

ARMS PARK NEWS



THE OFFICIAL CARDIFF MAGAZINE

ISSUE ONE

APRIL 2000

£2.00

HEINEKEN CUP SHOWDOWN



DAVID YOUNG

Club and
Country

Spencer John's

great
comeback

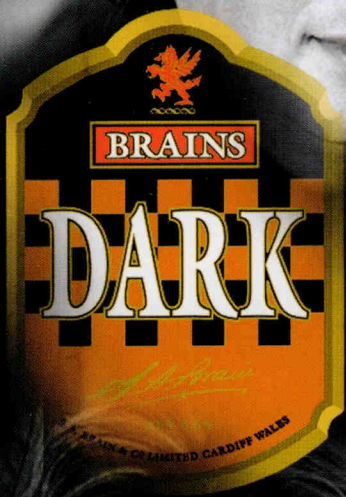
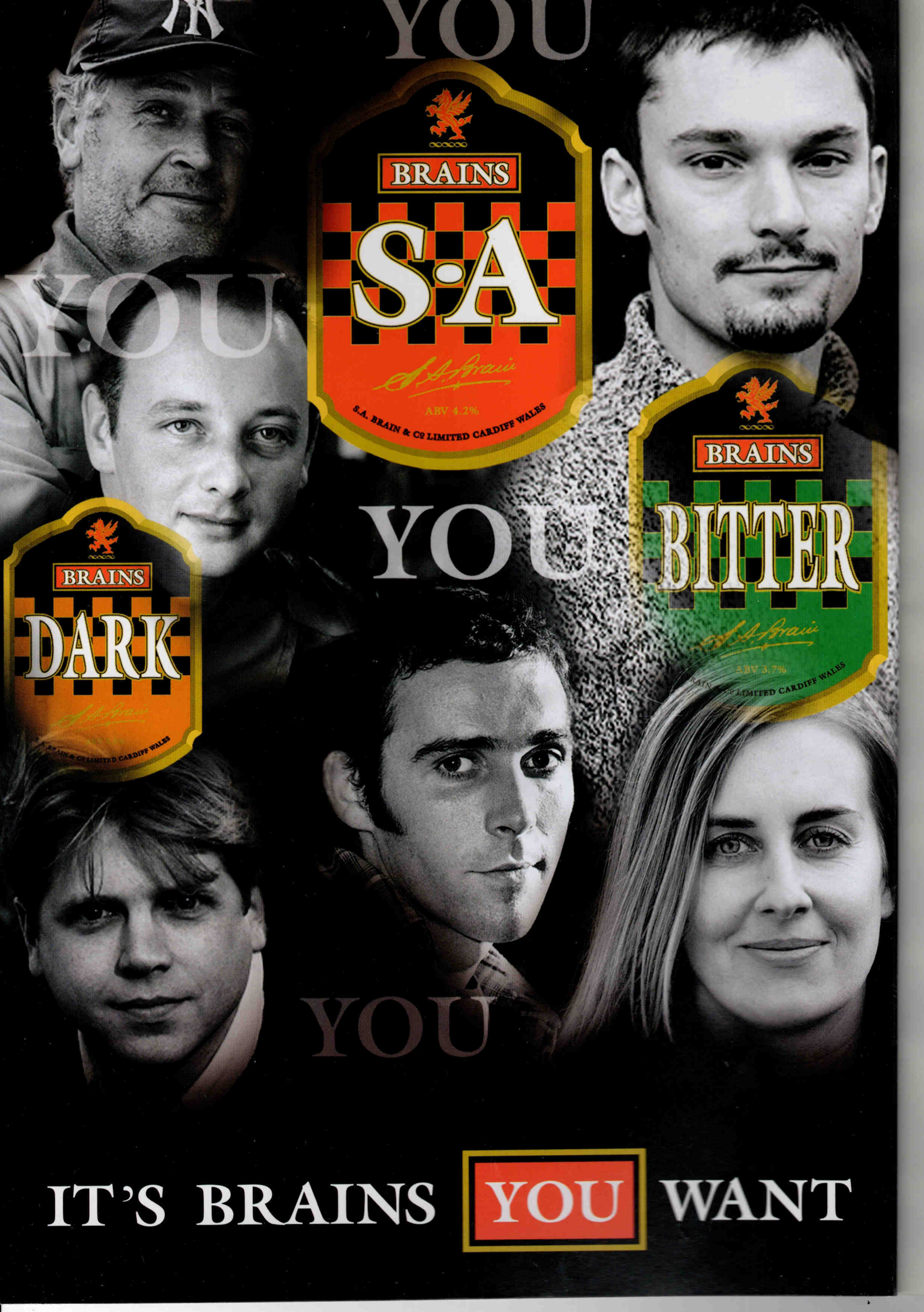
And lots more....

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IT'S BRAINS

YOU

WANT

Welcome to the first issue of **Arms Park News** which is part of our continuing service to members. We are all committed to improving communication and I hope you will find this magazine a useful tool in that respect. I must start with a couple of apologies. Once again a structure of our Club season has not been ideal, but this is largely due to factors outside our control. The holding of Rugby World Cup last autumn and our co-operation with Millennium Stadium plc and the Welsh Rugby Union to ensure the completion of the Stadium inevitably led to a distortion of home and away fixtures.

The downside was the number of away matches up to the end of November, but now we are seeing the re-balancing of that situation with our succession of home matches.

Which brings me to my second apology; the problems we have had with the pitch this season. The reasons for the current situation are well documented but it is worth repeating that they stem not so much from the World Cup hospitality arrangements, when the marquee was in place for only seven days, but from the building work on the Millennium Stadium last summer. We also had unfavourable weather over the winter months but in the circumstances we have coped well with the problem. The team have performed admirably and played excellent rugby in often in difficult conditions.

You have my assurance that we are now doing everything in our power to remedy the pitch problem and we seemed to have turned a corner. We also have a programme in place for the spring and summer after which we anticipate that the pitch will be back to its previous condition.

We still have much to look forward on the playing front this season. The entire squad deserve our warmest congratulations for their achievements, particularly in the Welsh / Scottish League, where we remain unbeaten since September and of course in the Heineken Cup where the matches have given us a high profile throughout Europe. We must all now look forward to the quarter final against Llanelli at Stradey Park when the team will require all the support we can give. Let's hope that we use all our ticket allocation and make our presence felt on the day.

I would like to thank all our supporters and sponsors for their continued support at Cardiff Rugby. You are a very important part of the Club's present and future.

I will end on a note about next season. Once again the issue of cross border competition is on the agenda. The years go by but the issue never changes. We do not want to be involved in another rebel season but we do need the stronger competition provided by the English clubs. Many of you have asked in recent days what is gained by score lines of 71-15 and 116-0 in successive league matches. That is a perfectly valid question and is a timely reminder that nothing is gained in the long run by the top two or three teams in Wales playing what amounts to little more than unopposed rugby against other premier division clubs.

Enjoy this first issue of **Arms Park News** and let us hope we have something to celebrate both on and off the field at the end of the season.



David Jenkins

Chief Operating Officer

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CARDIFF

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CLUB AND COUNTRY



DAVID YOUNG IS PROUD OF HIS DUAL RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE HELM FOR CARDIFF AND WALES



It's difficult to know where to start when talking about being captain of both Cardiff and Wales these days. They are both huge responsibilities and - something I will always be proud of - they are both huge honours.

When I was asked to lead Wales back in January much was made in the press of the fact that if there had to be a change of leadership for the Six Nations matches then I was the ideal man for the job because I had led rugby teams since I was a teenager. It was a nice compliment because, yes, I did captain Wales at under-15, under-16 and youth level and, yes, I had also led Salford and Wales in rugby league. And, of course, I am in the middle of my second season at the helm here at the Arms Park.

But nothing quite prepares you

for the off-the-field responsibilities and profile that go with being national captain. To be honest, I do adopt the same approach with club and country. I'll always be a players' man and I'll always see myself as leading a squad and not just the 15 or 22 players who happen to be involved in the next match. Club profiles don't come any higher than Cardiff but Wales is something else again. I am finding myself in a whole new ball game.

When Graham Henry first sat down with me to talk about the Wales captaincy one of my first reactions after I had got over the shock was that here was a coach who had worked with the likes of Sean Fitzpatrick saying to me that he thought I was the man for him. Chuffed? Of course I was.

My original plan was to retire

from international rugby after last autumn's World Cup. A couple of years ago a series of niggling injuries were beginning to get me down. Wales' lack of success also didn't help. But the arrival of Graham Henry and a new management team changed a lot of things - which is why recent events have left such a bad taste in the mouth. He told me that I would be stupid to finish now and that I had two or three good seasons at the top level left in me. You can imagine what a boost it was for me to be told that so here I am as captain of my country!

Next year, though, will definitely be my last at test level. The goal is to retain my Welsh place and, if all goes well, challenge for a place on the Lions tour to Australia. But I fully intend to continue playing for Cardiff after that.

Cardiff Rugby Club will always be very special for me. The way we do things here is something I'm proud of. Last year was a difficult one, with all the uncertainty of our English fixtures but we came through it in one piece. But I can't deny it that this season has been more enjoyable. Everything is more settled. We have improved the squad so that now there is far more strength in depth. We have an excellent team spirit and have swept away all that nonsense about us lacking heart and commitment. Have you ever stopped to think how many of those jibes come from people who left us after failing to cut the mustard here?

It is an absolute privilege to work on a permanent basis with men of the quality of Robert Norster, Geraint John, Huw Wiltshire and Lynn Howells. Bob's emphasis on standards and discipline are legendary and we all have a philosophy of mutual support. As with the appointment with Wales it was a real honour for me last summer when Lynn

asked me to carry on as club captain. He knows I'm not a 'yes man' and that if I have anything to say I'll say it. The same applies for him to me. Everything he's done here this season proves that the club was absolutely right to appoint him and also that he was absolutely right to accept the challenge.

So in more ways than one I'm a lucky bloke with inspiring role-models in the club and country set-ups. I've long since realised that you can't play rugby forever so I like to think that I'm learning from my experiences with Lynn, Graham and the rest of the two management teams. It's fascinating to watch Graham, for instance, with his management of people. We have a senior players' forum and he asks our opinions on a range of matters but, to answer a question I'm often asked, I play no part in team selection. Neither would I want to. Graham Henry knows exactly what he wants. He's a great listener, but the final decisions are his. It's the same with Lynn at Cardiff.

I've tried to put much of what I've learned into practice with my coaching at Abercynon. For the last two-and-a-half seasons that's been a terrific experience. But what started as a couple of nights a week commitment mushroomed into a much bigger role and, very reluctantly, I've just stood down from my responsibilities there - but only after I was satisfied that there was someone to fill the vacancy. That man is Phil John. It's been quite a year for Phil. Who would have thought that Phil of Ponty would play for Cardiff and then help out with Cardiff's captain at Abercynon? It's a funny old world.

But there again, who would have thought a few months ago that Dai Young, captain of Cardiff, would also be Dai Young, captain of Wales...



Even captains are never short of advice...

THE YOUNG ONES

This season's Cardiff squad is well-balanced in more ways than one—alongside the big names are the heroes of the future



This is the tale of half a dozen young men, none of them older than 21, who stand tall alongside the likes of Alfie, Leigh-boy, CQ and the positively ancient Owain in the Cardiff squad, and in whose hands and feet (and hopefully heads) the future of not just Cardiff but also

Welsh rugby lies.

We would be hard pushed to find any time in the recent past when a squad of thirty to thirty-three blue and blacks contained so many youngsters. There will always be a smattering of thirty-somethings, and always, too, the 'middle-aged' men like Gareth

Thomas (and he's not 26 until next summer) and Martyn Williams (still only 24). But how about this: Ryan Powell is just 19; Gary Powell, Phil Wheeler, Rhys Williams and Jamie Robinson are all 20; and Craig and Martin Morgan both 21. Throw in Liam Botham at 22 and that's a quarter

of the squad. Not bad for a club that apparently raids other team's nurseries and only wants the established stars.

But these are the stars of the future and, hopefully, the near future at that. To a man they all say their destiny lies at the Arms Park; that their ambitions centre

around a regular first team place here and representative honours further afield.

Baby of the team Ryan Powell puts it in a nutshell: "I want to stay with Cardiff because I'm not afraid of a challenge and, anyway, I've been made to feel very welcome both on and off the field."

