



CARDIFF ATHLETIC CLUB NEWSLETTER

MARCH, 1992

OPENING REMARKS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

DR. C. D. WILLIAMS

There has been justified criticism that Members have not been kept informed of matters current within the Athletic Club. The Management Committee acknowledges this criticism and apologises to Members accordingly.

It is hoped that the contents of this Newsletter will go some way to rectifying these omissions.

The Rugby Club has been going through a bad time on the field and, like all other businesses in this difficult period of recession, we have felt the cold draught of financial decline.

It is evident that morale is currently at a low ebb but it has always been at times like these that Members of Cardiff Athletic Club have given their whole-hearted support.

We thank all those Members who have loyally supported the Club both on and off the field and hope that we will continue to receive that support.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF CARDIFF R.F.C.

MR. ALUN PRIDAY

It may well be that you are wondering if all the 'Media Hype' about splits and decisions within the Committee and amongst players is correct. Well let me assure you that most of what you have read is inaccurate. I read that we had quite a number of extra meetings, in fact we had one additional meeting and that was a meeting called for everyone interested in finding a solution to our run of dismal results. This meeting was held on the

Thursday after Alan Phillips returned from Bermuda where he had been playing Rugby and following the heavy defeat the side had experienced at Swansea the previous Saturday.

Regrettably Alan telephoned me on the Wednesday evening proffering his resignation, as he had heard that the Players were unhappy with his coaching. I pleaded with him at length not to resign but to attend the meeting and help us find the solution needed. Alas Alan was intent on resigning and therefore I reluctantly had to accede to his request and accepted his resignation. This meant that a very important member of the trio, which Alan himself had requested to run the playing side some 18 months previously, had gone. The meeting was held with a full Committee attending together with Team Manager, Team Captains and Coaches. It was obvious to all present that we needed to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation and it was the unanimous opinion of all present that Malcolm Childs who had the respect of the players and who had coached the Athletic XV so successfully the previous season be invited to assist Peter Manning in the preparation of the 1st XV. He accepted and also agreed to attend selection which was changed from that which had picked the team for the last two seasons viz Team Manager, Captain and Coach. It was apparent that there had been a clash of personalities between the three people concerned and that the Team Manager and Captain had to resolve their problems and they had to work together to achieve the results on the field of play that we all wanted.

Regrettably some six weeks later it was found that these differences were not resolved and the Committee deemed it necessary to avoid an unsatisfactory situation continuing by suspending the Team Management position until the end of the

season. By then it was hoped a new coaching Team Management selection structure be established in plenty of time for the season 1992-93. This solution was thought to be the correct one as the Captain of the Club is an appointment made by the Annual General Meeting.

The selection Committee until the end of the season was restructured to include one of the two senior Coaches, two Committee men and the Club Captain, who had a casting vote. Thus for the first time for two seasons there was Committee representation on Selection, a situation that had been thought unnecessary by Alan Phillips some 18 months earlier.

Regrettably, our results have not improved, due in no small part to a long list of injuries, lack of expertise in certain crucial position and a sad lack of consistent goal kicking.

Very shortly we have to appoint a Senior Coach to 'Head up' the Coaching Department; it will be his responsibility to recommend the appointment of his own assistants and as a member of the Rugby Committee he will also assist in the recommendation of next Season's Captain, so that these two will be able to work together to obtain the results we all hope the team will achieve next season.

Away from the 'Green side' of the club your Committee will continue to attend to the side of the club to which it is best suited, the encouragement of sponsorship, the lottery and to the general administration of the game and the Club. I am sure nobody in the Club be it Player, Coach, Committeeman or Member is happy to see us languish at the bottom of the Heineken League or to see us out of the Schweppes Cup. It is up to us all to pull together to support the Teams and the Club back to better times. It is very easy to bask in the reflected glory of a successful side but it is the true test of Club loyalty to support the players when things are going against the team. So let us all do our bit and support the players.

I look forward to seeing you at the next game.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

First is must be emphasised that the long term financial position of the Club is sound and is under control.

The Development of the ground was carefully planned some four years ago. With the changing face of Rugby, it was recognised that the Club had to move with the times if we were to enter the twenty first century with the ground, players and financial backing to keep Cardiff R.F.C. at the top of the tree in Club Rugby.

The Hospitality Suites were planned to use parts of the ground which would not intrude on existing members' facilities, while at the same time offering suite holders a package of facilities which would be attractive.

It was fully understood that in the short term, there would be a period when the servicing of the loans required to carry out this development would have to be met from internal resources; However basically the development will be financed from the rental received from the Suites.

In preparing our budget forecasts for the year 1992/93, it was envisaged that our borrowings would reach £700,000 to £750,000. However we did not expect to be involved in such a severe recession also our situation has not been helped by our poor performances on the Park. This has resulted in falling attendances and much reduced bar takings.

Against this background, a searching look has had to be taken to examine areas where economies can be achieved. Some of the economies have not been popular but nevertheless necessary.

The current position is that the Club is having to service loans of some £800,000 and the budgeted forecast for the current year indicates that the Revenue Deficit will be in the region of £55,000, this compares with a deficit of £34,500 in 1990/91. This deficit situation will continue for the next five years, hopefully on a reducing basis, following which we will have cleared the bulk of our borrowings and return to a surplus on revenue account.

So for the foreseeable future we will have to follow a careful and prudent examination of our financial affairs.

