

SPORT

England star Mark opens Parkfield's artificial wicket

MIDDLESEX and England star, Mark Ramprakash, who played some of his early cricket was at Parkfield CC, officially opened the club's new artificial wicket at their Saddlers Mead ground last week.

The wicket was provided with the help of the National Cricket Association, whose development officer, the former Essex cricketer, Keith Pont, was also present at the opening.

The aim of the NCA is to promote and encourage the development of youngsters of all ages to take part and enjoy the game of cricket.

Parkfield CC is aiming to make their ground a centre for cricket excellence and invite any young cricketers to come along to

develop their skills under the direction of their five cricket coaches. They have teams from under-11 to under-17 and the policy is to gradually introduce them into the senior elevens.

Junior cricket is played throughout the winter (indoors) and coaching is provided throughout the year.

The provision of the artificial wicket will enable coaching sessions and junior matches to be played on a wicket of even bounce and not always at the discretion of the weather.

The Parkfield youngsters certainly voted it a hit as their colts teams played an inaugural match on it on Tuesday after Mark Ramprakash and Keith Pont had performed the opening ceremony.



England star, Mark Ramprakash, tries out the new artificial wicket at Parkfield CC.

New boys shine for Wembley

NEW strike duo, Nelson Kumah and Keith Boreham, proved their worth for Wembley on Tuesday, scoring the goals which gave their side a 2-1 win over Premier Division Boreham Wood.

The Lions went behind when Simon Lane diverted a corner into his own net. Kumah levelled and Boreham fired the winner midway through the second half.

Wembley: Beckles, Hollingdale, Cumberbatch, Sue (Shields), Lane (Fahy), J.B Bates, Sardi, I. Bates, Boreham, Kumah, Haigh.

Wealdstone won 1-0 away to a Walton side that included former Stones Neil Cordice, Mark Hill and Sean Newman. Steve Bircham scored Stones winner after 35th minutes.

Wealdstone: Holdsworth, Massey (Smart), Smith (Wise), Moore (Waugh), Crow, Marshall, Hibbert (Airben), Takell (Hart), Walker (Hammati), Sheldrick (Ross), Bircham.

Harrow Borough went down 2-1 in a friendly against ICIS Champions and Conference new boys, Hayes, at Earlsmead on Monday.

Junior Haynes and Warren Kelly (penalty) gave Hayes a 2-0 interval lead before Sean James pulled one back for Borough in the second half.

Harrow Borough: Penman, Clarke, James, Court (Bensted) (Day), Dowie, Jones, Baring (Robson), Hestale, Byrne (Hurlock), Xavier, Enderby.

Edgware Town maintained their good pre-season run with a 5-0 win over a Charlton XI on Tuesday. Goals came from Carl Thomas, Steve Newing, Laurence Murphy and John Coleman 2.



'WE'VE won the cup.' Triumphant Edgware Town skipper Steve Newing holds aloft the Harrow Senior Cup after Town's 6-0 final win over Northwood.

PICTURE BY SOPHIE POWELL

Soccer fixtures

Thursday August 8
Friendly: Wembley v Hayes (Vale Farm, 7.30pm)
Saturday August 10
Friendlies: Barton Rovers v Edgware Town; Ruislip Manor v Wembley (to be confirmed); Walton & H v Harrow Borough; Wealdstone v Wimbledon (White Lion ground, 3pm); Kingsbury Town v Hendon (Silver Jubilee Park, 3pm).
Tuesday August 13
Friendlies: Edgware Town v Harlow Town (White Lion ground, 7.30pm); Kingsbury Town v Harrow Borough (Silver Jubilee Park, 7.30pm); Maidenhead Utd v Wealdstone (7.45pm).

Wasps are QPR bound

Wright takeover ties up fixtures move to Loftus Road

MEDIA tycoon Chris Wright completed his £10 million takeover of Queens Park Rangers on Monday and thus paved the way for Wasps to play the bulk of their Courage League Division One games at the soccer club's Loftus Road ground this coming season.

The move was part of the declared plans of Wright - the chairman of Chrysalis Records - when he paid nearly £2.75m for a 49.9 per cent share of the Sudbury club last month.

Said Wasps press secretary, John Gasson: "A substantial number of our games will now be played at QPR."

Although the respective fixture lists of the two clubs are currently being studied, no decision has yet been made on which games will move to Loftus Road, although it is almost certain to include the prestige fixtures - the crowd pulling Courage League clashes with Bath, Leicester and Harlequins, along with the

club's European Cup matches.

In the event of any clash of Saturday fixtures at Loftus Road, both clubs have made it known that they will be willing to switch either to the Sunday or Friday evening.

Wasps will not, however, be totally deserting Sudbury. Games will be played there when there is no way round a clash with QPR fixtures and when it is felt that, out of sentiment, they should be staged for the benefit of the club's long standing members.

Repton Avenue is also likely to host the less attractive League fixtures as the ground would create a better atmosphere with smaller crowds.

The changing face of rugby will see a decidedly different look to the new season, which begins for Wasps with a visit to Sale on August 31. Gone are many of the traditional club matches and in their place is a crowded fixture list of 41

games - every one highly competitive.

But Wasps are ready for the challenge under the new management team of Roger Uttley and Nigel Melville and coach Rob Smith. With the array of new signings they have made, they again expect to be challenging for all the major honours. "We've got a very well balanced squad, powerful, with cover in all positions and with the emphasis on youth," says John Gasson.

There could be more new signings on the horizon - and a big name amongst them. Wasps have been linked with Wigan's former All Black centre, Vusi'aga Tuigamala and they are 'hopeful' of getting their man.

On the departures front, hooker Paul Delaney has joined Harlequins, Chris Wilkins and Chris Braithwaite have left for Blackheath, while Wasps former England prop, Jeff Probyn, has signed for big spending Bedford.

London Towers re-sign star quartet

BUDWEISER Basketball League champions, London Towers, have re-signed the nucleus of the team that won three trophies last season.

Talented Americans, guard Danny Lewis and forward Tony Windless, will return for their third season, together with loyal servant Roger Duhaney, the club captain, who will be starting his seventh year with his home town team.

They are joined by England centre Neville Austin, whose steady improvement last season was a

key to the team's success. Lewis and Windless were both named in last season's Budweiser All Star team.

Windless is certainly delighted to be back as a Tower. He said: "We have an exciting season in prospect with strong challenges in Europe

and England. I'm happy to be back with such a professional organisation."

Coach Kevin Cadle is also pleased. "They're not just talented guys but they also know how to win. That is going to be important this year as we challenge in Europe."

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Olympic agony for Mandy

HATCH End hockey star Mandy Nicholls was denied a second Olympics bronze medal on Saturday when the GB team lost a penalty stroke shoot-out.

The 28 year old forward had played her part as Britain drew 0-0 against Holland in the bronze medal play-off game in Atlanta, but when the shoot out followed, she couldn't bear to watch and sat with her head in her hands on the bench as her teammates lost out by 4-3.

However, there was some consolation for Mandy, who won bronze with the GB team at Barcelona in 1992. She scored her first Olympic goals when she netted twice in the 5-0 win over Argentina in the last of the tournament's group matches.

Harrow's other Olympic hope, Parkside AC's Alison Wyeth, disappointed. She failed to qualify from her heat of the 5000m.

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Starlight soar to Trophy triumph



STARLIGHT CC skipper Paul Goodison receives the Mayor of Harrow's Knockout Trophy from Colin Jones of the Harrow Cricket Association following his team's Final win over Harrow. Match report and more pictures on page 106.

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