"I played at centre for Cowbridge School where I got my A Levels," says Rhys Williams, "then joined Cardiff Youth when I was 18 and they prepared me for my senior debut."

As we all know, he hasn't look back since, playing full-back in the Junior World Cup and now for Wales Under-21, as well as

counter-attacking and reminds me in advance whether opposing half-backs are right- or left-footed. He thinks of everything!"

Going hand in hand with Rhys Williams' progress has been that of Jamie Robinson. Groomed by Peter Manning at Ysgol Gyfun Glantaf, he also hit the headlines when Wales got to last year's

struggle at times to fit everything in, I realise it's an important part of my future and in the years to come it will be all worthwhile."

But it's all very well for these pacy backs to play senior rugby and keep out of the way of the hard men. What about the young guys in the pack who find themselves alongside and, worse still, opposite the 18 stones-plus, gnarled veterans who passed their own examinations (practical) in advanced skullduggery years ago?

Gary Powell looks as if he can look after himself better than most. Born in Church Village, educated at Treorchy Comprehensive and, wait for it, Llandovery College, Gary describes his experiences this season as "awesome!"

Before he came here he spent a season at Richmond, that little Wales within England, where Bateman, Walne, Adrian Davies and Andy Moore, John Davies, Barry Williams and Craig Quinell held court.

"CQ looked after me when the going got rough," boasts young Gary. (To which Mr Quinell's response is: "Look after him? He was even an unofficial lodger at times" - a report to which Spencer John, a more recent landlord of the young prop, will nod knowingly.)

Gary got his A levels in Business Studies, P.E., and Photography (there's a lot of colourful countryside around Llandovery) but is currently taking a sabbatical away from his academic studies and concentrating on the university of life.

"I am on a steep learning curve in the front row arts," he says, "but Dai Young has been great, always giving me time and advice on how to develop my play."

And if the club captain is a hero for Gary Powell, then Steve Williams is a big favourite with lock Martin Morgan.

"Steve has been very helpful since I arrived in Cardiff last summer," says Martin. "I had a season when I was dual registered with Llanelli and Llandovery and got some European experience



s of Tomorrow

Ryan started with Cwmbran Youth but has been in touch with Cardiff since he played for the club against Harlequins at Llandovery two years ago, just days after his eighteenth birthday.

Rhys, Jamie and Phil, on the other hand, are products of Cardiff Youth.

becoming a star of the first team.

"My boyhood hero was Jonathan Davies - because of his trickery, his pace, and his whole approach to the game - and this year Mikey Rayer has been a tremendous help to me at the club. He has given me invaluable advice on positional play and

Junior World Cup final and made his Cardiff debut a couple of months after Rhys.

Like the rest of the young bunch, Jamie hasn't forgotten the importance of qualifications outside rugby. "I'm on a three-year degree course at the University of Glamorgan and, although it's a

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for the Scarlets against Stade Francais, Leinster and Perpignan, but I was still pretty wet behind the ears and one of the advantages of being with this Cardiff squad is there are so many experienced players ready to help people like me."

Martin hails from Carmarthen and went to school in Cardigan, from where he won junior honours as both a middle and front of the line jumper. Since joining Cardiff he has again been dual-registered with Llandovery and has also played for Abercynon, Aberavon against Neath in the Welsh Cup, and, believe it or not, 'Wales' and the 'British Isles' in last autumn's Rugby Legends tournament!

"I played in Cardiff's first game of the season at Newport and my immediate ambition is to cement a position in the first team but I realise it won't be easy," he admits. Meanwhile, Martin, like Ryan, Gary, Rhys and Jamie has been a regular in the all-conquering Wales Under-21 team that followed up last year's Grand Slam with straight wins over France, Italy and England.

Spare a thought though for Phil Wheeler. With a dozen first team games as a back row forward already under his belt before his twentieth birthday last November, he might just be the

nugget amongst all these gems. But fate has not been kind to Phil. At various times he has had serious knee and shoulder injuries and has broken a wrist. On the Wales Schools tour of New Zealand three years ago he played on through the pain barrier after tearing knee ligaments against Taranaki.

Last year he captained Cardiff Youth but seized his opportunity to shine in front of a capacity Arms Park crowd for the club against Swansea - he was the one who stole the ball for Anthony Sullivan (remember him?) to sprint 80 metres up the north touchline for a glorious try that brought the house down.

This year Graham Henry called him into the Wales Senior Trial at Swansea only to be struck down with more knee ligament trouble but his attitude sums up all that is good about this generation of players.

"I am not going to rush my return but I'm determined to put in an intensive summer's training, hopefully get a couple of sevens tournaments to play in, and then I'll be raring to go in September."

At 6'3" and 16 stones Phil Wheeler is a real flank forward prospect for the future.

But then, so are all of Cardiff's young ones.

STARS OF TOMORROW



Martin Wyn MORGAN

Born Carmarthen February 22 1979
Height 6'6"
Weight 17st 7lb
Honours: Wales Under-16, Wales Youth Under-19,
1999-2000: Wales Under-21



Gary POWELL

Born Church Village October 30 1979
Height 6'0"
Weight 17st 10lb
Honours: Wales Under-16, Wales Under-18, Wales Under-19
1999-2000: Wales Under-21



Ryan Denvers POWELL

Born Panteg July 1 1980
Height 5'8"
Weight 13st 4lb
Honours: Wales Under-16, Wales Under-18, Wales Under-19
1999-2000: Wales Under-21



Jamie Peter ROBINSON

Born Penarth April 7 1980
Height 6'2"
Weight 13st 7lb
Honours: Wales Under-19
1999-2000: Wales Under-21



Philip Charles WHEELER

Born Cardiff November 3 1979
Height 6'3"
Weight 16st
Honours: Wales Under-16, Wales Under-18, Wales Under-19
1999-2000:



Gethin Rhys WILLIAMS

Born Bridgend February 23 1980
Height 5'10"
Weight 12st 8lb
Honours: Wales Under-16, Wales Under-18, Wales Under-19
1999-2000: Wales Squad





HALL OF FAME

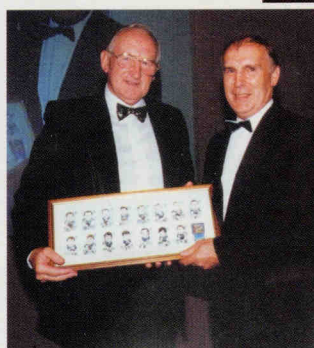
Cardiff Rugby Football Club honoured fifteen all - time greats at its inaugural Hall of Fame dinner in September 1999. The photographs give some impression of the sense of achievement and mood of celebration on what was one of the club's most successful evenings in recent years.



*Back Row (left to right)
Alan Phillips, Alun Priday, Robert Norster, Gerald Davies, Lloyd Williams,
John Nelson, Gareth Edwards, Rex Willis*

*Front Row
Barry John, Howard Norris, Jack Matthews, Bledwyn Williams
[Absent- Clifff Morgan, Gareth Davies, Terry Holmes,*

*Star full back Alun Priday receives his award from Rugby
Chairman John Evans*



*Old master Gareth Edwards in
happy mood with one of today's
stars Liam Botham*

DINNER



Robert Norster, recognised for his supreme line out skills and all round play, with his current management colleague, Lynn Howells



The Prince of Centres Bleddyn Williams reunited with another of the victorious 1953 Cardiff and Wales teams, Gareth Griffiths



Two great Cardiff club men- Dr Jack Matthews and Dr C.D. Williams

THE CHANGING FACE OF CARDIFF ARMS PARK

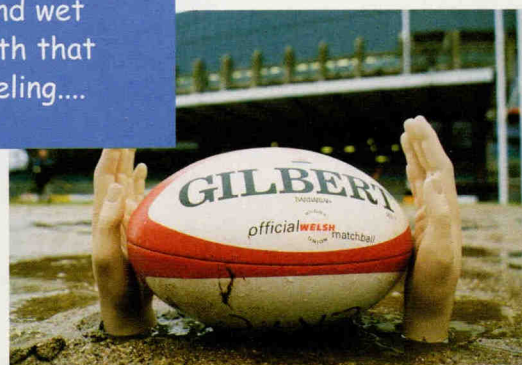
Summer 1999
Working together for
Welsh rugby....



....Autumn and
everything in the Park
is looking green....



....a long and wet
Winter with that
sinking feeling....



.... and now the
Springtime shoots of
recovery



Huw J. Edmund

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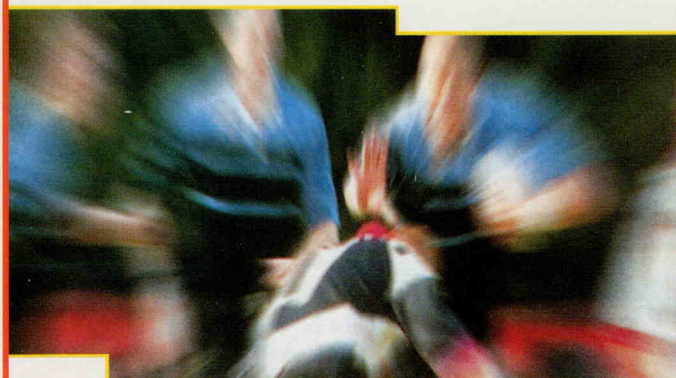
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Cardiff has never been short of quality wingers to run in tries and create them for others. In modern times Steve Ford's appetite for the try line took him to the top of the all-time list and Simon Hill is still plying his trade as an elusive eel who defends and attacks with equal skill. Now Nick Walne has joined the long line of classy runners and he is already proving a great favourite with the Arms Park faithful.

Nick was born in Scunthorpe but like Ireland's Paul Burke, whose English birthplace is traced on page 35, there is no doubt about his qualifications for Wales.

"I moved with my parents to Llangybi nearly 20 years ago and we have been there ever since," says a young man who regards himself as Welsh to the core. School in Caerleon and games for Wales at all the age levels from Under-15 through to the youth team was followed by the commendable academic

Cambridge was the place for me and that anything I achieved on the rugby field would have to dovetail in with my professional career off it."

In the autumn of 1994, with three top grades at A level already under his belt, Nick Walne duly headed for St Catherine's College, Cambridge, and another ambition was achieved three months later with his first Varsity match. Two more blues followed, interrupted only by a missed year in 1995.

Nick had already had some contact with Cardiff. "My father and I were invited to a hospitality box to watch a Welsh Cup match at the Arms Park. It turned out to be no ordinary cup tie - you've guessed it, St Peter's. So what started as a good day out ended with us quietly slipping away as we could see we were interrupting a lot of private grief!"

His next business with the club was much happier. "Cardiff were very good to me when I was injured at Cambridge, with Terry

my cap."

To complete a dream season, Nick Walne was on the Wembley pitch that great spring day when Scott Gibbs demolished England's grand slam aspirations.

"As Gibbsy went for the line I was out in midfield alongside Shane Howarth shouting him on!"

By the time Nick Walne headed with Wales to Argentina three months later he was already on Cardiff's books.

"Because of the World Cup my first game was delayed until late October. And then to cap the

"I am happy with the way things have gone. This is a great squad to be part of. Next year I hope to get involved in a business career off the field, possibly in banking, but I hope I can further my rugby ambitions for a few years more as well."

Every Cardiff fan who saw Nick Walne swerve and sprint his way over Caerphilly's line three times from near and far and then capped that with no less than six in the next game against Dunvant will hope and pray that this level-headed young man will indeed stay with us for many years yet.

NICK WALNE

W I N G E R

ambitions of someone who saw playing rugby as only part of his life in the next ten years.

"I've always wanted a job in the City (of London) and, as a rugby player, I fancied playing for Cambridge at Twickenham after seeing a Varsity Match when I was quite young. I had already made the usual enquiries about an Oxbridge education when, as luck would have it, one of our neighbours in the Usk valley also offered to help."

That neighbour was none other than T.G.R. Davies, the blessed Gerald of fond memory and an all-time great wing for Cardiff, Wales, the Lions...and Cambridge University.

"I didn't have to spend long in Gerald's company to know that

Holmes arranging physio treatment for me with Jane James, and later still I was invited to play on Easter Saturday against the Barbarians. After that I never really had any doubt that one day I would try to play regularly for the club."

But first Nick Walne's degree in economics and post-graduate diploma in management studies was followed by a year playing for Richmond in the Allied Dunbar League.

