



Konic Minolta Cup

Semi-finals

Price: £2.00



Llandovery v Llanelli

6.05pm, Saturday 14th April 2007

Talbot Athletic Ground, Aberavon



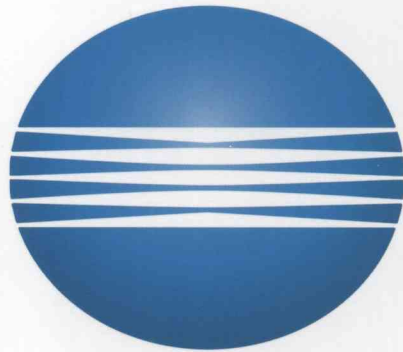
Cardiff v Bridgend

4.40pm, Sunday 15th April 2007

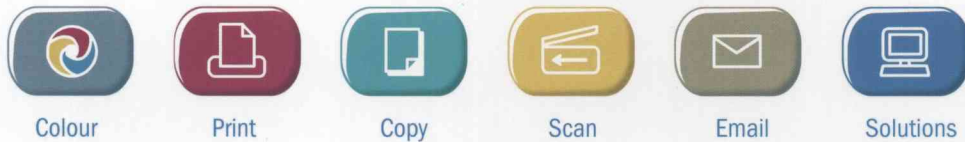
Sardis Road, Pontypridd

Heading towards glory at the
Millennium Stadium





KONICA MINOLTA



...it's what we do!

WRU MESSAGE



Welcome to the semi-final stage of the Konica Minolta Cup where four Principality Premiership sides will battle it out for a chance to compete for glory in the Cup Final at the Millennium Stadium on Saturday, 28 April.

Our semi-professional structure is the bridge between grassroots rugby and the professional game in Wales and the Konica Minolta Cup is a key cog in that wheel, linking community rugby with the semi-professional game, and giving grassroots clubs a taste of top-class club rugby.

The Principality Premiership is a more vibrant and competitive competition than ever before and, along with the Konica Minolta Cup, it is proving to be a shop window for our future Wales internationals.

Only a year ago, the likes of James Hook, Alun Wyn Jones and Aled Brew played their regular rugby in the semi-professional competitions, with James Hook taking part in last year's Konica Minolta Cup Final for Neath.

Looking at the teams selected for these semi-finals, I'm sure we will be saying the same thing in a year's time about players who step up to the Regional and international stage.

Thanks to Konica Minolta for their continued support and good luck to the teams.

Pob hwyl!

Roger Lewis, WRU Group Chief Executive

KONICA MINOLTA MESSAGE



This year's Konica Minolta Cup has made for thrilling viewing. Now we are down to the last four, cup fever is spreading and the ultimate prize of a place in the Konica Minolta Cup Final at the Millennium Stadium is within touching distance of Llandovery, Llanelli, Bridgend and Cardiff.

These four great clubs have battled their way through three highly competitive rounds to reach the semi-finals and there will be two very happy sets of players and fans at the end of the weekend. Konica Minolta are delighted to be involved in this great tournament and our representatives have received fantastic welcomes at clubs across Wales in each round. What we've learned along the way is that the magic of the cup is still very much alive and kicking.

Our best wishes go to the players and supporters of all four clubs this weekend and I'm sure we are in for two great games. There is a fantastic day out in Cardiff on Saturday, 28 April awaiting the successful teams and I look forward to meeting them there on the big day.

Alan Hiatt, Konica Minolta Sales Manager

Editor **Owain Jones**
Art director **Richard Lee**
Designer **Julie Greinacher**
Editorial team **Jon Hill**,
Stephen Mitchell
Picture editor **Osha Mason**
Production manager
Liam Curry

Printed in Wales by:
Stephens and George
www.stephensandgeorge.co.uk



Published by:
ProgrammeMaster
4th Floor, Mermaid House
2 Puddle Dock London
EC4V 3DS

To advertise in this programme,
call Managing Director
Kevin McCarthy on
+44 (0)20 7332 2000

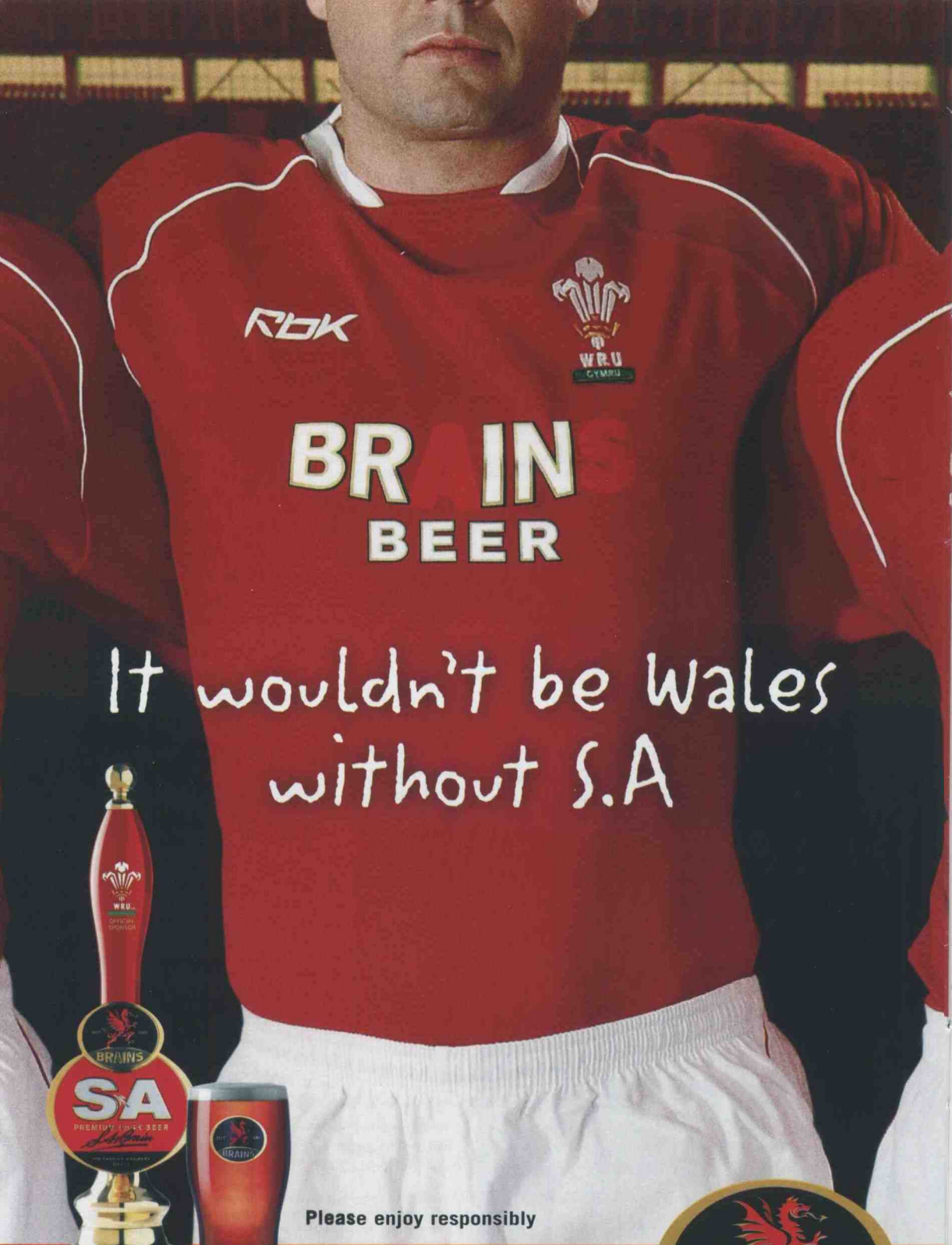
T: +44 (0)20 7332 2000
F: +44 (0)20 7332 2001
www.programmemaster.com

Copyright ProgrammeMaster. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means without the written permission of the copyright owners. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this publication, the publishers cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. In the interest of independence and impartiality, many features in the WRU programme have been written on behalf of the publishers by third-party experts. It should be noted that any opinions and recommendations expressed therein are the views of the writers themselves and not necessarily those of the WRU. Terms and conditions for all competitions appearing in this programme are available on request.

Special thanks to WRU Communications Manager Liz Jones, WRU Programme Co-ordinator Natalie Mock and Howard Evans.

