



ISSUE 10

Season 2020-21

21 April 2021

LEAGUE REORGANISATION ANNOUNCED

Welcome to Parknews The RFU have endorsed proposals to re-shape the structure of the league competitions for Level 3 (National 1) and below from 2022-23 season. In the case of National 1 there will still be just one national league (there had been talk of a regional split with play-offs) but the number of clubs in the division will be reduced from 16 to 14. Immediately below, National 2 will comprise three leagues on a regional basis. Overall, this will mean an increase in the number of clubs at levels three and four from 48 to 56, but of crucial interest to National 1 clubs is how the reduction of two clubs at the end of next season will be achieved.



Much depends upon what happens at Premiership and Championship levels. There have been strong rumours that the Premiership is going to expand to 14 clubs. That would allow Saracens back into the Premiership, with a space for Ealing Trailfinders, without any existing Premiership sides being relegated. This would, presumably, depend upon those two clubs occupying the top two places. If that were to be the case then there would be two spare places in the Championship, so the reduction in numbers at National 1 could be achieved without additional clubs needing to be relegated. Indeed it could get better than that if the Championship were also to expand to 14, which has also been rumoured.

This reorganization is based on player welfare issues. At all levels there will be a protected two-week break over the Christmas period and protected weekend breaks (at points to be determined through the season). But there are other implications. Two less teams to play implies the loss of two home games and the consequent gate money and the ancillary income from clubhouse takings and sponsorship income. This needs to be balanced against the saving from the expense of two "away" trips. For most clubs this will mean a significant loss of income (though possibly Plymouth Albion and Darlington Mowden Park might disagree!)

If it turns out that there is more than one promotion place from National 1 to the Championship up for grabs then you can bet that a few clubs will be throwing money at trying to be one of them. Next season could be even more competitive than usual!

Return to the Rock

It was great to be able to get back to the Rock last Saturday and catch up with old friends. There were people from all sections of the club enjoying the sunshine (and indeed the products offered by the Oliver Reed Bar). There will be further openings through the summer, especially when there are major live sports events to be shown on the big screen. Keep an eye on the website and social media for details.

Live sport this Saturday

There is live sport involving Rosslyn Park this Saturday morning, with both Rosslyn Park Netball Club teams playing against two teams from Capital Nuns at Roehampton University. Unfortunately, although the netball girls would love to have your support, the Uni are – quite correctly - not encouraging spectators due to the covid situation and we need to respect that. But we hope soon to be able to encourage supporters to go along to cheer on the Park teams.

Future events

**This Saturday 24 April
in the morning**

Rosslyn Park Netball Club

RPNC Surrey v Capital Nuns

Friendly, Roehampton Uni 09:30

RPNC Kingston v Capital Nuns

Friendly, Roehampton Uni 11:00

*Due to Covid restrictions supporters should not attend.
Hopefully this situation will soon change, but in the meantime
please support the girls in spirit only.*

This Summer of Sport

Throughout the Summer the ground will open up regularly as a beer garden for the big sporting events such as the Lions' Tour and the soccer Euros. Look out on the club's website and social media platforms

Thursday 24 June

LONDON FLOODLIT 7s

Home 17:00

Please reserve this date in your diaries because, if Covid recovery goes to plan, this could well be the best tournament yet. A great evening's entertainment on a mid-summer evening. More details nearer the date.

All events are subject to Covid recovery going to plan. All Government Covid rules in force at the time will be strictly applied at all events - we want everyone to enjoy themselves, to feel safe and not to risk another lockdown!

ROSSLYN PARK FC 2021

SUMMER OF SPORT

This summer Rosslyn Park FC will transform into one of London's Biggest Beer Gardens.

Join us for a festival of sport including Open Air Live Screenings of every Lions Test & England Euro Match.

Think outdoor eating, drinking, dancing and celebrating the best of British Summertime!