"It was a busy season in which I played in 44 games, not just for Richmond but, and this was a real bonus, three times for Wales A and then, the biggest surprise of all, I went as a replacement for the full Wales team in Italy and was called on for Dafydd James to win

longest pre-season ever for me. I got a shoulder injury after barely half an hour of my first match at Ebbw Vale."

Since then, the real Nick Walne has come to the fore for the first team. He is a genuine wing, rarely out of position, a skilful timer of the midfield break from the blindside, and, more than anything, a deadly finisher in the classic manner.

TECHNOLOGY AT THE ARMS PARK

Ticket Office Manager Andrew Thomas explains some of the innovations that are helping the day-to-day and match day operations at the home of Cardiff Rugby

The last nine months has seen a tremendous investment in technology behind the scenes at the Arms Park

Our systems now rival many other professional sports clubs and their grounds, and with the technology doing the leg-work, it

allows the staff more time to give that 'personal' service that is so important to any organisation.

Many key areas of the club have been equipped with the latest technology aimed at providing a faster and more efficient service to supporters.

The clubhouse bars and kitchens along with the numerous hospitality suites are linked together with state of the art tills, eventually allowing for faster food and beverage ordering.

We are soon to install the new till systems in the club shop that

will allow season ticket holders to obtain their privileges and discounts, simply by swiping their season ticket cards.

The electronic ticketing and turnstile systems have been implemented with great success, and have been fully operational at all our home games this season.

We are committed to improving communications both inside and outside the Club and the supporters database has allowed us to communicate far more effectively with supporters, especially those living outside the locality. We generate 'updates' to inform of fixture changes and ticket availability, as well as posting application forms for high demand games.

We are also able to inform sets of supporters about offers that would interest them, such as all under-16s about upcoming junior ticket offers like the current, and very popular 'Junior Ticket Bonanza', or informing casual ticket buyers of half-season tickets.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please call 08700 135213 or send your name and address to the ticket office on a post card.

For those of you who are interested in reading a more technical specification and description of the club's technological infrastructure, there will be an article appearing soon on the club's new web site :

www.cardiffRFC.co.uk



SIMON HILL

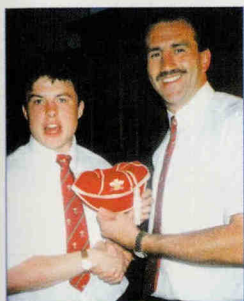
TESTIMONIAL YEAR

October 1990 - March 2000

232 games, 113 tries

(including 10 hat tricks)

One of the great stalwarts of the current Cardiff squad, Simon Hill, has been awarded a Testimonial Year that will continue until next January. The official records show that Simon first played for the club in October 1990 at Pontypridd but in fact he first donned the blue and black colours on one of those hazy pre-season tours of another rugby age to distant rugby outposts - Holland.



Simon Hill in dental pose receives his first cap from Robert Norster in Zimbabwe!

"I first came into contact with Cardiff at a golf day in Southerndown. The sun and the sangria must have got to me because I made it known to John Scott that I reckoned I could cut the mustard at the Arms Park.

"One thing led to another and before I knew it I was playing in the club trials at Sophia Gardens and then it was off for a quiet squad weekend in Amsterdam to play in a four-team tournament.

"There's no truth at all in the rumour that after that baptism I needed a month to recover before I was ready to make my debut at Ponty..."

Whatever the truth of such scurrilous stories what is beyond doubt is that in the decade since Simon Hill has been a great servant of Cardiff Rugby Football Club.

Catch up with the full Simon Hill story in his Testimonial Brochure available from the Club Shop in May



MATCH SIMON'S GREATEST CARDIFF XV

What do you think was the best Cardiff team selected from the hundreds of players that Simon lined up with throughout the 1990s?

FULL BACK: Mike Rayer Rhys Williams Justin Thomas

WINGS: Steve Ford Nigel Walker Liam Botham
Nick Walne Gareth Thomas

CENTRES: Mike Hall Gareth Thomas Colin Laity
Leigh Davies Mark Ring

FLY HALF: Adrian Davies Neil Jenkins Paul Burke
Lee Jarvis Jonathan Davies

SCRUM HALF: Andy Moore Rob Howley Robert Jones
Paul John Andy Booth

PROPS: Mike Griffiths Lyndon Mustoe Spencer John
Andrew Lewis David Young Phil Sedgemore

HOOKERS : Jonathan Humphreys Huw Bevan Paul Young
Ian Greenslade

LOCKS: Derwyn Jones Mark Edwards Craig Quinnell
Paul Kawulok Tony Rees Simon Crothers
Stuart Roy John Tait Steve Moore

BACK ROW: Mike Budd Hemi Taylor Emyr Lewis
Mark Bennett Gwyn Jones Owain Williams
Greg Kacala Howard Stone Robert Lakin
Steve Williams Martyn Williams

Send your entries to Simon Hill at
Cardiff Rugby Club by April 30

RDM FACTORS



Being the first residents of the prestigious Cardiff Gate Business Park three years ago, RDM Factors Wales know all about committing resources wisely.

As the only factoring company to have a fully operational centre in Wales, a unique commitment to the owner-managed business sector in the Principality, the opportunity presented itself to join like-minded businesses within the Cardiff RFC sponsorship set-up.

Kelvin Thomas, Regional Manager, comments :

"The Cardiff business

community is famed throughout the UK for its 'village-like feel' - a theme to the sponsoring businesses of Cardiff RFC. We both have clients and businesses with whom we have strategic relationships amongst the sponsors and have enjoyed forging these new and lasting relationships and long may it continue.

"It was a simple choice to become part of the Cardiff family. Welsh rugby needs a strong Cardiff rugby side and the branding and profile of Cardiff Rugby Football Club is renowned as a quality one throughout the globe."

RDM Factors provide flexible financial packages to owner-managed businesses, releasing cash tied-up in unpaid invoices and working in partnership with clients to provide individual solutions quickly and professionally.

Kelvin Thomas makes another important observation: "We are delighted also to make a contribution to Capital Rugby, not only because of the tremendous aims of the scheme but also because of the calibre of individuals involved. As a schoolboy, like so many others locally and throughout South Wales, I benefited both on and

off the field from the guidance of dedicated people such as John Huw Williams. Capital Rugby is in safe hands."

RDM are looking forward to a continuing relationship with Cardiff Rugby Football Club for years to come.

*(Above)
Kelvin Thomas, Regional
Manager of RDM Factors
Wales, meets Robert
Howley and Capital
Rugby's John Huw
Williams at the
Arms Park*

KOOGA

From head protectors to state-of-the-art training gear KooGa again prove they deserve their reputation for producing the most innovative rugby equipment and apparel in the UK today.

The training range goes from strength to strength with new, technologically advanced fabrics providing comfort and fit under all climatic conditions.

The concept underpinning the new training range is to use layering to provide flexible protection in all weathers and at varying stages of the training cycle.

The range starts with a base layer T-shirt made from smart micro-polyester that moves moisture from inside to out. While the rugby jersey absorbs moisture, the T-shirt next to the skin stays dry. The second layer is a super-light half-zip micro-fleece; followed by a heavy 350gm cotton rich sweat for the coldest nights. There is a choice of top layers - either the Cyclone and Auckland rain jackets, or the Tempest fleece-lined coaches jacket.

The final product is the Tornado 3-in-1 jacket combining a waterproof micro-fibre outer shell featuring welded seams, and a fully removable heavy weight fleece inner that can be worn separately. At £69.99 this is one of the best value jackets in today's sports marketplace.

The hardware range has expanded to include specific lady's product and what will become the most technical shoulder pad available to rugby players. These products are being tested by professional players at the moment, and will be available for the coming rugby season.

Bill Newton, Merchandising Director says, "With our major presence in the World Cup, Allied Dunbar League, European Cup, French Championships and six Nations, we have achieved brand leader status.

Once again, KooGa expands the range of superior products made for rugby in a market that has been traditionally starved of high quality garments.", adds Bill.



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STRADEY PARK

The Heineken Cup quarter-final with Llanelli is dominating everyone's thoughts at the Arms Park, not least ex-Scarlet EMYR LEWIS

club and if I learnt anything it was that cup matches - any cup matches - bring them together even more.

In my first year at the club - 1988 - I sat on the bench at the final and watched Jonathan Davies (someone else who ended up a blue-and-black!) orchestrate the demolition of Neath. A year later I was back on the Scarlets bench and got on as a replacement for all of 48 seconds.

But the memories got better with three winners' medals in the next three years. I even got a try in 1991 and, wait for it, a match-winning dropped goal in 1993. Then along came Cardiff to spoil the party in 1994 and by the start of the following season I was a blue-and-black myself - and a very proud one at that.

If I ever had doubts about the intensity of games between the two clubs they were soon put right when I first played for Cardiff against Llanelli. Luckily it was at the Arms Park. As usual the Scarlets' fans were packed into the north enclosure and I was feeling the pressure in the build-up to the match. I was soon feeling a lot else as well out on the pitch from my former team mates. To say that I got a warm welcome, particularly if I was caught in rucks and mauls, would probably qualify as an understatement. Let's just say that long before half-time I really had come of age as a blue-and-black in more ways than one. Meanwhile, that sea of red on the terraces was giving it to me verbally but the last laugh went to me with what the Cardiff supporters still remind me was a brilliant try (who am I to argue?) at the posts at the clubhouse end.

Cardiff won that day and in the six years since we have won a few more against them and they have won a few against us. It will probably never change if the two clubs go on playing each other for another hundred years. And what will certainly not have changed on April 15 is that Stradey Park will be as intimidating as ever. We know that we are in for a very physical match that means a hell of a lot to both sides.

If I had one wish it would be that we have a strong and experienced referee. Thankfully, the arrangements for the Heineken Cup mean that he will be a neutral and if we show discipline, play within the laws and develop control of the match we should get a fair crack of the whip.

Our own European campaign so far has been one of fits and starts. When we played our first pool match against Harlequins at the Arms Park we had not yet gelled as a team. But even in the middle of the disappointment of that drawn game there were encouraging signs of what we were capable of. We had an awesome 20 minutes or so at the start but we left the Quins off the hook.

What happened in Montferrand is still a painful memory for us all but by the time of the return game in January we were really buzzing. Nothing needed to be said in the weeks before that game. We had already turned it on against Pontypridd and the French felt the full force of our first near-80 minutes performance of the season.

There was a great satisfaction within the whole squad. We really are together as an all-for-one,

one-for-all unit and whoever plays in a particular game gets the full support of those watching on the sidelines.

A great motivator for us will be the continuing nonsense about us lacking heart and commitment. I think we have laid that one to rest in recent weeks. Another spur will be the events of the Welsh Cup semi-final at Bridgend last year.

And none of us will overlook the genuine class of the Llanelli boys and their coach. Gareth Jenkins was great for me in my years at Stradey, giving me every chance to develop as a number six as well as at eight and always telling me exactly what was expected of me out on the pitch. Now he has Nigel Davies as his right-hand man and the tradition of sweeping back play has continued. And then there's the 'Rupert factor!' We know he loves to spread the ball but we're pretty good at total rugby ourselves.

I may be tempting fate but this Cardiff side is potentially the best club outfit I have ever been involved in. We are professional off the field and we are professional on it. In all honesty I thought the league was the most realistic target this season with Europe in the firing line next year - by then we should have really matured into a consistent team.

But Harlequins beating Montferrand gave us a lifeline and we have seized it. Suddenly, Europe 2000 is not impossible. Springtime in Stradey will tell us if we have been day-dreaming. If we do slip up I can assure you that it won't be for the want of trying - or for lack of support from the sea of blue-and-black!

There will be just one thing on our minds as we all - team, supporters and officials - head west along the M4 on the morning of April 15: a win, any sort of win, against Llanelli and a route into a European semi-final.

Every Cardiff game against the Scarlets is important - for them, perhaps, more so than us, but this Heineken Cup is right up there with the big ones. It might surprise some people but one of the things I'll be looking out for as we travel there will be hundreds of blue and black colours from every car and bus we see on the road.

Why? Because it will be taking me back to the days when I journeyed in the other direction towards the National Stadium, usually in glorious spring sunshine, for the seemingly annual Schweppes and then Swalec Cup Finals which Llanelli were involved in. Then it really was a case of the motorway being a sea of red. But I know I won't be disappointed by the wonderful support we'll get from our own fans this time.

