

Dave Nosey Parker

If you have nothing to hide... ...you have nothing to worry about



News on the referee front...

STEVE GANSON will return to Red Hall this week after over-seeing the 2017 World Cup qualifiers in America with match referee Robert Hicks and assistant Chris Kendall.

Ganson may be in the running for the Head of Match Officials role which has been vacant since Jon Sharp's departure earlier in the year.

The RFL have advertised the position and St Helens-based Ganson must be a leading candidate after being in the caretaker role since Sharp left.

It's rumoured there will be two more full time promotions onto the officials list and a pointer to these could be who takes some of the festive pre-season friendlies before an announcement is made in January.

Recruitment for merry whistleblowers, I am informed, is going very well especially in Furness, Cumbria and the North East.

There was a meeting in Leeds last week at which 40 retired match officials attended to line them up for work as match assessors at all professional games from League 1 through the Championship and into Super League.

There is, I hear, also an imminent announcement to be made about the workings of match officials and the National Conference League and community game.

MORE INJURY woe for St Helens plagued utility back Jonny Lomax. In the past week he has been back in hospital once more for hernia surgery.

Coach switch?

SOMEONE needs to act quickly or we could be losing two more prominent coaches to the other handling code.

Andy Hay, out of work since his setbacks at Salford and Featherstone Rovers, has been spotted up on rugby union and spoken with two clubs, while former Huddersfield forward Chris Coop, who was at Salford Red Devils as head of performance, has just been interviewed by Sale Sharks.

THE GEORGE Hotel in Huddersfield is back on the market for £3 million after previously being bought for £900,000 by dentist Dr Altuf Hussain in 2013. Huddersfield MP Barry Sheerman, who has gone on record in the past 72 hours about the saga, would like to see the George become the world's first "rugby league hotel owned by the fans". But he added: "The asking price seems to make that a remote possibility."

Front row seat for sport's big names

PARK ROW, Leeds, was the place to be on Thursday night as sports solicitor and agent Richard Cramer opened the doors to his palatial new office suite in the city centre.

The first person to greet me was legendary Shaun Edwards who had just signed a four year extension with Wales RU and alongside him the very fit looking 54-year-old Ellery Hanley.

Ellery has shed two and a half stones since he played for England, Wigan, Leeds and Balmain Tigers and looks as though he could just pull a shirt on and play again. He underwent a knee operation towards the end of November but is already back in the gym.

Leeds Rhinos CEO Gary Hetherington called in en route to a Carl Ablett testimonial function and there was also an invite, I heard, to attend a 'works do' at Paul Caddick Construction.

Gary certainly puts himself about and must have forgotten what the armchair looks like at home!

Doing a fair bit of meeting and greeting was Elite Star Management's top man Karl Harrison who has just hauled in Leigh halfback Martyn Ridyard. He is also

Rain puts damper on Ball's good deeds

RFL Benevolent Fund general manager Steve Ball got trapped in the Cumbria floods last weekend and it took him 22 hours to get home from Whitehaven where he had been to visit the Purdham family.

"I found the road to Carlisle blocked, then the A66 and I thought that with the council and government having spent £39 million on flood defences around Cockermouth, that I would try that way," said Steve, pictured above.

"That town was cut off so I thought I would head south to Newby Bridge and then found that cut off, so I was holed up before I could get out and head home to Hexham."

He managed to make the funeral of Masters player Dave Chisholm along with 500 others on Tuesday at Rawdon Crematorium and then



A penny for Gary's thoughts: Could he be trying to persuade Shaun Edwards to tear up his new Wales RU contract? Or talking fit-looking Ellery into having another spell back at Headingley...?

handling Lee Smith's trial period with Hull FC.

Being a Leeds Utd fanatic home and away, Rhino should get on well with any negotiations at Hull knowing how Adam Pearson loves 'the Whites'.

Also present was former Sheffield Eagles and Hull KR player and now Leeds Beckett University lecturer Nick Halafihi, Geoff Burrow, General Secretary of the GMB Union-backed Rugby League Players Association (who revealed he had recruited 11 new

members at Keighley Cougars on Tuesday night), Ewan Dowes, Chris Green from Hull FC, plus Richard Hunwicks, England RL's new Head of Human Performance and right hand man to Steve McNamara, who was previously with Wales RL and Salford Red Devils.

