

# Sport



**Big fight night  
awaits Byfield**  
Turn inside

## Tividale's message to leaders

TIVIDALE boss Dave King says his side are capable of handing league leaders Wolverhampton Sporting their first defeat of the season.

Third-placed Dale were due to welcome Ellesmere Rangers to The Grove last night before heading for a clash with the West Midlands Premier League pace-setters this Saturday.

Sporting sit top of the pile after winning their first nine of the campaign.

However, Tivi are full of confidence themselves after last Saturday's 4-2 victory over Wellington.

A hat-trick from Joe Lawley and a Nathan Jones strike secured the win.

King said: "We didn't start well against Wellington but got back in the game before half time and had the moments of quality to win it."

"It was a bit of a Jekyll and Hyde performance from us. At time we were poor but at times we were very, very good."

"We're happy to get the win but will now have to be at our best for two very tough games against Ellesmere and Wolverhampton Sporting."

"You only have to look at Sporting's results already this season to know how strong they are. I definitely think we have it in our locker to go there and cause an upset, but we will have to be at our very best."

## Vital point for Athletic

GORNAL Athletic's upturn in form continued with a 1-1 draw at Darlaston Town last Saturday.

The Peacocks had picked up their second win of the season the previous week-end when beating Wyrley 6-1 at Garden Walk.

They followed that up with Saturday's away point to leave them in 13th place in Division One of the West Midlands League after a difficult start to the campaign.

Manager Matt Fisher's men will turn their attention to the Birmingham County FA Saturday Vase this Saturday when they go to Stratford Town.

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## 'Still work to do for promotion' admits boss

DUDLEY Kingswinford director of rugby Neil Shillingford admits there is still work to be done if his side want to become promotion contenders this season.

DK suffered a 41-10 home defeat against Burton last Saturday following the previous weekend's loss at Bromsgrove.

The back-to-back defeats against Midlands One West's top two sides has brought the Heathbrook outfit back down with a bang after a good start to the campaign.

Shillingford said: "I don't think the final score is a true reflection of the game but we were still well beaten. Much like Bromsgrove, we have again come up against a big pack and struggled. It felt like we went back in time to this time last season."

"The one thing we have done well this season is enforce our game plan on others, but that wasn't the case on Saturday."

"The last two games have highlighted the weak areas of the squad that had been papered over a little by our early wins. It shows us that we still have work to do. I'd still like another quality number 10 that can control things and a good full-back, but those players just aren't around at the moment."

"Our line-out hasn't been functioning either, but that is down to missing the height of Adam Perkes and Dan Marsh."

DK don't have a game this Saturday but will return to action when they go to Camp Hill on Saturday, October 14.



Matt Squire and Connah Jones look to halt a Burton attack. Photo by Ian Jackson

# Future hanging in the balance for Heathens

FEARS are rising over the future of Cradley Heathens.

Hot on the heels of club director Nigel Pearson hinting at a winter exit from the club after eight years at the helm, co-boss Gary Patchett says next season's plans could be out of their hands.

Thousands of fans have flocked to support the re-born Heathens who made a stunning return to the sport sharing with Wolver-

hampton and Birmingham in 2010.

But with no immediate prospect of a track to call their own next year, track sharing is once again the only option.

It could mean that their final two meetings – both at Monmore – against Eastbourne on Monday week (October 16) and the FAST Golden Hammer a week later could be their final action of the modern era.

"They were difficult this year, but we pulled a rabbit out of the hat with the double-headers, which have been reasonably successful," said Patchett.

"But running at Birmingham isn't much fun for the supporters. We are grateful for the fact that we were able to race there, but it's hard."

"And with the likelihood of new owners at Birmingham, then they could be

running two teams there.

"We may be putting two and two together and coming up with five, but it may be that Perry Barr is not an option."

"Then we have the AGM to come and from what I'm hearing, and with Lakeside looking to return to the Premiership, they may come up with a 10-team league and four more home fixtures for Wolves."

"That's four more Mon-

days we can't have. We might be scuppered."

Heathens have already put together a stunning line-up for the prestigious Golden Hammer on October 23 with club icons Ashley Morris, Max Clegg and Tom Perry all included.

Teenage sensations Dan Bewley and Jack Smith from Belle Vue have also accepted invitations for what is set to be a fitting finale to the season.