Contents

- 03 Semi-finals preview
- 05 Coach's view: Iestyn Thomas
- 06 Llandovery squad
- 09 Player profile: Andrew Jones
- 11 Coach's view: Rob Appleyard
- 12 Llanelli squad
- 14 Player profile: Ian Jones
- 16 Team line-ups
- 19 Coach's view: Chris Stephens
- 20 Bridgend squad
- 23 Player profile: Tom Evans
- 25 Coach's view: Justin Burnell
- 26 Cardiff squad
- 28 Player profile: Ross Johnston



RBK

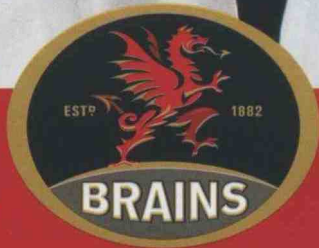


**BR IN
BEER**

It wouldn't be Wales
without S.A



Please enjoy responsibly



more positive thinking from

Welsh Rugby Union 2006/07
Undeb Rygbi Cymru 2006/07

Patron Her Majesty The Queen
Noddwraig Ei Mawrhydi Y Frenhines

Vice Royal Patron HRH Prince William
Is-noddwr Brenhinol Y Tywysog William

Honorary Life Vice-Patron
Is-noddwr mygedol am oes
The Rt. Hon. Sir Tasker Watkins VC, GBE, DL

Chairman Cadeirydd David Pickering

Vice Chairman Is-Gadeirydd Ken Hewitt

Group Chief Executive
Prif Weithredwr Y Grwp
Roger Lewis

Millennium Stadium Manager
Rheolwr Stadiwn Y Mileniwn
Gerry Toms

Group Finance Director
Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid Y Grwp
Steve Philips

Head of Communications
Pennaeth Cyfathrebu
John Williams

National Representatives
Cynrychiolwyr Cenedlaethol
David Pickering, Martin Davies,
Gerald Davies CBE, DL

District Representatives
Cynrychiolwyr Dosbarth
Mal Beynon, Geraint Edwards, Humphrey
Evans, Brian Fowler, Roy Giddings, Ken
Hewitt, Russell Howell, Peredur Jenkins,
Alan Jones, John Jones, Anthony John,
Ray Wilton, Aurwel Morgan

Regional Representative
Cynrychiolwr Rhanbarthol
Gethin Jenkins

Head of Group Commercial and Development
Pennaeth Grwp Masnach A Datblygiad
Rupert Moon

Head of Group Corporate Compliance
Pennaeth Grwp Cysyniad Corfforaethol
Julie Paterson

Head of Group Services
Pennaeth Grwp Gwasanaethau
Tim Burton

WRU Elite Performance Manager
Rheolwr Uwch Perfformiad, URC
Mostyn Richards

WRU Community Rugby Manager
Rheolwr Rygbi Cymunedol, URC
Phil John

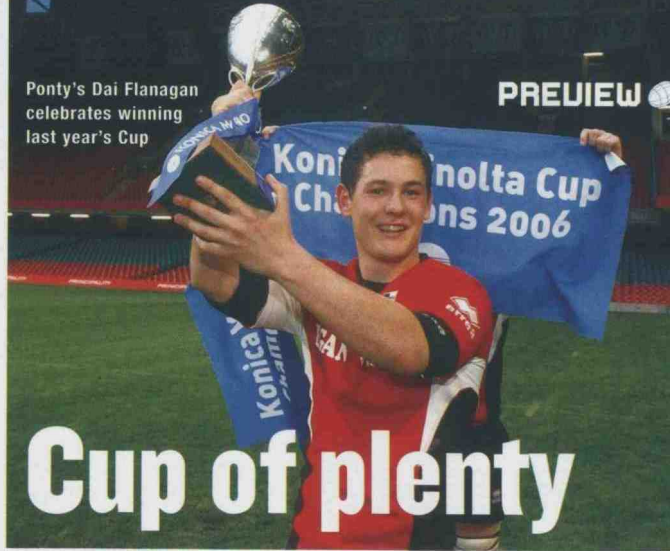
Manager, Match Officials
Rheolwr Swyddogion Gemau
Robert Yeman

Millennium Stadium Board of Directors
Bwrdd Cyfarwyddwyr Stadiwn Y Mileniwm
David Pickering (Chairman), Roger Lewis,
Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Byron Davies,
Cardiff Council, Ken Hewitt, Martin Davies,
Cllr Nigel Howells, Stella Mair Thomas,
Helen Conway, Mal Beynon, Geraint Edwards

PICTURE: HUW EVANS

Ponty's Dai Flanagan
celebrates winning
last year's Cup

PREVIEW



Cup of plenty

The Konica Minolta Cup is a showcase for the semi-pro game in Wales. Howard Evans anticipates two cracking games this weekend

There is a saying in cup folklore that "West is best", and in the semi-final between Llandovery and Llanelli the latter have been the main reason for that adage, having won 13 of the 35 finals. But for Llandovery, even the last four, let alone the final showdown, is uncharted territory.

In previous cup meetings, Llanelli lead 2-1, but Llandovery caused an upset last season by dismissing Llanelli 29-21 at Church Bank. And their 21-6 victory in the league last September will have done the club's confidence no harm at all.

New Zealander John Elrick has returned home, but Simon Daniel's boot has proved equally effective for the Drovers and lock Arwel Davies should be leading a side that has back-rower Jonathan Mills home from a short spell at London Welsh.

Llanelli have young talent galore. They could include Morgan Stoddart at fullback, but in truth they have pace aplenty and several of their players will be knocking on the Scarlets' door next season. Chris Rowe is the skipper at lock, but both Dan Godfrey and loan Cunningham have led the side during the campaign.

Cardiff and Bridgend both represent East Wales and have met six times in the cup, with Cardiff leading 5-1, including two finals: 14-6 in 1981, and 12-12 win on try-count the following season. Bridgend's sole success came in 1975 by 6-4 at the Arms Park.

Fly-half Craig Evans is running into top form for Cardiff and Darren Allinson is a fine prospect at scrum-half, while Jamie Roberts at fullback looks a star in the making. The pack grows stronger each week with Rhys Gill, Ross Johnston and Gareth Gravell all powerful figures.

Bridgend have signed former Wales fly-half Matthew Jones and have another good kicker in Gareth David at fullback. The squad will include Andrew "Wizz" Williams, who was in the top division when League rugby began back in September 1990.

All told, the semi-pro game in both West and East Wales has plenty to shout about, not least two great semi-finals this weekend.

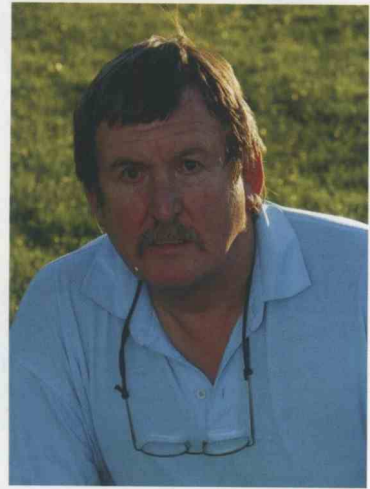
TO JOIN THE WRU SUPPORTERS CLUB CALL 08453 303 241 103

WWW.WRU.CO.UK/SHOP

New kit now available
RDK

RDK
BRAINS
BEER

RDK
BRAINS
BEER



Drovers return

With a win over Llanelli earlier this season under their belts, **lestyn Thomas** is hoping for more of the same from his Llandovery squad this time around

Having ploughed his furrow with Llandovery since 1987, director of rugby **lestyn Thomas** has seen his team through good times and bad. This season is no exception; on the one hand they're involved in a relegation dogfight, and on the other they're gunning for a place in the Konica Minolta Cup Final.

Thomas believes that the club's cup form has helped their fight on both fronts. "We've been able to use the cup to gain a bit of momentum," he explains. "We're enjoying the competition and it has helped with our confidence in the league."

Aside from boosting league form, Thomas knows exactly how much getting one over on Llanelli and playing at the Millennium Stadium would mean to the Drovers faithful. "It's a great honour to be here," he says. "Llandovery have never been this far before but we're certainly not just making up the numbers, nor would we be on April 28."

Llandovery's success over the past few years has helped cement this never-say-die attitude, explains Thomas, having built his team

around a team ethos rather than star power. "We like to get maximum performances out of our lads, who aren't here for individual glory but because they want to play rugby and want to be part of the Premiership and that's fine by us," comments the Drovers' boss.

Within this cohesive unit, Thomas has particular praise for such talented youngsters as

WE'VE NEVER BEEN THIS FAR BEFORE, BUT WE'RE NOT MAKING UP THE NUMBERS

hooker Emyr Phillips and utility back Howard Thomas: "They're outstanding prospects who've been playing consistently well for us all season."

Llandovery will certainly have to be at their most united to overcome Llanelli and Thomas is well aware of the task at hand. "They're a highly competent side with a lot of form and a lot of history of doing well in this cup," he says. "They've got some good younger players who train and play full-time, but we haven't done badly against them in the past. We knocked them out of the cup last year so

this should be an enjoyable game, both a derby and a semi-final."

The team certainly had a nail-biting route to this weekend's game with comfortable wins over Nantyffyllon and Caerphilly being offset by a gripping, last-minute victory at Bedwas in the quarter-final. "It was a tight game and Bedwas are obviously a proud club and a difficult team to beat," admits Thomas. "We did well to stay at it and get the points in injury time. It was enjoyable for us but equally disappointing for Bedwas."

Their injury-time away victory encapsulates both the agony and ecstasy the cup competitions can provide. A win over the 13-times winners this weekend would spark ecstatic scenes among the Llandovery faithful and, according to their coach, the anticipation has been building since the game was announced. "People have been looking forward to the Llanelli game because we've fared well in the past, so we'll be heading into the match full of confidence."

And what better way for **lestyn Thomas** to mark 20 years at the club than with his team's first final at the Millennium Stadium?

PICTURE: HUW EVANS



LLANDOVERY ROUTE TO THE SEMI-FINALS

ROUND 5, JANUARY 27, 2007 LLANDOVERY 50-10 NANTYFFYLLON

In a comfortable victory for the Drovers, Nantffyllon's forwards gave a good account of themselves but their backs were simply outgunned. Jon Elrick got the scoreline ticking over with an early penalty, followed by a try and conversion on the 20-minute mark, and a fine move from the home side's own 22 saw Howard Thomas touch down to widen the gap. The Division Three South West side did themselves few favours, picking up two yellow cards, and Llandovery's superior fitness levels ensured a resounding win for the hosts.

