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SUPPORTERS ENJOY A

Welcome to Parknews The pre-season matches are over and the serious campaign starts this weekend. It is always difficult to say where we stand in the great scheme of things after the pre-season matches. We look to have recruited well, but most other National 1 teams would say the same. On the surface the win over Blackheath looked a good omen, but was that their strongest team? We looked good against Loughborough, but they are from a lower division. It could just be that the Rangers' match at Esher in midweek was in some ways the most encouraging, because if that really was our second string, and it really did look like it was Esher's first XV, then to lose by the narrowest of margins to a team expected to be promotion candidates in National 2 would suggests our 'Firsts' must be pretty hot! Then came Saturday's narrow defeat by a very useful Ealing Trailfinders Academy team. If appearances are anything to go by, the Ealing side were padded out with a handful of more experienced players. The main difference between the two teams was Ealing's speed of pass and movement that stretched Park's defences at key moments. Being attached to a fully-professional Championship club, they have presumably been able to train together through lockdown, a luxury comparatively ring-rusty National one clubs do not have.

Which all leads us to the truth - that no one knows anything for sure. Who have the other National One clubs recruited? How is each club fixed in terms of strength in depth as a long season develops? A good or bad run of injuries can make a big difference. A vital match can be won or lost by marginal decisions by players or officials. Surely that is the fascination of competitive sport – the sheer uncertainty. But it should be a lot of fun finding out. Do follow and support Park on the journey.

This weekend

This Saturday we start our National One campaign with a very difficult match after a long trip to Plymouth Albion. Albion have always been extremely difficult to beat on their own ground – even when they have had the odd poor season. Having survived almost being forced into liquidation in 2016, they were taken over by former players, Bruce Priday and David Venables who put have put a lot of effort into rebuilding the club. This was beginning to pay off before COVID called a halt to things and they are expected be active contenders around the top of the table this season. Their numbers have been boosted by Exeter Chiefs Academy players, Frankie Nowell, Max Norey, Danny Southworth, Bailey Williams and Alex Sheridan, plus Samoan Centre Jeremy To'a.

Albion are one of the oldest clubs in the country, formed in 1876. Park first played them on the Christmas tour in 1902 and the two clubs have enjoyed friendly relations over many years, evidenced by several players who have played for both clubs. Two notable examples are Peter Berryman and former skipper Tony Brookes, whose son James may be in the Park squad on Saturday. Albion used to play at Home Park, before Plymouth Argyle FC took over, and behind that ground you will find Rosslyn Park Road, named after our club!

Albion moved from their long-term home of Beacon Park in 2003, to their present ground at Brickfields, which has a 1500-seater grandstand and enough space to fulfil their higher ambitions. However, they are expecting a big crowd for Park's visit this Saturday (they got over 500 in for a pre-season game with Exeter University) so if you want to be sure of a seat you would be well-advised to book in advance: Grandstand tickets are on sale now (£19) from http://www.plymouthalbion.com/shop/



Future events
Friday 03 September

Park Nomads v Park Fours

Home KO 8:30PM

Saturday 04 September morning

Park Surrey v Omega A

Netball

Roehampton Uni Time: 10:00AM

Plymouth Albion v 1st XV

National 1 Away KO 3:00PM Travel details inside

Saturday 11 September

Fours v Bank of England

Curtain raiser, Friendly Home KO 11:30

First home league match

1st XV v Leeds Tykes

National 1 Home KO 3:00PM

Saturday 18 September

Taunton Titans v 1st XV

National 1 Away KO 3:00PM plymouth-albion-vs-rosslyn-park-4th-september-2021/ There's a decent large beer tent at the ground which opens at noon, along with the ground itself. Note that so far this season Albion have only been accepting card payments – no cash! So don't get caught out.