Not that any of us will be underestimating the task ahead. We shall be up against not just a team but a town, a whole community who always regard us as the city-slickers who have to be put in their place. I played for the Scarlets for the best part of eight years. They are a close-knit

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The world of financial services is full of advisers, consultants and products. Many limit their advice to which product to buy, and never fully appraise their clients situation, finances and future.

It is comforting to know that there is a company offering specialist financial planning to all Cardiff members both corporate and individual to help them through the minefield.

EsP are a family run business established 3 years ago based in the Vale of Glamorgan. The Directors, Wayne Page and Tim Edmunds have over 30 years combined experience in the industry and are assisted by their wives, Cher and Annette respectively.

"Unlike many other advisers, we do not, simply sell products" say Wayne and Tim.

"Our objective is to help our clients achieve their financial goals

through the proper management of financial resources".

When given the opportunity to support Cardiff Rugby as sponsors there was no hesitation in offering our commitment.

"This was not simply a commercial decision, but we are delighted to make a contribution to the ethos that has become Capital Rugby and support the Welsh stars of the future".

Multi-Manager Funds

At a time when building society returns are so low it may become beneficial to look at alternative investments such as multi manager funds.

Risk is a concept which all investors must consider. What is the risk that capital could be lost if a specific investment were made? Is that risk acceptable? Or, what is the risk that income from an investment will reduce in absolute

or real terms?

As a general rule, the greater the potential reward, the greater the

possible risk. For this reason, financial planners are constantly seeking ways of reducing risk while retaining as much of the potential for performance.

Diversification is a long-standing method of spreading the risk of investment. No single investment house can always provide the highest returns. For this reason the concept of multi-manager, multi-fund investment was born.

Many providers now offer this approach, whereby the holding company provides the product 'wrapper' but rather than only investing in its own fund range, it offers the flexibility of external fund-links, using the skills of leading fund managers, thus reducing risk and giving opportunity for investors to earn returns.

Multi-manager investment usually involves different categories of funds; in some cases pre-selected assets and fund managers mean

little or no involvement for clients in investment decisions; in other cases clients have total freedom to choose and monitor their own portfolio. Whichever category is chosen, unlimited (or at least extensive) switching and re-direction facilities enable total flexibility throughout the term of the investment

Some companies provide a portfolio management service, using an actively managed fund of funds. This embraces the concept of balancing risk/reward by spreading risk, but the provider is responsible for the all managers and funds chosen. Investment management is outsourced but a high level of client service is maintained.

This concept is gaining ever wider acceptance and is now available for ISAs, unit trusts and OEICs, investment bonds, pension funds and other life contracts.

As well as spreading investment risk it offers a low cost route to switching investments from one fund manager to another as relative performance and charges vary.

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CARDIFF

REX WILLIS (1924-2000)

CLIFF MORGAN reflects on the life
and times of his great half-back
partner who died in January

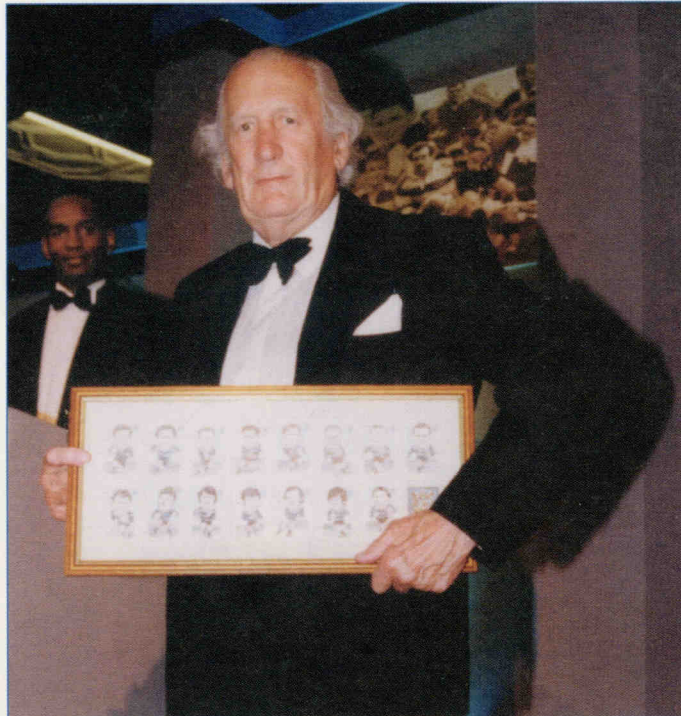


The death of a friend is always a blow, but when the news reached me on the morning of the funeral of John Nelson, another great man of Cardiff, that Rex Willis had passed away, not only myself but countless other rugby men felt that someone very special had gone out of our lives.

Rex was, at heart, a shy man and also someone who knew and understood people. Quite simply, he relished the warmth and conversation of other human beings – and we, for our part, valued the time spent in his company for he was generous to a fault and a trusted friend to have around and to turn to.

On the field of play I always considered Rex to be 'my better half'. I first met him in 1949 when I was invited to go to Porthcawl to play for Rex Willis' XV against the local club. I was barely nineteen and distinctly nervous but his almost laid-back approach was infectious.

"I'll chuck the ball in front of you and it's your job to catch it!"



was the sum total of his tactical talk and we just went out and played. Happy days! History records that we were to play eight seasons together for the club and fourteen times as a partnership for Wales. But there was much more to the playing side of our friendship than that. Rex was a giant of a player, as indestructible

on the field as he was gentle and fun-loving off it. He was a great respecter of the rugby union game and all it stood for, whether it was the traditions of the Cardiff club or the unwritten heritage of the Baa-Baa's for whom he absolutely loved to play.

It was a great privilege for me to play alongside Rex for the

Barbarians against both the Springboks and the All Blacks. He was captain against the latter in 1954 and, of course, he twice led Wales. When both Cardiff and Wales beat those All Blacks Bleddyn Williams was captain but Rex called the lineout signals.

"If I shrug my shoulders then throw the ball long," was his instruction. Rex was forgetting his natural shrug of the shoulders so Sid Judd and Malcolm Collins had a busy afternoon when lineout ball after lineout ball was thrown to them. It was our only tactic!

Rex Willis was a first-rate man. For many years he was a successful cinema-owner and entrepreneur and with his long wavy hair and much-admired sports-cars he was a stylist in everything he did. His whole life was an adventure and our own lives will be just that much duller without him.

Rex Willis receives his Hall of Fame award, September 1999

HALL OF FAME



JOHN NELSON

(1925 - 2000)

A Tribute by Brian Mark

John Nelson was born in July 1925 in Grangetown and at an early age his family moved to Splott. So he had the pedigree of a true Cardiffian and in the years that followed he was educated at St Alban's Primary School and then St Illtyd's College; as a consequence he was a staunch supporter of the Old Illtydians Rugby Club.

He qualified as a teacher at St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill and then did his national service as a Royal Navy officer in H.M.S. Ganges. After teaching for a few years John resumed his studies at Cardiff University in 1951 and then entered the world of business. He joined Shell-Mex for a short time before becoming manager of the Alliance Building Society in Cardiff.

After 1971 there followed 18 years when John's work took him first to Worthing and eventually Cardiff again in 1982 where he worked with the Gateway and Woolwich Building Societies until his retirement in 1989.

John Nelson was an outstanding wing forward for Cardiff Rugby Club playing 291 times between

1948 and 1959. The high spot of his career was as a member of the famous Cardiff team that defeated the All Blacks in the epic encounter of 1953. John had a great respect for the heritage of the game and like the rest of that team he took a great pride in the annual reunion dinners that are still held.

He also played for the Barbarians and in a Welsh trial and was a reserve for Wales in 1955. To his great delight in 1999 he was nominated for Cardiff's Hall of Fame alongside his contemporaries, Jack Matthews, Bleddyn Williams, Cliff Morgan and Rex Willis.

As Honorary Secretary John was always a loyal and devoted servant of the Rugby Club. It may be hard for outsiders to realise the extent of his work behind the scenes but all who came into contact with him were soon aware of his kindness.

John represented the rugby section on the management committee of Cardiff Athletic Club. He was a founder member of the Former Players' Association and in everything he did and wherever he

went John emphasised the need to preserve high standards both on and off the field.

In the 1960s he was anchor man for the BBC Saturday night radio programme "Sports Medley". To quote the Hall of Fame brochure :

"It was a job to which his authoritative and distinguished voice was ideally suited".

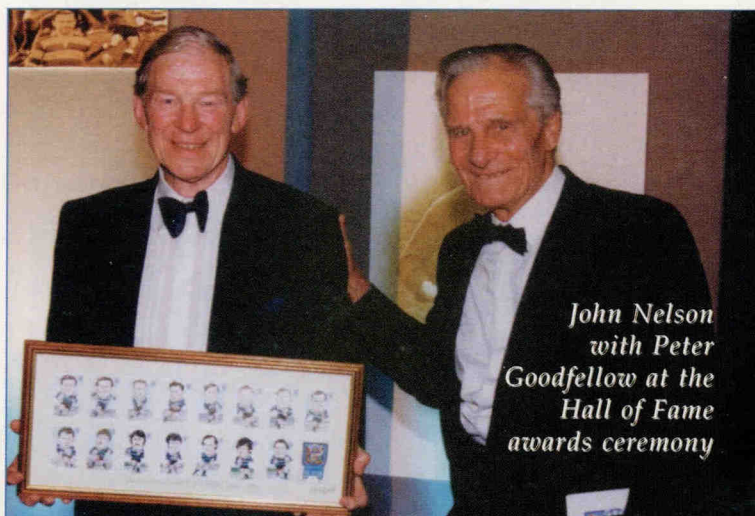
The most important part of John's life remained his family. He met Barbara, then a Neath supporter; at university and she was soon to learn of his keenness for his rugby - the honeymoon

arrangements were changed from France to Cornwall so that he could play at St Ives on the Cornish Tour.

John and Barbara's pride in their four children and two grandchildren was recognised by all who knew them. The hundreds that attended John's funeral were a silent tribute to a great man and the esteem in which he and his family were held.

John Daniel Nelson was a great ambassador for Cardiff Rugby Club and all it stands for.

He will be dearly missed by those who knew him.



*John Nelson
with Peter
Goodfellow at the
Hall of Fame
awards ceremony*

CATERING FOR OUR NEEDS



Betty and Jeff Ellerman, 39 years married and still looking after our appetites in the Clubhouse



Mike Salt and Geraldine Wadsworth, fine tuning their corporate hospitality

In our efforts to provide nothing but the best for Cardiff Rugby Club's members and corporate clients, a recent redefinition of roles means that the catering operation will satisfy the most discerning of appetites. As for many years past Jeff and Betty are at the helm in the Clubhouse with an increasingly varied menu available between 12 noon and 2pm from Monday to Friday. Meanwhile Mike and Geraldine are putting their years of Blue and Black experience to good use with their responsibilities in the corporate hospitality sphere.

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FROM THE COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT

Commercial Manager,
Tina Tew, writes

These are exciting and challenging times for everyone concerned with Cardiff Rugby Club. The performances of the team on the field have given everyone a big boost and, at the same time, provide constant challenges for the commercial department to both satisfy the needs of customers and maximise the opportunities that success on the field present.

During my many years' service at the Club, I have seen changes in personnel, procedures and policy - although not all decisions have been popular, we have not deterred from our key objective to be the best Club in Europe - tough business decisions are therefore inevitable. Like any other organisation, we aim to provide high levels of service and customer satisfaction. We do value our customers - members, season ticket holders, supporters and corporate clients alike.

Within the Commercial department we have a dedicated team who really do care - we take pride in all aspects of our work and are committed to providing individual attention to our wide and varied customers, whether in the ticket office, shop, members lounge, bars or corporate facilities.

Communication,

recognised as a powerful marketing tool, is not always the easiest of issues to conquer. This magazine is itself an example of how we are always exploring new avenues of on going communication. It is an attempt (and I believe a successful one) to encompass the needs of real rugby fans, our business partners and our schools and youth initiatives in one publication. Your feedback and contribution would be very welcome.

Another increasingly popular means of communication is our website. We are well aware that the lack of a site in recent months has been a great disappointment to many of our supporters worldwide but we have carefully weighed up the alternatives before settling on a new design and content. I am delighted to announce that our new site will be online on April 14 - a specimen page is shown in this issue.