Tries: Jon Elrick, Howard Thomas, Steve Covington, Ioan Davies (2), Dafydd Jones, Iwan Davies; Cons: Jon Elrick (6); Pen: Jon Elrick

ROUND 6, FEBRUARY 17, 2007 LLANDOVERY 37-13 CAERPHILLY


A tale of two halves, the Premiership club was rocked by the Cheesemen in the first 40 minutes, only to stamp their authority on the game in the second. Caerphilly took advantage of some sloppy opposition play to take a 6-5 lead into the interval. But Jon Elrick, playing in his last game for the club, kicked Llandovery into the lead after the break and forward momentum enabled the home side to push over for tries to Arwel Davies and Adam Yelland. Viv Jenkins touched down in injury time to cap a fine comeback.

Tries: Viv Jenkins (2), Arwel Davies, Adam Yelland, Ricky Davies; Cons: Jon Elrick, Simon Daniel (2); Pens: Jon Elrick (2)


QUARTER-FINAL, MARCH 24, 2007 BEDWAS 14-21 LLANDOVERY

Two clubs looking to make it to the semis for the first time in their history, and it was the Bridge Field outfit that took the early initiative, building up a 14-6 lead. On the 56th minute, however, Bedwas hooker Ben Flower picked up a second yellow and the visitors made the most of their numerical advantage. The Drovers' pack piled on the pressure and, with one minute left on the clock and the scoreline tied, Mike Jones, Ioan Davies and Rob Walters combined to send lock Steve Covington over the line, and Llandovery into the last four of the competition.


Tries: Jonathan Mills, Steve Covington; Con: Simon Daniel; Pens: Simon Daniel (3)




15 HOWARD THOMAS
POSITION: Fly-half/Fullback
HEIGHT: 1.80m
WEIGHT: 84kg
DOB: 7.9.85




14 GRUFF JONES
POSITION: Wing
HEIGHT: 1.76m
WEIGHT: 70kg
DOB: 23.1.88




13 MIKE JONES
POSITION: Centre
HEIGHT: 1.83m
WEIGHT: 87kg
DOB: 22.4.81




12 IOAN DAVIES
POSITION: Centre
HEIGHT: 1.80m
WEIGHT: 83kg
DOB: 15.11.78




11 VIV JENKINS
POSITION: Wing
HEIGHT: 1.79m
WEIGHT: 87kg
DOB: 22.02.84




10 SIMON DANIEL
POSITION: Fly-half
HEIGHT: 1.82m
WEIGHT: 102kg
DOB: 12.11.77




9 ROB WALTERS
POSITION: Scrum-half
HEIGHT: 1.81m
WEIGHT: 90kg
DOB: 1.3.77




8 GARETH BENNETT
POSITION: No 8
HEIGHT: 1.95m
WEIGHT: 119kg
DOB: 14.2.78




7 GARETH WILLIAMS
POSITION: Flanker
HEIGHT: 1.82m
WEIGHT: 90kg
DOB: 5.9.81




6 JON MILLS
POSITION: Flanker
HEIGHT: 1.98m
WEIGHT: 115kg
DOB: 12.2.84




5 ARWEL DAVIES
POSITION: Lock
HEIGHT: 1.92m
WEIGHT: 99kg
DOB: 16.6.79




4 TOM WALKER
POSITION: Lock
HEIGHT: 1.98m
WEIGHT: 119kg
DOB: 12.6.80



3 ANDREW B JONES
POSITION: Prop
HEIGHT: 1.80m
WEIGHT: 108kg
DOB: 17.11.73




2 EMYR PHILLIPS
POSITION: Hooker
HEIGHT: 1.82m
WEIGHT: 95kg
DOB: 22.2.87




1 ENDAF HOWELLS
POSITION: Prop
HEIGHT: 1.80m
WEIGHT: 114kg
DOB: 1.3.78

TOP POINTS SCORERS THIS SEASON	
Tries:	Points:
Viv Jenkins 8	Simon Daniel 149
Ioan Davies 4	Jon Elrick 133
Howard Thomas 4	


REPLACEMENTS




16 DENNIS PUGH
POSITION: Prop
HEIGHT: 1.81m
WEIGHT: 114kg
DOB: 5.7.84




17 ANDREW JONES
POSITION: Hooker
HEIGHT: 1.83m
WEIGHT: 95kg
DOB: 31.7.78




18 STEVE COVINGTON
POSITION: Lock
HEIGHT: 2.00m
WEIGHT: 108kg
DOB: 20.10.77




19 EIFION GWYNNE
POSITION: Flanker
HEIGHT: 1.80m
WEIGHT: 90kg
DOB: 24.10.74



20 DAFYDD JONES
POSITION: No 8
HEIGHT: 1.92m
WEIGHT: 100kg
DOB: 5.8.83



21 ADRIAN WILLIAMS
POSITION: Scrum-half
HEIGHT: 1.75m
WEIGHT: 70kg
DOB: 19.5.73



22 OWAIN GWYN ROWLANDS
POSITION: Wing
HEIGHT: 1.88m
WEIGHT: 89kg
DOB: 9.9.82

COACHES	
Head coach: Iestyn Thomas	
Assistant coach: Lyndon Lewis	

BBC SUPPORT Wales

Passionate about Rugby.
Angerddol am Rygbi.

CELTIC LEAGUE ANGLO WELSH CUP SIX NATIONS SCRUM V
Y GYNGHRAIR GELTAIDD CWPAN EINGL-GYMREIG Y CHWE GWLAD

Rock steady

A builder and the bedrock of the Drovers' front row, **Andrew Jones** is relishing the chance to reach his first cup final



Prop Andrew Jones has been a talisman for the Drovers

The term "stalwart" is often overused, but it's fair to say that Andrew Jones fits the bill perfectly. Since making his debut at the age of 18, the prop has been a constant presence in the Llandovery engine room. At 33 years of age he's seen a lot in his time but the amiable veteran believes that reaching the Konica Minolta Cup Final would represent the finest moment in his career to date.

"We've never been this far before," he comments. "Personally, having been at the club so long, it's a huge incentive to get there. At my age there's not too many games like this left so I can't wait for the kick-off."

For a few moments in the previous round it didn't look like Llandovery, or Jones, would make it this far but, according to the Carmarthenshire builder, it was the Drovers' team spirit that pulled them through against Bedwas. "We never gave up," he says. "They started well and I think at half time they must have thought they'd win the game, especially as they were the home team, but we stuck at it and scored the winner in the last minute."

That 21-14 win set up this weekend's mouth-watering

showdown and, in the opinion of Jones, has helped kick start the Drovers' struggling league season. "We've been up for the cup and it has given us a bit of momentum," he enthuses. "Since then, we've beaten Bridgend, Maesteg and Newport in the league, so it's given us a lot of confidence."

Not something, it would seem, that the prop is in short supply of

AT MY AGE THERE AREN'T MANY GAMES LIKE THIS LEFT. I CAN'T WAIT FOR KICK-OFF

– a fact illustrated by the way he relishes the prospect of this weekend's clash. "Everyone in the Llandovery area is pleased we've drawn Llanelli because they're the team to beat due to their cup heritage," he says. "We've got a lot of respect for them and we've had some cracking games against them in the past but we've beaten them earlier in the season

and we know we can beat anyone on our day."

The familiarity between the two sides, believes Jones, should make for a close and intriguing contest. "A lot of the players know each other," he says. "They've got some guys who've played for Llandovery and we've got some lads who've had experience with them."

And if the Drovers can claim another local scalp, the tantalising prospect of appearing at the hallowed Millennium Stadium awaits. "We didn't really talk about it until the later rounds but we started thinking before the Bedwas game that we're only two victories away from the national stadium. This match is probably the best opportunity we'll ever get to reach the final."

Llanelli may be the "Cup Kings", but the man who has been the bedrock of the Llandovery pack for over a decade is more than willing to steal their crown.

Competitive?
It's in our nature.

Cystadleuol?
Dyna'n natur ni.

0800 045 0006

principality.co.uk

PRINCIPALITY

Great expectations

Llanelli have won Welsh rugby's top domestic trophy 13 times, and coach **Rob Appleyard** believes his young side have what it takes to make it fourteen...



For some clubs the banner of "Cup Kings" would be more of a burden than an accolade but, far from buckling under the weight of history, Llanelli assistant coach Rob Appleyard feels that his team's glorious past has only served to motivate the stars of today. "The boys get quite a big build-up for cup games with talks from former players and motivational videos," he explains. "We had Ray Gravell before our match against Newport and Phil Bennett came in before the quarter-final against Pontypridd."

The former Swansea blindside flanker is no stranger to glory in the competition himself, and in his view the presence of Llanelli legends has really galvanised the youngsters. "It makes the boys realise that they're pulling on a jersey that has been worn by some world-famous players. When the chips are down on the field they have the weight of tradition with them and that motivates them to go forward."

Appleyard is doubly familiar with many in his squad, working with them during the day in his role

as the WRU skills coach for the Scarlets Academy and then in the evening with Llanelli RFC. He feels that his dual role has been highly beneficial for all concerned. "A lot of our boys are Academy players," he says. "Most of our team are aged around 18 to 20 and if I didn't have this access to them it would be a lot more

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN THE WEIGHT OF TRADITION MOTIVATES US

difficult, given that they're young men in their first senior league. By covering them in the day and the evenings we find we can iron out any issues early on."