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW AT SUMMEROFSPORTLONDON.COM

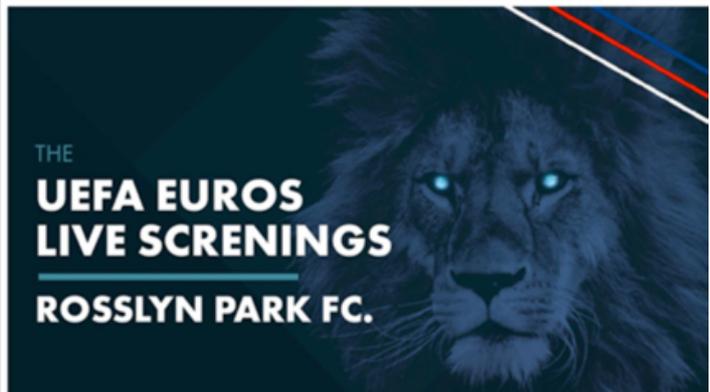
EARLY BIRD PRICES

£10 per person // Minimum 6 per table booking

*Limited Capacity so please book early to avoid disappointment.



THE
BRITISH & IRISH LIONS
LIVE SCREENINGS
ROSSLYN PARK, 2021



THE
UEFA EUROS
LIVE SCREENINGS
ROSSLYN PARK FC.

Last weeked's matches

The Netballers report:

Our first games of 2021, and what a weekend it was. It was great to see the girls out in full force ready to get back on court. We had 2 tough opponents, not the score lines we would have wanted but lots of lessons learnt and smiles all round!

Rosslyn Park Surrey vs Whitton A 31-47

Home POM: Milly

Away POM: Simone

An exciting first game back against a very experienced Whitton squad. There was some excellent play from both our attacking and defending players. Milly earned a very well deserved Player of The Match as she was all over their mid-court, making space and bringing the ball down court. There were beautiful passages of play between Vicky N as centre, and both Milly & Ellie to move the ball down court.

Simone and Kila were focused on keeping their shooters out of the game, with some great interceptions. The shooting was on fire with beautiful ball movement into the circle between Beth and Lu.

All in all, a strong first game back for Surrey after 4 months off court, which they should be very proud of.



Rosslyn Park Kingston vs Wandsworth 15-42

Home POM: Jude

It was always going to be a challenging game for the Kingston Squad, playing Wandsworth A's (a number of divisions above us). However, the whole team put 100% heart and soul into the game. Some exceptional interceptions from Hannah & Maddie enabled the shooters to get into their groove.

Saskia and Jude were solid in their defence, against some very strong shooters who didn't miss! Our Player Of The Match Jude, showed her superior fitness, putting in quality play right up to the final whistle. Despite the score line, the team kept pushing right to the end, improving on every single quarter. It was great to get game time against such an experienced side.

As a club who has had less than 1 full season together, both teams performed very well against some tough competition. There are lots of positives from the game, and some clear areas of focus for the next set of games. Ready to get back on court and do it all over again this Saturday!

Women's Rugby at the Rock

Women's Rugby at Rosslyn Park is looking to take a significant step forward. The Slingbacks held their AGM last Friday and, after debate, approved plans put forward in presentations by Park's Rugby Manager Donnie Masters and Slingbacks Coach Rhys. The Slingbacks have always been about enjoying good rugby in a social atmosphere and – whilst it is important to preserve that – the results in the past few seasons have been disappointing and numbers at training have waned. It has proved difficult to retain the interest of new recruits who have come down to train, largely because of the small numbers there. The Slingbacks have been a proud part of Park's history for more than 20 years, but there was a real and likely danger of not being able to field a team next season. A few real stalwarts have kept the show on the road, but despite their efforts succeeding seasons have become more difficult. We need to rediscover the atmosphere, drive and ambition that saw the team initially climb from playing friendlies at the lowest level of the game to gaining promotion to what was then Premiership 2.