It would and be real boost for the team to see and hear a few Park supporters down there. If you want to get the cheapest rail tickets, make sure to book in advance. If you missed the travel details in the previous Parknews, the Albion ground is Brickfields, Damarel Close, Plymouth, PL1 4NE. Plymouth station is roughly 1.5 miles walk to the ground, though it's easier to get a cab from the station forecourt. Trains leave London Paddington at 07:00, 08:04, 09:04 and 10:04 and it's about a 3 hours 15 minutes journey. After the match cabs usually rank up on the corner of the road turning left out of the ground, but you might be safer booking one. If you want to bump into fellow Park supporters, take a cab from the station to the historic Barbican Quarter

by Sutton Harbour where there are several historic seafront pubs among the attractions: a leisurely pub crawl will almost certainly start from the Dolphin by noon.

If you can't make it to Plymouth, then it is the first match to be featured in the new National League Rugby Review Show on Sunday at 18:00. It's a new show dedicated to all rugby at National League level. It started on 01 July and is available to watch on https://www.ncarugby.com/national-league-rugby-reviewshow/ on Sundays from 6pm after every round of matches and throughout the season from that point until Tuesday 31 May 2022. You can buy season-access tickets at the same address. Forty per cent of your purchase will go back to your club. (This will be calculated after PayPal admin fees and VAT are subtracted from the payment). It costs £15 for season access. Once purchased, you will receive a confirmation email. A link will be included where you will be able to assign the subscription to a club from a drop-down list on a Google Form. Host and commentator Warren Muggleton will travel the country for key games each week for comprehensive coverage and analysis. It will be THE place to watch all the tries and big moments from the weekend's action whilst supporting and investing in your club!

Friday night match

On the Friday evening 03 September our **Nomads** (Surrey Championship) are due to play Park **Fours** (Middlesex Merit Premier) under lights at the Rock, kicking off at 8:30PM. Admission is free, so why not bring your mates along for some alfresco drinks while enjoying the rugby?

This Saturday

If you are not going to Plymouth next Saturday, please do go along to support our netball girls who play their first match this season with our Surrey team against Omega A at Roehampton University, starting at 10:00AM, so plenty of time to get back to the club! Please do get along and support if you can. The courts can be found using the entrance to the university almost opposite Queen Mary's hospital, close to the junction of Roehampton Lane and Clarence Lane. On entering, just follow the internal road down parallel with Clarence Lane and you really can't miss the netball courts at the end. There's usually ample parking, buses 493 and 265 stop almost outside and the 170 and 85 stop close by.

Wine tasting

Also on Saturday evening, you can come along and enjoy a decent wine as we have an event in the Clubhouse that should be right up your street. The Rugby Wine Club are hosting an exclusive wine tasting at Rosslyn Park. The evening will involve talks from expert wine producer Gabriel Cuisset and rugby legend Mike Tindall, six of their delicious organic wines to sample, and the opportunity to find



out more about how they're helping to 'prop up' grass roots rugby. The evening will run from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. As spaces are limited, please register your attendance as soon as possible here. There are rumours that the lads might still be around during miniregistration on the Sunday morning.

Park 26 Ealing Academy 34

Pre-season match



There were a lot of positives for Park to take from this match, and it was also a timely reminder – if one was needed – that Park still have some areas for improvement. So this was a useful workout for Park

Park had the better of the early stages and looked to have scored early on when Hugo Ellis got over the line, but was deemed to have been held up. Under the revised laws this season that gave Ealing a drop out to clear rther than a 5-metre scrum.

It was the visitors who scored first after 10 minutes with a move of quite devastating pace to score out wide on the left. The conversion was missed.

Park came back with a good move of their own which saw Arthur Ellis score, Craig Holland's conversion putting Park in front by 7-5.

A super attack up the wing involving Benji Marfo and Jared Saunders came close to delivering a score, but it was the visitors who were next on the scoreboard, again their speed of movement creating space to score in the corner for 10-7 on 20 minutes.

Again Park came back, gaining a penalty close to the visitor's 22 that was kicked to the corner for a line-out which led to the pack



driving over in the corner, Hugo Ellis claiming the spoils to put Park ahead again at 12-10.

