry kit and off we set to play Bridgewater. It was my job to set out the changing room on arrival at the ground whilst the players were stretching their legs and inspecting the pitch. This involved hanging up the jerseys with numbers displayed and selecting a pair of shorts from S/M/L/XL/XXL to accompany each jersey. Naturally the front row got the XXL shorts and I did my best with the others but there were often problems and players having to play in badly fitting shorts!

Finally the job involved collecting the players valuables. Remember no mobile phones in those days so it was just wallets and watches. Doug had given me a canvas sack for this stuff but I always evacuated my work briefcase on a match day to store these valuables because it had a combination lock. The briefcase would be stored in the safe of the club office during the match.

Yes it sure was an amateur set up back in 1995 and when you talk to guys like Kojo and the now retired kitman Ron you realize just how much has changed for the better.

Phil

ED I remember that trip. We stayed on campus at Exeter University. Before leaving there on the Sunday morning there was a slight hiatus over an unpaid bar bill. The players had all been warned that they must pick up the tab for anything they ordered beyond what was provided with the meal. So it was the cause of some embarrassment when it dawned on Coach Kent Bray that he hadn't paid for a bottle of wine he'd ordered the previous evening.



1st XV Fixtures 2018-19

Aug 11	H	Newport (fr)
18	H	Leicester Lions (fr)
24	H	London Irish Wild Geese (fr) 19:45KO
Sep 01	A	Cinderford
08	H	Bishops Stortford
15	A	Rotherham
22	H	Old Elthamians
29	A	Darlington Mowden Park
Oct 06	A	Blackheath

13	H	Birmingham Moseley
20	A	Sale
27	H	Loughborough
Nov 03	A	Chinnor
10		No fixture
17	H	Esher
24	A	Plymouth Albion
Dec 01	H	Amphill
08	A	Cambridge
15	H	Caldy
22	A	Bishops Stortford
Jan 05	H	Rotherham
12	A	Old Elthamians
19	H	Darlington Mowden Park
26	H	Blackheath
Feb 02	A	Birmingham Moseley
09	H	Sale
16	A	Loughborough
23		No fixture
Mar 02	H	Chinnor
09	A	Esher
16		No fixture
23	H	Plymouth Albion
30	A	Amphill
Apr 06	H	Cambridge
13	A	Caldy
20		No fixture
27	A	Cinderford

NB It is very likely that there will be additional 'friendly' matches on some Friday evenings in order to keep the whole squad match fit. These are likely to be against similar other local clubs. Look out for details during the season.

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

Clubsid fixtures

Set out below are the intended fixtures for the Clubsides for next season, but please bear in mind – as has always been the case at the more social level of the game – things such as stag weekends always cause some fixtures to be arranged. On weekends where the 1st XV are at home it is generally the case that one of the Clubsides will play their own home fixture as a curtain-raiser kicking off at noon. These are always entertaining and competitive matches, and it would be great if a few more supporters came down early to support them.

When the first XV are away, if there is more than one Clubside at home generally the kick-offs will be staggered. Whether or not the firsts are at home, some matches may well be switched to Friday evenings under floodlights. In all these instances admission is free and the Clubhouse is open, so please do come down and support.

Two of our teams have changed their Leagues for next season. The Hatters were victims of too many lost fixtures last season when other clubs dropped out of the Zoo Sports Shield, which otherwise provided some excellent matches and a challenging level of Rugby. The Hatters have accepted an invitation to join the Surrey Premiership, where they have some good fixtures against some pretty strong second XVs. The Fours had been kept out of the top division of the Middlesex Merit tables by the presence of the Bs (a club not being allowed two teams in the same division). That has now been resolved and the Fours take their rightful place at the top table. It gives us a super clash on Friday 29 September, when the two Park sides play each other in a league match under the lights.

Hatters Fixtures 2018-19 Surrey Premiership

Sep 22	H	Esher Abbots
29	H	Farnham 2
Oct 06	A	Dorking 2
20	H	Wimbledon 3
Nov 03	H	Irish Nomads
17	A	Richmond Jutes
24	A	Chobham (cup)
Dec 01	A	Sutton & Epsom 2
08	A	Guildford 2
Jan 05	H	Dorking (cup)
12	A	Farnham 2
19		Reserved, cup
26	H	Dorking 2
Feb 02		Cup QF
09	A	Wimbledon 3
23		Cup?
Mar 02	A	Irish Nomads
09	H	Richmond Jutes
16		Cup S/F
23	H	Sutton & Epsom 2
30	H	Guildford 2
Apr 06	A	Esher Abbots
13		Play off S/F
20		Easter
27		League final
May 04		Cup final