With the facilities the club offers, there is no reason we cannot aspire towards returning to the upper reaches of the women's game. There will be a concerted recruitment campaign, aimed at finding players to supplement the existing squad and who can take us forward to the next level. That does not mean ditching our existing players, but building upon what we already have. Rhys emphasized to the players that anyone who trains seriously will get match time.

This drive will be supported on the coaching side with Rhys being joined by former Slingback Anna Butler as Forwards Coach. After being part of the team that took the Slingbacks to Premiership 2, Anna has had a successful Premiership career as a prop at Richmond for several seasons at the top level. She is an excellent

Coach and communicator and is very welcome back at the Rock. In leading the playing group, the coaches will be joined by players Shanice Williams (backs) and Sophie Behan (forwards).

It was recognized by everyone that we must not lose the strong social aspect of the game – and not everyone can or wants to train diligently every week. The ideal would be to attract sufficient players to be able to run a second XV, or at least a Sevens or Tens team for those who cannot commit to regular training but still want to be part of the squad, play occasionally and enjoy the social aspects of the game. However, that entails moving from a situation where we have rarely had enough players to fill the bench in the last three seasons to having a dozen or more players to spare, so we need to recognize that it will take a bit of time to fully realise that aspiration.

To facilitate the changes needed the existing committee members have stepped aside while the Slingbacks consider the structure that will best support their drive to success. Club Captain Sam Emery had anyway decided to step down from that role after two years, but will remain active as a player. Sam received the Jo Starling Cup for her services, and for her key role in the Rugby4NHS initiative. Shanice Williams takes on the mantle of Club Captain and is 100% behind the drive to take Rosslyn Park women's rugby back to a level where it belongs. Also stepping down are Esther King and Chair Liz Delves, both of whom have given great service to the club, on and off the field. Both are Vice Presidents. They will still be around – indeed Liz is the only player to have turned out every season since the team were formed until Covid cancelled this one.



Shanice Williams is the Slingbacks new Club captain

The moves underline the Club's commitment to women's rugby at the Rock. Hopefully we shall soon start to return to a level at which we feel we belong.

Our former grounds

5: Old Deer Park (part 2 – two world wars)

With the outbreak of the First World War an Extraordinary General Meeting was held on 14 September 1914. There was £76 in the kitty and liabilities of £90 per season if it was decided to keep going rather than to wind up affairs. The meeting decided keep on taking members' subscription to keep the club going – not that Park could play as a club. Pretty well every able bodied person had signed up to serve in the forces. If you want to know what happened to the Club members that served then there is no finer source than the book "The Final Whistle" by Stephen Cooper, so we shall not try to reproduce any of that information here. But while most of it's members fought – and many died – the club carried on its affairs, albeit without a team of its own.

A committee meeting on 15 November decided to put the ground at the disposal of rugby-playing Public Schools for the Christmas holidays. This was closely followed by the formation of Public Schools Services XVs, made up of pupils and former pupils awaiting call-up from the services or home on leave. These matches proved popular with both the players and sports-starved

spectators. There was a charge for admission, with all profits donated to war charities.

For the 1916-17 season the club agreed with Richmond CC to lease the whole ground for £120 a year, which provided three pitches. Games that had previously been played at the Richmond club during the holidays were transferred to Rosslyn Park. The 'Public Schools' matches gradually developed to allow any servicemen to play who were home on leave or for any other reason. There were even several players from Australia and New Zealand, some of them Internationals. It was during these matches that the '5 Yard' touch rule was introduced and adopted, along with the additional pitch marking it necessitated.

The club had kept the sport going through the Great War. Although all profits from its activities had gone to war charities, members had kept paying their subscriptions. There was a balance in hand comprising £200 in 5% War Loan stocks, £119 in cash and £70 worth of other assets. But there was a far bigger price to pay. Secretary Burlinson had made great efforts to stay in touch with Members who had enlisted for the hostilities. He reported that just over 350 members had gone to war – a fifth of them had perished, among them more than half of the First XV, and more than that had been seriously injured.