Ealing replied with another pacy move through quick hands and fast feet to again touch down in the corner, a good conversion attempt bouncing back off the near post, to regain the lead at 15-12 on the half hour.

It looked as if the lead would see-saw again when Park launched a good attack through the middle, but they were undone by an interception. That was defended at the cost of a penalty, which was thumped deep into Park territory. Ealing got over and Park lost Henry Spencer to a yellow card. The conversion gave the visitors a useful lead of 22-12 at the interval.

Things got even more difficult after 6 minutes of the second period when Ealing worked the ball at pace from right to left, scoring again in their favoured corner to stretch the lead to 27-12.

Park again came back, hoofing a penalty to touch and Hugo Ellis claiming his second try, Holland nailing a decent conversion for 19-27.

Park gave everything trying to come back but Ealing looked to have put that beyond them when another smart move saw them again dot down in the corner, this time converting for 34-17.

Park threw everything into attack and an end-to-end move brought a super try, though the scorer eluded identification (he will be acknowledged next week should he put his hand up). Holland converted for a final score of 26-34.

Park: Howard; Scott, Cheeseman, Jones, Marfo; Holland; Gash; Dawe, Saunders, Hay; Spencer, Gillanders; Murphy, A Ellis, H Ellis. Bench: Jackson, Buckingham, Kearney, Garvey, Laventure, Gray, Poole, Boyland, Waters, Edwards.

Esher 1st 24 Park Rangers 21

Pre-season match

The Rangers acquitted themselves well against the First XV of a useful Esher side who are expected to challenge for promotion this season.

They got off to a nightmare start, conceding an early penalty kicked, to touch, and a good run from the Esher inside-centre put the full-back in to score.

Park were soon back in the game when Owen Waters, playing in the centre, broke to the left of the posts to score out wide, James Brookes adding a superb conversion for a 12-7 lead with barely 5 minutes on the clock.

Most of the first 15 minutes were played in Park territory, a major factor being conceding too many promising situations spoiled by penalties that allowed Esher to kick clear and into Park territory. Rangers defended well but eventually cracked on 15 minutes when Esher drove over, converting for a 12-7 lead.

The Rangers then held sway for a long period in the Esher half.

Despite some good inter-passing and constant probing from scrum half Dave Lewis, Park simply could not find a way through a superbly-drilled home defence.

However, a penalty gave Esher an attacking line-out, they muffed the throw but Park got themselves penalised again. Pressure on the Park line was resisted but at the cost of a yellow card for Lewis 11 minutes from the interval. Short-handed Park defended very well and a break out from Matty Edwards looked likely to bring a score until another penalty intervened. But, with Lewis' suspension spent and waiting for a break in play, Esher stretched the defence out wide and got over close to the corner. The missed conversion brought the half-time whistle at 17-7.

Park made their intentions clear from the re-start and put the home defence under immense pressure, only to be undone by a midfield interception on 46 minutes and a runaway try close to the posts, converted for 24-7

To their credit, Rangers' heads never dropped. A likely try up the left was lost to a foot in touch. A score always looked "on", but Esher's defence was really stubborn. Park did get over the line but were held-up.

Eventually a chink of light came when pressure led to their conceding a yellow card. Park kicked the penalty to touch and then applied the catch-and-drive to eventually score in the corner through Jon Mills. Waters nailed a great conversion for 24-14.

With 6 minutes remaining Park repeated the trick, Mills again the scorer and Waters again converting for 24-21. But time ran out on a very entertaining and competitive match.

Park: Foster; Rosillio, Edwards, Waters, Barnes; Brookes; Lewis; Traynor, Rasor, Lovell; Grey, Laventure; Ledger, Bush, McLean. Bench: Arisbotham, Wade, Garvey, Kirby, Mills, Carr, Jones, Gash, Howard



New signings

After Parknews went to press last week Park made four new signings – three players and a coach. Most of you will have picked this up from the club's social media, but in case anyone missed it, former British & Irish Lion and Irish international rugby player, Sean O'Brien, has been recruited as defence coach. He played in the backrow for Leinster for 11 seasons. He won 56 caps for Ireland, and has toured with the British and Irish lions twice. Sean is currently playing at London Irish, but is keen to establish himself in a coaching role.