Behind the scenes attentions begin to focus on season 2000/2001, a time to analyse initiatives, scrutinise decisions and generally review commercial activities - we will learn from experience and develop. We are constantly striving to enhance our packages,

whether to members, season tickets holders or corporate clients, improving facilities and services wherever practical and, of course, viable.

As part of the preparations for next season, I am delighted to report that Fila, a well-known, top quality brand respected in the world of sport, have secured a four year sponsorship with the Club. In addition to the direct financial benefits, the sponsorship will provide a much needed range of leisure and replica products, suitable for all ages. The lack of opportunities for our very young supporters to display their true blue and black colours has been a big disappointment for them but now they will be able to show off their support in the best way possible.

The new strips, both home and away, will be launched exclusively to the Club in August so get your orders in early!

As I said, these are exciting times and together we will continue to keep Cardiff Rugby Club as market-leaders on and off the field...



CARDIFF action





JOHN TAIT



John Noel TAIT

BORN: Orangeville, Ontario
August 14 1973

HEIGHT: 6'8"

WEIGHT: 16st 7lb

HONOURS: 22 Canadian caps

POSITION: Second Row

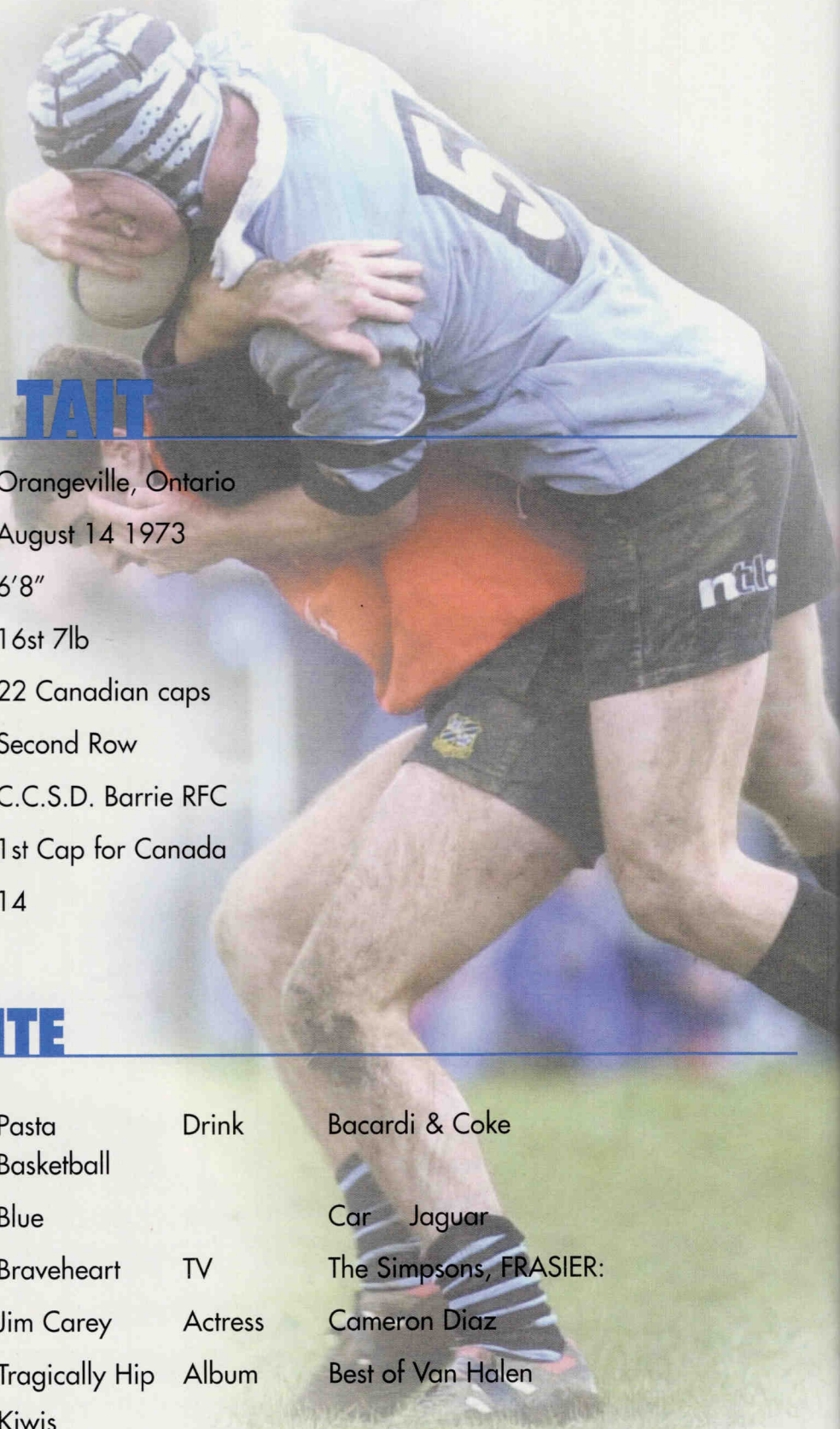
FORMER CLUBS: C.C.S.D. Barrie RFC

RUGBY HIGHLIGHT: 1st Cap for Canada

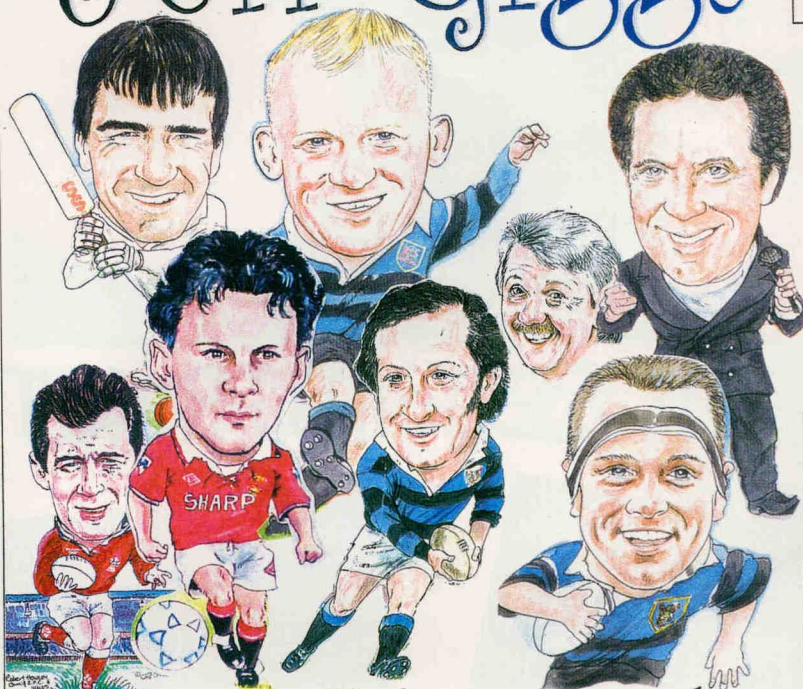
BOOT SIZE: 14

MY FAVOURITE

FOOD:	Pasta	Drink	Bacardi & Coke
OTHER SPORTS:	Basketball		
COLOUR:	Blue		Car Jaguar
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NIGHT SPOT:	Kiwis		
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Bruiser's Corner

Q. What do you
call a donkey
with 3 legs ?

A. Wonkey

RECONSTRUCT

A

B

C

D

E

F



Q. What is yellow
and smells of bananas?
A. Monkey sick



FIND THE FOLLOWING 'RUGBY' RELATED WORDS

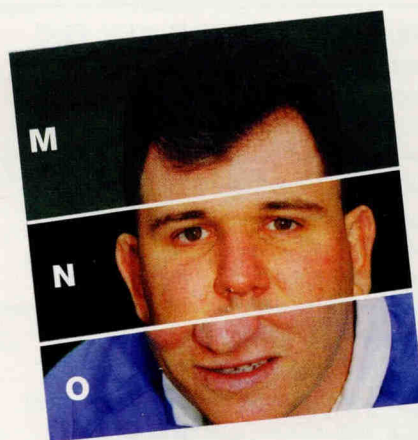
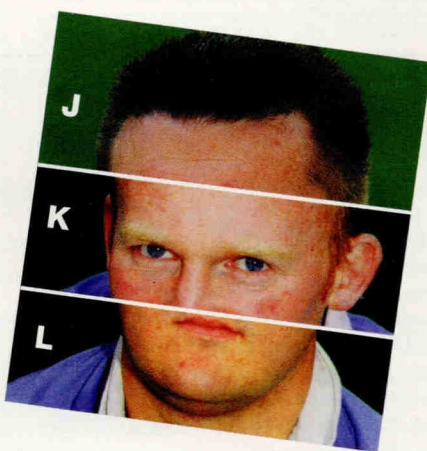
TRY
CONVERSION
ARMS PARK
KICK OFF
SCRUM
PENALTY BALL
FINAL WHISTLE

Q. What is a
Ghost's Favourite
food ?

A. Spook-etti

A	B	E	T	U	B	A	L	L	W	H	E
I	G	T	R	Y	D	R	Z	P	C	A	F
N	H	L	Q	B	I	S	Y	A	O	E	M
A	D	N	S	C	R	U	M	P	N	Q	A
L	L	P	F	H	G	J	S	I	V	U	R
W	P	P	F	Z	I	D	Y	N	E	O	M
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L	T	U	I	F	H	L	E	X	N	T	K
E	S	I	K	D	I	F	P	K	I	B	W

THE FIVE FOLLOWING FACES



Either cut out these five photographs and cut between the white lines then reconstruct the pictures by sticking them to a piece of card or paper or if you don't wish to cut up your magazine rearrange the letters in the correct order

You never see Bruiser serenading the players !



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LATEST NEWS...

2 CARDIFF PLAYERS SENT OFF IN MIDWEEK FRIENDLY

Craig Quinell and Rob Howley were sent for an early bath during wednesday's game at Swansea.

Howley, amazed at the decision, called for greater communication between the officials and said "If a fourth referee were involved, neither Craig or myself would have ended the game early."

[more...]

Cardiff forwards getting involved

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FEATURED PLAYER

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CARDIFF V SWANSEA

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LATEST RESULT

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FAMILY DISCOUNT

Enjoy the benefits of our exclusive family area and take advantage of our special price family ticket for all home matches

FOOD AND DRINK OUTLETS

We now operate two public bars facilities on a match day, conveniently situated at each end of the ground. Our resident fast food station now serves more than just a burger or hot dog - why not sample a delicious tray of sausage and chips or a bacon roll?

ENTERTAINMENT

Our mascot 'Bruiser' is here to entertain you at all home games. Meet his guests at half time and laugh along with his show time antics

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Cardiff v Edinburgh - Saturday 8 April

with Cardiff County and Vale of Glamorgan Youth Brass Band

Cardiff v Glasgow Tuesday 25 April

with Cardiff Athletic Club Choir

Cardiff v Ebbw Vale - Saturday 29 April

With Red Dragon Fun Day

Cardiff v Swansea - Saturday 13 May

With Jo's Heatwave Cheerleaders

CARDIFF

For more information contact Sales and Marketing

CARDIFF COLLECTABLES



Have you been into the Club Shop recently? If so, you will know about the increasing range of rugby goods on offer. These days you're likely to find not just a wide selection of clothing from sweatshirts to tee shirts, ties and replica jerseys, but also a magnificent choice of other rugby souvenirs.

Shop manager Shirley Withers says, "We were being increasingly asked for Groggs and the Jeff Giggs' caricatures so we have broadened our stock of them, as well as making available back numbers of our match programmes that are very popular. We also have all the major rugby books that have been published recently."

The Club Shop, in fact, reflects the new found popularity of rugby collectables. The Groggs have been part of the culture of Welsh rugby since the glory days of the

Seventies. These days Richard Hughes runs the operation started by his father John at their base at The Broadway in Pontypridd.

"For us it's a hobby as well as a business," admits Richard, "and here am I, a Ponty supporter, telling you that our Cardiff Groggs are amongst our most popular range and Cardiff's run of brilliant form can only boost sales!"

"These particular figures are only available in the Club Shop and I honestly believe that in future they will be very rare and valuable."

Apparently, the recent upsurge in Cardiff Groggs occurred around about the time of our European matches but the heroes of yesterday are equally popular.

"We are bringing out new figures on people like Gareth Edwards, Gerald Davies and Cliff Morgan in Cardiff colours and I can exclusively reveal that a new

Bleddyn Williams Grogg is currently in production."