When the club re-assembled after hostilities had ceased there were 191 new members, so two 'A' teams were regularly fielded in addition to the Firsts and an 'Extra A XV'. In playing terms 1919-20 was not a resounding success but great effort had been made and people were grateful to be alive and playing – unlike many of their former friends. A profit of £24 was made on the season.

The 1920-21 season did not see things improve on the field, despite 106 new members, with only four wins from 22 matches. Things did get better the following year with the win tally doubled. The club was now able to regularly field six teams, and the 67 new members included the Welsh international fly-half P E R Baker-Jones. The following seasons saw continued improvement. The joint tenancy with Old Merchant Taylors came to an end when they moved out and Park took sole tenancy for £300 a year. In 1923 the club took out a 21 year lease at £360 per annum.

The following season was moderately successful in terms of results and the club were regularly fielding five teams. It was decided during the summer to revise and renew the lease on the ground. This gave the club the security of a further 21 years tenure at an increased rent of £360 a year.

There was a distinct improvement in 1924-25, winning 24 of 41 matches, but the following season the club again lost slightly more matches than it won. At the AGM the club's founder, Charles Hoyer Millar was elected President for Life in recognition of his great service over more than four decades.

It was back to winning ways in 1926-27 and the club was now running nine teams. The international back, B S Chantrill had signed from Bristol along with Irish international I M B Stuart, but the star player was undoubtedly the skipper and full-back, the Reverend O R Fulljames, a vicar and a great character known universally as "Jimmy".

Jimmy Fulljames is credited with having 'invented' the quick tap at a drop-out that season in a match at Old Deer Park. Park were awarded a drop-out and Jimmy looked up to see no opponent facing him, so he punted the ball a short distance in front, caught it himself and passed to his winger who sprinted way to score. Many felt it was sharp practice rather than commendable quick thinking. Mrs Fulljames, who was at the match, reported that a man standing close to her had said, "... and 'e's a parson!" It was the club's most successful season to date.

1927-28 was marginally less successful, winning 16 of 27 matches played, which led to the club's Jubilee season. A sumptuous dinner with formal attire required was arranged at the Victoria Hotel in Northumberland Avenue. A Guards band provided the music as guests sat down to a seven-course feast. Tickets cost 16/- (80p). A match was played on Boxing Day against Upper Clapton, the only

other team still surviving from Park's original fixture list.

By 1930-31 Park were fielding 11 teams. The First XV were skippered by another great man of Park, Peter Cooper, who went on to fame as an International referee and was marked out as someone who would go on to great things until struck down by a yachting accident when only 42. After that season the club endured another lean spell which ended in 1934-36, when the intake of players included the England hooker E S Nicholson, from Bristol.

By 1935-36 Park had the largest playing membership in London, for which the facilities at Old Deer Park were no longer really adequate. A larger facility was identified at Teddington, but before the club's Committee had made up its mind St Mary's Hospital had agreed terms and moved in. Who knows what the future would have held had the proposed move taken place?!

A further dip in form occurred the following season, despite the debut for Park of the celebrated Russian Prince, Alexander Obolensky, who scored a brace of tries in his first match against Old Blues. Another Park legend, Ken Smith, took over the captaincy for 1938-39 while a further great figure of the club – Cecil Dixon – became President, Millar suffering illness and no longer able to keep up his keen interest in the club's affairs to the degree he felt appropriate to the job. Despite their best efforts, while membership rose to more than 600, playing standards dropped again.

This was still a different era. The pavilion had bare floorboards and was lit by gas mantles. It was strictly Men Only. On matchdays "the ladies", as they were known, were relegated to the adjacent tea room where they partook of tea and cakes. After the match, the men in the pavilion would start on the beer and singing and then – about 6:00PM – they would strike up with a rendition of "Farewell Ladies". That was the cue for women to leave the ground altogether as the more risqué songs rang out across the field of dreams, fueled by large quantities of ale.