The three players are **Ollie Dawe**, a prop signed from Jersey Reds and previously at Bristol Bears, hooker **Jared Saunders** previously at Saracens for seven seasons and Jersey Reds and **Luke Baldwin**, a Scrum Half from Newport Gwent Dragons, previously at Saracens and Bedford. Ollie started his career as a youngster at Plymouth Albion playing 26 matches for them in the 2016 National 1 season before going on to greater things, so next Saturday should see him in familiar surroundings (assuming selection). South African Jared Saunders also actually turned out for Plymouth for 7 matches as a younger player in 2013-14 while attached to Saracens, for whom he played more than 20 Premiership matches and 6 Heineken cup ties. Luke Baldwin also played 6 matches for

Sarries before moving on, he is a Kent lad who attended Judd School but played his youth rugby at Tunbridge Wells RFC rather than Tonbridge Juddians, whom we shall meet later this season.

First Home match

After the trip to Plymouth we have a home fixture against Leeds Tykes on Saturday 11 September against Leeds Tykes, kicking off at 3:00pm. The Leeds club were relegated from The Championship last season, along with rumours of all sorts of financial trouble, and have lost the services of almost all of last season's squad. They have left the plush surroundings of the Headingly complex and moved to the Sycamores in the suburbs at Bramhope. Many doomsayers doubted their ability to start the current season. That reckoned without the return of the charismatic former Welsh International Phil Davies, under whose guidance the club rose from National 4 to the Premiership before he resigned from the position. His return has attracted some useful players – as was amply demonstrated by an away win in a friendly with Rotherham Titans last Saturday.

Away travel

After Plymouth, we travel to new territory to take on National 2 champions of last season, **Taunton Titans**. The ground is Towergate Stadium, Hyde Lane, Bathpool, Taunton, TA2 8BU. If travelling by train, you will pass the ground on the right (facing forwards) 2.2 miles before pulling into Taunton Station, so that's the distance you'll have to walk unless you get a cab. Trains leave London Paddington quite frequently for the 90 minute journey, but at time of writing there's quite a disparity between the fares, so do check before you book. There are return trains at 17:44 and 18:26. The centre of Taunton is a fair walk from the station, and not in the direction of the ground. The good news is that Taunton Rugby Club gets a mention in the Good Beer Guide and does food. Admission is £10 on the gate but Under-16s go free.

We round off a really challenging first month of the season with another long away trip, this time to **Darlington Mowden Park** on 25 September. They play at their 20,000+ all-seater stadium the Northern Echo Arena, Neasham Road, DL2 1DL. Last week the ground last weekend staged two big pop concerts, so let's hope the pitch has recovered by the time we get there! If travelling by train,



you will pass the ground on the right (facing forwards) 1.2 miles before pulling into Darlington Station. If walking to the ground (or taking the 13A or 13B bus from the station) you need to leave the station by the opposite exit to the one taking you into town. There's a regular service to Darlington (00 and 30 past the hour) from London Kings Cross. For the return journey there are trains at 17:58 and 18:28, but again be warned about taxis – last time we had one booked for the end of the match it failed to arrive and we had to walk. So don't cut it too fine!

National 1 round-up

Most National 1 sides played pre-season matches last weekend, the results of which should be taken with a generous pinch of salt. **Chinnor** were expected to mount a strong challenge this season, an expectation slightly tempered when DoR Matt Williams took the job at London Scottish and a couple of key players went with him. However, they have recruited strongly and a Friday evening away win at **Blackheath** would seem to suggest they will be one of the stronger clubs. **Rams** were also on most lists, but in two pre-season matches **Cinderford** have now done the double over them and — links with Gloucester re-established - the men from the Forest of Dean are a team to keep an eye on.