Among the club's talented youngsters a fair few have impressed so far in this year's tournament, with second-rower Dominic Day getting particular praise. "He's a big lump at 6ft 6in, wins a lot of line-out ball and takes up so much opposition focus it allows our other second-rower Adam Powell a lot of free reign."

With a squad as young as Llanelli's, Appleyard concedes

that, while they've strung together a good cup run, a stable league form has been harder to achieve. "Inconsistency comes from naivety and the boys not preparing properly mentally for games in terms of motivation and build-up," he explains. "Some days we haven't turned up in the league but we've been working hard to make sure that hasn't happened in this knock-out competition."

The Llanelli man sees this weekend's encounter as a clash between two sides with plenty of mutual respect and a local bond. "As a region we really want Llandoverly to stay up," he admits. "But this is the cup and we have to be ruthless. Unfortunately for Llandoverly they're the ones in the way at the moment."

In Appleyard's opinion, a triumph at the Millennium Stadium on the 28th would be a fitting reward for their season's efforts. "As a group they've learned so much," he says. "It would be wonderful to have something to show for it come the end of the season, to prove that the side of 2006/07 is a great team."



LLANELLI ROUTE TO THE SEMI-FINALS

ROUND 5, JANUARY 27, 2007 SEVEN SISTERS 7-85 LLANELLI

Any dreams of giant-slaying were quickly dispelled as the 13-times cup champs put the Division Two West underdogs to the sword with a ruthless display, chalking up three tries without reply in the first ten minutes. Pick of the Premiership bunch were Dan Evans, who contributed 25 points, and Richard Davies, who harried the Dulais Valley outfit's defence with a scintillating show of incisive running. After a tentative start, Seven Sisters showed heart, but were simply outclassed. Tries: Richard Davies (2), Matthew Jacobs (2), Lee Williams, Craig Maloney, Ioan Cunningham, Daniel Gravell, Dominic Day, Dan Godfrey, Shaun Hopkins, Craig Hawkins, Dan Evans; Cons: Dan Evans (10)

ROUND 6, FEBRUARY 17, 2007 NEWPORT 3-17 LLANELLI

The visitors arrived at Rodney Parade with an unbeaten record in the previous four cup encounters between the two sides and determined to maintain their winning ways. The presence of Scarlets player Morgan Stoddart further signalled their intentions and though it took 29 minutes for kicker Craig Jones to break the stalemate, Llanelli ran out convincing victors, despite the Black and Ambers having their fair share of territory and possession. A confident and clinical display saw man of the match Stoddart make and take chances across the park. Tries: Ioan Cunningham, Jonathan Edwards, Morgan Stoddart; Con: Craig Jones

QUARTER-FINAL, MARCH 25, 2007 LLANELLI 37-30 PONTYPRIDD

The opening and closing ten minutes belonged to the cup holders, but Llanelli dominated in the intervening hour with Lee Williams in particular wreaking havoc. Dai Flanagan's boot kept the visitors in the chase, but having gone into the interval 22-14 to the good, the Stradey Park side turned the screw in the second half with Daniel Evans finding the line at the corner flag and Williams scoring his second try to extend the gap to 17 points. Ponty struck back with two late tries but, kicking into the wind, failed to convert either. Tries: Lee Williams (2), Craig Hawkins, Jonathan Edwards, Matthew Jacobs, Dan Evans; Cons: Rhys Priestland (2); Pen: Rhys Priestland

	15 EMYR WILLIAMS
POSITION: Fullback	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 90kg	
DOB: 24.10.85	

	14 MATTHEW JACOBS
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	

	13 QUINTIN SNYMAN
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	

	12 RICHARD DAVIES
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.75m	
WEIGHT: 86kg	
DOB: 20.8.83	

	11 DANIEL GRAVELL
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 5.9.81	

	10 CRAIG JONES
POSITION: Fly-half	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	

	9 LEE WILLIAMS
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.70m	
WEIGHT: 77kg	
DOB: 27.10.86	

	8 DAN GODFREY
POSITION: No 8	
HEIGHT: 1.90m	
WEIGHT: 110kg	
DOB: 31.5.82	

	7 JON EDWARDS
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 100kg	
DOB: 5.7.84	

	6 ROB McCUSKER
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.95m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 12.10.85	

	5 DOMINIC DAY
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.97m	
WEIGHT: 114kg	
DOB: 22.8.85	

	4 ADAM POWELL
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.88m	
WEIGHT: 106kg	
DOB: 27.12.83	

	3 PETER EDWARDS
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.78m	
WEIGHT: 125kg	
DOB: 12.8.80	

	2 CRAIG HAWKINS
POSITION: Hooker	
HEIGHT: 1.75m	
WEIGHT: 92kg	
DOB: 4.7.79	

	1 SHAUN HOPKINS
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 106kg	
DOB: 23.2.85	

REPLACEMENTS

	16 IAN JONES
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.90m	
WEIGHT: 117kg	
DOB: 1.9.85	

	17 GRAHAM JENKINS
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	

	18 CHRIS ROWE
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.96m	
WEIGHT: 117kg	
DOB: 23.9.82	

	19 IOAN CUNNINGHAM
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 109kg	
DOB: 1.3.83	

	20 MATTHEW EVANS
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 93kg	
DOB: 23.3.79	

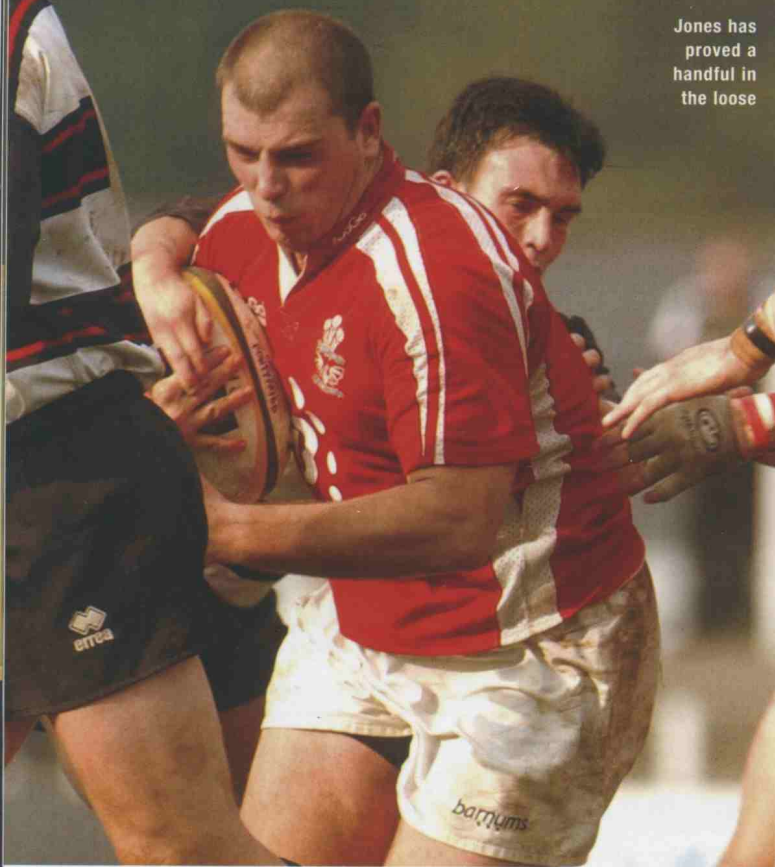
	21 CHRIS DAVIES
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 88kg	
DOB: 24.7.79	

	22 ROB COLES
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	

TOP POINTS SCORERS THIS SEASON	
Tries:	Points:
Craig Richards 10	Dan Evans 75
Morgan Stoddart 10	Gareth Bowen 62
Matthew Jacobs 7	Rhys Priestland 62

COACHES
Head coach: Kevin George
Director of rugby: Arwel Davies
Coach: Rob Appleyard
Attack coach: Paul Fisher

PLAYER PROFILE



Jones has proved a handful in the loose

Final focus

The prospect of this weekend's semi-final showdown has provided Llanelli's **Ian Jones** with a welcome sting to the tail end of the season

For Llanelli prop Ian Jones, this year's Konic Minolta Cup has proved a real boost, helping him and his teammates maintain their late-season concentration. "The cup gives us something to look forward to," he explains. "We know we won't be winning the league but the cup has allowed us to go into training and really focus. It's tough for other clubs in our position who aren't in the competition as they've got nothing to aim for."

The young loosehead sees that

chance to run out at the Millennium Stadium on April 28 as the pinnacle of a year of hard work. "It would be against either Bridgend or Cardiff and both would be a tough game," he admits. "Luckily both teams want to play rugby so it would be a great way to end the season."

But the 21-year-old is certainly not underestimating the threat Llandoverly pose to his final dreams this weekend. "It will be a hard match but if we can get the ball to our backs we can finish Llandoverly off," he believes. "They've got a

strong pack but we're definitely up for the challenge."

In Jones's opinion, Llanelli's watershed moment was their 17-3 win at Newport in February. "That was the turning point," he says. "We all thought that if we could go to Newport and beat them we could beat anyone. The preparation for the game was brilliant and everything just clicked for us, it really helped our confidence."

