

TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA - MAY, 1967

The Cardiff Rugby Club's tour of South Africa, which was the first short international tour undertaken by a Club, was financed by the South Africa Rugby Board. Having regard to the standard of the opposition and the amount of travel undertaken, the playing record of Played 5, Won 2, Drawn 2 and Lost 1 with 84 pts for and 71 pts against, was commendable.

A more comprehensive report of the tour has been made but this condensed report has been prepared for the sake of brevity and to conform with the pattern outlined in the Welsh Rugby Union Handbook (1966-67 edition, pages 35 and 36), and the following are the salient points:-

1. RECEPTION - The hospitality of the hosts was overwhelming and cannot be praised too much, but it is suggested that on future tours itineraries should be approved beforehand by both parties. This would avoid the embarrassment of asking for alterations when the visiting party arrives at its destination. As things turned out, because of the excellent feelings towards each other there were no really awkward moments.

It should be mentioned, perhaps, that the most unpopular part of the tour was the time when we were awakened at 5.30 a.m. at the Arthur's Seat Hotel at Cape Town on 18th May, in order to leave the hotel at 6.30 a.m. to catch an early flight. This, too, on the morning following the night out after a game. Consideration should be given it is felt to a more reasonable time of departure.

2. STANDARD OF PLAY OF OPPONENTS - The play was vigorous, robust, workmanlike and clean, and every attempt was made by them to play good rugby. The standard was as we had expected from top South African provincial teams, but they were, however, stereotyped in their play.
3. STANDARD OF REFEREEING - Whilst the standard of refereeing was good, we had reasons to query the following on occasions:-
 - (a) the interpretations of the law governing the length of the line-out which should be determined by the side throwing in the ball. (N.B. the law permits the line-out be formed by at least two players);
 - (b) the last man in the line-out being allowed to extend the line-out before the ball has passed over his head;
 - (c) the inadequate channel between lines-out and resultant barging;
 - (d) the tendency to allow loose scrummages to continue for long periods;
 - (e) the back row was allowed to break forward before the ball had left the opponents scrum, and
 - (f) the threequarters were allowed to advance inside the ten-yard limit before the line-out ended.

cont'd

It is suggested that if Unions can find the money, attempts should be made to assemble, for short courses, referees belonging to the various unions concerned with the purpose of achieving uniformity.

We found it an advantage to hold discussions on rules and interpretations with the appointed referees on the day before the game, and we recommend this procedure for all future tours, home and abroad.

The decision to take our Coach turned out to be a very wise move, in view of the fact that he was able efficiently to control and supervise training. Our own baggage man was also of great help and did a creditable job. The presence of our Medical Practitioner at his own expense was very much appreciated, as he was able to attend to the minor but worrying ailments and we were grateful to him for his assistance.

* * *

16th June, 1967.