

Anderson could tip balance for Saints

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

THE LAST weekend of hockey action before the mid-winter break should bring a feast of high-class entertainment with both League and Cup fixtures for the leading clubs.

But away from the Cup and Premiership, in the green oasis of Paddington Recreation ground in central London, Hampstead and Westminster this afternoon battle with visiting St Albans. A win for Hampstead – the only men's National League club on maximum points – could take them a long way towards sewing up the Second Division title and securing the one promotion spot.

The teams met early in the season and Hampstead ran out the 4-2 winners, but today they will be without Tom Matthews and Nigel Land while St Albans will be missing Andy Halliday, who has a broken thumb.

The arrival last weekend of the South African Murray Anderson, who scored a hat-trick in St Albans' 4-2 win against Firebrands, and the return of Paul Bolland could tip the scales towards the Saints.

The Hampstead manager, Ian Smith, said: "This is a very significant game. We have been going well and are reasonably confident. A lot hangs on this game but there is still a long way to go."