As a matter of record, in the current year, our income from football gates is down over 50% of the budget forecast and at the nine months point, our bar trading account is showing a deficit of £5,000 (Budget forecast was a surplus of £20,000).

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 1992/93

It is felt that every endeavour should be made to encourage Members to make use of the Club facilities, not only on match days but during the remainder of the week. To this end, it was felt that rather than uplift the Membership Fees, Members would be encouraged to use the Club more often if a levy was put on Membership, this levy to be offset by the issue of vouchers to the same value for redemption across the bar. The format of Membership for 1992/93 will remain unaltered from 1991/92 but a levy of £20 per Member will be made against all Memberships for 1992/93 where the Member is over 18 years of age.

On payment of Membership plus levy, Members will be issued with vouchers to the value of £20 which will be redeemable for purchases over the bar up to 30th April, 1993.

COMMERCIAL MATTERS

This season has seen the successful completion of Phase II of the Hospitality Suite development, opened on Saturday, 21st September, 1991 by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff. These suites have been leased on a seven year basis with payment of £50,000 per suite paid in advance. These monies have been used to pay the first stage capital payment. The balance of £440,000 has been deferred at a very low interest rate for seven years to coincide with the renewal of the leases at that time.

The Phase I stage of Hospitality Suites at

the river end are nearing the end of their third season. Several of the leases have been extended beyond this point, however eighteen of the twenty-six suites will be due for renewal at the end of the season. With the demand already shown, we are confident all will be re-leased.

We have several plans in the pipeline for the seating area incorporated in the Phase II development, in addition to the family and schoolboy enclosures. Details of the new schemes are currently being discussed.

The lottery continues to be an invaluable source of income to the Rugby Section; the income being used to finance many projects such as schools rugby, in particular the development of the under 16's and 17's, tours, scholarships and players' outfits. Of late the number of lottery memberships has declined and we are looking towards ways of boosting the figures. If you are not already a member of the lottery and would like to find out more, or indeed have friends or relatives who would be interested, please contact us. We are urgently looking for new recruits.

On a more general note, we wish to remind members of the excellent facilities we have available for holding large or small functions, whether for personal use or business purposes, match days or weekdays. Rooms can accommodate between 8 and 120 people, all with bar and catering facilities.

The Commercial Department has been in operation for almost three years and during this period has introduced various new schemes with many more under consideration. We are always looking for new ideas and ways of promoting the Club and would welcome any suggestions you may have.

SECTION NEWS

Tennis

The 1992 season will commence with an American Tournament and lunch at Sophia Gardens on Sunday, 12th April, 1992.

After the success of the teams in 1991, the Section is looking forward to the commencement of the SWLTA Summer Doubles Leagues and is again entering three

men's teams and three ladies' teams. Men's match practice commences on Tuesday, 31st March, 1992, the ladies have been practising throughout the winter with coaching from Yvonne Hughes.

Club Night on Thursday evenings was much improved in 1991, thanks to the strenuous efforts of Chairman, Stuart Dickson. This year, Club Night will begin on Thursday, 30th April, 1992. We are aiming to build on this success.

The Club is always happy to welcome new members who should contact the Club Captain, Penny Newman, on Cardiff 551450.

Bowls

The green will be opened on Friday, 10th April, 1992, at 6.30p.m., followed by our usual buffet and general 'get together' for members, family and friends.

Captain's Day will be on Saturday, 11th April, 1992, when we are looking for a full turn-out of members – for those members needing 'weight training' to enable them to reach the jack – there will be a special session at the gymnasium on March 32nd.

Our week's tour to Dundee in August, has almost been finalised, the only detail outstanding relates to how many distilleries we will visit.

The Christmas party was a great success and a date has already been entered in the diary to repeat the exercise in December, 1992.

Our changing rooms have been enlarged, thanks mainly to the direct efforts of members – many thanks to all involved.

Hockey

This season has been another good one for the men. The First Team is in a transitional phase with the younger players jostling for position with the older established ex-Internationals currently in the squad. Preparation for the European Club Championships to be held in Gibraltar in

June, 1992, continues apace, under the Captaincy of Steve Sparkes. We wish the team every success.

The ladies, under Captain Judith Evans, have consolidated their position high up in Division One this year and it seems quite likely that the second team will gain promotion to Division Two. A remarkable achievement for a Section which was reformed only six years ago.

The five Junior sides, enthusiastically run by Jonathan Atter, have also performed well, winning the Under 12 and Under 14 Leagues and hoping for a win in the appropriate Welsh Cup.

The Club now runs two Ladies' sides, five Men's sides and an occasional Veterans' side, together with Under 12, Under 14, Under 16 sides and a Men's indoor squad. All this activity is held together by a small band of selfless heroes and the job of Chairman would be impossible without this dedicated work behind the scenes.

Cricket

Would all Cricket Members please note the following:

1. Indoor nets at Ebbw Vale – Sunday evenings 6.00p.m. to 8.00p.m. until 29th March. Cars leave Cross Inn, Gabalfa (facing Gabalfa flyover) at 5.00p.m. prompt.
2. Outdoor training – Monday evenings at Sophia Gardens at 6.00p.m. until 30th March.
3. Outdoor nets – commence 6th April at Sophia Gardens at 6.00p.m.
4. Additional tea ladies are required for 1992. Would all players please see their wives/girl friends/mothers with a view to providing one tea lady.

Any queries regarding the above to Tony Edwards (619351 Office/615297 Home).