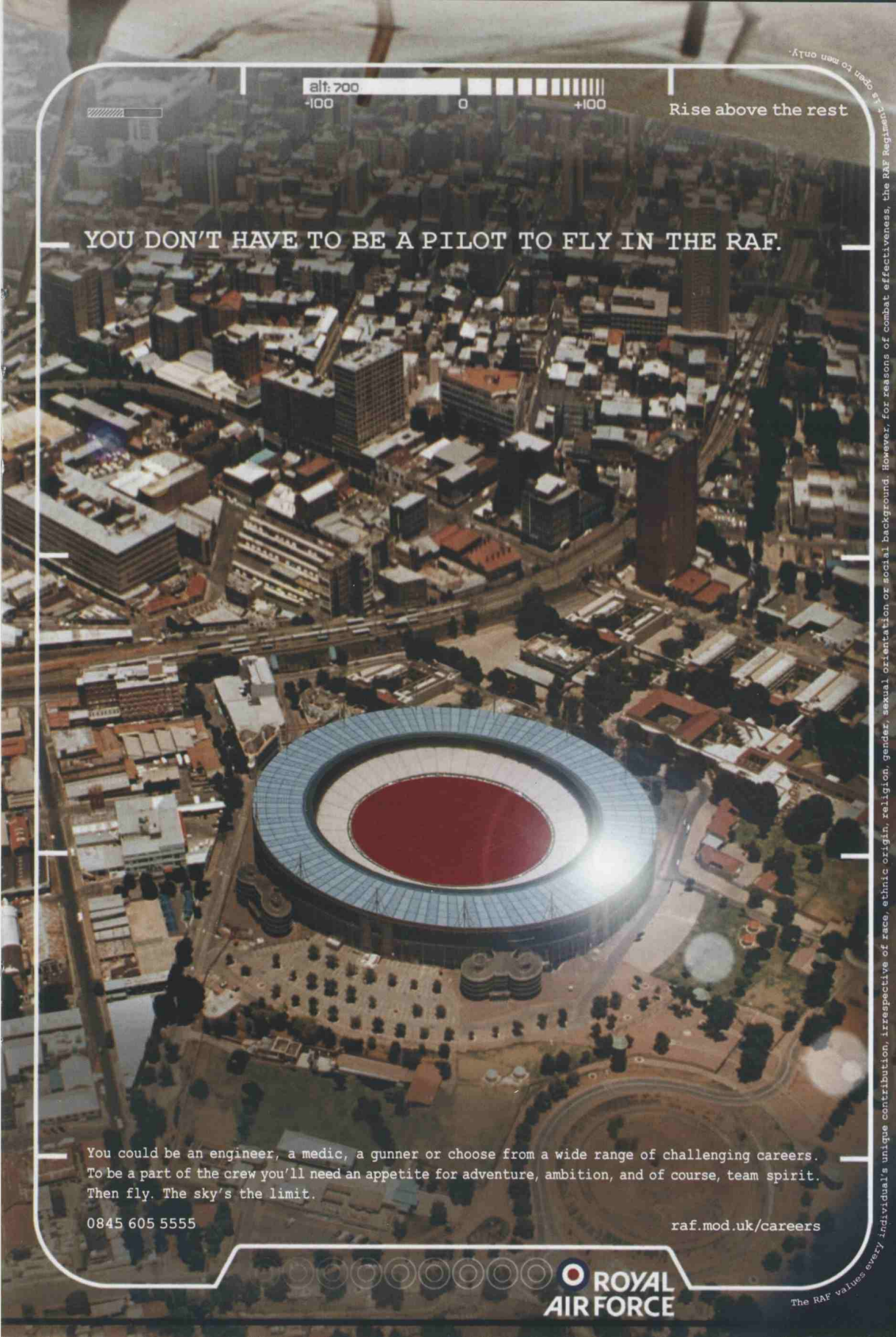
On a personal level, Jones has been pleased with his form in both the league and cup this season. At 6ft 3in and almost 19 stone, the hard-working loosehead has been turning a few heads. "It's a great stage to put your hand up and show people you're still trying, wanting to play rugby and working hard to make yourself a better player," he comments.

Despite being one of Llanelli's most consistent performers in the competition, it was an injury sustained in the cup that nearly cut short his season. "I got a bang against Ponty and had to come off," he recalls. "I had a haematoma in my left thigh, so I've been out for a while, but I should be ready to face Llandoverly."

Llanelli fans will be buoyed to hear that Jones should be fit for this weekend's match. Born in Carmarthen, he's been capped by Wales from Under 16 to Under 21 levels and represented his country at the 2004 Under 19s World Cup. He's indicative of the young talent the Principality Premiership boasts, with Llanelli in particular nurturing several hot prospects.

Ian Jones may be relishing the Cup Final as a great end-of-season prize, but many feel this could be just the beginning of a bountiful medal haul over the coming years for the promising youngster.

PICTURE: HUW EVANS



YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A PILOT TO FLY IN THE RAF.

You could be an engineer, a medic, a gunner or choose from a wide range of challenging careers. To be a part of the crew you'll need an appetite for adventure, ambition, and of course, team spirit. Then fly. The sky's the limit.

0845 605 5555

raf.mod.uk/careers

ROYAL AIR FORCE

The RAF values every individual's unique contribution, irrespective of race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or social background. However, for reasons of combat effectiveness, the RAF Regiment only accepts men only.

LLANELLI v LLANDOVERY

TALBOT ATHLETIC GROUND, April 14, 2007, 6.05PM



15 EMYR WILLIAMS

14 MATTHEW JACOBS

13 QUINTN SNYMAN

12 RICHARD DAVIES

11 DANIEL GRAVELL

10 CRAIG JONES

9 LEE WILLIAMS

8 DAN GODFREY (C)

7 JONATHAN EDWARDS

6 ROB MCCUSKER

5 DOMINIC DAY

4 ADAM POWELL

3 PETER EDWARDS

2 CRAIG HAWKINS

1 SHAUN HOPKINS

15 HOWARD THOMAS

14 GRUFF JONES

13 MIKE JONES

12 IOAN DAVIES

11 VIV JENKINS

10 SIMON DANIEL

9 ROB WALTERS

8 GARETH BENNETT

7 GARETH WILLIAMS

6 JON MILLS

5 ARWEL DAVIES (C)

4 TOM WALKER

3 ANDREW B JONES

2 EMYR PHILLIPS

1 ENDAF HOWELLS



REPLACEMENTS

16 DENNIS PUGH

17 ANDREW R JONES

18 STEVE COVINGTON

19 EIFION GWYNNE

20 DAFYDD JONES

21 ADRIAN WILLIAMS

22 OWAIN GWYN ROWLANDS

BRIDGEND v CARDIFF

SARDIS ROAD, April 15, 2007, 4.40PM



15 GARETH DAVID

14 RICHARD RADFORD

13 PHIL LEWIS

12 LEIGHTON THOMAS

11 MATHEW HUTCHINGS

10 MATHEW JONES

9 NICK GRIFFITHS

8 ANDREW WILLIAMS

7 MATHEW TIDBALL

6 MARVIN THOMAS (C)

5 TOM EVANS

4 HUW ALFORD

3 KEVIN JONES

2 IEUAN DOBBS

1 CRAIG VOISEY

15 JAMIE ROBERTS

14 ELGAN JONES

13 RICHARD DAVIES

12 RICHARD JONES

11 LEON ANDREWS

10 CRAIG EVANS

9 TOM ISAACS

8 ADAM POWELL

7 GARETH GRAVELL (C)

6 GAVIN LUCAS

5 JAMES DOWN

4 DAFYDD ROSSER

3 SCOTT ROBERTS

2 ROSS JOHNSTON

1 RHYS GILL



REPLACEMENTS

16 RYAN PRICE

17 GARETH GUNTER

18 LUKE HUNTER

19 MATTHEW AMOS

20 NICK HAMPSON

21 DARREN ALLINSON

22 DAFYDD HEWITT



REPLACEMENTS

16 IAN JONES

17 GRAHAM JENKINS

18 CHRIS ROWE

19 IOAN CUNNINGHAM

20 MATTHEW EVANS

21 CHRIS DAVIES

22 ROB COLES



REPLACEMENTS

16 ANDREW JOY

17 RHODRI JONES

18 LEE DAVIES

19 GARETH WILLIAMS

20 BRENDAN ROACH

21 MARK DAVID

22 DARREN SIMPSON

Teams accurate as of April 12, 2007

In the event of a tie the winners will be determined by the following criteria:

1. The club which has scored the greater number of tries.
2. The club which has scored the greater number of converted tries.
3. If after 1 and 2 have been applied no clear winner has emerged, extra-time of 20 minutes (10 minutes each way) will be played. If the scores are still level at the end of extra-time then points 1 and 2 will be applied again.
4. If the result is still a tie then a replay shall be arranged and played within 14 days.
5. If the result is still a tie after that then the winners will be decided by the toss of a coin.

