



Issue 22

25 January 2023

Season 2022-23

PARK DEFEND WELL FOR VALUABLE AWAY WIN

Welcome to Parknews Park deserve credit for having doggedly held out for an away win against one of the better sides in the division, but Saturday's dour struggle at Bishops Stortford was not a vastly entertaining spectacle. The conditions for spectators were pretty awful: the route from clubhouse to pitch involved negotiating a path through a quagmire of oozing mud and, with no seats or solid standing areas, the viewing positions when one got there were not a lot better on a bitterly cold afternoon. Thank goodness that the condition of the pitch itself was in a bit better order! Having conceded over 60 points in their last two matches it is good to report that Park defended very well indeed, though the tendency to put themselves under pressure by conceding technical penalties is still in need of repair. To be fair to both teams, it was not an afternoon for expansive running rugby, all the tries coming from concerted forward drives. At least the referee must have been enjoying it - he didn't blow the final whistle until after ten-to-five!!

In other matches, the **B XV** narrowly lost a thriller to **HAC** by 29-30, the **Fours** held **Hammersmith & Fulham** for 65 minutes before going down by 27-60. The **Nomads** match at **Guildford** was called off earlier in the week and **RPNC's** netball at **Oxshott** fell victim to the weather.

The win at Bishops Stortford means that Park remain in fourth position but now only 8 points behind Sale, who lost at home to Cambridge on Saturday. We are now 5 points behind Rams, who have two games in hand as do the third club, Cambridge, who are three points ahead. They play home to Rams this coming weekend. Immediately below us, eleven points behind but also with two matches in hand, are Cinderford who visit Sale this weekend. So a good win this weekend give our prospects a significant boost. Please do come along and add your vocal support.

This Saturday is another full day at the Rock when Park entertain **Darlington Mowden Park** in another important National 1 match, kicking off at 3:00PM. There's a potentially very entertaining curtain raiser at noon with the **Rangers** facing **Henley Hawks** in Division 1 of the Halbro Raging Bull competition at noon. Lunchtime sees the annual Burns-themed pre-match lunch. Park won up at Darlington earlier in the season by 33-28, a great result for us at a ground where we have only rarely tasted success. Mowden are currently in a position of mid-table safety, lowly by their own high standards, thanks to a good home record. On their travels their only success thus far has been a 29-22 win at Hull, a record they will be all out to improve upon at Park's expense on Saturday. Although they have only won away once so far they have had some incredibly close matches, for



The packs fight it out at Bishops Stortford last Saturday [Photo: @Rosslynpark twitter feed]

Upcoming events
Friday 27 January

Nomads v Battersea Ironsides
Surrey Championship
Home KO 7:45PM

Saturday 28 January

Park Rangers v Henley 2
Halbro Raging Bull Div 1
Home KO 12:00PM

Park v Darlington MP

National 1
Home KO 3:00PM

for discounted advance match tickets and pre-match lunch bookings ([Book tickets here](#))

Fours v London Cornish
Middlesex Merit Premier
Home (Richmond Park) KO 2:00PM

London Welsh Druids v B XV
Middlesex Merit Premier
Away KO TBA

Netball

Park Blues v Wimbledon (Hampton)
Kingston Div 9
Home (Roehampton Uni) 09:30AM

Park Reds v Actonians B
Kingston Div 5
Home (Roehampton Uni) 11:00AM

PRE-MATCH HOSPITALITY

RPFC BURNS LUNCH

ROSSLYN PARK VS DMP | SATURDAY 28TH JANUARY | 1PM

MENU

CULLEN SKINK: TRADITIONAL SMOKED HADDOCK CHOWDER,
LEEK AND QUAIL'S EGGS
V VEGETABLE CHOWDER WITH LEEKS AND QUAIL'S EGGS

—

DRAM OF WHISKEY

—

ROAST HAGGIS, NEEPS AND TATTIES
V PEARL BARLEY RISOTTO, BLUE CHEESE AND SOFT HERBS

—

A SELECTION OF SCOTTISH CHEESES SERVED WITH OATCAKES,
FRESH PEARS AND WALNUTS

FOR DIETARY OR SEATING REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE CONTACT
cori.poole@rosslynpark.co.uk

£30 for RPFC Members or £36pp including Match Ticket
Book online www.rosslynpark.co.uk

instance 31-34 at Sale, 10-12 at Bishops Stortford and 17-18 at Esher.