But it was an era gradually coming to an end as another war broke out. As in the previous conflict, the club kept going through the war, playing mainly Hospital and Services teams. No serviceman stationed in London was ever knowingly denied a game, whichever club they normally played for, and several Internationals turned out. But, with due respect to the Members who lay down their lives during the conflict, one wartime death stood out from the others – in November 1942 Charles Hoyer Millar passed away peacefully bringing an end to his association with the club that he and his schoolboy friends had founded in a Hampstead pub more than 63 years earlier.

But things moved on – more of that in a future newsletter.

Greed

Shock! Horror! The whole country seems to be up in arms about twelve elite clubs forming a cartel, preserving themselves from relegation and greedily cornering a disproportionate amount of the game's wealth. Even during a pandemic the PM has decided to jump on the bandwagon of condemnation. Your correspondent was deeply disappointed when he further discovered that this furore was not about Premiership Rugby Union at all, but some other less important sport played with a round ball.

400 Club

Winners of the April draw are £100 Steve Baldwin, £50 Michael Stannard and £25 Peter Kirvan.

Sponsorship Opportunities

With clubs financially reeling from the Covid crisis, sponsorship has never been more important to clubs - and Rosslyn Park is certainly no exception to that rule. A very wide range of sponsorship advertising, marketing and promotional opportunities are available throughout the season with prices suitable for all budgets. These provide a very powerful and cost effective opportunity to promote your business.

During the lock-down, Jodie Rockett, our Commercial and Sponsorship Manager, has been working on some exciting

sponsorship opportunities. One of these packages is featured below. We understand that we are currently living through uncertain times, but if individuals or their businesses feel able to commit to the package at this time – your support would be significant to the Club and very much appreciated.

Supporters can play a part in this important area. Jodie has a variety of sponsorship opportunities to suit all budgets so if, your business or someone you know might be prepared to sponsor the club or any of its activities please do contact Jodie. She will be delighted to follow up on leads. Her contact details appear in the next column.

- **Email marketing & campaigns to club database throughout the year.** Database of over 3,000 members and players
- **Feature on RPF website & full company description**
- **Social media support across all channels throughout the season.** Twitter, Instagram, Facebook & YouTube
- **Branded pitch board located around the venue** 6m x 2m board designed and produced by club for the full year
- **Table of 8 guests including 3-course meal for one home game of the season.** Home game of choice, including 3-course meal & car parking spaces
- **Hire of the club/venue free of charge.** This can include both pitch and clubhouse for one full day
Cost: £2,000 + VAT per season

For an additional £1,000 + VAT

- **Company branding on Men's 1st XV playing kit**
National exposure throughout the year

Digital Marketing

The Rosslyn Park website, database, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram all represent a large and fast growing audience with targeted engagements. These platforms allow opportunities for companies to build bespoke and extremely cost effective packages and are a great way to interact with our supporters and social media followers instantly. Our social media not only provides the latest Rosslyn Park tries and score lines but also highlight your companies involvement at the club.

Please contact Jodie Rockett, our Sponsorship Manager, via email: jodie.rockett@rosslynpark.co.uk or phone: [0208 876 1879](tel:02088761879) to discuss how sponsorship at Rosslyn Park may fit with your own promotional plans.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS AS THEY HAVE SUPPORTED US

Keep up to date

Keep in touch with everything happening at Rosslyn Park by regularly visiting the Club's website at

www.rosslynpark.co.uk

The club is also active in several social media channels:

Twitter: <http://bit.ly/2PqDIQy>

Facebook: <http://bit.ly/2NG7bxV>

Instagram: <http://bit.ly/34d652t>

YouTube: <http://bit.ly/2PQSpqC>

Do you want to receive an email notification when ParkNews is published? If you wish to receive the weekly email notifications that ParkNews has been published (and are not already receiving them) please just email: parklife@rosslynpark.co.uk with "Send Me ParkNews" in the subject line. You can also receive a tweet immediately Parklife appears on the website by following [@RPNoseyParker](https://twitter.com/RPNoseyParker) on Twitter.