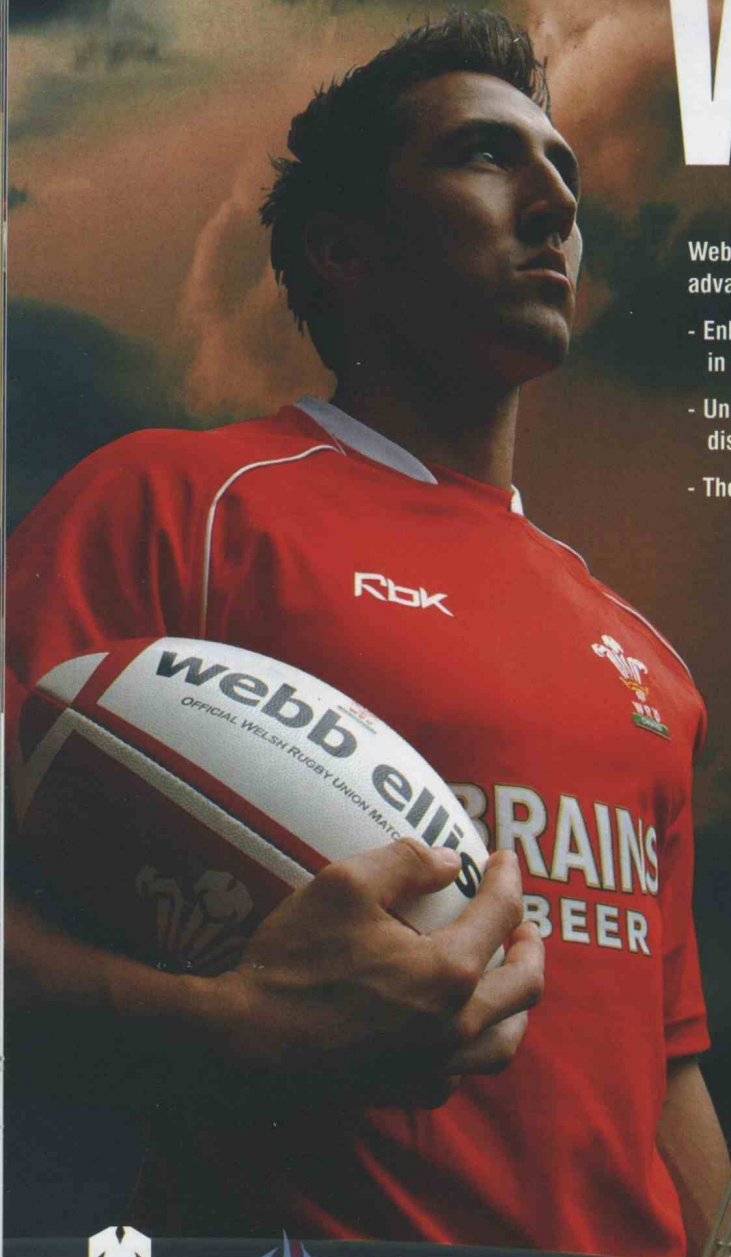
MATCH OFFICIALS: Llanelli v Llandovery

REFEREE Nigel Whitehouse
TOUCH JUDGE 1 Gwyn Morris
TOUCH JUDGE 2 David Jones
TOUCH JUDGE 3 Mark Davis
TOUCH JUDGE 4 Andrew Bevan

MATCH OFFICIALS: Bridgend v Cardiff

REFEREE Nigel Owens
TOUCH JUDGE 1 Huw Griffiths
TOUCH JUDGE 2 Reg Hughes
TOUCH JUDGE 3 Peter Mortimer
TOUCH JUDGE 4 Lyndon Young

PROUD TO REPRESENT WALES



Webb Ellis engineers have developed the most advanced ball in the world

- Enhanced rubber compound for great grip in the wet.
- Unique pimple configuration for longer distance, more accuracy, and better handling.
- The New Match Ball for Wales.

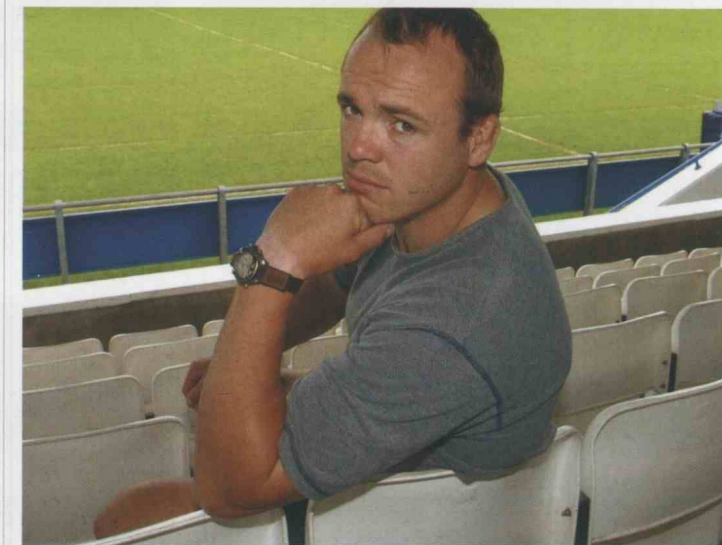


webb ellis

5 & 6 St. Matthew's Street
Rugby CV21 3BY
Tel : 01788 567777
www.webb-ellis.co.uk
email : sales@webb-ellis.co.uk

Keeping the faith

It's been something of a mixed season but, explains head coach **Chris Stephens**, there's plenty of belief in the Bridgend camp



As a former Wales lock, Bridgend head coach Chris Stephens knows all about winning at the top level, but he reckons his Ravens will be going into this weekend's semi-final as underdogs against Cardiff. It's a tag he's happy to bear. "Cardiff have been going pretty well lately so we're treating it as our cup final," he comments. "We'll be giving it our best shot."

Now in his third year as coach of Bridgend – he still puts in the odd playing appearance – Stephens admits that Bridgend haven't had the best year in the Premiership as they flirt with relegation. All the more reason, he says, for a shot at cup success: "We're in a positive frame of mind because, although we haven't had a great year, we are turning a corner, certainly in our quarter-final win against Aberavon, but last weekend's loss against Maesteg was frustrating."

Stephens is sure that the club's biggest obstacle this season has

▲ A TILT AT THE CUP STOPS THE SEASON PETERING OUT. MAKING THE MATCH 22 MEANS A LOT TO THE BOYS ▼

been self-belief. "We performed well over the last two seasons – finishing second and third – so we know what it takes to win," he believes. "Hopefully things will come together against Cardiff."

On their way to the semis, Bridgend overcame Abercynon 53-19. "We played some good running rugby," recalls Stephens. "We scored quite a few points and it was comfortable in the end." Next up were cup giant-slayers St Peters and they impressed. "They were organised for a Division 3 side and they brought a physical edge," says the

PICTURE: HUW EVANS

Bridgend boss. "If they can keep their side together they'll do well."

Their biggest cup challenge came against Aberavon, and Stephens admits it was a huge boost: "After losing to Llandovery in the league, the general consensus was that we would be put away but we held tight. It was a deserved win."

For Stephens, the team's glory trail has kept their season alive. "Having a tilt at the Cup stops the season from petering out," he says. "It has kept the players on their toes, pushing for places in this weekend's game. Making the match 22 means a lot to the boys and we have a good contingent of local lads in the squad who are playing for the love of the club."

He is also particularly pleased that this weekend's semi-final presents a chance to give their best for the loyal supporters. "It's an occasion that not too many of our fans get these days after the demise of the Celtic Warriors. We hope we can show the fans at Sardis Road what we can do."

In their meetings in the League, it's one apiece and Stephens is sure that not an inch will be given between the sides. "It will be a hell of a game. The Millennium Stadium is a huge motivating factor," he points out. "I played for Wales A in 2000 and know what a magnificent stadium it is. I know plenty of the boys would be chuffed to get there."



BRIDGEND ROUTE TO THE SEMI-FINALS

ROUND 5, JANUARY 27, 2007 BRIDGEND 53-19 ABERCYNON

Division Two East side Abercynon put in a battling display, but the outcome never really looked to be in doubt as the Brewery Field outfit put in a solid, eighty-try display to cement a convincing victory on home turf. The visiting supporters were given something to shout about as their side crossed the line three times but, prompted by a fine, man-of-the-match performance by scrum-half Nicky Griffiths, the Principality Premiership club proved too strong.

Tries: Will Kershaw-Naylor (3), Darren Simpson (2), Andrew Joy, Brendan Roach, penalty try; Cons: Gareth David (5); Pen: Gareth David

ROUND 6, FEBRUARY 17, 2007 BRIDGEND 66-3 ST PETERS


Any hopes the Rocks harboured of repeating their famous cup victory over Cardiff were firmly quelled as Bridgend racked up a 28-point haul in the opening 16 minutes, with fullback Matthew Hutchings completing a hat-trick inside 12 minutes. The scrum and line-outs were evenly contested, but when it came to open play there was only one side in the running. The Division Three South East side stemmed the flow until the interval, but the second half was a case of more of the same as the home side ran in a further six tries.


Tries: Matthew Hutchings (3), Richard Radford (4), Roger Davies (2), Andrew Williams; Cons: Gareth David (8)


QUARTER-FINAL, MARCH 24, 2007 ABERAVON 19-20 BRIDGEND


A game that, for the first 70 minutes was very much a battle of the kickers sprang to life in the final quarter as, with 12 minutes of stoppage time looming, No 8 Gareth Williams put the Ravens in front for the game's first try. Aberavon replied with their own score, which was well converted to put them 19-17 ahead. Coach Chris Stephens took to the field to replace the injured Mike Powell and soon won a line-out. Bridgend ploughed forward and won a penalty, which Matthew Jones kicked from 35 metres out to seal a hard-fought victory and a place in the semis.