B XV Fixtures 2018-19 Middlesex Merit 1

Sep 01		Hamptonians ?
15	A	CS 1863
22	H	Hampstead 2
28	A	Rosslyn Park 4 (Fri 7:45)
Oct 06	H	Belsize Park 2
13		Cup
20	A	HAC 2
27	H	Haberdashers 2
Nov 03	A	Kilburn 2

ROSSLYN PARK RUGBY CAMPS

MON 23RD JULY TO FRI 27TH 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

ROSSLYN PARK
 ROSSLYN PARK FC, THE CLUB HOUSE
 UPPER BRIDGEWAY ROAD
 BROMLEY, MIDDLESEX
 UX8 3PP
 0208 8766044

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

17	A	Hackney 2
24		Cup
Dec 01	H	Hamm & Fulham 2
08	A	Hampstead 2
15	H	Rosslyn Park 4
Jan 05	A	Belsize Park 2
12	H	HAC 2
19		Cup
26	A	Haberdashers 2
Feb 09	H	Kilburn 2
16	H	Hackney 2
Mar 02	H	Hamm & Fulham 2
09	H	CS 1863
16		Play-off S/F
30		MMT Cup Final
Apr 06		Play-off final

Fours Fixtures 2018-19

Middlesex Merit 1

Sep 01		Sutton & Epsom 3?
15	H	HAC 2
22	A	Haberdashers 2
28	H	Rosslyn Park B (Fri 7:45)
Oct 06	A	Hackney 2
13		Cup
20	H	Hamm & Fulham 2
27	A	CS 1832
Nov 03	H	Hampstead 2
17	H	Kilburn 2
24		Cup
Dec 01	A	Belsize Park 2
08	H	Haberdashers 2
15	A	Rosslyn Park B
Jan 05	H	Hackney 2
12	A	Hamm & Fulham 2
19		Cup
26	H	CS 1863
Feb 09	A	Hampstead 2
16	H	Kilburn 2
Mar 02	H	Belsize Park 2
09	A	HAC 2
16		Play-off S/F
30		MMT Cup Final
Apr 06		Play-off final

Nomads Fixtures 2018-19

Surrey Championships

Sep 15		Surrey Pre-Season
22	H	Effingham 2
29	A	Ironsides 2
Oct 06	H	Emanuel 2
13	H	Haileyburians Plate
20	H	Reigatians 2
27	A	Old Hamptonians 2
Nov 03	H	Warlingham 2
17	A	Law Society 2
Dec 01	H	Haileyburians 2
08	A	Exiles 2
Jan 05	A	Economicals Cup
12	H	Ironsides 2
26	A	Emanuel 2
Feb 02		Cup QF
09	A	Reigatians 2
16	H	Old Hamptonians 2
Mar 02	A	Warlingham 2
09	H	Law Society 2
16		Cup S/F
23	A	Haileyburians 2
30	H	Exiles 2
Apr 06	A	Effingham 2
13		Play-off S/F
27		League final
May 04		Cup final

Slingbacks Fixtures

The Slingbacks open their League fixtures at the Rock on Sunday 09 September with a tough match against Guernsey. They and Havant are the only new faces in the division this season. The match with Guernsey will be the first time Rosslyn Park has played that club at any level. Though we have played Havant at many levels over the years this will be the first women's match between the two clubs.



Slingbacks Fixtures 2018-19

Championship SE – West 1

Sep 09	H	Guernsey
16	A	Portsmouth Valkyries
Oct 07	H	Witney
14	A	Havant
Nov 04	H	Reading
18	A	Windsor
Dec 09	H	Portsmouth Valkyries
Jan 06	A	Witney
13	H	Havant
Feb 03	A	Reading
24	H	Windsor
Mar 03	A	London Welsh
17	A	Guernsey



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.

Away travel

We have three away matches in September: Cinderford on 01, Rotherham on 15 and Darlington Mowden Park on 29. Get in early if you want to buy the cheapest rail tickets.

For **Cinderford**, Gloucester, from Paddington, is the station to book to. From there you need to take a 30 or 31 bus (the bus station is close to the railway one) which leaves at 25 and 55 past each hour with a scheduled journey time of 35 minutes. In Cinderford the main stop is directly outside the ground. Be warned that the return bus after the match leaves at 16:45, and the one that follows is not until 18:00. For those who wish to make it a complete day out, we used to recommend tarrying a while in Gloucester before moving on, but now there is the Fern Ticket Inn almost next to the ground with a selection of real ales - and don't overlook Cinderford's own clubhouse which opens early, always does at least one real ale and is cheaper!