For the Clubsides, the weekend starts on Friday evening with a juicy London Derby in the Surrey Championship with our Nomads taking on Battersea Ironsides at 7:45PM. Admission is free and the clubhouse open so please drop by and bring your friends along to perchance have a drink or two. On Saturday the **Fours** are at home to **London Cornish** in Middlesex Merit Premier, kicking off in Richmond Park at 2:00PM. The **B XV** travel to **London Welsh Druids** in the same competition. On the **netball** court our unbeaten Kingston League teams have home matches at Roehampton Uni in the morning, so please do get along and support them if you can. The **Blues** are first off at 09:30 against **Wimbledon (Hampton)** followed at 11:00 by the **Reds** playing **Actonians**. The matches are at Froebel College on Roehampton Lane, next to the corner with Clarence Lane.

Bishops Stortford 10

Park. 13

National 1

Park won a tense but scrappy encounter thanks largely to some excellent defence and tackling, particularly in the second half when the home side threw everything into securing a win.

It was Stortford who had the first real attack with a probing thrust up the right but it was well dealt with by the defence. However they were gifted a 3 point lead when Park were adjudged to have collapsed a scrum within kicking range. Scrum half Connor Lloyd made no mistake.

Park were soon level after a good attack drew a penalty for fly half Craig Holland to equalize on 12 minutes.

The match was largely a midfield battle with plenty of kicking thrown in for good measure. The deadlock was broken close to the half hour when both sides conceded penalties. Stortford kicked to find touch on halfway, but Park won a subsequent scrum which was adjudged to be held up by the home side. A scuffle saw the home scrum half Lloyd dispatched to the bin. Holland kicked to touch and Park set up an unstoppable maul for hooker Charlie Piper to touch down from the back of it for 8-3.

The try led to another scuffle and Park prop Austin Hay was the player to see yellow on this occasion.

Park conceded a couple more penalties but defended them well until, just before the interval, a further transgression saw Stortford kick into the Park 22 and drive over from the resulting line-out with number 8 Will Rogers touching down. Lloyd, restored to the field, added a good conversion to take the lead by 10-8.

It was now Stortford's turn to concede penalties, and two in rapid succession allowed Park to kick deep into home territory during added time. The efficient Park maul did its work again, providing Piper with his second try and an interval lead of 13-8.

A promising start by Park caught out the home side, who conceded a line out deep in their own territory but this time Stortford were unable to exploit the situation and the match reverted to a bit of a stalemate.

Park's propensity to concede penalties allowed the home side to have more territory and attacking play than they probably otherwise deserved. Things looked decidedly dodgy when Jordan Martin was sent to the bin for a tip tackle, allowing Stortford to kick for a 5 metre lineout, but again excellent defence saw Park steal and clear.

Park were then penalized at a ruck, allowing another close quarters lineout but this time the home side were held up allowing Park drop out and clear.

The visitors were then pinged at a scrum. Stortford kicked for goal but missed. Then Park were penalised for crossing when about to break away, allowing the home side to kick for another lineout.

However, it was Park who almost extended their lead as darkness set in. With about 5 minutes remaining the home hooker was yellow carded for tackling a player who was in the air. One last chance saw Matt Bolwell charge down a clearance only for it to ricochet unkindly and Park knocked on at the lineout.

Stortford just had time to gain a scrum deep into added time but were penalized, effectively ending the match. It was a tense battle for supporters of both sides. Neutrals may well have found it less than engrossing.

Park: Robinson; Addams, Luca Smith, Gordon, Marfo; Holland; Baldwin; Warren, Piper, Hay; Martin, Gillanders (C); Ledger, Ellis, Laventure.

Replacements: Saunders, Garvey, Bolwell, Spencer, Lewis.

ED: Apologies that we have no match photos

The Rangers' match at Bishops Stortford had to be cancelled as there were insufficient available players.

Clubsides

Will Thorogood reports: Every week at Rosslyn Park seems to have its problems or dramas, and this one was no different. A bit like in any family! The Nomads reported, early in the week, that their Guildford 2's opposition could not raise a side (only 6 available). So the Nomads decided to have a rest week, ahead of their big Friday night clash against top of the table Ironsides 3's. However, some Nomads did kindly help out both the B's and 4's in their Saturday games at the Rock. Thank you.

