

## RUGBY UNION ROUND-UP

## Old Eds fight back but it's all in vain

## Mid 2 West North

ASTON OLD EDS 18 LEEK 24

ASTON produced a heroic comeback in the last quarter but just failed to overturn Leek's advantage.

Aston took the lead when Tom McNamee converted a other penalty from 40m out.

The visitors responded quickly and opened the scoring with the first try of the afternoon.

They extended their lead after 10 minutes and soon took advantage of Aston being reduced to 13 men as a result of Lea Ross and Pat Clarke heading for the sin-bin.

Leek stretched their lead to 17-3 by half time. McNamee kicking a successful penalty for Aston.

Leek continued to cause the Aston defence problems after half time and added a converted try to build up a 24-6 lead.

With their tails up, Leek bombarded Aston, who defended resolutely, with Paul Horrocks prominent.

Aston eventually cleared to half-way and seemed to be buoyed by their defensive work.

A strong midfield charge by Michael Tate was taken on by McNamee who found Matt Dudley outside him but the final pass didn't find the outside runner.

Going into the last quarter, Aston changed tack and started to use their forwards in close support to gain ground. A five-yard line out was caught and driven on over the line for Adam Baldock to touchdown. Chris Cheney converted.

With the clock ticking down, Aston repeated the exercise from another line out, and while the first drive was stopped, Horrocks was on hand to pick up and drive over to reduce the deficit to 24-18.

Aston pressed forward again but Leek held their nerve.

## Sutton lead table and Nevitt insists there's more to come

## National League 3

SUTTON COLDFIELD RFC 60 DERBY 5

SUTTON moved to the top of the National League Three Midlands table after they demolished Derby 60-5 in a 10 try to one spectacular at the Roger Smoldon Ground.

The convincing victory over old adversaries Derby extended Sutton's unbeaten league run, from last year, to 29 games.

Once again the strong Sutton backs led the impressive try-scoring route with wingers Nathan Burchell and Ian Miller to the fore each scoring a brace.

He was ably assisted by full-back Dave Edwards and centre Jonathan Raistrick with a try each.

The forwards weighed in with first league tries for second row Fraser Tait and flanker James Sutton, who scored a try apiece.

Number eight Mark Evans opened this season's account



Nathan Burchell was in superb form.

Picture: Ian Worthington

with a fine run to the line.

Centre Alex White scored a try and added five conversions for good measure giving him a personal tally of 15 points.

Sutton travel to Mansfield this weekend.

It will be the first meeting of the two sides since Sutton lost a close-fought play-off battle 33-27 in April 2011.

First team coach Matt

Nevitt said: "It's going to be a tricky test for us this weekend and we are preparing for a battle.

"It's not a case of looking for revenge. We have gone past that and moved on.

"It was disappointing two seasons ago to miss out on promotion.

"We had injuries going into the play-off game but were still

confident we had a strong enough squad to win the game.

"Things just didn't go to plan on the day. The elements were tricky and it was one of those days where nothing we did came off.

"But we are a focused group here and the lads responded to the disappointment in style last season.

"So we will go to Mansfield in confident mood. It's our first big test in the league, in my opinion. We will show them respect."

Reflecting on his side's superb start to the season, Nevitt admitted he is not getting too carried away.

He said: "It's been a good start for us in terms of the results.

"But the performances have been a little patchy so far and we have probably produced about 40 or 50 minutes of good rugby so far. We will need to keep improving as there are harder tests to come."

■ Sutton seconds thrashed Drotiwich 93-3 with Andy Tovey scoring six tries.

## Salts claim win to lay down a marker

## Mid 2 West North

OLD SALTS 32 TAMWORTH 16

OLD Salts lead Midland Two West North after the opening two fixtures as they claimed victory over neighbours Tamworth.

Danny Norton opened Tamworth's account with a penalty on ten minutes but Salts responded with a try from Chris Newman.

Tamworth responded with another penalty but Pete Harris glided over the line to give Salts a 12-6 lead at the break.

After the break, Norton kicked a further penalty for Tamworth but Old Salts responded through Tom Lee.

Jack Sporic then crossed for a try and Lee added the extras to give Old Salts a 22-9 lead.

The home side looked to pull clear but Tamworth threw everything at Salts in the latter stages with Danny Borthwick scoring a try. Norton converted to make the score 22-16 and put the game firmly in the balance again.

With time running out, it was the home side who finished the better with a penalty from Lee, following a Tamworth infringement, stretching the advantage to 25-16.

Sam Turner then raced through to score. Lee converted to complete the win.

## Aldridge open with an unlucky defeat

## Mid 5 West North

RUGELEY 18 ALDRIDGE RFC 10

ALDRIDGE slipped to defeat in one of those 'should have, could have' encounters that could come back to haunt them later in the season.

The visitors were up against a stiff breeze in the first half and found themselves 18 points adrift as they approached half time.

They were behind by two tries, a conversion and a couple of penalties without doing too much wrong, apart from being caught napping on a couple occasions by Rugeley's pace out wide.

They clawed their way back into opposition territory and after some forward pressure and a few darts for the line, lock Eddie O'Neill crashed over three minutes before the break. Chris Jones converted.