Rotherham Central is the station for **Rotherham's** ground, from where it is almost exactly a mile walk to the ground on Clifton Lane (S60 2SN). Advance rail tickets will be available shortly. There are services from both Kings Cross and St Pancras, but if you pick your train right the Kings Cross service (change at Doncaster) is considerably cheaper and takes about the same time. It's a long time since we last visited, but to get to the ground you need cross the river by the bridge near the station, then turn right down Wellgate; most of the pubs require a left turn instead. However, the clubhouse opens at midday and stocks real ale from a local brewer so you may want to save your legs.

If you have never been to the all-seater Northern Echo Arena, then **Darlington Mowden Park's** home is the biggest dedicated rugby ground in England after Twickenham. Darlington is unsurprisingly the station to aim for, from Kings Cross. The cheap tickets on this route don't last very long, so look out for them. You'll see the ground on the right before the train arrives in Darlington and can judge for yourself whether you fancy walking or not! However, the ground is on the opposite side of the tracks to the town centre, so our regulars usually head into town and get a cab from there. Number Twenty 2 in Coniscliffe Road is highly recommended as a watering hole and usually does some decent food. The address of the ground is Neasham Road, Darlington, Durham, DL2 1DL

Eric Mountjoy

It is with great sadness that we report the death last Friday of that stalwart man of Rosslyn Park, Eric Mountjoy. He had been ill for some time, a problem exacerbated by a nasty fall. Eric joined the club as a player, after which he served the Club in any way he could culminating in serving as President from 1985-88. After that he still actively supported Park home and away for as long as his health permitted. Always good company to share a pint with, he could enjoy a joke against himself. We shall miss his sense of humour, bonhomie and wisdom.



Eric's many works for Park are well-known and documented. What many may not know is that he also turned out to play with a different-shaped ball for Wimbledon FC in the halcyon days of amateur soccer. He played as a left-winger, which will come as a shock to anyone with whom he ever discussed matters of politics! In terms of Rugby, Eric was unashamedly 'old school' but accepted that changes had to be made and nothing could ever have lessened his support for the club that he loved and

to which he dedicated so much of his time. Even if you ever disagreed with him, his basic honesty and decency shone through.

However Eric should never be portrayed as a stick-in-the-mud type. Indeed when he was First XV Secretary he arranged for Park unprecedentedly to fly to the away match at Sale, making us the first club to fly to an internal

fixture. Unfortunately the airport up there was fog-bound so the plane had to turn around and land back where it started. Even then Eric saw the funny side, though he was still being ribbed about it decades later.

On hearing the sad news, Phil Peace got in touch from Cambodia to say, "I was so sorry to hear about Eric. He was always such a passionate Park supporter and always had time for a friendly chat in the clubhouse. Back in 2008 I organized a VIP trip to Chinnor in a luxury gin palace of a coach which was attended by numerous past presidents and members including Eric and Andy Ripley. Eric was such good fun on that trip and he never stopped thanking me for making the arrangements for many months after. I was dead chuffed and will miss his wise and friendly banter. A true gentleman."

At the time of going to press we have no details of the funeral arrangements.

Going Dutch

The newest member of the Dutch Rugby Federation (voted in at their AGM last week) is Rugby Club Amsterdam which was founded by Nomads Alumnus Bas Dekker to get his kids playing the game he loves. They are now up to 300 members so growing fast and no doubt will be a fine touring destination in the future! Photo is Bas drumming up support for training showing off his Park training top.



RFU

There is a change in the rule on Dual Registration and loan players for this season. Originally you could include up to four such players plus up to three loan players in the matchday squad. This was changed last season at the behest of Premiership Clubs to ten plus three loanees. This met with much criticism (Hull Ionians claim they were only relegated because Loughborough had an arrangement with Leicester and so could bring in a shedload of Leicester players for their vital end-of-season relegation battle). The National 1 clubs voted overwhelmingly (by 13-3) to revert to the old system. The Premiership Clubs objected to this and the RFU has, of course, effectively taken their side even though it is not the integrity of their competitions that are affected: up to eight dual registration players, plus three loanees, will be allowed in the matchday squad this season.

Last Sunday's Rugby Paper carried a piece by Jeff Probyn saying that there is a previously unannounced massive overspend on RFU construction projects at Twickenham, meaning massive cutbacks have to be made. However, the funding of the Premiership and Championship is all a matter of contracts, so that is effectively protected - meaning that all the cutbacks will fall on the grassroots of the sport. Clearly for those of us outside the charmed circle of the Premiership and Championship in future the initials 'RFU' will stand for Require Funding? Unlucky!

Codders the Quin

Our former Head Coach, Alex Codling, has left Ealing Trailfinders after accepting a post as forwards Coach at Harlequins. His place at Ealing will be taken by another former Park Coach in the form of James Buckland. We wish both men every success in their new positions.

Next Parknews

Normally Parknews appears on the Club website weekly, between 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. Letters and other contributions from readers are always welcome: the usual deadline is around noon on Tuesdays.