This may or may not be connected with the current competition run jointly by the South Wales Echo and the Grogg Shop to find the best Wales XV ever - but on that subject Richard Hughes' lips are sealed until the closing date for entries on April 14.

Another perennially popular collectable that has its origins in Cardiff are the player caricatures by Jeff Giggs. They are familiar to Cardiff's fans through the match programmes that have featured them for several seasons and the framed portraits that can be bought.

Yet Jeff's first-ever commissioned caricature was of a Newport player against Cardiff!

"It was the Cup Final of 1977 and the Newport centre Neil Brown's girl-friend asked me to

draw him in black-and-amber. She was very pleased with it and everything took off from there."

Jeff Giggs has been working as an artist full-time since 1989 and his work extends beyond rugby to private commissions for people as varied as U.S. Senator Rocco of New York State, Terence Conran of Habitat fame, and the Crown Prince of the Netherlands.

But rugby remains his first love and another colourful character linked with the Arms Park gets some of the credit for Jeff's business success.

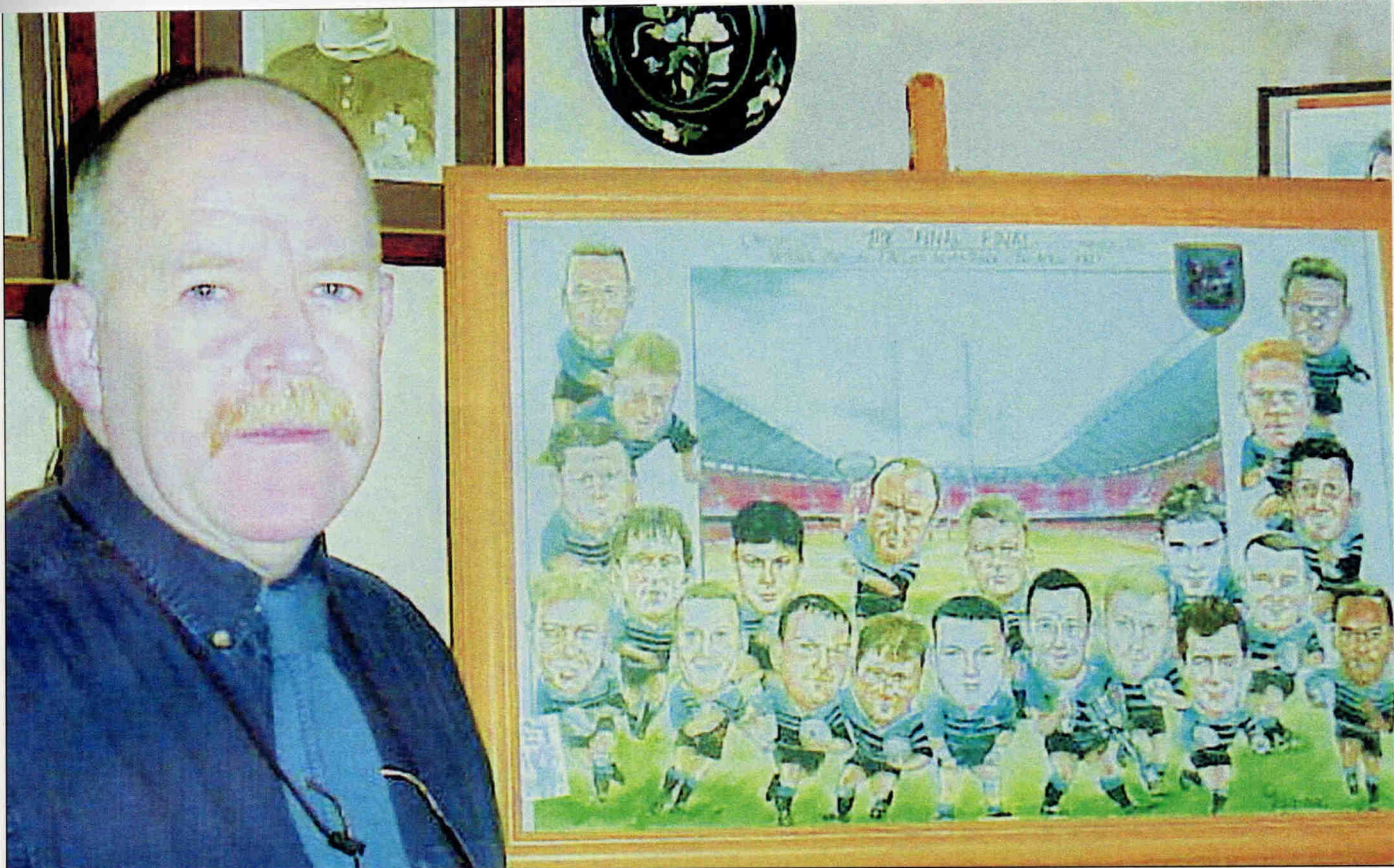
"I was playing in a golf competition with Albert Francis some years ago and out of that connection blossomed the idea of complete sets of the Wales squad. That was in the days of Terry Holmes and Gareth Davies so yet again the blue-and-blacks were well-represented.

"I also met John Hughes at a local pub, 'The Gower', that had a sports theme so it was a case of Giggs meets the Groggs!"

Nowadays Jeff is as likely to draw Campese, Lomu and van der Westhuizen as he is Quinnell, Jenkins and Howley, both for commercial sales and commissions from as far afield as New Zealand and Australia, and his work can also be seen in local restaurants, including a famous French establishment at the bottom of St Mary Street.

Other clubs in Wales such as Newport, Swansea and Neath ask for players' caricatures but Cardiff will always have a special place in his affections.

"It was a great honour for me to be asked to provide the caricatures for the fifteen great players in the Cardiff Hall of Fame last September



and I'm delighted to hear that the framed set of collectors' cards are still selling well in the Club Shop."

Shirley Withers confirms the popularity of the Hall of Fame, even if sometimes it is for the saddest of reasons : "We sold one of the framed sets the other day as well as an individual portrait of Rex Willis only to discover that the customer was related to Rex who died in January."

A colourful

but operates in the media office at the club.

"We start with a clean sheet for each cover and thrash out ideas before I present the editor, Alan Evans, with a couple of drafts. After that, it's a case of all systems go with a 48-page issue to be put

images as varied as a silhouette of a castle for the visit of Caerphilly, a European montage when Montferrand came to the Arms Park, and Neil Jenkins in all his glory on the night that Ponty were put to the sword. Never let it be said that Cardiff Rugby Club doesn't have a sense of humour!

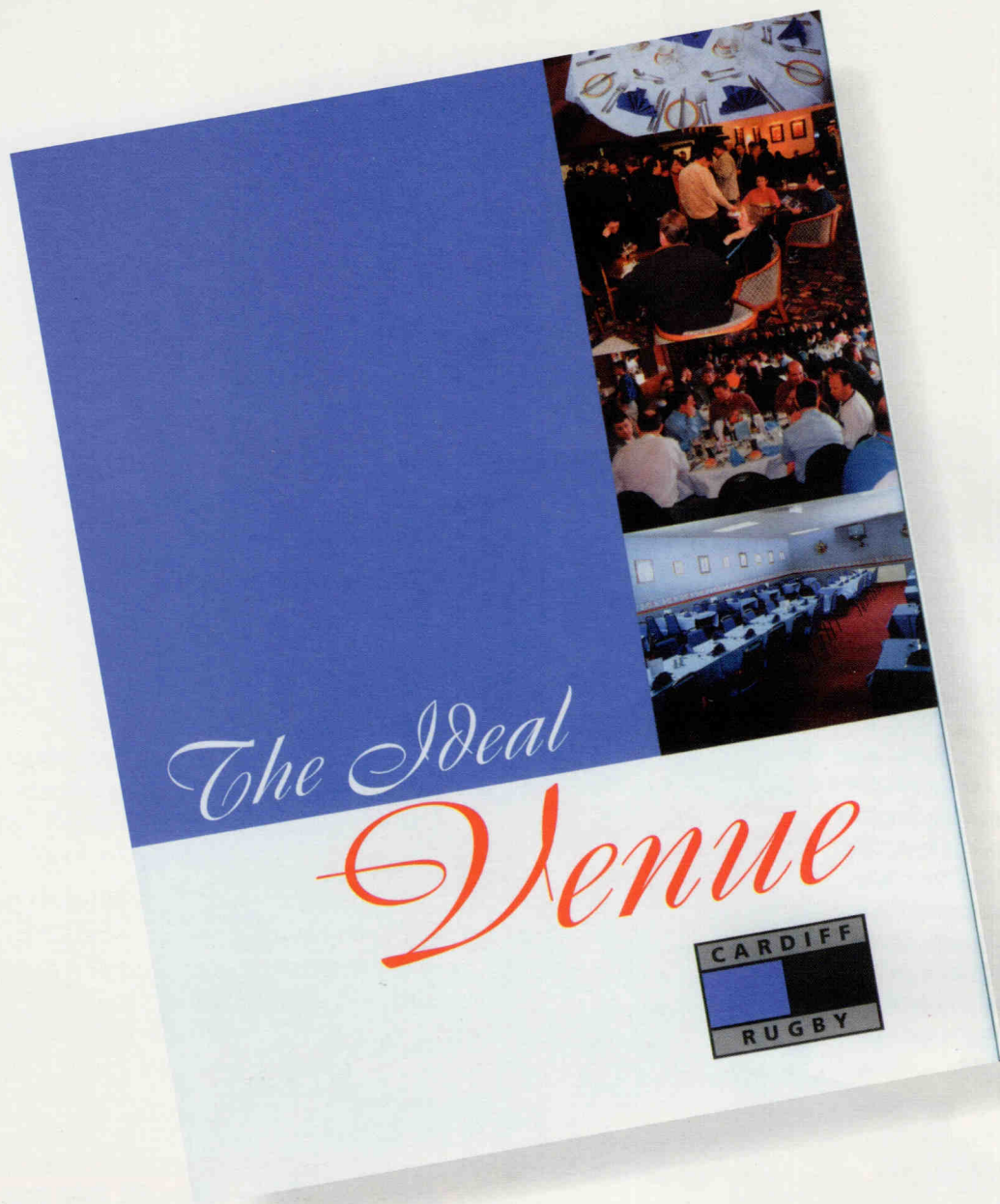
Jeff Giggs and Friends celebrate a famous Cardiff cup victory in 1997



in addition to the collectables' market - and one that has attracted many favourable comments from collectors and media visitors at home matches - are the match programmes. Their covers are proving to be a particular source of satisfaction. They are the work of designer Patrick Willey who works for the publishers, Sports Programme Promotions of Bristol,

to bed about two days before each game."

With favourable comparisons being drawn with international programmes, the end results have been the source of much interest to both regular fans and away team supporters in recent weeks, with



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CARDIFF

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ALAN EVANS INTERVIEWS

PAUL BURKE

The best fly-halves are the stuff of folk-lore; instinctive and unpredictable characters, whose true origins are shrouded in mystery and whose moods and movements as any rugby match unfolds test the nerve-ends of team mates and fans alike. For years Welsh rugby has celebrated a mythical fly-half factory, usually somewhere in west Wales, and toasted a monopoly in the number ten production line.

Only Ireland has seriously challenged the Welsh fly-half pedigree. First there was Jack Kyle, who even Cliff Morgan bowed to; then came Michael Gibson, good enough in 1968 to vie with King John himself for a Lions Test spot. Paul Burke may not belong to that lofty pantheon of Irish or Welsh pivots but Cardiff watchers have long since realised that in terms of sheer natural ability, whether running, passing or kicking, he most certainly is the finished article at club level.

At 5'8" and barely 12 stones, he hardly fits the bill of the so-called modern number ten. Most current Test fly-halves start at least two inches taller and a stone heavier and some reach the (literal) heights of Stephen Larkham's 6'3".

So Paul Burke is almost a throwback to another age. And it's great to have him around the Arms Park. He arrived here in September 1998 with ten caps for Ireland already under his belt and now less than 30 games later he is already on course for 400 club points including several tries hall marked by outrageous dummies and scampering runs to the goalposts.

And he's a real fly-half, too, in terms of his unconventional background.

"I was born in London and

educated in Sunbury and at Epsom College and played mini-rugby for London Irish," he said. This early introduction to the game is something he is particularly proud of.

"They tell me that I was the first product of mini-rugby at Sunbury to play for Ireland at senior level - but I also did my bit for England in between!"