Sale have been quite bullish about their close-season signings and prevailed by 29-27 in a match away to Fylde which could have gone either way. **Cambridge** are another club who have been beating the

drum and had a good 29-17 away win at Bury St Edmunds. **Caldy** have been quietly building and looked good in a 19-19 draw with Welsh club RCG, whom they play again this Saturday as they were due to play Old Elthamians. **Tonbridge Juddians** haven't played since beating Canterbury last Saturday week.

Taunton Titans played their traditional pre-season match with Cardiff Met Uni on Friday night but we have not managed to unearth a report. Bishops Stortford wound up with a match against Hertford on Thursday evening, but we have no report. Stortford are a good side, well capable of causing a few upsets. Darlington Mowden Park had a 17-12 away win at Blaydon. No news, alas, on our first home opponents Leeds Tykes since their away win at Rotherham last week, while our opponents this coming Saturday, Plymouth Albion, had already completed their pre-season matches and held at public training session, to which an enviable number of supporters turned up. Perhaps it was just the beer tent....

Photos

The First XV photos in this Parknews are kindly supplied by Isabelle Lovell. In reproducing photos in Parknews it is always necessary to reduce the resolution (sharpness) in order to comply with file size limitations of the website. However you can purchase full-resolution copies and many other Rosslyn Park photos from Izzy's website https://www.isabellelovellsports.co.uk

New Laws

There are some new experimental Laws to look out for this season.

50:20 line-out. This is a version of the Rugby League law that has the potential to change tactics considerably. Effectively, if the team in possession kicks the ball from inside their own half **indirectly** (ie it must bounce in play first) into touch inside their opponents' 22, they get the throw into the resulting lineout. The team kicking cannot pass or carry the ball back into their own half for a 50:22 to be played, the phase of play must originate inside the defenders' half. The objective of the Law is to force defending teams to put more players into the backfield, thereby creating more attacking space, reducing defensive line speed.

Goal line drop-out. If the ball is held up in in-goal, there is a knock-on from an attacking player in the in-goal area, or an attacking kick is grounded by the defenders in their own in-goal, then play restarts with a goal line drop-out anywhere along the goal line. The reason for this change is to encourage variety in attacking play close to the goal line and to increase ball in play time by replacing a scrum with a kick that must be taken without delay. An opportunity for counter attack is also created, something we saw Ealing exploit last weekend when Hugo Ellis looked to have scored and was ruled 'held up'; Ealing took a quick drop-out which led indirectly to their scoring a try. It felt a tad unfair, having driven the defence back over their own line to lose possession, and there appears to be a disincentive to all out attack as teams may keep defenders back to cover for this possibility. We'll have to see how this works out over the season.

"Flying wedge" clarified and outlawed. This change effectively outlaws the three person pre-bound mini-scrum by redefining the flying wedge in order to reduce the times where the ball carrier and multiple support players are in contact (latched onto each 0ther) prior to contact, and to protect the tackler who can be faced with the combined force of three opposing players. It's probably best to give the full wording here to avoid confusion. Firstly there is a new definition of 'latched': Bound to a team-mate prior to contact [Binding definition: Grasping another player's body firmly between the shoulders and the hips with the whole arm in contact from hand to shoulder]. There is also an amended definition of 'flying wedge': An illegal type of attack, which usually happens near the goal line, either from a penalty or free-kick or in open play. Team-mates are latched on each side of the ball-carrier in a wedge formation before engaging the opposition. Often one or more of these team-mates is in front of the ball-carrier. Instructions to referees say that the trial Law recognises the potential for 1-player pre-latching prior to contact. This will be deemed legal, but this player must observe all of the requirements for a first arriving player, particularly the need to stay on their feet.