Try: Gareth Williams; Pens: Gareth David (2), Matthew Jones (2); DG: Matthew Jones

	15 GARETH DAVID
POSITION: Fullback	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 100kg	
DOB: 6.8.82	


	14 RICHARD RADFORD
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: 1.92m	
WEIGHT: 100kg	
DOB: 7.6.80	


	13 PHIL LEWIS
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: n/a	
WEIGHT: n/a	
DOB: n/a	


	12 LEIGHTON THOMAS
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 100kg	
DOB: 24.5.77	


	11 MATHEW HUTCHINGS
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: 1.79m	
WEIGHT: 88kg	
DOB: 18.10.80	


	10 MATTHEW JONES
POSITION: Fly-half	
HEIGHT: 1.73m	
WEIGHT: 74kg	
DOB: 4.4.84	


	9 NICKY GRIFFITHS
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.78m	
WEIGHT: 83kg	
DOB: 7.4.85	

	8 ANDREW WILLIAMS
POSITION: No 8	
HEIGHT: 1.95m	
WEIGHT: 96kg	
DOB: 31.3.71	


	7 MATHEW TIDBALL
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.89m	
WEIGHT: 87kg	
DOB: 16.6.86	


	6 MARVIN THOMAS
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.82m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 13.2.79	

	5 TOM EVANS
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 2.04m	
WEIGHT: 108kg	
DOB: 21.9.83	

	4 HUGH ALFORD
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.95m	
WEIGHT: 114kg	
DOB: 21.3.81	


	3 KEVIN JONES
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 119kg	
DOB: 27.4.79	


	2 IEUAN DOBBS
POSITION: Hooker	
HEIGHT: 1.78m	
WEIGHT: 93kg	
DOB: 14.9.83	


	1 CRAIG VOISEY
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.88m	
WEIGHT: 105kg	
DOB: 21.7.85	

TOP POINTS SCORERS THIS SEASON	
Tries:	Points:
Roger Davies 7	Gareth David 191
Richard Radford 6	Roger Davies 65
Andrew Williams 6	

REPLACEMENTS

	16 ANDREW JOY
POSITION: Hooker	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 25.8.78	


	17 RHODRI JONES
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 106kg	
DOB: 18.4.86	

	18 LEE DAVIES
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 117kg	
DOB: 5.12.81	

	19 GARETH WILLIAMS
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.89m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 24.2.83	

	20 BRENDAN ROACH
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 83kg	
DOB: 1.2.69	

	21 MARK DAVID
POSITION: Fly-half	
HEIGHT: 1.79m	
WEIGHT: 76kg	
DOB: 12.9.84	

	22 DARREN SIMPSON
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.83m	
WEIGHT: 89kg	
DOB: 24.1.78	

COACHES	
Head coach: Chris Stephens	
Director of rugby: Colin Hillman	
Assistant coach: Paul Williams	
Assistant coach: Huw Williams Jones	

Stand and deliver

Towering **Tom Evans** is looking forward to taking on some familiar faces this weekend



Evans prepares to hit the ruck against Neath

performances in the Premiership," he comments. "We've always been a decent side but we're just getting back to winning ways. It's a habit more than anything."

As far as the club's cup run goes, the highlight of the season

WE'RE JUST GETTING BACK TO WINNING WAYS. IT'S A HABIT MORE THAN ANYTHING

was beating Aberavon. "Ever since I joined the Ravens I have repeatedly been on the losing side, every game has had a couple of points in it but it's gone against us," says Evans. "For Matthew Jones to slot the winning penalty in injury time was very sweet."

When it comes to making it to this weekend's game on time, Tom smiles. "I don't foresee a problem. Some of the boys are labourers and electricians, doing hard, physical graft, so I can't complain. Being a student is not the hardest life in the world, as I'm often told."

Evans predicts a tight game and is looking forward to seeing a few old friends out on the pitch. "I know fellow medic Jamie Roberts, and Ryan Price was at school. Cardiff are a talented side but we'll be looking to get one over on them," says the big lock. "The Cardiff games are usually entertaining, so I can't wait."

"I've never played at the Millennium Stadium," he continues. "It would be a dream to run out on the hallowed grass. This is all we have left, so I'll be giving it my all."

When Bridgend take on Cardiff this weekend, you will be hard pressed to find a safer pair of hands than Tom Evans, Bridgend's athletic second-rower. It's hardly surprising, given that Tom's other job is delivering babies to overjoyed parents as part of his medical studies in Cardiff. "It can make getting to training a challenge – newborn babies don't always keep to timetables," he chuckles.

The 6ft 7in former Christ College, Brecon pupil will be out to make a point this weekend after playing with the Cardiff Under 19 and Blues Under 20 set-ups, only to be let go. That's not to say Evans bears any ill will to his former club, far from it. "I learnt a lot in my years at Cardiff and coaches like Bob Newman were integral to my development," he says. "I also cut my teeth at Glamorgan Wanderers. The experience I gained there has stood me in good stead."

After Cardiff released him, he spent his first year at Caerphilly in the inaugural season of the Principality Premiership. "It was my first season of senior rugby and I thoroughly enjoyed it," he recalls, "but unfortunately the Cheesemen were relegated. Luckily, Bridgend heard I was available and I'm in my second season now and thoroughly enjoying it."

Despite battling with Ospreys tyro Mike Powell this season, Evans has kept his head down and has begun to find form. "We've started putting in some decent

PICTURE: DENNIS CLARK



Top of the table

Celtic Pride Premium Beef, Welsh Lamb, Tŷ Nant Spring Water, The Fresh Pasta Company, Langfords – The Welsh Sausage Company, Llaeth y Llan, Mario's Luxury Ice Cream – some of the finest food producers in Wales, many of which are True Taste Award winners and all supplied by Castell Howell Foods. With this line up it's no wonder

Castell Howell Foods top the table as Wales' largest independent food wholesaler, supplying hotels, restaurants, bars, cafés, and bed and breakfasts.

Castell Howell Foods, are proud to be lining up alongside The Welsh Rugby Union and The Millennium Stadium as official suppliers.



Wales' largest independent food wholesaler

Castell Howell Foods, Stephens Way, Pensarn, Carmarthen SA31 2BG
Tel: 01267 222000 Fax: 01267 237178 www.castellhowellfoods.co.uk





Blue and Blacks magic

Justin Burnell is more than happy to extol the virtues of his opponents today, you could even say that he knows what makes them tick. Not surprising when you consider that he is a former Bridgend captain. "I led Bridgend in 1996 as a player and I know what a good outfit they are," he says. "Your values don't change over time and we're expecting a very difficult game."

The Cardiff head coach asserts that his Blue and Blacks outfit are more than pleased with what they have achieved to date in the cup.

Head coach Justin Burnell has got a lot of time for Cardiff's semi-final opponents, but knows there is no room for sentiment when the clock starts ticking this weekend

they have," comments the Cardiff boss. "Good sides go through bad patches but it doesn't last. They finished well for the last few years and I'm backing them to come back on song.

WHEN NEATH WERE PULLED OUT OF THE HAT IN THE FIFTH ROUND, A LOT OF PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS THE END OF OUR CUP AMBITIONS

"When we started out this season, we set ourselves an objective of a top six Premiership finish and a cup run and we are close to achieving our goals," says Burnell. "Anything above that is a bonus to us."

As for Bridgend's lowly Principality Premiership position, he doesn't believe that there is any lack of class within the Brewery Field side. "Their league position doesn't reflect the quality

"Any side that can field a player of the calibre of Matthew Jones deserves to be taken seriously," he continues. "He is surrounded by former Blues Academy boys Ieuan Dobbis and Gareth Williams. They are talented players. Matthew and Nicky Griffiths are two of the best half-backs in the Premiership."

If Cardiff do pip Bridgend to a place in the final, Burnell feels they will have thoroughly deserved it

after a tough cup run. "When Neath were pulled out of the hat in the fifth round, a lot of people, perhaps rightly so, thought that it was the end of our cup ambitions for the year," he admits. "But we dug in and concentrated on our own performance and came away with a 12-10 win at the Gnoll, which is no mean feat."

In the quarter-finals, Cardiff dispatched Swansea 39-8 in a second-half masterclass, this after Swansea had led 8-6. "We pulled our socks up in the second-half, it was a pleasing victory," says Burnell. "If we do achieve the goal of reaching the final we'll have beaten the best sides, no one can accuse us of taking the easy route."

In true jet-set style, Burnell has flown in for this weekend's game from Belfast, where he's been on Wales duty in the Under 19s World Cup. "A huge motivator for my boys will be a place in the Cup Final, let alone at the revered Millennium Stadium," he says. "We're not going to win the league, so it would provide a grand finale to an encouraging season."

BELONG

PICTURE: HUW EVANS



CARDIFF ROUTE TO THE SEMI-FINALS

ROUND 5, JANUARY 27, 2007 CARDIFF 69-14 NARBERTH

The Blue and Blacks took early control thanks to tries from Richard Jones, Shaun James and Jamie Roberts inside the first 25 minutes. To their credit, Narberth refused to stick to the script and countered with two tries of their own to bring the score to 19-14. But if the ghost of St Peters was hovering, it was soon exorcised when both Adam Powell and Gareth Gravell found the line. A second-half, six-try haul ensured victory for the home side over the plucky Otters.