With that extra little bit of Nomadic help, the B's had a full XV and reserves against HAC 2's at 1pm. A welcome return for skipper,



Photo by Will Thorogood

Ollie Allman, who had not played for nearly two months because of concussion.

There seems to have been a lot of "thrillers" at the Rock, of late (Rangers v Saxons, last week), and this game was no exception! Both sides were equal to each other throughout, in every department, with a half time score of B's (2 tries and a conversion) 12 HAC 15 (2 tries, a conversion and a penalty goal).

The second half was more of the same, open running rugby, Park dominance at the line out, and scrummage, with the B's manufacturing 3 well worked tries, but only one of which was converted. HAC replied with two tries of their own (one of which HAC managed to round near to the sticks, and duly converted). At this point, with about 5 minutes to go, and my maths is correct, the B's lead 29-27. However, with 2 minutes remaining, a penalty infringement against the B's in a kickable position for HAC gave them a one point lead. 29-30. From the kick off the B's exerted considerable pressure around the HAC 22 line who inevitably were penalised with about a minute to go. A difficult choice, go for goal or the corner? Goal was the decision. One could feel the tension and hear the silence. The ball was launched towards the posts, but sadly drifted to the left of the upright. No points, I'm afraid, and then the final whistle. Disappointment after all that hard work, but everyone knew that they had all played well, and had enjoyed a good game. They should feel proud of their performance despite the one point deficit. If only...? B's 29 HAC 2's 30.

Following a 3 o'clock game on the 4G between Ironsides 1's and Old Colfeians 1's (a frost casualty at theirs), the 4's took on league leaders Hammersmith & Fulham 2's in their MMT Premier game.

This game was meant to be at Hurlingham Park, but had fallen victim to Jack Frost and his games. However, through Tom Wrigglesworth's (skipper) tenacity, perseverance and a little help from his friends, (you know who you are), we managed to get the game switched (everything in place) by teatime on Friday. Phew, but thank you all, plus H&F for their assistance in the matter and the Refs' Society.

To the game...this was bizarre the way it went. In short, always a tough nut to crack, H&F, but, overall, we had the upper hand for much of the game. The 4's were only trailing 10-19 at half time (2 tries to 3 (two tries of which we had no answer to the pure, blinding pace and sidestep from "Billy Whizz" (George, the H&F right wing). He ended up with a hat-trick, but I think Tom got his own hat-trick in reply, but in a different style and manner? Is that right Tom?



Anyway, the 4's came out in the second half with a new determination and ferocity, and they quickly scored by the posts, duly converted, to which H&F replied. 17-24. The 4's then answered with a try in the left corner and then another near the posts, unsuccessfully converted. So, 27-24 to Park, seemingly in the ascendancy with about 65 minutes gone. But, "Anything could happen in the next 15 minutes" (Stingray, Stingray) and it did, I'm afraid!

A couple of pivotal moments in the flow of play, and the rest was history. An interception by Hammers, and then a H&F counter (a Georgie Whizz sprinting exhibition) to take the wind out of our sails. Suddenly the floodgates opened and we were deluged by try after Hammersmith try. It kind of reminded me of an England batting collapse! All of this within the space of 15 minutes. Try as they did, the 4's could not find any answers to the Hammersmith blitzkrieg, but the 4's can hold their heads high and be proud of their performance for 65 minutes, despite the shell shock of the last 15. 4's 27 H&F 60. Onwards and upwards for Saturday!

Rangers did not play, I'm told, but the 1's had a close and needed win at Stortford.

After all that, does anyone have any opinions about the new tackle law changes which will come into force in July? A lot to be considered, and its potential effect on our level of the game. Putting into practice and the policing (refining) of it? *Ed: see article further on*

Youth & Mini Rugby Camps

The club is again teaming up with AA Elite Sports to run the popular half-term training camps at the Rock on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 February. There will be Premiership stars in attendance to pass on their expertise between 10:00AM and 3:00PM. The camps are aimed at ages 7 – 15. The camps cost £50 for one day or £95 for both days. You can book at <https://aaelitesports.com/sports-camps/p/aa-elite-rugby-camps-february-16th-17th>

Netball

Saturday's match at Oxshott was postponed due to the weather. This week, weather permitting, our unbeaten Kingston League teams have home matches at Roehampton Uni in the morning, so please do get along and support them if you can. The **Blues** are first off at 09:30 against **Wimbledon (Hampton)** followed at 11:00 by the **Reds** playing **Actonians**. The matches are at Froebel College on Roehampton Lane, next to the corner with Clarence Lane.