They were rubbing shoulders with top professional climber and coach Robbie Phillips who in the past year has made the notoriously difficult ascent of the Eiger, Neil Hartley, the former Yorkshire CCC bats-

man and now chairman of the Tykes Past Players Association, plus a whole host of other guests. As a postscript, a delighted Richard Cramer attended the Yorkshire Business Awards on Friday where £144,000 was raised for the Variety Club of Great Britain. Businessman of the Year was Steve Parkin, Clipper Logistics chief who a few years ago was strongly linked to a joint takeover of Bradford City and Bradford Bulls.

Stanningley ARLFC, where Dave was coach to the under 16 team.

Several other Masters were present along with Shaw Cross officials and Lib Dem MP Greg Mulholland. A collection was taken for the Benevolent Fund.

PETER Regan, the former coach of Sheffield, Rochdale, Doncaster,



Hunslet and Batley, is back in the country from his seaside home in New South Wales, to see his first granddaughter who lives in Bristol.

He's coming north on Thursday to spend a couple of days with his former assistant at Rochdale, Kevin Lowe, then heading off to see former players at Doncaster before having lunch next weekend with former Dewsbury chairman Bob McDermott and his family.

TOP CUMBRIA outfit Walney Central are looking for a new coach following the resignation of former Barrow player Shaun Morrow.

Sons Danny and Jamie are both key members of the Cents team but Morrow has reverted to being chairman, a position he held until last season when he took over the hot seat vacated by former Barrow skipper Gary Broadbent. In a two season spell Broadbent lifted three trophies. Morrow came close with two!

With a glut of former Cumbrian professional players the Cents dominated the Cumbria league in its first three years of existence and while Broadbent left the domestic scene he took over as head coach of the county's open age side which recently won the County tri-series competition.

Morrow says there is a lot of hard work to do off the field. Son Danny, a BARLA international, has been targeted by Barrow and is training at Craven Park this close season.

Shane upsets NRL bosses

IT SEEMS Shane Richardson has managed to upset all the club owners and CEOs in Australia's NRL.

His long awaited plan for the future of the sport has been delivered to the clubs and details have been leaked.

Richardson wants to make it that the NRL cannot ratify a contract until a player turns 19 which has gone down like a lead balloon as clubs are saying it will simply drive star players into the arms of the waiting rugby union and Aussie Rules clubs.

He also wants to do away with the under 20s and replace them with a 'Platinum League' where players would be amalgamated into zones. This would involve clubs pooling their junior players into a particular zone.

This is much like the amalgamation proposed in England when Super League came in and really has no chance down under.

Burgesses all in the news

SAM BURGESS is likely to be named in the All Stars team to meet the Indigenous All Stars in February. Coach Wayne Bennett is keen to get him in the squad.

Mind you Souths would just like him back at training after a trip to England to his mate's wedding, opening his gym in Bowral, holidaying in Queensland and attending an Ed Sheeran concert in midweek, plus organising his wedding.

It seems training has been put on the back burner somewhat! meanwhile brother Tom has had two more run-outs with NFL teams, the Seattle Seahawks and NY Giants, after visiting the NY Jets and Pittsburgh Steelers.

AUSTRALIA was awash yesterday with rumours that Oscar winning actor Russell Crowe and Julie Burgess, mother of the four RL playing sons, were an item.

Crowe was seen "canoodling and more" with Julie at an Ed Sheeran concert last Wednesday according to various newspapers. Observers noted that they came together for an "embrace and more" on the stadium concourse.

Crowe split from his wife of nine years Danielle Spencer in 2012 and they have two sons.

It isn't the first time rumours have surfaced. Crowe went out of his way to make the Burgess family feel at home down under.

I HEAR that the Nines comp in New Zealand in February will see the NRL trialling a 'Free Play' like we have in Super League.

Red alert

WESTS Tigers international hooker Robbie Farah, a self-confessed Liverpool fan, has come out in support of the upcoming Liverpool All Stars v Socceroos All Stars game in Sydney in January.

Farah managed to sneak in a video camera when he visited Anfield in 2009 while on tour with the Aussies.

He revealed this past week a tattoo just beneath his rib cage which reads 'You'll never walk alone'.

A sell-out crowd at ANZ Stadium is expected when the two teams meet and Farah will have a prime seat.