Paul doesn't hide the fact that he captained England at Under-16 level and then played for their Under-18s against Wales Schools at Colwyn Bay and Wales Youth at Brecon. But this is decidedly not a case for the new-found watchdogs on national qualifications at the I.R.B., for Paul's parents are most definitely Irish through and through. And to complete a wonderfully Irish feel to his rugby c.v., Paul Burke played for England against Ireland at Under-21 level and then the following year played in the corresponding match for Ireland against England.

After a degree in sports science at Loughborough, Paul went to teach at the famous Christian Brothers Academy in Cork, played rugby for the local Constitution club, and then inter-provincial honours followed with Munster.

"They were happy times," he said, "because that part of Ireland is

so similar to Wales in its rugby culture. They are passionate about the game and when their rugby teams are doing well the feel-good factor is everywhere - just like here. They even have referees escorted off the field after matches!"

Between his time in Cork and his arrival at Cardiff Paul Burke spent two seasons at Bristol in harness with Robert Jones.

"They were difficult seasons at Bristol though I did notch up 600 points and playing with Robert was a real privilege. It was a bonus when he arrived at the Arms Park at the same time as myself."

His first season here was cut short by ruptured ligaments in the very first minute of the game against London Scottish last April - he had already scored 175 points in 15 outings - but he was back in full training by the first week in August and this season he has reinforced his reputation at the club. But the frustrations remain.

"I never felt that I had a fair run in the Ireland team and in my last game for them three years ago I actually scored 24 points and was dropped. I reappeared for the A side a couple of months ago, if only as a replacement, but that trail again seems to have gone cold, at least

for the time being.

"Then there's Cardiff. It's never going to be easy in the same squad as Jenks but I think I've done well when given the opportunity this year. The win against Newport here gave me a lot of satisfaction and when I played against Treviso it meant that I had played for three sides in European competition.

"Most of my games have been

"They were happy times, because that part of Ireland is so similar to Wales in its rugby culture"

with Ryan Powell. He's a very confident young man but he actually listens to me!"

There speaks the former schoolteacher and I think we get his drift. But on the field of play Paul Burke remains very much that rare combination of an impish fly-half and one who can nevertheless control play. At number ten we truly have an embarrassment of riches.



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"We had an absolutely wonderful time. The children - and staff - were quite in awe of the occasion. we just couldn't believe what was going on in our school."

So wrote Mrs Anne Rees, headteacher of Moorland Primary School following the departure of the Capital Rugby caravan in January.

The school - in Singleton Road, Splott - had received its usual quota of four introductory lessons, taken with two groups of children by John Huw Williams and Selwyn Wyatt.

But at the suggestion of the scheme's chairman Gareth Edwards, a "re-launch" took place there to mark the second year of operations.

Gareth's idea was to show sponsors what had been achieved so far. But, as he explained to journalists and others present, the scheme had gone off with such a bang that all that was needed was a re-focussing upon objectives.

"Schools have financial problems and difficulties with

resources" said the former Wales and British Lions star. "We have to do all that is possible to nurture the game of rugby and to encourage children to play the game as widely as possible".

Gareth was accompanied by Cardiff RFC squad members David Young, Craig Quinnett, Mike Rayer and Craig Morgan and by former players Robert Norster and Geraint John.

The scheme's corporate sponsors, Chartered Trust, were represented by their pro-active executive director Jeff Roberts who said, "As a leading player in the Cardiff economy and a major employer in the area, the idea of our becoming involved in a scheme to boost the Cardiff economy and the national sport in Wales had great appeal.

"Chartered Trust did not hesitate to commit itself to supporting the scheme for three years and we are absolutely delighted with the progress that is being made.

"As first Corporate Partner in the programme, we hope others

will follow our lead and support this innovative community programme which encourages children to learn skills that will not only help them in the world of sport but will equip them for life in the adult world".

And the last word comes from the school's headteacher. "Thank you for choosing Moorland", concluded Mrs Rees. "You would be welcome to come again at any time".



Chartered Trust's Executive Director Jeff Roberts and Gareth Edwards of Cardiff R.F.C join club captain David Young and Craig Morgan, Craig Quinnett and Mikr Rayer at the relaunch of Capital Rugby at Moorland Primary School

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

JOHN HUW WILLIAMS

CAPITAL RUGBY

RUGBY IN THE COMMUNITY

If you want an example of how to enjoy your work, follow Capital Rugby Director John Huw Williams as he goes about his work spreading the gospel of rugby football among the schools of Cardiff.

Leading the team for the second year, this former Cardiff wing threequarter has a coaching record that even the Great Redeemer Graham Henry would find hard to compete against.

Best remembered for taking the students of UWIC through from an

East District side to Divisions 4, 3, 2 then 1 of the Welsh League, he has travelled as the coach of schools and representative sides to Canada, Japan, France and Ireland.

The Wales Schools side he coached in New Zealand was outstandingly successful, as was the team he managed in Australia. And he can claim to have been part of the coaching team responsible for the defeat imposed by Wales Schools on an All Blacks side coached by Graham Henry.

With Cardiff as a player he



toured South Africa. Other clubs he has served include Newbridge, Penarth and Dinas Powys - the village where he lives following retirement from full-time teaching at St Cyres School.

John Huw organises the time-

tables for all Capital Rugby coaching visits to schools, assists with the representative under-11 and under-12 sides and takes particular responsibility for the Welsh-speaking schools in the capital city.

What is Capital Rugby ?

by Barri Hurford - Media Officer of Capital Rugby

Capital Rugby first came into being in the autumn of 1998 with a mission statement that read:

"In partnership with local schools, educational establishments and the local community, we aim to create an atmosphere of trust, respect and interaction through rugby football that brings benefit to all and provides a positive stimulus for the young people of Cardiff and its surrounding areas."

Objectives along the way: to stimulate general interest in sport and to educate our children to use their leisure time more positively; - to provide channels of progression to allow each child to fulfil his/her potential;

- to promote the game of rugby

football in Cardiff and surrounding areas and to provide opportunities for schoolchildren to watch top-class rugby on a regular basis;

-to promote desirable standards of behaviour;

- to help Cardiff Schools' Rugby Union to become a premier force in UK junior rugby; -to create an effective and realistic development programme that can be used by Wales' senior clubs to promote unity within their catchment areas; -to help create a platform for Welsh rugby to aspire to levels in keeping with the nation's expectations.

Regular coaching sessions form the basis of our self-discipline programme. Advice on personal conditioning and on nutrition is also included.

Throughout these first two years, the emphasis has been upon "catching them young". Our four coaches - John Huw Williams [Director of Capital Rugby], Selwyn Wyatt, Mark Ring and Mal Scott - have directed their attention and their energies towards the city's junior schools. To date, 80 schools have welcomed our coaching team. This means that between two and three thousand of Cardiff's junior school children have already enjoyed "hands-on" rugby, with the emphasis on fun.

At secondary school level, our four coaches are involved with the Cardiff Schools' representative teams at u-11, u-12, u-13, u-14 and u-15 level, providing not only coaching expertise but also playing

kit complete with Capital Rugby logo. This has been made possible through the generosity of our sponsors, foremost among whom is corporate sponsor Chartered Trust.

Apprentices at the Cardiff club have given great assistance with the scheme so far, as have members of the Cardiff squad - as and when training allows.

The laudable aims of Capital Rugby are to offer every child in Cardiff the chance to play rugby. But at the same time it recognises that responsibility has to be taken for keeping children off the city's dangerous streets and countering some of the more unsavoury influences that exist. Capital Rugby deserves the continuing support of all who support such aims.

For details of sponsorship opportunities for Capital Rugby contact Alan Thomas on Tel: 02920 575174 Fax: 575176

THANKS FROM YOUNG AND OLD



Dear Capital Rugby,
Thank you very much for coming to Ysgol Pencoe to teach skills and technique. Me and my friends are grateful that you teach rugby to girls as well as boys.
I hope that Wales win the next World Cup.
Thank you
Olwen Morris-Jones
(Age 10)



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Heol y Parc
RADUR
Caerdydd
CF4 8DF

R

Radyr Primary School
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RADYR
Cardiff
CF4 8DF

Prifathro - Headteacher
Aled M. Evans
Tel: 01222-842228
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17th February, 2000,

Mr Wyatt,
Capital Rugby,
Cardiff.

Dear Mr Wyatt,

We as a school would like to thank you, the players and any other staff who have assisted you on your recent coaching excursion to Radyr Primary School. The rugby skills taught were very appropriate to the age level and the children enjoyed them immensely.

We as a school will continue to implement rugby into the physical education curriculum and try to develop the skills you have taught us.

Yours sincerely,
J Lansing
J Lansing

Simon Hill, Owain and Steve Williams and Kevin Ellis with Capital Rugby's Selwyn Wyatt receive a warm welcome at Radyr Junior School

DREAMS COME TRUE WITH CAPITAL RUGBY

By Barri Hurford

It was a dream come true for Gareth McCarthy, star of the Cardiff under-15 team, when Capital Rugby coach Mark Ring arrived at the Cardiff HSOB after school one evening. Gareth had been having problems with his kicking, so while the rest of the squad was engaged on team activities, their outside-half and captain received a full 45 minutes of one-to-one practical advice.

To be taught individually by a charismatic player with 32 international caps for Wales was really something special for this New College pupil. Let him tell the story in his own words:

"Mark Ring has played for Cardiff and Wales in a number of different positions, including no 10 where I play. When I was told I was going to have an individual coaching session with him I was ecstatic.

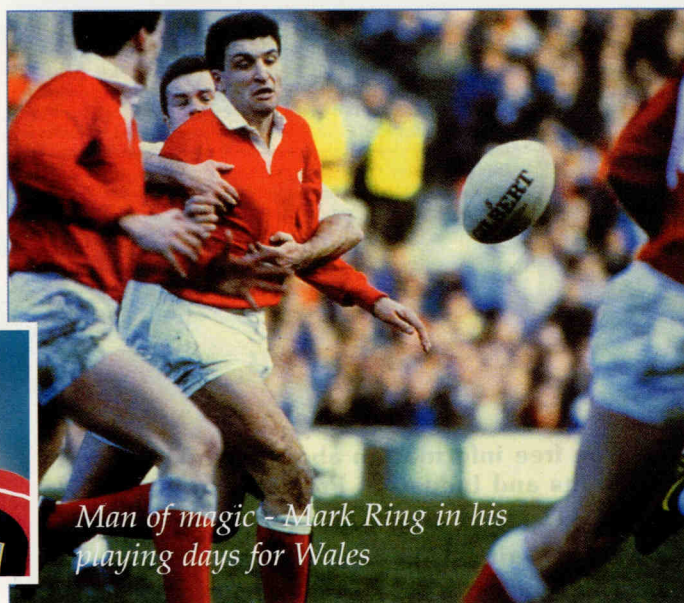
The entire session was devoted to the different techniques required for kicking a ball. If at outside-half you use the wrong techniques, then you are going to make mistakes and cost your team tries.

We went through every kick there is, including drop-kicking which was giving me problems. As we saw in the World Cup, drop-kicks can win matches.

After being shown the way by Mr Ring, I felt confident of dropping goals from anywhere on the pitch.

Although the session was serious, it was really good

fun as well. It was a brilliant experience and I would like to thank Mark Ring for handing on me such good advice. Now all I have to do is practise."



Man of magic - Mark Ring in his playing days for Wales



Healthy Eating

Vitamins and Minerals

Some good advice for our sporting stars

If you want to become a budding sports star, you will need plenty of fruit and vegetables and a variety of different foods in your diet - so you can get the necessary vitamins and minerals.

You can still eat chocolate, crisps and chips in moderation but living

on these alone will not give you the vitality and energy needed to be a very good sports person. Instead, vary your diet each day so it includes a range of foods from dairy products, like milk and eggs, to leafy green vegetables, meat, fish and cereals.

For example, vitamin A is found in liver, oily fish, dairy products, carrots, peaches and apricots to name a few. Vitamin C is found in fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, particularly citrus fruits. Vitamin K is found in whole-grain cereals and leafy green vegetables.

To help make sure you get everything you need to build a healthy and strong body.

All vitamins and minerals are important but some play more well-known roles. You may be aware that calcium is important for strong teeth and bones but did you know

that often calcium and vitamin D work together because vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium from the food you eat?

If you are taking part in sports from rugby and tennis to hockey and running then you need strong bones so they are not easily broken. By eating a well-balanced diet which is rich in calcium, protein and other vitamins and minerals while you are young, you will reduce the risk of having brittle bones when you are older.