Walking Rugby

If you are over 55 and still hanker after playing, we have the

FEBRUARY HALF TERM RUGBY CAMPS

Rosslyn Park RFC
10-3pm - Ages 7-15
16th & 17th February
www.aaelitesports.com

answer. Regardless of your standard of play, fitness or gender why not turn up on Monday mornings 10:00-11:30 when you can participate in a social game of walking rugby. The first game took place this Monday and one former First XV member who took part reported that it was great fun. But you don't need to be anything like that standard to enjoy taking part. Great social atmosphere and refreshments afterwards. For more information, contact community@rosslynpark.co.uk or call 07821 650 912.

Away travel

We have two tough away matches coming up in February in the form of **Rams** on Saturday 18 and **Cambridge** the following Saturday, both of where your vocal support could make a big difference. In both cases a Cheap Day Return is usually the cheapest ticket, so no need to book early.

Rams ground is at Old Bath Road, Sonning, Berkshire RG4 6TQ. Reading is the station to head for, either from Paddington or there's a local service from Clapham Junction or Richmond (much slower but could be more convenient for some). There is a bus from near the station that runs close to the ground, but finding it is far from easy. Especially if there's more than one of you to share the fare it's best to get a cab, but it's a fair distance out of town and cost around £14 each way last time.

For Cambridge there is a service from Liverpool Street but the fast service from Kings Cross to Cambridge will be better for most. The ground is nearer the station than it is the town centre, and it's walkable across a fen though in February a cab from outside the station may be preferable. Our regulars tend to go into town and take a cab from there. If you invest in a taxi make sure the driver knows you want the ground in Grantchester Road or you could end up at the University ground. There's a decent clubhouse that does reasonable bar food, but the pre-match lunch is already sold out.

Chairman's charity ride

After the game against Darlington Mowden Park on Saturday, our Chairman, Adam Tyrer, will be jetting off to Buenos Aires with 35 like minded souls for a charity bike ride. They call themselves the Truants and every 2 years or so head off to a hot distant land (although last time out due to Covid restrictions it was Scotland) and don their lycra to cycle in aid of Children's charities Nordoff Robbins, Teenage Cancer Trust and Childline. Together they have raised just shy of £5m on their previous 8 rides and are looking to smash through that this time out. Each of the



riders pay their own way and 100% of donations go to the charities.

Their last trip to Scotland gave them torrential rain and gale force winds and a distinctly non-flat route across the Highlands. This time the Truants return to their traditional foes of terrain, heat and humidity on a 250km route from Buenos Aires, across the River Plate and into the Uruguayan bush. Going off sealed roads for most of it, hiring mountain bikes locally and doing up to 100km in a day to test both the bikes and riders to the limit. The Truants themselves are a rag-tag bunch of mostly overweight, unfit somewhat past their prime individuals hence Adam fits in perfectly!

Many club members have already sponsored and Adam hopes you are able to donate something in honour of this trip, no matter how small, to help make his suffering worth it! Donating is easy through the Sports Giving website at <https://sportsgiving.co.uk/sponsorship/entry/630363>. Please do give generously, if not to see Adam suffer then because the causes are excellent!

Law changes

Most supporters, unless living on another planet, will by now be aware of the new tackle law being introduced at National 1 level and below next season. But for anyone who hasn't, in essence the RFU Council agreed on Monday 16th January to lower the height of the tackle from July 1 2023. They are at pains to point out that the change is designed to improve player safety and aims to reduce head impact exposure and concussion risk in the tackle for both the ball carrier and tackler. Evidence from studies has consistently demonstrated that higher contact on the ball carrier and closer proximity of the ball carrier and tacklers' heads are associated with larger head impacts (as measured by smart mouthguards) and an increased risk of concussion. Lowering the height of the tackle and encouraging the tackler to bend more at the waist will minimise the risk of this occurring while maintaining the tackle as an integral part of the game. Ball carriers will also be encouraged to follow the principle of evasion, to avoid late dipping and thereby avoid creating a situation where a bent tackler may be put at increased risk of head-on-head contact with the ball carrier through a late or sudden change in body height of the ball carrier.