Cleanout and the safety of the 'jackler'. This Law introduces a sanction for clean outs on the jackler (now defined in Law) when they target or drop weight onto the lower limbs. A player may lever the jackler out of the contest at the ruck but must not drop their weight onto them or target the lower limbs. The sanction is a Penalty kick. The Jackler is now defined as: The jackler is the first arriving team-mate of the tackler at the tackle. They must remain on their feet to contest directly onto the ball. If previously involved in the tackle, they must first clearly release the ball carrier before contesting for the ball. This is purely intended as a player safety measure to reduce the injury risk to the player being cleaned out.

Please cut the poor old ref some slack in applying these Laws: we all need to get used to them, and inevitably game situations will arise where clever coaches introduce something the law-makers never though of!

Membership

This is clearly going to be a crucial season with the possibility of three clubs being promoted at the end. We would love to be able to strengthen our squad even further but we have to operate within the constraints we have available. There is a way supporters or existing members can help. The Ripley Membership has as its purpose raising funds for our playing and coaching budget and has made a genuine contribution to the renewed success of our First XV. In addition to the benefits of full membership you will get two extra membership cards, free parking, two free lunches during the season for yourself and two guests, Q&A sessions twice a year with the Director of Rugby the Chairman and the Managing Director, plus an exclusive Ripley hat and scarf. Please consider whether your membership, or join as a 'Ripley' if you are not already a member. Please speak to Dom Shabbo if you might be able to help.

If the Ripley is not for you, and haven't yet renewed your membership, or would like to join the Club, now is the time. Single Full Membership costs £200 or £16.70 per month and includes free entry to all home games with free Programme, exclusive invites to events, free bar loyalty card and access to International tickets. Family Membership is available to all couples and includes the same benefits but for two persons and costs £300 or £25 per month. If you live a distance from the club Country Membership is available at £80 or £6.70 a month with the same benefits except you pay a reduced admission price of £10 and a programme is not included. Please go to https://rosslynpark.co.uk/membership/nonplaying-membership/ or call the club office on 020 8876 1879.

Mini & Youth Memberships Please note that Mini and Youth Memberships are managed through a separate registration process, details of which can be found here.

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.

MATCH DAY SPONSORSHIP

Get in on the Action! As the official Match Sponsor of a Rosslyn Park First XV game, you will host your guests in our newly refurbished Clubhouse. Before the game you will sample our excellent hospitality with a VIP lunch courtesy of our in-house caterers. Afterwards you and your guests will have the chance to meet Rosslyn Park players and present the Man of the Match award, the photo of this presentation will feature in the following Match Day Programme.

Meet the Players

Your company will be featured on the cover of the programme, and you will have a full page advert inside. You will also receive PA announcements throughout the game.

Finally, you have the opportunity to distribute promotional flyers in the Clubhouse and around the ground to advertise your business to all of our spectators and members on the day. Full Package Includes:

- · Front Cover Programme Branding as the Official Match Day Sponsor
- · PA Announcements throughout the afternoon
- · VIP Lunch for 10 for guests prior to the game
- · Man of the Match Presentation after the game.
- Photo of the Man of Match Presentation to appear in following Match Day Programme
- · Opportunity to distribute Promotional Flyers on the day
- 2 Car Parking Spaces
- · Post Match Visit for you and your guests from two Rosslyn Park players or coaches of your choice.

Digital sponsorship

- · Email marketing & campaigns to club database throughout the year. Database of over 3,000 members and players
- · Feature on RPFC 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

Kit sponsorship

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

Player Sponsorship

A great opportunity to be linked with a Rosslyn Park player and to follow his progress throughout the season. PA announcement when your player scores a try Company logo/name against player profile in match-day programme

10 tickets for a 1st XV home game of your choice

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 ways 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

Please do support our sponsors as they have supported us.

Please contact Kenneth Moore, via email Kenneth.Moore@Rosslynpark.co.uk or phone: 0208 876 1879 to discuss how sponsorship at Rosslyn Park may fit with your own promotional plans.

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

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