The amount of vitamins and minerals in our food is also affected by the way they are stored, prepared and cooked.

Some interesting facts are that frozen fruit and vegetables can be as good as fresh for vitamins and minerals; keeping food hot or re-heating it will destroy some vitamins and it is recommended that you eat at least five

portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

So remember, if you want to be healthy on the inside for playing your outside sports, Tesco has a healthy eating product range and plenty of information including leaflets, menu planners, recipe cards and recipe leaflets to help you.



STRADFORM

It would be difficult to find anyone more enthusiastic about the game of rugby than Nick Chandler, managing director of Stradform Ltd.

A player with Old Penarthians until enforced retirement at the comparatively early age of 32, he refereed in the Cardiff & District Union for five years before giving up the whistle and becoming chairman of Old Pens, a job he carried out with panache for 12 years.

Now an honorary vice-president, he enjoys visiting the club and watches games alongside Peter Goodfellow when he is not supporting Cardiff RFC.

But with wife Lizzie and daughters Rhian and Katie also passionate about their rugby, the

family patently appreciates the comforts of the Business Club that they share at the Arms Park. They rarely miss a match there.

A chartered building company with current sales in excess of £21 million, Stradform is part of Fifehead plc. They work hard to retain a strong identity with the South Wales cities and valleys where they have built their reputation.

"As a local business, we have to be concerned about local people. We are a people business.

Anything we can do to put something back into the local community will find us with a listening ear" stresses Nick.

Which is exactly why his company jumped at the opportunity to supply jerseys for the Cardiff Schools' under-14 squad. The team and replacements will wear the Stradform logo on the front of the shirt, with those of Chartered Trust and Capital Rugby on the sleeve. "And we'll be there to cheer them on"

promises the MD.

The firm has keen educational and sporting ties with the city and recently completed the new Science block at Cardiff High School.

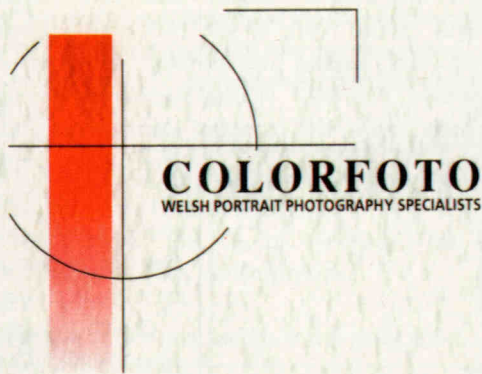
Relating warmly to the aims and the mission statement of Capital Rugby, he congratulates us on our regular Friday page in the South Wales Echo. "Never miss it" says Nick. The progress of a comparatively young venture like Capital Rugby is acknowledged by one of Wales' most successful

construction companies. By sponsoring these young Cardiff players, they are helping in the most practical way.

Capital Rugby is, reiterates Nick Chandler, the ideal vehicle for firms to show - through support of its youngsters - an identification with Cardiff and its people.



James Evans in his Colorfoto - sponsored kit meets Elaine Brown, one of the company's directors



COLORFOTO

If school sides can be encouraged to play the game of rugby, then we at Colorfoto Images will be well pleased." So says Gareth Davies, managing director of the high-flying photographic firm, who found time for an interview with me in the very week that the company was transferring from old premises under the shadow of Ninian Park in Sloper Road to new roomier premises in Image House, East Tyndall Street, Cardiff Bay.

A former professional footballer with Cardiff FC, Gareth is holder of the Football Association's full coaching badge and ran City's Youth team for a number of years. After a spell as manager of an indoor centre in Little Rock, Arkansas, he returned from the USA to join the family firm in 1993 and has now taken over from father John at the top. There are five full-time photographers in the Colorfoto Images team and they spend their days - and sometimes nights - taking photographs of school children and sports teams throughout Wales and the South

West. Colorfoto Images are sponsoring jerseys for the Cardiff Schools' under-13 representative side and the firm's logo appears on the front of the team kit, with those of Chartered Trust and Capital Rugby on the sleeve. The photographers have the back up of a staff of 50 at the new Cardiff laboratory and Gareth will ensure that the under-13's fixtures are brought to the attention of this entire work force, wherever they are in South Wales. "We also take photographs

for businesses in South Wales" says Gareth. "We're good at our job and want to encourage others to do their best too. When this young Cardiff side turns out, we want to be there on the touchline offering our support." With that sort of backing, these Cardiff players of the future are clearly off to a flying start. We know they will look good as they take the field. Now it will be up to them to produce their very best in each match and to uphold the faith that Colorfoto Images obviously has in them.



CARDIFF YOUTH - A GREAT YEAR

Coach Howard Stone has been involved in rugby at the Arms Park for two decades, but the current Youth side is a source of particular pride

There are many things that make a great team. Sometimes they are obvious - a collection of brilliant players, for instance; sometimes what makes a great team is indefinable.

But I know for sure what makes our current Cardiff Youth squad a bit special : an incredible team spirit amongst all the players and, secondly, the inspiring leadership of Greg Woods.

The team spirit can probably be traced back to our pre-season tour to Canada last August. Everyone went and there was also representation from the Rugby Committee in the shape of John Evans and Brian Bennett - this was a valuable reminder to the boys that there was much more to Cardiff Rugby Club than 80 minutes on a Saturday afternoon.

It soon became obvious when we got back that we had a real team on our hands. The weeks went by with a half-century of points or more against Old Illydians, Exeter, Glamorgan Wanderers and several others. The real breakthrough came at Leicester with an impressive 56-28 win. The boys were

magnificent that day, running the big Englishmen, with their usual smattering of under-21s, ragged.

So what about the contribution of Mr. Woods? Young Greg is a player with a big future. He's a great tight-head prop and an excellent leader. He has a fantastic attitude and everyone looks up to him. If we really do get to the end of the season with our unbeaten record intact then he and his team will deservedly go down in the annals of the club's history.

The funny thing is that we don't really have an array of individual stars. Take winger Karl Rees. He scores tries like they're going out of fashion but I ask you - how can any self-respecting wing be overtaken by lock John Tait as he was in a training session at Treforest!!?

Seriously, though, I'm proud of every one of them. My only hope is that the club will have a development side in place, as promised, next year and that they all have a reason to stay with us.

Before then we have a short tour of Italy this April with games in Treviso and Rovigo. Cardiff Youth have earned their few days in the sun.

<div>  Cardiff R.F.C (Youth) 1999 - 2000 </div>				
1999 (Italics represents Welsh Youth Cup Games)				
Sept	4th	Swansea	(a) w	36 - 15
	11th	Northampton	(h) w	31 - 22
	18th	Old Illydians	(a) w	62 - 3
	25th	Leicester	(a) w	56 - 28
Oct	2nd	Exeter	(h) w	53 - 3
	9th	Llanelli	(h) w	26 - 20
	16th	Glam. Wands	(a) w	62 - 15
	23rd	Newport	(h) w	22 - 20
Nov	10th	Caerphilly	(a) w	72 - 5
	13th	Cross Keys	(a) w	23 - 7
	20th (1)	Ammanford	(a) w	63 - 9
Dec	4th	Army	(a) w	51 - 7
	18th (2)	Aberdare	(a) w	34 - 0
2000				
Jan	15th (3)	Mountain Ash	(a) w	51 - 8
	26th	Caerphilly	(a) w	50 - 12
	29th	Exeter	(a) w	83 - 6
Feb	13th (QF)	Abertillery	(a) d	11 - 11
	16th	Maesteg	(a) w	36 - 12
	19th	Bristol Colts	(h) w	41 - 14
Mar	4th	Carmarthen A.	(a) w	19 - 7
	11th	Newport	(a) w	57 - 14
	18th (SF)	Pontypridd	(a) w	26 - 22



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WELSH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
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SUPPORTERS OF ALL AGES...

Spanning the Century

The visit of 100 year - old Mrs Maria Eley captured the imagination of the local press. Mrs Eley played for Cardiff Ladies against Newport at the Arms Park as long ago as 1917 and was a special guest of the Rugby Committee at the recent game against Caerphilly. She watched another Cardiff victory with her family and Mr & Mrs Tony Williams and Mr & Mrs Robert Lakin and with a true sense of doing things properly she was kind enough to send a thank you note and a bouquet of flowers to club receptionist Laura Evans.





SPENCER'S GREAT COMEBACK

The story so far... Spencer Courtney John, a young prop playing for Llanelli, is called into the 1995 Wales squad and wins his first cap against Scotland at Murrayfield. He is 21 years and three months old - that's young by propping standards and very young for a British front five forward.

Wales lose heavily but young Spencer holds his place for the next match and goes with Wales that summer to the World Cup in South Africa. He then joins Cardiff and wins three more caps in 1997.

Then the wilderness years arrive. Two years when the national selectors don't come to call. End of promising career? No chance. Spencer John becomes the backbone of the Cardiff pack in 1999, playing in an impressive 34 games out of 38 and, with the dawn of a new millennium, he can

no longer be ignored.

So the early months of 2000 have seen Spencer John back in the Wales squad, vying with the redoubtable David Young and Peter Rogers for a Test spot. The lesson, quite simply, is : never give up.

But Spencer puts it much better than this.

"Having tasted international rugby five years ago I was determined to be part of the set-up again. But I knew it wouldn't be laid on a plate for me. That determination can only come from within the individual. I've had help from lots of people in the last couple of years but they can only coach skills - you can't coach desire and determination.

"When I fell out of favour with Wales it was time for me to take a good look at myself. So I did that and then I gave myself targets.

"Everything went well last year up to a point. I was fortunate to have Terry Holmes helping me at the club but I couldn't understand why, when I was in most people's eyes the number one at the club, I couldn't even get into the Wales A squad. That was hugely frustrating.

"This year Lynn Howells and Geraint John have been very fair and have told me what I needed to do to put myself into international contention. It seems to have worked!"

Spencer John unashamedly admits that he's a family man.

"I'm very lucky to have the interest and support of my entire family, with my father, mother and sister never missing a match. That means a lot to me. I also love children which is why I hate seeing talent wasted."

Spencer has been a firm

supporter of Capital Rugby since it first started 18 months ago, taking every opportunity not just to coach rugby to the pupils of Cardiff but also to give them sensible advice.

"I always tell them to enjoy their sport but to never forget their schoolwork and to always finish every task they are set. Success in life is about making the most of your opportunities."

And as he went off to prepare for another game for Wales, Spencer John was clear about what the great comeback meant to him : "These days I realise what an honour it is to play for both Cardiff and Wales - and I don't take anything for granted. I look upon every game as possibly being my last and so I put everything into it."

Never was a great comeback more hard earned or deserved.

VENDITTO RESTAURANTS

Wales

Whether it's sports hospitality, large corporate functions, or a romantic dinner for two - Toni Venditto has a restaurant for every occasion!



da Venditto

7-8 Park Place, Cardiff CF10 3DP
Telephone 029 20 230781 Fax 029 20 233881
(Situating opposite Cardiff's new Theatre)

Architect design and chic, with a refreshing sophisticated menu and wine list, da Venditto is at the forefront of what can only be described as up market dining. The perfect choice for those who like the finer things in life.

Topo Gigio

12 Church Street, Cardiff CF10 1BG
Tel 02920 345903 Fax 02920 641107

Everything you could want in a restaurant pizzeria! An authentic Italian atmosphere, a bustling open plan kitchen, and of course 15 years experience of offering good food, good service and a good time! Need we say more?



Signor Topo Gigio

153-155 Crwys Road, Cathays, Cardiff CF12 4NH
Tel/Fax 02920 20 23 2261

A landmark of a busy suburb of Cardiff, yet within 10 minutes of the city centre, Signor Topo Gigio is friendly and informal. Freshly prepared food and welcoming surroundings are the hallmark of this typical Italian restaurant/pizzeria.



Fontana Lounge/wine bar

11-12 Church Street, Cardiff CF10 1BG (basement) Tel 02920 344794 Fax 02920 641107

Soon to undergo a complete re-design by Toni Venditto and top architect and interior designer, Luciano Palmiero. The Fontana will re-open in mid May as Cardiff's only wine bar. Chic, fashionable and licensed until 2.00am, it is the perfect place to meet up with friends before or after dining or just socially. Fully air-conditioned and with waitress service, enjoy the great atmosphere - but without the crush.

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