Under the new Law tackles must be made at the line of the waist and below. The aim is to put players' heads in the safest possible place by defining in law where the line of the tackle may start. Ball carriers will be encouraged to follow the principle that rugby is a game of evasion, and they should avoid late dipping and thereby avoid creating a situation where a bent tackler may be put at increased risk of head-on-head contact with the ball carrier through a late or sudden change in body height of the ball carrier. Match officials will focus on the actions of the ball carrier as well as the tackler when head contact occurs.

There has been massive controversy about this change, at least two petitions against it gathered almost 10,000 signatures each on the first day. Many arguing that it leaves us with a different sport at Premiership and Championship level. Those who were taught the game in days of yore may remember coaches emphasizing the need to tackle round the legs in order to bring the player down. Coincidentally, with the game going professional at the higher levels, there was more emphasis on preventing quick release to a support runner with often two players committed to the tackle. At the time many people felt that this slowed the game down, made it less open and – certainly at amateur level – it made it less of a game for all shapes and sizes, with beefier backs the order of the day..

Things have moved on, and any Law change is now immediately analysed by coaches, who often come up with ways to neutralize or exploit its effects in unexpected ways, so anyone who hankers after a return to yesteryear will probably be disappointed. It is not surprising that players who enjoy the physical side of the game are up in arms. Purely from a spectator point of view it may be best to keep an open mind and judge by what actually happens.

Obolensky Dinner

A message from Tom Baigrie about this season's Obolensky Dinner: The 2023 Obolensky Dinner is now 8 weeks away on 8 March 2023

- and I am delighted to say that we are now 85% full so space is limited! To those of you who have responded already – thank you. To everyone else please do let us know if you can join us. We now have our speakers announced (Nick Mullins and Topsy Ojo) and as ever it promises to be a fantastic night. Please let us know ASAP (via Karen Richard (karen.richard@rosslynpark.co.uk)) if you would like to take a table or part thereof.

Can you help?

The club is really grateful to our sponsors, and would urge everyone to support them as they have supported us. If you, your business or anyone you know might be interested in joining in with sponsoring Rosslyn Park, then Kenny Moore would be delighted to talk with you. Kenny can be contacted at the Club Office (020 8876 1879) or e-mail kenneth.moore@rosslynpark.co.uk

PITCH BOARDS

Great for a local business to promote awareness and been seen throughout the year by all that use the club, and exposure through our live streaming of select games.

£1,500.00 + VAT

1 x Branded pitch board located on the 1st XV pitch (6m x 0.9m) for one year

MATCHDAY BALL SPONSORSHIP

£150.00 + VAT

- Company name and logo on Club website
- Company name mentioned as official game Match Ball Sponsor for the day on PA announcements.

MATCH DAY SPONSORSHIP

£1,500.00 + VAT

- 10 x Tickets to a 1st XV home game of your choice
- Lunch for 10 people at a 1st XV home game of choice
- Company name and logo against player profile on Club website
- Presentation of Man of the Match
- A5 full-page advert to be featured in match day programme
- Company name and logo on the main scoreboard
- PA announcements through the day and at lunch

MATCHDAY PROGRAMME ADVERT

£650.00 + VAT

- Company name and logo on Club website
- A5 full-page advert to be featured in a total of 13 Men's 1st XV programmes at home game

Keep in touch

There is always something going on at Rosslyn Park - keep in touch check regularly for Parknews on the website and subscribe to the club's social media channels, which include news, reports and match video highlights:

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

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

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

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

You can also receive a tweet immediately Parknews appears on the website by following [@RPNoseyParker](https://twitter.com/RPNoseyParker) on Twitter.



NEXT HOME MATCH

ROSSLYN PARK

VS **DARLINGTON**
MOWDEN PARK

SAT 28TH JAN
3PM | THE ROCK

TICKETS FROM £12. U16S GO FREE
BUY TICKETS NOW!
WWW.ROSSLYNPARK.CO.UK

RFPB BURNS LUNCH FROM £30 PER PERSON
25% OFF ALL DRINKS 4.45-6PM | BURGER KITCHEN