Tries: Richard Jones (3), Shaun James, Jamie Roberts, Adam Powell, Gareth Gravell, Gareth Gunter, Chris Stamatakis, Elgan Jones, Michael Leaman; Cons: Chris Anderson (4), Craig Evans (3)

ROUND 6, FEBRUARY 17, 2007 NEATH 10- 12 CARDIFF


Victory for Cardiff at the seemingly unassailable Gnoll was always going to take something special, and that's just what Ross Johnston produced as, in the 16th minute, the hooker ran onto a flat pass and powered 40 metres to the try line. Superb in the line-out and fierce in defence, the visitors extended their lead to 12 points as Jamie Roberts squeezed over at the corner flag in the second half and, despite a subsequent penalty goal, try and conversion by last year's beaten finalists, the Blue and Blacks held onto their two-point margin to secure a famous victory – their first at the Welsh All Blacks' stronghold in the club's cup history.

Tries: Ross Johnston, Jamie Roberts; Con: Craig Evans


QUARTER-FINAL, MARCH 25, 2007 SWANSEA 8-39 CARDIFF


A lacklustre first 40 minutes seemed to spell disaster for Cardiff as, despite a strong wind at their backs, Gareth Gravell's men slid to a 6-8 deficit. Whatever words were exchanged at the interval they made the difference, and the visitors broke through on the 55th minute with Jamie Roberts beating the Whites' defence to sprint for the line. In a scintillating seven-minute spell, Cardiff notched a 17 point lead, and they kept their momentum to the last, with Craig Evans crossing the line in the final minute to seal a blistering comeback.


Tries: Jamie Roberts, Ross Johnston, Nick Gill, Elgan Jones, Craig Evans; Cons: Craig Evans (4); Pens: Craig Evans (2)


	15 JAMIE ROBERTS
POSITION: Fullback	
HEIGHT: 1.98m	
WEIGHT: 105kg	
DOB: 8.11.86	

	14 ELGAN JONES
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: 1.82m	
WEIGHT: 94kg	
DOB: 20.2.82	


	13 RICHARD DAVIES
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.78m	
WEIGHT: 91kg	
DOB: 2.10.78	


	12 RICHARD JONES
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.89m	
WEIGHT: 99kg	
DOB: 1.9.80	


	11 LEON ANDREWS
POSITION: Wing	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 89kg	
DOB: 6.6.84	


	10 CRAIG EVANS
POSITION: Fly-half	
HEIGHT: 1.88m	
WEIGHT: 90kg	
DOB: 21.3.85	


	9 TOM ISAACS
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 85kg	
DOB: 5.5.80	

	8 ADAM POWELL
POSITION: No 8	
HEIGHT: 1.95m	
WEIGHT: 108kg	
DOB: 28.5.86	


	7 GARETH GRAVELL
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.82m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 29.10.80	

	6 GAVIN LUCAS
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.98m	
WEIGHT: 108kg	
DOB: 14.4.78	

	5 JAMES DOWN
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 2.04m	
WEIGHT: 109kg	
DOB: 29.8.87	

	4 DAFYDD ROSSER
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.98m	
WEIGHT: 112kg	
DOB: 12.4.84	


	3 SCOTT ROBERTS
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 120kg	
DOB: 5.9.84	

	2 ROSS JOHNSTON
POSITION: Hooker	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 105kg	
DOB: 26.3.86	


	1 RHYS GILL
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.86m	
WEIGHT: 114kg	
DOB: 30.10.86	


TOP POINTS SCORERS THIS SEASON	
Tries:	Points:
Tom James 11	Craig Evans 247
Richard Jones 8	Chris Anderson 58
Jamie Roberts 8	Tom James 55


REPLACEMENTS


	16 RYAN PRICE
POSITION: Hooker	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 114kg	
DOB: 4.11.83	


	17 GARETH GUNTER
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.85m	
WEIGHT: 114kg	
DOB: 26.3.79	

	18 LUKE HUNTER
POSITION: Prop	
HEIGHT: 1.92m	
WEIGHT: 118kg	
DOB: 6.7.83	

	19 MATTHEW AMOS
POSITION: Lock	
HEIGHT: 1.98m	
WEIGHT: 108kg	
DOB: 6.2.83	

	20 NICK HAMPSON
POSITION: Flanker	
HEIGHT: 1.92m	
WEIGHT: 102kg	
DOB: 3.11.82	

	21 DARREN ALLINSON
POSITION: Scrum-half	
HEIGHT: 1.79m	
WEIGHT: 83kg	
DOB: 13.11.87	

	22 DAFYDD HEWITT
POSITION: Centre	
HEIGHT: 1.80m	
WEIGHT: 87kg	
DOB: 21.8.85	

COACHES	
Head coach: Justin Burnell	
Assistant coach: Howard Stone	
Assistant coach: Matthew Silva	

Pack mentality

Hooker **Ross Johnston** offers a front-row view on Cardiff's cup clash

If there's one player who has embodied Cardiff's never-say-die attitude during this year's Konica Minolta Cup run it's Ross Johnston. That's the message from his head coach, Justin Burnell. Johnston – recently turned 21 and the brother-in-law of Wales's Grand Slam winning captain, Michael Owen – has added an all-action, combative attitude to the Cardiff pack that has led them to this year's semis, with a series of outstanding displays.

Talking to Ross, it's clear he has found his niche at the Arms Park. "We had a nail biter at the Gnoll that we did well to come through, and we were clear winners against Swansea in the 39-8 win," he says. "You have to play the best teams to win the cup and that's what we've been doing. Bridgend will be no different. This side has been playing good rugby of late, and it's just reward for our hard work."

This weekend's game at Sardis Road can't come quickly enough for Johnston. "We are desperate to win the game but you never know in a cup match, anything can happen," admits the Cardiff hooker. "The whole game can turn on one moment of inspiration. Bridgend are a tough side to beat, we're expecting a very stern test."

"Along with Scott Roberts and Rhys Gill, we form the youngest front-row in the Premiership so we will have our work cut out," he continues. "Upfront will be a huge challenge, but in captain Gareth



Gravell we have an inspirational leader from the back of the scrum." Hailing from Beddau, Johnston says that Sardis will be a fitting place to battle out the semis: "It's a historic ground but I'll have to put sentiment aside and go out and perform. Hopefully I'll have a few local boys coming down to cheer me on."

Johnston has thrived this season under Justin Burnell. "We set ourselves a target of a top-six finish and a decent cup run, so we're on our way," he observes. "Personally, it's been satisfying to play week-in, week-out. Last year was more frustrating – I played a few games

YOU NEVER KNOW IN A CUP MATCH, THE WHOLE GAME CAN TURN ON ONE MOMENT OF INSPIRATION

with Glamorgan Wanderers, and got a rare run-out with the Blues between a few niggling injuries, but there was no consistency."

Having recently being offered a development contract with the Blues for next season, Johnston is determined to make his mark. "Next year will be a big one for me, Rhys Thomas will probably be at the World Cup, I'm hoping to get some Blues experience alongside my cousin Duane Goodfield. I just want to keep my head down and keep performing. I've never played on the Millennium Stadium and it has a mythical status in Welsh rugby, so it's a huge incentive to turn over Bridgend."

PICTURE: HUW EVANS



We're giving our fans the credit they deserve...

The WRU MasterCard

0% p.a. on balance transfers for **12 months** from the date your account is opened (2.5% handling fee)

0% p.a. on card purchases for **3 months*** from the date your account is opened

15.9% APR
typical rate (variable)



The Official WRU MasterCard

What better way of showing your support by applying for and using the Official WRU MasterCard? On approval of your credit card, a contribution will be made that invests in the development of grass roots rugby in Wales. Plus, you'll benefit from the best rates we've ever had!

No annual fee

FREE 24 hour Customer Satisfaction Helpline

We're here to answer your calls 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Chip and PIN

You will be issued with a chip and PIN card - this is the most secure technology for payment cards available today!



* We will use your payments to reduce balances at lower rates of interest before balances at higher rates of interest. Where you have two promotional rates which are the same, we will use your payments to reduce the balance with the longer promotional period first.

The Welsh Rugby Union MasterCard is issued by MBNA Europe Bank Limited, Registered Office: Stansfield House, Chester Business Park, Chester CH4 9QQ. Registered in England number 2783251. Credit is available, subject to status, only to UK residents aged 18 or over. You cannot transfer balances from another MBNA account. We will monitor or record some phone calls. MBNA is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

MB-SP-A-0906



MILLENNIUM STADIUM

THE WELSH RUGBY UNION AND MILLENNIUM STADIUM GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE OUR PRINCIPAL SPONSORS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SUPPLIERS, WHOSE CONTINUED SUPPORT ALLOWS US TO DEVELOP BOTH ELITE AND COMMUNITY RUGBY. THANK YOU.

TITLE SPONSOR



BROADCAST PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



SPONSORS/SUPPLIERS



S4/C

GYDOL Y FLWYDDYN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

24/7

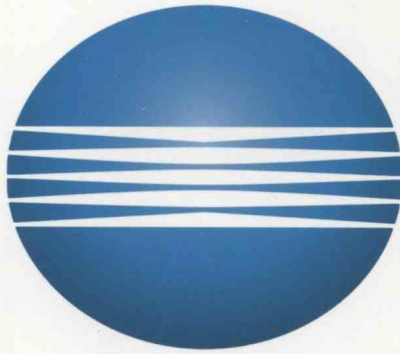
Rygbi 2007

Y gorau o'r maes chwarae The most comprehensive coverage of regional and international rugby

s4c.co.uk/rygbi



konicaminolta.co.uk



KONICA MINOLTA



Colour



Print



Copy



Scan



Email



Solutions

...it's what we do!