The breeze gave Aldridge plenty of advantages in the second half and although the set-pieces were not functioning smoothly they kept Rugeley penned within their territory for all of the rest of the match.

They had plenty of opportunities both in the backs and the forwards but failed to translate this supremacy into points.

Richard Tipton got over between the posts, only to be declared held-up, and they crossed on other occasions too but again failed to get the award.

Jones had slotted a penalty to reduce the deficit but a couple of other kickable penalties were surprisingly run and, without support, these chances also went begging as the game petered out.

## Bridgnorth efficiency is too much as Spartans slip up

## Mid 2 West North

BRIDGNORTH 22 SPARTANS 5

SPARTANS found the going tough against a Bridgnorth side expected to challenge for honours this season.

The home players soon set about their task, pressuring Spartans from the first whistle.

Bridgnorth were a well-organised and efficient side but squandered a number of opportunities with loose passes

and poor decisions.

The visiting Men in Black were constantly in their own half but tackled well and competed solidly, improving as time passed until finally conceding a try beneath the sticks five minutes before half time.

Spartans responded well and a surge in midfield saw the siege relieved, with Jamie Parker tackled inches from the line in the corner to end the half.

Spartans stuck to their task

as the second half began and, with the forwards' contest fairly even, it was the Bridgnorth backs who showed the greatest threat.

A well-worked move saw the home side extend their lead to 12 points as continued pressure told.

However, Spartans showed excellent spirit to release young Alex Garbett for a fine try to close the gap.

Bridgnorth were quick to extinguish any flickering Spartans' fire with a penalty

for a ten-point margin, and the final quarter was a good contest between two sides beginning to tire.

With just three minutes left as a clash of heads saw Spartans momentarily freeze and with no whistle heard a robust Bridgnorth flanker took his chance to cruise in.

Once more, Spartans showed their warrior spirit making one last trip to the home try-line, but they were held up short and time ran out leaving Bridgnorth winners.

## Golden girl Ellie inspires Boldmere aces to a stunning victory in league

## Swimming

By STEVE HARLOW  
Swimming correspondent

BOLDMERE Swimming Club's A squad were inspired by a good luck message from Paralympic star Ellie Simmonds as they pulled off a truly remarkable result by winning the Junior League Division 1 title.

Boldmere went into the final lying in third spot, level on 17 league points with second placed Leicester Sharks and one league point and thirteen gala points behind league leaders Northampton.

It looked like mission impossible, but the youngsters were inspired by a good luck message from Simmonds while travelling on the coach to the final.

The club produced 29 personal bests and 59 unofficial bests from the all-important relays, as well as five new club records.

Achieving 34 from a possible 51 top three finishes, Boldmere touched the timing pads first 11 times.

Nine-year-old Ben Smith

won the 25m backstroke in a personal best time of 18.97secs and finished second in the 25m freestyle.

Jamie Dark secured third place in a very close finish in the 25m breaststroke with a personal best of 23.14secs while Acer Woolley came 4th in the 25m butterfly.

The nine-year-old girls excelled by setting new best times against stiff opposition.

Abbey Turnbull took third place in the 25m butterfly and fourth in the 25m freestyle while Defne Balu set a 23.20secs best in the 25m breaststroke, claiming fourth.

Holly Bloor set three personal bests with a 20.28 for second in 25m backstroke individual.

She went quicker of the first leg of the medley relay to break the club record in the time of 19.85secs. Her third came on the first leg of the girl's freestyle eight-leg cannon relay.

In the 10-year age group, Lilly Wood sliced nearly two seconds off her personal best to finish second in the 50m breaststroke in 44.43secs.

Alexandra Bartley claimed



Ellie Simmonds

a new best if 40.31secs to take third in the 50m backstroke.

Ten-year-old James Goodwin set bests, finishing fourth in both 50m butterfly (17.45secs) and freestyle (34.22secs).

Toby Chiles placed fourth in the 50m breaststroke in a personal best of 47.56secs and Jack Bateman was fourth in the 50m backstroke.

The relay quartets put in dominant displays winning both freestyle and medley relays.

The 11-year girls maintained the momentum with Megan Holder claiming second in the 50m backstroke.

Stella O'Hehir gained third place in the 50m butterfly and freestyle while Aristeia Knight gained an impressive personal

best of 41.96secs against strong opposition, finishing fifth in the 50m breaststroke.

The relays also had a clean sweep, earning valuable maximum points with two wins.

In the 11-year boys' group, Leo Karski knocked over a second off his 50m butterfly best with 35.24secs to take third.

Roan Griffiths (37.06secs) and Leighton Palmer-Whyte (40.88secs) also set personal bests in the 50m backstroke and 50m breaststroke respectively.

Taleb Givans was sixth in the 50m freestyle.

Kate Davies won her 50m butterfly to lower the 12-year-old club record to 31.73secs.

She also set a personal best of 37.66secs for second in the 50m breaststroke. She set a second club record of 13.81secs on the first leg of the freestyle relay.

Lauren Wall also claimed a personal best in the 50m backstroke with 35.11secs, taking fifth, as well as the 50m freestyle.

The final individual win came from Matt Price who won the 12-year 50m back-