

A fixture card is enclosed and this outlines some of the activities of the club in addition to the fixtures. As you can see, leagues are the thing. The firsts, seconds, thirds and for goodness sake, even the grandads and fathers of the Penquins side are now participating in leagues. The first fifteen ended last season as seventh in the London South East 4 league. The second and third fifteens retained their places near the top of their respective leagues. In the UH Cup competition, the firsts lost to Imperial Medics after an excellent first half when it seemed they would sweep the opposition away. The second fifteen won their cup and the thirds lost. The ladies fifteen won the UL league and have become more involved in club organisation. There is an inevitability about the finals in the UH competitions. Imperial Medics (St Mary's etc) and Guys St Thomas (GKT for the purposes of the UH Cup) are the only two hospital sides with Saturday league sides and any strength in depth. It is sad to see Barts-London struggling to produce a single side given that the two medical schools before merger had strong rugby traditions.

The Guys St Thomas sevens side retained the Royal Society of Medicine and the National Medical School titles but did not fare well in the UH Sevens competition which they had previously won.

The past v present games were held in May followed once more by the ball under canvas at Honor Oak Park. This was an excellent day. The event during the current season will be on Saturday May 3 2003. This is a bank holiday weekend. Put it into next year's diary. Another occasion worth committing to your diary is the lunch which precedes the UH Cup final at the London Welsh ground. It is a bit presumptuous to suppose that GKT will be represented but since the fixture is assuming a regularity and familiarity more akin to the Varsity clash, you might just as well note the date which is March 12 2003.

University politics of a sort intrude on sport too. The KCL Student Union has year by year reduced the grant to the rugby club, now recognising only the activities of the pure student side that plays on Wednesday. There is much unhappiness that qualified people play rugby on Saturday for the Club and thereby use student facilities. The KCL Union would prefer to have no medical school sports sides and especially any containing doctors and dentists. There was also an attempt to dispose of the Cobham playing fields. The argument for finding new ownership related to its relative low activity amongst the several sites within Kings College. A Kings College Hospital rugby side still exists and the club is officially recognised by the RFU. It contains no students but does have a few ex KCH patients. It accounts for some of the high activity at the Kings Dulwich ground. The KCL student union appears able to live with this arrangement which is probably financially advantageous. It is one reason why at the Guys ST Thomas RFU AGM in May there was a vote in favour of retaining the club's official name and eschewing the incorporation of Kings in the title. This may be unsound politics. For the present, the Cobham ground is being partially leased to Wimbledon Football Club but Kings will retain ownership. Students will have reduced access.

The Club now has its own web site, details of which are in the fixture card. This will be regularly kept up to date with results and other news items.

International tickets will be available for the following games at Twickenham: New Zealand Nov 9, Australia Nov 16, South Africa Nov 23. Please note that numbers of people have requested tickets for the New Zealand game in advance of this newsletter. It is almost oversubscribed already. The six nations games for which tickets will be available are France Feb 15, Italy March 9 (Sun) Scotland March 22. Write to me with your requests but do not send a cheque. Distributing these tickets in as fair-minded a fashion as possible still results in complaints of inequity. The costs for tickets are £50, £45 and £40.

The season 2001 - 2 was marred by the death of Paul Scanlan at age 38. He was a regular first fifteen player in the 1980's, a vice president of the Club and Captain of the Penguins veterans side 1999-2000. He was still playing in the months before his death which occurred in a London intensive care unit on May 1 2002. He became ill from a rare cervical cord lesion when in Italy as a non playing member of his side which had competed in Naples and had travelled to Rome to see England play. He leaves a father, brother and a wife. An appeal is being launched through this newsletter for a permanent memorial to Paul. It may take the form of a scholarship or a prize in Orthodontics, Paul's profession. Please make cheques payable to the Paul Scanlan Memorial Fund and send them to me.

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